

mission

STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

PRODUCED BY
THE OFFICE OF
ADVENTIST MISSION
VOLUME 10
NUMBER 2



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EDITORIAL

I dislike goodbyes, but I'll need to bid farewell to my colleague Kayla at the end of the week. She's been an integral part of Adventist Mission for the past six years, and I can't imagine our office without her. Her friendship has warmed my heart, and I'll miss her greatly.

Kayla and I have shared many good times promoting mission and gathering stories. One of my favorites was interviewing three generations of missionaries in Tennessee: Evelyn; her daughter Gail; and her two granddaughters, Melissa and Tami. We were fascinated as we listened to the four women reminisce about the sad, funny, dangerous, and miraculous experiences in their lives.

We share these memories with you in "Three Generations of Missionary Women" found on page 16 of this magazine. It's our tribute to Evelyn, who has fallen asleep in Jesus. In part because of what she and countless other missionaries have done and continue to do, there will soon come a day when we'll no longer need to say goodbye to those we love. I can't wait. Thanks for all you do to support their ministry!

Laurie Falvo,
Editor



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ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTO . . .

PHOTO COURTESY OF GAIL GIEBEL

In 2014, at the age of 83, Evelyn Muir visited the floating islands on Lake Titicaca in Peru, where she and her husband, Wellesley, had served as missionaries for many years. She is pictured with Peter Moncada (left) and Pastor Deivis Santiago from the Lake Titicaca Mission. Her story appears on page 16.

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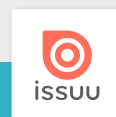
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Return to Palau Impacts the Nation



Originally from Palau, **Mesikt Idechong** is the pastor of the Ypao Seventh-day Adventist Clinic Church in Guam.

The year is 2003. The place is the Palau National Gymnasium. The event is a state funeral for Pastor Ruimar DePaiva, his wife, Margareth, and their son, Larisson. Their 10-year-old daughter, Melissa, looks on as she stands with her grandmother and grandfather. She mourns alongside the hundreds of people who have come to pay their respects to her family. No one could foresee that the Lord was about to move upon this funeral ceremony in a way that would impact Palau and the world forever.

Nearly 20 years later, Melissa DePaiva Gibson, now a married young woman, her husband, Michael, and a large delegation have arrived on Palau. The group consists of representatives from the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the North American Division, the Guam-Micronesia Mission, Andrews University, and a documentary film team. They have come to

witness the premiere of the documentary *Return to Palau*.

The film was produced to highlight the incredible power of the gospel in the face of the unthinkable tragedy that befell the DePaiva family. While serving as missionaries, the pastor, his wife, and his son were slain by someone who broke into their home in the middle of the night. Melissa had been kidnapped and left for dead, but she was rescued. The perpetrator was apprehended and imprisoned.

The public's feelings of shame and outrage at what happened were palpable. However, at the state funeral for the family, an unexpected event occurred. Ruth, the mother of Pastor DePaiva, unexpectedly approached the podium after the final speech from High Chief Reklai and began to speak to the people from a mother's heart. She encouraged a spirit of forgiveness for all as she had forgiven Justin, the perpetrator of the crime. She then asked to meet the mother of Justin. Justin's mother was brought to the podium, and the two women embraced like old friends. There was barely a dry eye in that large gymnasium. The nation had never seen an act of forgiveness of this magnitude.

Long before the premiere of *Return to Palau*, banners had been hung high in the streets, posters were displayed in shops and restaurants,

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and flyers were distributed to homes, inviting the public to attend the showing. It was a night that would make history as it became the largest gathering for any indoor event on Palau. Prepared with 1,000 seats, the gym was filled to overflowing as an estimated 1,500 people arrived. So many wanted to see this incredible story of tragedy, forgiveness, and hope.

When I think of what the premiere of this documentary meant to the people of Palau, three things come to mind. First, it caused many people to take a break from their daily routines to remember what happened to this Brazilian missionary family years ago. The story was told and retold among family members, church members, government leaders, and our youth. The public's attention was as fixed on this story as it had been 20 years earlier.

Second, it caused people to deeply ponder the meaning of hope, forgiveness, and mercy and what these meant in their own lives. Someone once said, "To err is human, but to forgive is divine." How was it possible that even after her son, daughter-in-law, and grandson were murdered that Grandma DePaiva could forgive so fully and so freely? At a time when it would be understandable to be bitter, angry, and full of vengeance, how was she full of peace and mercy? Yes, truly forgiveness is an act of God in the human heart. What is impossible with man is possible with God.

Third, it meant a lot to the people of Palau because it led them to pray. The overall message of

the documentary is that God is alive and well and that what He did for Melissa and her grandmother, He is willing to do for us today if we only ask Him. The film's presentation of God's deep love for sinners reminded us that as we continue to pray and stay close to God, He will take any bad situation in our lives and turn it around for good.

What was looked upon as a shameful chapter of Palauan history has become a glorious testament to the power of God's conquering love and abundant forgiveness.

The documentary's impact on me as I participated in the film was humbling. I remember that as I was being interviewed, tears ran down my face. I felt incredibly moved as I thought of how God's goodness knows no bounds in something so tragic and yet so triumphant, so sad and yet so inspiring. I remember how good it felt to hear Pastor DePaiva's voice again through the family's home videos. It felt good seeing the young family happy and playing in the snow at Andrews University in



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Berrien Springs, Michigan, just before they were called to Palau. At the same time, watching the documentary brought back feelings of hurt and shame because Justin, the one who had caused so much pain, is a member of my family. However, it filled me with joy to see “the rest of the story”—to see Melissa grow up to become a godly woman, go through school, and marry a God-fearing man; to see Justin finally give his heart to Jesus, surrender His life to God, and be baptized in the church pastored by the man whose life he took. How can anyone not be amazed at what God is still doing with this beautiful story? It's evident that God is calling His children to Him through this documentary.

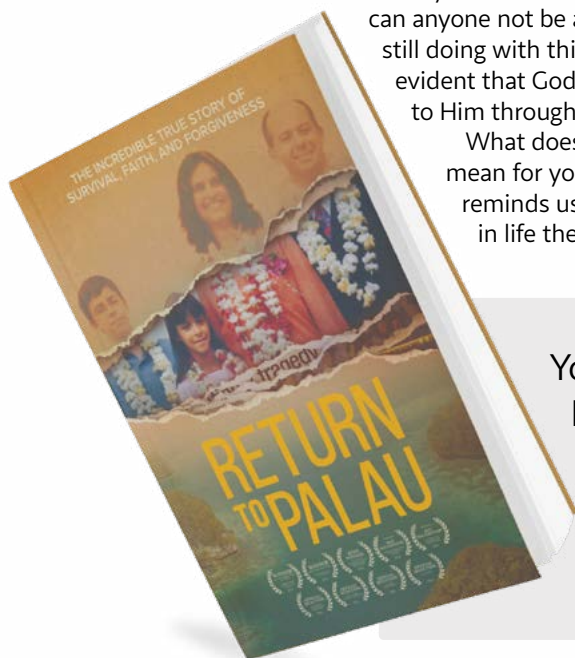
What does *Return to Palau* mean for you and for me today? It reminds us of God's promise that in life there may be situations

that happen that are meant for evil, but God is able to turn them for good (Genesis 50:20). It declares that the Lord Jesus can give us beauty for ashes when we mourn (Isaiah 61:3). It promises us that all things will work together for good for those who love God (Romans 8:28). It tells us what the power of God's forgiveness can do within a family, within a culture, and within a nation. Where can we find the source of this power? That is the purpose of this documentary. To let us know that the source of this power is in Jesus Christ. What He did for the DePaiva family, the Lord stands ready to do for us today. Will you ask Him now? Will you call upon Him who delights to do wonders in your life? He will abundantly answer, and you may never be the same again.

This film and this event were about Jesus. In a room filled with some 1,500 people that night, one could feel the reverent anticipation among those who witnessed it. It was special. It was not just the premiere of a film. It was the Lord Jesus Christ revealing His tender heart to the people in Palau and to all the world. It was a moment in history that will bear fruit for many years to come, and it's my earnest prayer that because of it, many souls will walk through the gates of the New Jerusalem, forever to be with their Savior. What a reunion that will be for the DePaiva family, for Justin, for you, for me, for us all!

Adapted with permission from the stories on the Guam-Micronesia Mission's website.

- 1 Melissa and Pastor Idechong in Guam in 2018
- 2 Melissa and Michael Gibson pose by a *Return to Palau* promotional poster at the film's world premiere in Palau.
- 3 Pastor Dwight Nelson interviews Pastor Idechong about the topic of forgiveness in the Palauan culture (Photo credit: Michelle Hamel)
- 4 His Excellency President Surangel Whipps, Jr., embraces Melissa after presenting her with an honorary Palauan citizenship. (Photo credit: Michelle Hamel)



You can rent *Return to Palau* at **Returntopalau.com**. Revenue from the film will be used to further the legacy of the DePaiva family and to help care for Melissa's grandmother Ruth, who suffered a debilitating stroke.

Thousands are seeking refuge in Ukrainian churches.

Please help our members help them!

Thousands of displaced people are flooding Ukraine's Adventist churches seeking safety. Our members are doing everything possible to meet their physical and spiritual needs, but the demand is overwhelming.

Ukraine's Adventist Mission director, Leonid Rutkovskiy, has requested assistance. "All our pastors have stayed in Ukraine, and everyone is working and doing what they can do," he said. "But we are almost running out of personal and church savings."

You can help bolster our members' ministry by supporting the Hope in Crisis fund, an initiative created by Adventist Mission after the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States. The first funds helped send counselors to comfort people on the streets of New York City. The initiative also assisted Haitians after the earthquake in 2010.

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Pioneering the Streets of Kinshasa

In this Mission Spotlight story, Gary and Rick reminisce about one of their favorite Global Mission pioneers.



Gary Krause,
Adventist
Mission director

Gary: Rick, we're thinking about that visit many years ago to Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, West Africa. That was quite a trip.

Rick: It was. It was my first time visiting that country, so it was eye-opening.

Gary: In Kinshasa, you're looking at [a city of] 17 million people, and it's growing rapidly. It seemed like every one of them was out on the street when we drove in from the airport. Just an active, vibrant, happening city, and there we have Global Mission pioneers through the years who've been planting churches.



Rick Kajiura,
Adventist
Mission
communication
director

Rick: Yes, I remember going into the city and seeing lorries, or trucks, filled with people in the back. That was their transportation into the city. And so it was a huge challenge—you've got a small number of Global Mission pioneers trying to reach many people.

Gary: We were there for a Global Mission pioneer training, and I'll never forget the person who really stands out to me—Pastor Jeremiah, a former pioneer who led the singing for the event. He was so enthusiastic and had such a wonderful story that you suggested we take him out on the street so that we could film him in action.

Rick: Yeah, so we went out right in front of the church and set up there. He started playing music, and immediately he had a crowd. His personality is so infectious. He's just so vibrant and has this life about him that people are just drawn to it, I think, even without the music.

Gary: He had his two little kids with him, Benji and Josie. Josie had been sick. She'd had malaria. She also had ulcers on her leg, so she doesn't look overly happy in the video, but she sang! They had walked two hours to come to the event, and that evening they were walking another two hours back home.





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Rick: I'd forgotten that they had walked two hours, but I think that's often the case in many areas of the world. What I do remember, though, is all the children that gathered around when he started singing and playing.

Gary: I remember several years later, walking down the corridor at the General Conference, and I heard the same song that we had recorded Pastor Jeremiah playing and singing. I poked my head into Ricky Oliveras' office—he's one of our video producers—and he was editing. Sure enough, there was Pastor Jeremiah. . . . We knew him with two kids and a one-month-old baby at home, but now the family had grown, and he was still ministering like he had through the years. It was just wonderful to see!

Rick: What was great about that video was that they had little homemade trumpets.

Gary: That's right. Beautiful. Well, Global Mission pioneers such as Pastor Jeremiah are working all around the world. Thanks to our donors' prayers and financial support, they're planting churches in places we didn't know we could plant churches, in very difficult circumstances. Whenever I meet a pioneer living on a basic living stipend, I'm humbled because I say, "Lord, I don't know what sacrifice is." Please continue to support Global Mission pioneers pioneering the gospel around the world.

- 1 Former Global Mission pioneer Pastor Jeremiah
- 2 Pastor Jeremiah and his daughter Josie singing about Jesus
- 3 Gary interviewing Pastor Jeremiah and his daughter Josie
- 4 Pastor Jeremiah and his children playing hymns for the community on their homemade trumpets



Watch this story in action at [M360.tv/s2147!](https://M360.tv/s2147)

Global Mission's priority is starting new groups of believers among unreached people groups. Please pray for them and support their ministry by visiting Global-Mission.org/giving.



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Yap's Newbie Teacher

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From the United States, **Delilah Drew** is a volunteer kindergarten and first-grade teacher serving on the island of Yap in the Federated States of Micronesia. She is pursuing a degree in Medical Laboratory Science at Andrews University.

My respect and appreciation for educators have exponentially increased these past few months. When I first arrived on the island of Yap as a volunteer missionary, I came with idealistic dreams of adorable little kids who would be easy to shape and lead. I had chosen to teach kindergarten and first grade because I thought I couldn't mess it up.

Well, I was wrong. Because of COVID-related quarantine complications, I arrived at Yap SDA School just in time for midterms. The first day was overwhelming—the kids didn't listen, didn't stay in their seats, and were constantly talking. They threw crayons on the ground, ripped up their papers, hit each other, and jumped on desks. I'm not going to lie; I had to raise my voice, take things away, and make some of them sit down. It was hard to keep them on task long enough to get through their tests. I was in way over my head, and it was only day one!

That evening, I talked to the previous first-grade teacher, and she gave me a copy of a book called *The First Days of School*. I immediately looked up classroom management. I came up with routines for the morning activities, recess, lunch, and physical education classes. I spent a big chunk of the second day going over the rules and expectations and then had the students practice them. We only got through two subjects that day, but they learned how to line up; where to put their shoes, backpacks, and lunches; and how to sit quietly at their desks.

I gave each one a classroom job, too, so that they could feel a sense of responsibility.

Just having higher expectations and being firm with them helped so much. Some kids still acted up, but because the class was behaving better, it was easier to get them back on track. It was encouraging to see how sweet the kids were.

Academically, I faced another challenge. The students weren't familiar with the English alphabet. One of the textbooks at the school suggested teaching the kids to read in small increments, starting with only three letters of the alphabet and adding a new sound every other day. At the time, I couldn't see the progress my kids were making. It felt like I was hardly making a difference, and it was taking way too long. I even wondered if I was a failure as a teacher.

I stuck with it, though. As the weeks passed, I introduced small storybooks, and to my surprise, my kids could read bits of them! I was excited to see that they gradually were able to read more and more.

Now we're well into the second semester of the school year, and I'm reminded of just how far my students have come in very simple but meaningful ways. Every week, my class learns a new memory verse. We've already gone through the well-known ones like John 3:16 and Genesis 1:1, but I also sprinkle in verses that are less familiar. On Mondays, I write the week's memory verse on the blackboard. When my students file into class and

sit down at their desks, I see them look at it. After a few seconds, my braver students attempt to read the verse out loud. The other students catch their excitement and try sounding out the words too. It makes me so happy not only to hear them reading something on their own but also to know that they are excited to be reading from the Bible.

Truly, one of our memory verses has been fulfilled: "The Lord is good to all" (Psalm 145:9). The Lord is teaching my children to be interested in learning and appreciating the Word of God, and He has certainly been good to me too. I will always remember this year in Yap for all that it has taught me, this newbie teacher, about God's goodness and love.

- 1 Delilah and her students
- 2 Students of the Week showing off their medals and certificates
- 3 Kindergarteners and first graders with leis to present to the Federated States of Micronesia president's cabinet members visiting the school



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.



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Glō Mom Makes Waves



Sandra Dombrowski is a freelance writer living in Connecticut, United States.

She has a passion for highlighting, promoting, and working in urban ministry.

When Nicole and Victor Broushet opened an urban center of influence, The Vegan Nest Café, in Worcester, Massachusetts, United States, it was just the two of them bringing Christ to the community by serving tasty, healthy food; providing health education; and meeting people's needs. Four years later, they opened a second location in Clinton, Massachusetts, multiplying their services by training their staff to carry out the ministry.

Managing two cafés and responding to all the ministry opportunities they generate keep Nicole and Victor busy. But their capacity to serve continues to grow because they have collaborated with area Seventh-day Adventist churches, a local public school, and other community stakeholders. The waves of Christ's influence are rippling out beyond the walls of the cafés, touching communities outside their reach.

After opening their second location in Clinton, Nicole started scanning local news and publications for ways that The Vegan Nest could serve the community. She read an article about Clinton that appealed for businesses and organizations to support efforts to help the community. She thought Glō Mom might be the answer. Glō Mom is The Vegan Nest's ministry that invites local businesses to donate items for babies and then distributes them at baby shower gatherings for new moms in underserved communities. Nicole called the phone

number in the article, and the family outreach coordinator for the Clinton public schools who had written the article was pleased with Nicole's proposition and offered to work with her.

Because of the pandemic restrictions, Nicole planned an outdoor, drive-by Glō Mom baby shower at a school. The local Seventh-day Adventist church helped prepare baskets of baby items, healthy snacks, and birthing support information in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. All the translations were provided by the family outreach coordinator. Marisol Gracia, a bilingual church member who offers free doula* services as a ministry, shared her contact information.

But The Vegan Nest didn't stop there. They decided to use their café in Worcester as another location for a drive-by baby shower. Two other Adventist churches in Massachusetts also agreed to host a baby shower on the same day.

Because The Vegan Nest had established a friendship with the radio station adjacent to the café's location in Worcester, the waves of Christ's influence spread even farther. The radio station advertised the free event and promoted all the baby shower locations, even providing live streaming updates throughout the day. If someone couldn't drive by to pick up a basket, they could call in or send a message to request a delivery.

The director of a pregnancy resource center heard about the baby shower and shared the information with a 17-year-old girl who had recently emigrated from Ecuador and spoke no English. She was pregnant, living in a homeless shelter, and about to give birth any day. Marisol, the doula, connected with her and supported her through the birth. When the newborn baby suddenly went limp, she lifted her hands and prayed over the baby and the attending nurses. By the grace of God, the baby revived. Both Nicole and Marisol visited the young mother afterward, bringing nourishing food, postpartum support, and the love of Jesus.

A young couple in Worcester also heard about the free doula services during the baby shower and wanted Marisol to assist them as a midwife delivered their baby at home. Marisol developed a relationship with the mother before the birth. When she arrived at the home to assist the



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mother, she found that the family had erected a shrine to a fertility god. She could sense a spiritual battle erupting and started to pray. It was a difficult birth. The midwife became agitated, and tragically, the baby died. Marisol accompanied the mother to the hospital and convinced her to receive care. Through all the trauma, the couple appreciated Marisol's prayers and support and recognized that she was connected to a source of comfort and hope.

Since the woman came home from the hospital, she has contacted The Vegan Nest Café at least once a week. She and her husband visit the café regularly and want to volunteer so they can learn more from Nicole and Victor. "I don't think this is the end of the story," Nicole said. She senses that God has a plan for this young couple.

"What we're seeing from these partnerships between the church, the center of influence, and these community stakeholders [is the opportunity] to build authentic relationships with people," Nicole said. "We're becoming so deeply ingrained in their lives that we're able to share Jesus in a really practical way."

* A doula is a trained, nonmedical professional who provides support to a mother before, during, and shortly after birth.

- 1 Nicole Broushet (fourth from left), Marisol Gracia (far left), and volunteers from the Redemption Community Seventh-day Adventist Church in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, at the Worcester location drive-by community baby shower
- 2 Baby shower baskets waiting for pickup by needy community members in Worcester
- 3 The Attleboro, Massachusetts, Seventh-day Adventist Church invites the community to the Glō Mom drive-by baby shower



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Urban Centers of Influence

Global Mission supports a holistic mission to the cities through the ministry of dozens 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/urban-centers-of-influence.

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





The Twist in the Story



Ricky Oliveras,
Office of
Adventist
Mission

John was a bright student living in Malawi, a country in southern Africa. When he was a young teenager, he was handpicked by local leaders of his faith to study at a school in Zanzibar, Tanzania. There, he would learn how to enter territories where there were no adherents to his faith and create new followers. This was a high honor for John, and it made his father proud.

John diligently applied himself to his studies in Tanzania. He learned a lot about his religion and a lot about Christianity because, in his work, he would interact regularly with Christians.

When John's training was complete, the school leaders advised him to return to Malawi and become thoroughly acquainted with the King James Version of the Bible. They knew that many Christians favored this version, and to convert Christians, John would need to understand why they believed as they did.

In Malawi, John enrolled at the Luwazi Seventh-day Adventist Mission school. He joined an Adventist Youth group and met a Seventh-day Adventist pastor who helped him understand Adventist beliefs. All the while, he sent reports back to the religious leaders in Tanzania.

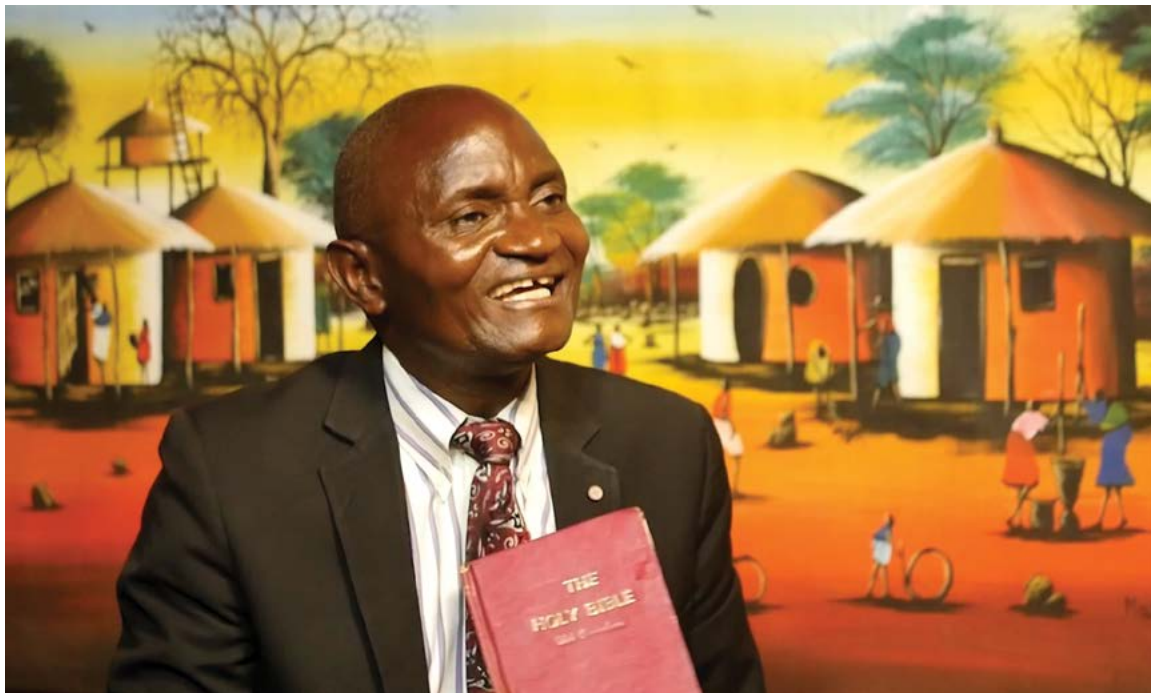
After three years of studying at the Adventist school, John felt that he finally understood the Bible. But instead of using this knowledge to convert Christians to his faith, John gave his heart to Jesus and was baptized. He stopped sending reports to Tanzania.

When John's father learned he had become a Christian, he was furious. He had sent his son to Tanzania so that he would be highly respected when he returned. "It would have been a privilege for him to say, 'My son has gone to a higher position,'" John said. "When he heard that I became a Seventh-day Adventist, it came like a blow."

John's father rejected him, but John had become a child of God, and he dedicated his life to sharing His love with others, especially those of his former faith. Adventist Church leaders noticed John's gift for ministry and selected him to become a Global Mission pioneer.

John laughed as he shared the twist of circumstances that led him to be, once again, trained to go into unentered areas and create new followers! Only this time, he was making disciples for Jesus.

John ministered for 10 years as a Global Mission pioneer, following Christ's method of ministry





and sharing his testimony. Then, because he hadn't had an opportunity to complete his education, he enrolled at Malawi Adventist University.

"I wanted to pursue my degree," John said. "I graduated in 2018, and I thank God because now I know many more things than I did before."

From his teenage years to his time at the university, John knows firsthand the difference Adventist mission schools make in people's lives.

This quarter, a portion of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a community outreach and leadership development center on the campus of Malawi Adventist University.

Please pray for those involved as the project develops. Pray that more students will come to know Jesus through Adventist education as John did. Thank you for supporting mission through your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering!



Watch this story at
m360.tv/s2222.

Please give generously to support the work in this part of the world by contributing to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter. You can do so at Sabbath School or by visiting adventistmission.org/donate.



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Three Generations of Missionary Women



Evelyn

“Wellesley said, ‘If I asked you to marry me, would you be willing to go anyplace in the world with me?’

“And of course, I said, ‘Sure, why not?’”

Little did Evelyn know that that question was the beginning of a lifetime of adventure and service and a legacy that would carry on through her daughters and granddaughters.

Wellesley and Evelyn Muir met at a funeral near her home city of San Francisco, California. Neither of them knew the deceased. Wellesley preached the sermon, and Evelyn sang a solo. They married in 1954, and in 1956, they accepted a call to serve in the Lake Titicaca Mission in Puno, Peru.

Puno was a small port city on the shores of Lake Titicaca. Located more than 12,500 feet (3,810 meters) high in the Andes Mountains, it was *cold* and often windy. The air was so thin that the Muirs kept oxygen tanks in their home to help visitors who suffered from altitude sickness. Just a short walk could leave one feeling winded. Life in Puno was difficult for a young city-bred woman. Evelyn



Kayla Ewert and Laurie Falvo, Office of Adventist Mission

recalled what someone had shared with her about the three things a missionary needed to do: adapt, adapt, adapt. She had seen other missionaries come and go, sometimes after only a couple of months. Evelyn was determined to stay. “We were there to work,” she said. That was the beginning of more than 16 years of service in Peru.

Lake Titicaca was inhabited by the Uro people. Thousands of years before, their ancestors had settled near the lake to escape drought. Then, to escape invading tribes, they had moved onto the water itself, living on rafts made from buoyant reeds that grew in the shallow areas of the lake. Joined together, the rafts created small floating villages. Although many Uros have since left the islands for the comforts of Puno, some continue their traditional lifestyle, and the now famous floating islands draw tourists from around the world.

Wellesley and Evelyn were the first Adventists we know of to visit the floating islands. The first time they tried to visit one of the villages, they were chased off by men brandishing long poles. The island dwellers were wary of strangers, especially those with light skin. Certain that they were about to be beaten or perhaps even killed, Wellesley and Evelyn made a quick exit.

On their next attempt, they were also chased away. Wellesley and Evelyn might have given up trying to help the Uros, but they knew that Jesus loved these people and could transform their lives. Over time, Wellesley and Evelyn established friendships with the Uros and were able to provide them with basic medical care. They were instrumental in fostering the idea of a floating school and church, and with God’s leading and the work of many people, these ideas became a reality.

One time, the missionary couple took their kayak out to visit church members on an island deeper in the lake. On their way back, they were caught in a sudden storm. The wind came up. The waves got big, and water got in the kayak. The sun went down, and it got dark. They couldn’t see a thing! Clouds covered the moon. Wellesley and Evelyn needed to find the channel that led to the port of Puno, but the channel lights weren’t on.

They prayed, “Lord, You know we need to get home. We’re freezing to death. Please help us.” Suddenly the moon broke through the clouds, and they could see the channel perfectly! As soon as Wellesley and Evelyn rowed into the channel, the moon disappeared again. Though they couldn’t see much, they were able to go forward knowing they were safe in God’s hands.

Wellesley and Evelyn also ministered to the Quechua and Aymara people in the highlands around Puno. During their first year, when that



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area suffered from a terrible famine, they helped distribute 20,000 care packages supplied by the United States government.

Wellesley and Evelyn were instrumental in initiating several ministry outlets. They helped get land for youth camps in the region, where many young people came to know Christ. The couple also helped start radio work in the highlands and promoted the Voice of Youth program, which trained young people to preach in nearby villages and towns.

Later, Wellesley was transferred to the Inca Union in Lima, Peru. One of the largest projects he and Evelyn oversaw was the building of the first official Adventist airbase in the world. They had to clear part of the Amazon jungle, and all the supplies came by dugout canoe. During construction, the Muirs lived in tents.

While serving in Peru, Wellesley and Evelyn had two girls, Gail and Gladys. Evelyn homeschooled her children while working alongside her husband in evangelism and youth work. She became famous for her storytelling at camps. Evelyn also talked with the youth about Christian principles and health and gave counsel on how to live their lives in service to Jesus.

Wellesley and Evelyn later served in Bermuda and Thailand. Wellesley passed away in 2012 and Evelyn in 2020. They were loved by many around the world and left behind a legacy of mission service.

Daughter Gladys followed her mother's footsteps and became a missionary nurse, serving 10 years in Guam and making many short-term missionary trips around the world.

Gail

Gail can't think of a better way to have grown up than as a missionary kid in Peru. From taking boats out to the floating islands to helping with evangelistic meetings, her parents involved her and her sister in everything they did.

One year, Wellesley and Evelyn asked the girls where they wanted to go on furlough. (Furlough is when missionaries take leave from their duties, often returning to their home country.) Gail and Gladys had just seen a *National Geographic* magazine featuring Turkey and were fascinated by the photographs. So, the family headed to Turkey.

On their first Sabbath there, the girls were in for a surprise. Used to the packed churches in Peru, they were shocked to learn that there was only one church in Turkey with only 36 members at that time, none of whom were Turkish. This made a profound impact on Gail, and she decided that day that she would become a missionary to Turkey.

Gail attended Pacific Union College, where she earned degrees in nursing and biology and met Herb Giebel, a fellow missionary kid who had grown up in Asia. Both later attended Loma Linda



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University, Gail to work on a master's degree in biology and Herb to study medicine. When Herb asked Gail on their first date, he had one question for her: "Would you be willing to go to Turkey one day?" She laughed and said she would be happy to go to Turkey but wasn't sure about going there with him.

They got married while Herb was in medical school and began preparing to be missionaries. Through a series of doors opening and closing, Herb and Gail found themselves only briefly in

Turkey before going to Uzbekistan. Eventually, they landed in Nigeria for full-time mission service. Neither had planned on going to Africa, but Herb and Gail knew God was leading them.

Herb was asked to establish the first Adventist residency program in West Africa at the hospital in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. When Herb, Gail, and their two young daughters, Melissa and Tami, arrived in Ile-Ife, everything was peaceful—but that was about to change. About one month later, on their return from the capital city, the family found soldiers everywhere. One soldier stopped them and told them that they couldn't get to the hospital compound through the city because fighting had started.

A missionary surgeon who was traveling with them said that he had to get to the hospital, especially if there was fighting. The soldier replied, "Well, if you go, it's at your own risk." The missionaries prayed that God would protect them, and Melissa and Tami lay down on the floor of the car. As they drove through the city, it seemed like everything had been set on fire. The missionaries were grateful to make it to the compound safely.

For the next seven years, there was fighting off and on as two communities in the city fought for land and power. One day, the girls were playing outside when the fighting started again. The army came through the area and told everyone to get off the streets. "We'll kill anyone who's still here in half an hour," they warned.

Gail was home alone with her daughters, and they hurried to the one place in the house without windows: a small hallway between the bedrooms. They grabbed their dog and lay down on the floor, praying for God's protection. The bullets hitting their house sounded like rain; miraculously, none got inside.

There were seven little Adventist churches in the villages around Ile-Ife, and after the war, all but two had been destroyed. The members had been chased away or killed.

The Sabbath School class at the hospital church decided to do outreach and began working with the two empty churches. Every Sabbath, the Giebels' vehicles would fill up with nursing students from various religious backgrounds. The four-mile journey would often take close to an hour due to poor road conditions. At the churches, the students conducted a branch Sabbath School.

Gradually, they were able to have worship services regularly at one of the churches. This outreach changed the lives of many students, and some even became Adventists.

After serving 16 years in Nigeria, Gail and Herb moved to India, where they've spent the past seven years serving at the Christian Medical College in Vellore. It's the only medical school in India where Adventist students are given the opportunity to



study medicine and other allied health professions without being required to attend classes or take exams on Sabbath.

"I think whether we're overseas or in the United States, mission is what life is all about," Gail says. "Satisfaction in life comes from sharing Jesus."

Melissa and Tami

While the fighting in Ile-Ife was most intense, the Giebel family was asked to go help at a hospital in northern Nigeria for two weeks. Those two weeks turned into one year. In Jengre, they quickly realized that food spoiled within a day. With no electricity, the Giebels couldn't keep leftovers cold, and no matter what they did, nothing lasted.

The complication came on Sabbath. The Giebel family wasn't accustomed to making meals on Sabbath. But what do you do when you can't keep food prepared on Friday for Sabbath? This wasn't a problem for seven-year-old Melissa and four-year-old Tami. They remembered the story of the children of Israel and the manna. With their simple faith, Melissa and Tami said, "Mommy, let's just pray. If Jesus could make the manna last, He can make our food last."

So they knelt in the little kitchen and said a short prayer. The girls were confident that God would answer it. On Sabbath morning, they eagerly peeked at the food and discovered that it looked as fresh as it had on Friday.

Week after week, this happened. The food prepared on Friday lasted through Sabbath but spoiled on Sunday. This had a big impact on the girls. Melissa and Tami felt that God really did care, and not just about the big things.

Mission work was a family affair. At just seven years old, Melissa had her first official job as a "nurse" when they were living in northern Nigeria. Wearing a white cap and a dress made by her mom, she would sit in the obstetrics ward making cotton balls or rocking babies to sleep.



Melissa and Tami learned at a young age to trust God with their lives. Tami recollected a time in Nigeria when she went to the airport to pick up her aunt because her mom was unable to go that day. She was used to "tax collectors" who forced drivers to stop and pay to use the road. So, when their vehicle had to stop because one such "tax collector" had placed a board embedded with upturned nails on the road, she didn't worry—until the man demanded that the driver give him the keys.

Tami and her aunt crouched down low in the back seat. They couldn't tell whether the collector had a gun, but the driver was scared enough to hand over the keys. Tami says, "I remember praying, 'God, You're the only one who can take care of this situation. Please help us.'"

When Tami opened her eyes, she saw a car parked behind them and a man approaching the "tax collector" and their driver. "Give the keys back," the man said firmly.

"No," the collector replied haughtily.

"Give the man back his keys," the newcomer insisted, his voice taking on a more authoritative tone. After what seemed like an eternity, the collector returned the keys to the driver, told him to go, and removed the board from the road. "As we drove away," Tami says, "I looked out the back window. There was no one there."

When it came time to go to college, both girls studied nursing at Southern Adventist University in the United States. Growing up in a war zone didn't scare them off from mission work. They both planned to serve in the Middle East someday.

Melissa decided to stay for one year after graduating to get experience working as a nurse in the United States. But during that year, one by one, all the doors leading to working overseas slammed shut. She didn't know why, but God seemed to want her to stay put.

Melissa has since become deeply involved in the Adventist-Muslim Friendship Association



(AMFA) in Chattanooga, Tennessee. AMFA works with refugees, mostly from the Middle East. God is using Melissa's unique skills to touch lives through this ministry. As someone who spent a lot of time in the Middle East and who was impacted by war and challenging living conditions, Melissa can relate to the refugees in ways many people can't. She is a bridge builder between them and the American volunteers while also helping them learn about American culture.

Tami took time off from her studies to spend two years in the Middle East as a student missionary. She worked with a small school dedicated to helping refugee children get an education. It was a new experience for her, going off into the mission field on her own. Tami learned a lot about working with people and cared deeply for the children.

The students noticed that their Adventist teachers always went somewhere on Saturdays. "Where are you going?" they asked.

"We're going to church," Tami and her fellow teacher said.

"Oh, I want to go too!"

"No, you can't. Your parents won't let you."

"Yes, they will!"

"OK, go home and have your parents write this on a piece of paper: *This is my child. My name is so-and-so, and I agree that my child is going with these two teachers to church. Have them sign it.*"

The kids went home and returned with the signed notes. Still, the teachers called to confirm. Sure enough, the parents had given permission. After four months, so many kids were going to church with them that paying for the taxis was getting too expensive. So, they started a branch

Sabbath School at the school. Between 40 and 60 kids attended each Sabbath. Most weren't Christians. After a few weeks, their mothers started coming too.

The kids' eyes sparkled as they listened to one of the teachers bring the Bible stories to life. The kids—and their mothers—couldn't get enough. "It was amazing to watch her tell the stories," Tami says. "The ladies would try to get her to talk quicker because they were so excited about what they were learning about God."

When Tami returned to Southern Adventist University, she completed her nursing program and, in 2018, married Adrian. They plan to head to the mission field once he finishes his surgical residency. "There's no meaning in life unless you're able to live your life for God," Tami says.

As the third generation of missionary nurses in their family, both women have seen how God is able to use those who are willing. They know that God will lead them as He led their grandmother, and like their mom, they know that true joy comes from sharing Jesus with others.

- 1 Evelyn helping evacuate a villager to a hospital using the mission airplane
- 2 First Adventist floating school for the Uros with teacher Carlos Velasquez
- 3 From left, Evelyn, Gladys, Gail, and Wellesley Muir in front of the tents that served as home while the mission airbase in Peru was built. Behind them is Eloina Panduro, whom the Muirs took into their home and helped educate
- 4 The Giebel family, including some of the Nigerian children they took into their home in Ile-Ife
- 5 Going to church in the village outside Ile-Ife, Nigeria
- 6 Gail (left) and Evelyn (front) with Adventist nursing students graduating from Christian Medical College, Vellore, India
- 7 Melissa, Gail, Herb, and Tami with friends in Ile-Ife, Nigeria
- 8 From left, Tami, Evelyn, Gail, and Melissa

Your generous and systematic mission offerings help support the ministry of more than 400 missionary families. Please give at adventistmission.org/donate.





Through Open Doors

This story was written by a frontline worker serving in the Middle East and North Africa Union.

My family and I had just arrived at our new assignment in the Middle East—a new country and a new culture. I felt like a small child as I viewed my surroundings, observing every detail to know what was expected of me.

That’s probably why in those first few days in our new home, I noticed that our neighbor’s door was wide open every time I walked by. Trying not to look too curious, I kept my glances quick. The front room was always filled with people, many more than I would expect to see at any family gathering. Chairs lined the room where folk sat quietly. Portraits of what looked like priests or bishops hung on the walls. I wondered whether our neighbor’s house was actually a church.

By the third day, I gathered my courage to ask another neighbor what was happening. She explained that the father of the family who lived in that home had been a high-ranking priest in their church. He had just passed away, and family and friends were paying their respects. Then, without even a pause, she asked me whether I’d be willing to visit the grieving family.

Just the thought was intimidating! I had yet to learn the social norms and didn’t know what was acceptable. I know that grief is a sensitive cultural

experience, so I also knew I could easily offend. But I couldn’t say no. My wife and two boys promised to support me.

We must have looked a bit unusual as we stood quietly at their open door together; they were surprised that foreigners came to show respect. Graciously they welcomed us in and seemed to appreciate our attempt at a few Arabic words.

That’s when I first met Tony, a man

deeply grieving the loss of his father. With tears in his eyes, he described his father to us as his best friend, his advisor. He seemed to have so much on his heart that I suggested we go out to dinner to continue our visit. This was the beginning.

Each time we met, Tony opened up more and more, sharing how heartbroken he was about losing his father. Each meeting gave us an opportunity to pray together. The prayers led to a deeper spiritual friendship. Tony began asking me questions such as “How can I know the will of God?” “How can I hear His voice?” “How can I deal with pain and suffering?” “Why are you different from other Christians I know?”

I asked Tony whether he would like to study the Bible together, and he accepted! At present, we meet once a week, and we’re learning about the beauty of the Sabbath, how God is able to save us, and what happens when we die.

Tony has accompanied my family twice to church and even brought a friend along the second time. He has begun to keep the Sabbath. Each Friday evening, Tony joins us for sundown worship. He is growing. Please keep him in your prayers.

As Tony and I take this journey together, I’m humbled that God is teaching me perhaps as much as He is teaching Tony. I’m learning that we too easily slip past open doors, feeling too intimidated or inadequate to step inside. I need your prayers too. Please pray that I will walk through every door God opens to meet those who long to find hope in Him.

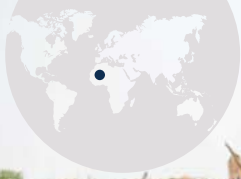


Global Mission is all about reaching the unreached for Jesus. We do this in various ways, including through the service of Global Mission pioneers, urban centers of influence, Waldensian Students, and tentmakers who use their careers to share Christ. Please support Global Mission in the Middle East and North African Union with your prayers and donations at **Global-Mission.org/giving**.



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





Water of Life

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Keyla Valbuena, a general practitioner from Colombia, serves as a volunteer with ADRA in West Africa.

When I accepted a call to work in an African country with ADRA, I had no idea where the nation was located. But it didn't matter. The important thing was that I had a second chance to keep a promise I'd made to God. I had told Him when I graduated from medical school that I would serve Him, and then I got busy with my career and forgot my promise. COVID upended the plans I'd made for myself and gave God an opportunity to reveal the plans He had for me. Now I volunteer at a clinic, helping relieve people from sickness and pain.

When I arrived in West Africa, I immediately faced some challenges. One was the weather. I arrived during the hottest part of the year, which lasts for six months! Every day, the temperature exceeded 100° Fahrenheit. The hot, dry desert air melts even the strongest people. The water from the faucet, heated by the sun, comes out nearly boiling, so a shower brings no relief. As soon as you towel dry, you start sweating. But nighttime is delightful, full of cool, caressing breezes. One of my favorite experiences is sleeping on the roof of the house under the light of the moon and stars.

Another challenge I faced was the language barrier. My patients speak Arabic, French, or one of the local dialects. I'm grateful for Abou, a local volunteer who translates for me. He speaks four dialects plus French and a little English. Initially, he and I communicated in broken English while I learned a little French and a few words of the local dialects. Over time, I've come to know some of my

patients so well that I no longer need a translator to help them.

Every day, I meet people who have numerous needs. Many of them suffer from a variety of ailments and can't afford to pay for medication. Our clinic helps them get the treatment they need and teaches them healthy habits so they can avoid getting sick.

After I'd been at the clinic for about a month, our ADRA team decided to check on several projects in the southern part of the country. We traveled for eight hours along dusty roads that seemed to wind through the middle of nowhere before finally reaching our destination. We thanked God for His traveling mercies, unpacked the vehicle, and settled into our ADRA offices. Then, exhausted from our long drive, we fell asleep.

The next day, we visited a village where ADRA had set up a well to pump water to the community. The chief greeted us exuberantly. We checked the solar panels that power the well; they were functioning fine. A few meters away, we saw a long line of children and women with their yellow jerry cans, waiting their turn to collect the precious liquid.

The people were so excited to have access to clean water. My job was to capture their smiles. Yet a single photo couldn't capture how precious this resource was to them. They told us that previously they had to travel four to six miles (six to ten kilometers) round trip just to get a little water.

The women, who are responsible for obtaining water, demonstrated their joy with dancing and

laughter. The children joined us. “Pose! Pose! Pose!” they said to me. Since I had a camera in my hands, they wanted a picture with the foreigners who had made all this possible.

Many of us take for granted how fortunate we are to have running water in our homes. We aren't mindful of how much we waste because we aren't aware of its vital importance in so many aspects of our lives. For this village, having water was a blessing. It was life. Despite the language barrier, no translation was necessary to understand that they were demonstrating how grateful they were to be able to enjoy having water without having to walk for hours under the scorching sun.

Serving as a volunteer has been an answer to prayer, and it has been one of the greatest blessings of my life to see the joy people express when you do something for them with love.

- 1 The village young people posing for photos with Dr. Keyla
- 2 Dr. Keyla examining a patient in the clinic
- 3 The clinic health team includes four local volunteers; two foreign doctors, including Dr. Keyla, second from left; and a health promoter
- 4 Women and children waiting to fill their yellow jerry cans with water



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



Watch video stories about Adventist Volunteer Service

missionaries at m360.tv/avs.

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Three Angels' Messages Sidewalk Evangelism



Sandra Dombrowski is a freelance writer living in Connecticut, United States. She has a passion for highlighting, promoting, and working in urban ministry.

It's projected that two-thirds of the world's population will live in urban centers by 2050. Across Western Europe, the Americas, Australia, Japan, and much of the Middle East, 80 percent or more of the population live in urban areas right now.*

The fact is that most people on earth live in cities, and the number is growing. Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church is still largely a rural or suburban church with a relatively small presence in the cities, it's working with Holy Spirit power to keep up with population trends and reach people in urban centers for Christ.

In one response to this great need, the world church's Mission to the Cities initiative rolled out the Three Angels' Messages Sidewalk Evangelism pilot project in New York City, United States. The goal is to send 100 theology students, seminary students, future pastors, and other young people as sidewalk evangelists worldwide, using Christ's method to take the three angels' messages to people in large urban centers. Sidewalk evangelism is designed to give future leaders of the Adventist Church a total immersion experience in urban mission that will influence their ministry perspective for years to come.

Angel Smith and Haram Kim, both students at Andrews University Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Michigan, participated in the

Sidewalk Evangelism pilot project. They learned that no matter how large the mission field, Christ's relationship-oriented method still brings true success. This experience stretched their skills, challenged their faith, and opened their eyes to new methods.

Angel was stationed in a bustling residential neighborhood in Queens. As a veteran literature evangelist, she decided the fastest way to find Bible study interests was door-to-door canvassing. After all, she only had one month. But at the end of the day, Angel knew something was missing.

She called her mentor, Pastor Wayne Jamel, to ask for help. He told her to assess her gifts and talents, then pray about what God would have her do. Angel's passion is playing basketball and working out at the gym, so she bought a one-month membership, prayed for guidance, and headed to the gym to mingle with people. "It flipped what ministry really looks like in my mind," Angel said. "I met people just from doing what I love!"

Angel encountered people who never would have invited her in had she knocked on their door. While exercising at the gym, she started a conversation with Tahmina. They decided to work out together and soon were sharing meals, too. Angel learned that Tahmina grew up in a home that didn't discuss beliefs other than their own. She listened sympathetically to Tahmina's stories from her painful past, and they developed a trusting friendship. Because of this comfortable relationship, Angel freely shared Jesus and Bible truth with Tahmina.

Haram was assigned to Bryant Park in Manhattan, a popular public space where thousands of people pass through every day. He considers himself shy and had little evangelistic experience. *How will I reach all these people for Christ?* he wondered. Like Angel, he prayed earnestly, and soon he was striking up conversations with food vendors and playing ping pong with strangers. God also arranged some divine encounters. Once, someone approached him and said, "I like the message on your T-shirt!" Through these encounters, Haram learned about their interests and needs and



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offered them Bible studies. If he sensed they were interested in talking more, he would offer to treat them to his native cuisine.

“Korean food was my secret weapon!” laughs Haram, who quickly learned that sharing a meal is a great way to form friendships.

True to its purpose, the Sidewalk Evangelism project focused Angel and Haram like laser beams on urban mission. Angel returned to the seminary with ideas for future ministry, thinking deeply about what urban mission should look like. “Maybe we should be planting centers of influence first, with exercise and fitness classes, mental health clinics, vegetarian cafes and restaurants, rather than [starting with] churches,” she shared. “Churches will follow.”

Participating in sidewalk evangelism radically changed Haram’s attitude toward cities. “Before sidewalk evangelism, I thought that God didn’t want us in the big cities because of their worldly influences. But how could I meet so many people, [see] so much diversity, and [witness] peoples’ struggles with health issues, relationships, and financial issues, and not feel the love of God for



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the big cities?” he reasoned. “The cities are where the people are, and God loves people!”

Please pray that more people will be filled with God’s deep love for humanity and develop a passion for urban ministry. Ask God to send more sidewalk evangelists who are willing to serve in urban centers around the world.

MISSION to the CITIES

Mission to the Cities is an essential part of the “I Will Go” 2020–2025 strategic focus voted by the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Global Mission supports Mission to the Cities by making disciples among urban, unreached people groups. Your sacrificial giving provides funding to support pioneers and urban centers of influence in starting new groups of believers.

To learn more about how Mission to the Cities is helping to share hope and healing among the urban unreached, visit MissiontotheCities.org. To donate, visit Global-Mission.org/giving.

* Hannah Ritchie and Max Roser, “Urbanization,” Our World in Data, last updated November 2019, <https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization>.

Photos courtesy of Josue Alberto

- 1 Angel plays basketball in Queens, New York City, to reach people for Christ
- 2 Angel gives a parting hug to her new friend Tahmina
- 3 Haram, who once preferred to stay in the country, confidently walks the streets of New York City to reach people for Christ
- 4 Haram in Bryant Park, New York City



A Heart for China

The story of missionaries William and Helen Lee

William Milton Lee (1915–1997), best remembered as the American missionary who could speak the Chinese Mandarin language with a perfect accent, was an evangelist, radio broadcaster, and author of Chinese Voice of Prophecy lessons. He and his wife, Helen (1914–2012), devoted their lives to serving the Chinese people in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia. The following story is adapted from their biographical article in the online Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists. We invite you to visit encyclopedia.adventist.org to enjoy more stories about Adventist missionaries.



Ruth Siew Lan Lo is a retired nursing and music professor living in Australia.

William Milton Lee, known as Milton, was born on March 9, 1915, in Shanghai, China, to pioneer missionaries Frederick and Minnie Lee. Helen Virginia Warren was born on July 22, 1914, in Shanghai, China, to Merritt and Wilma Warren, who were also missionaries to China.

Milton received his primary and secondary education in China, graduating from Far Eastern Academy in 1932 as president of his class. Helen graduated in the same class. After graduating from



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the academy, Milton attended Southern California Junior College in La Sierra for two years, then finished at Pacific Union College with a history major and religion minor in 1936. A year before finishing college, he filled out a questionnaire from the General Conference indicating his willingness for mission service. Before graduation, he had a call from the China Division.

Milton's seven years of friendship with Helen, who had graduated with a nursing degree from Pacific Union College, culminated in their marriage on August 4, 1936, in the United States. Seventeen days later, on August 21, 1936, they sailed for China from San Francisco. Both had a good foundation in the Chinese language and a love for the Chinese people. They arrived in Shanghai in mid-October.

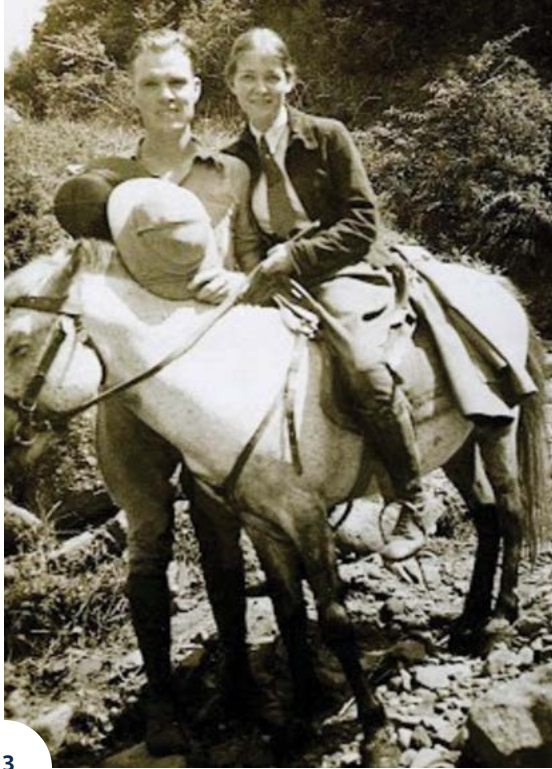
Milton and Helen were blessed with two children: Frederick M. Lee was born in 1939 in Kunming, southwestern China, and Sylvia Lee-Fillman was born in 1944 in Mount Vernon, Ohio, while they were on furlough in the United States.

In China, the Lees served the mountain tribes of Yunnan in the southwestern part of China. They began their pioneer mission work at Mojiang a 10-day journey from the mission headquarters at Kunming. With the help of a group of enthusiastic nationals, Milton kept busy raising up companies of believers while Helen established a clinic in town. Eventually, the Mojiang district grew into a thriving mission field with seven churches, 3,000 worshipers, a church school, and a nurse-operated clinic. Then war with Japan broke out leading up to World War II.

In 1944, the Lees took a furlough back to the United States. Milton studied at the Adventist



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Theological Seminary, after which he was assigned to pastor a five-church district in Ohio because the United States Government would not allow American civilians to return to China during the war. Soon after, Milton requested that the church allow him to go to the Voice of Prophecy in Glendale, California, to see how their successful Bible correspondence school operated. He thought that he could apply that knowledge to his work in China when he returned to the mission field. During his visit to California, he met David Lin, who was writing Chinese Bible lessons prepared for the Chinese mindset.

After World War II, the Lees returned to Shanghai on the first available civilian ship in 1946. There, Milton immediately began his ministry in radio broadcasting, started a Bible correspondence school, and began evangelism under the mentorship of seasoned national evangelists C. I. Meng and David Lin. In an account of their experiences in China, Helen recalled that it was there that something miraculous happened:

“God did an amazing thing for Milton. For eight years, he had been speaking Chinese entirely with the western tones. Almost overnight, he switched to using the northern tone, without the help of any language teacher.”

When W. H. Branson became the president of the China Division, he undertook a massive evangelistic effort with meetings starting on the same day, April 4, 1947, throughout China. Milton was asked to oversee the meetings in Peking (now known as Beijing). He invited his father to join him in a widely advertised “Father-Son Effort.” The campaign attracted considerable interest, and 86 people

美國父子佈道家

國語演講



前任時兆月報主筆
李寶貴牧師



時兆聖經函授學校校長
李副貴牧師

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were baptized in the first baptism. A second series of meetings was planned, but the United States Consulate ordered all Americans to leave Peking due to the advancing Communist army.

With the People's Republic of China firmly established in mainland China, the Lees moved to Hong Kong in 1949. There Milton taught religion at the Clear Water Bay College, which was a merger of the China Training Institute from Chiao Tou Tseng near Nanjing and the local South China Union College. On Sundays, he assisted in the evangelistic meetings at the Bible Auditorium in Kowloon with C. I. Meng, who preached in Mandarin, and Ho Wai Ye, who preached in Cantonese. After the China Training Institute relocated to Chiao Tou Tseng, Milton remained in Hong Kong and devoted most of his time to evangelism and teaching in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

In 1951, the Lees were called to Taiwan, where Milton led out in the evangelism work in the southern part of the island while Helen held talks on health and nutrition. They continued this work until 1959.

Because of his excellent Chinese language skills, Milton was appointed to the position of division evangelist for Chinese-speaking people in the entire Far Eastern Division (currently the Northern Asia-Pacific Division and Southern Asia-Pacific Division) from 1960 to 1966. With his home based in Singapore, he conducted evangelistic efforts in Mandarin throughout Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Milton returned to Taiwan in 1967 to focus on radio evangelism, broadcasting to mainland China and Taiwan and producing hundreds of recorded



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sermons. He also fostered the production of a weekly television program, *The Voice of Signs*. During his furlough year, Milton completed a master's degree from the Adventist Theological Seminary. In total, Milton and Helen Lee served among the Chinese people for 44 years.

In 1980, the Lees retired to Angwin, California, where Milton continued to record sermons in Chinese, which Adventist World Radio broadcast from Guam deep into the China mainland. They also held several full-length Chinese evangelistic efforts in the Far East. After China opened for visitors, the Lees made 14 visits to encourage people there.

Milton had two special burdens in his heart. One was to keep the Chinese *Signs of the Times* from being discontinued, even in times of great financial challenge. The other was to promote an Adventist shortwave radio station in the Far East strong enough to reach all of mainland China. He was gratified to see both goals achieved during his lifetime.

While in Angwin, Helen helped translate 270 Bible stories from *The Bible in Living Sound*. The project was funded by donations from church members of the Loma Linda and San Francisco Chinese Seventh-day Adventist churches. The stories were professionally produced with Chinese actors and sound effects at the National Radio and Television studio in Taiwan. They were broadcast all over eastern Asia by shortwave on Adventist World Radio in Guam.

When Milton developed Parkinson's disease, the Lees moved into a retirement village in Saint Helena, California. On December 4, 1997, his life ended abruptly in a tragic automobile accident, which also left Helen critically injured.

Helen moved to Napa Valley Retirement Estates in Yountville, California, and eventually recovered. She continued to promote the translation of *The Bible in Living Sound* and made three more trips to China. With significantly more donations, more than 110,000 sets of MP3 packages of the recording were distributed in China. One of the highlights of her

retirement years was the report of the gospel work in China presented to nearly 100,000 people at the General Conference Session in Saint Louis, Missouri, when she was 91 years old. Helen died on April 26, 2012, at the age of 97.

Milton and Helen Lee's influence among the Chinese community around the world continues through the hundreds of audio recordings of Milton's radio broadcasts, the print collections of his sermon notes, and the MP3 collection of Helen's dramatized production of *The Bible in Living Sound*.

Photos courtesy of Adventism in China Digital Image Repository

- 1 Milton and Helen Lee in Taiwan, circa 1975
- 2 Helen Lee
- 3 Milton and Helen Lee in Mojiang, Yunnan Province, circa 1937
- 4 Brochure for the joint father and son (Frederick and Milton Lee) evangelistic meetings in Beijing in April 1947
- 5 Helen and Milton Lee dining in Hong Kong with Hing So Lo, Milton's Cantonese translator, and his wife, Rose, shortly before retirement, circa 1979
- 6 Milton Lee

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Mission Accomplished

I first heard about Lee a week before school started from a teacher who works with me at a child development center in Saipan. They told me that he would be in first grade and didn't speak much English. Because he wouldn't be in my preschool class, I didn't think much about him until I met him on the second day of school.

While supervising a group of kids on the playground, I noticed a boy who looked too serious for his age and didn't seem interested in playing outside with his classmates.

"Hi, what's your name?" I asked.

"Lee," he replied with a bored look on his face.

So, *this is him*, I thought. For the rest of that afternoon, I observed that he was a quiet child who kept to himself.

Over the next few days, I made a point to greet him on the playground. I was always met with the same bored look that spoke volumes about his interest in talking to me.

I later learned that Lee was shy and that it took him a while to warm up to people. Additionally, he was still learning English and could communicate only a few words at a time. After several weeks passed, I still wasn't getting a response from him, so I decided to make it my personal mission to befriend him one way or another.

One afternoon, rainy weather forced the children to stay inside the classroom during recess. It was my turn to supervise again, and after taking a quick survey of the room, I noticed that Lee was playing alone with some toys on a table.

Should I approach him? I wondered. I wasn't sure whether he would enjoy my company because he hadn't seemed to in the past. Deciding against my doubts, I chose to sit across from him but was content to let him play by himself. After a few minutes of watching the other kids, I



Samantha, right, with some of her students

decided to join Lee in hopes of finally connecting with him.

At first, he didn't seem very open, but after a few minutes, he accepted me. My new resolve turned out to be a success! We spent the last forty-five minutes of that period together pretending to be dinosaurs, having a dump truck race, and even having a birthday party for the toy soldiers.

The next morning, when I arrived at the playground, Lee's eyes lit up when he saw me walk through the gates. He immediately walked up to me and pointed to himself and then to me.

"You touch," he said while gesturing around the playground. I was shocked. That was the most he had said to me since school started. However, I hadn't comprehended what he was trying to say.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"You touch!" he repeated as he slowly backed away from me. It took me several seconds to understand what he was trying to tell me: he wanted to play tag!

While I chased him around the playground that day, his laughter filled the air and warmed my heart. I was overjoyed that my persistence hadn't been in vain.

Since arriving in Saipan, I've come to realize that doing God's work isn't for the faint of heart. There are many days that I question my purpose on this island and whether God is truly working through me to minister to the children. But as I look back fondly on this experience, I've come to realize that times like this remind me why I chose to serve in the first place.

Adapted with permission from the stories on the Guam-Micronesia Mission's website.



Samantha Wawondatu, a communication graduate from Walla Walla University in Washington, United States, served as an assistant preschool teacher at Saipan Seventh-day Adventist School. Saipan is the largest island of the Northern Mariana Islands, a commonwealth of the United States, located in the western Pacific Ocean.



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



Story by Andrew
McChesney, Office of
Adventist Mission



Animation by
Diogo Godoy

Anita's Sabbath Adventure

"Happy Sabbath!" A voice cut through the darkness.

Anita stirred in her bed.

"Rise and shine, Sunshine!" her father said, poking his head into the door of Anita's bedroom.

It was four o'clock in the morning. Anita's eyes popped open. It was time to get up!

After breakfast, Anita put on her favorite Sabbath dress. Then she slipped her bare feet into flip-flops. Anita gave her Sabbath shoes to her mother to put in a bag. Now she was ready for the trip to church.

Anita climbed into the back seat of the family's white van. Her father slid behind the wheel, and Pastor Kamu sat in the seat beside him. Anita's mother sat with her in the back, and five university students joined them. Her parents traveled to new churches in Indonesia to speak about Jesus nearly every Sabbath.



At five o'clock, the van left the campus of Mount Klabat College (Klabat University), the Seventh-day Adventist school in Indonesia where Anita's father and mother taught as missionaries. The sky was dark, and few cars were on the street. But her father still had to be careful as he drove. He steered around sleeping dogs and sometimes had to stop for cows crossing the road. Anita slept on her mother's lap.

About an hour and a half later, Anita awoke as the van came to a stop. She liked this part of the trip to church. She and the others boarded a small motorboat, and soon they were cruising on the ocean. Anita looked across the dark-blue water. Light was just beginning to crack on the horizon as the sun rose. Warm, humid air rushed against her cheeks as the boat navigated gentle waves.





After an hour, the boat docked on an island, and the group transferred to another boat for a 30-minute ride. Then, they landed on yet another island dotted with coconut trees amid a lush green jungle. Anita was glad that she had worn flip-flops and not her nice Sabbath shoes because she liked feeling the mud between her toes as she walked along the trail.

About 45 minutes later, Anita came to a small village with a Seventh-day Adventist church. Sabbath School would begin soon, and the church was already crowded with people. The people greeted Anita and the others with delight. Grandfathers and grandmothers smiled broadly. Fathers and mothers beamed with joy. They were so happy to welcome the visitors. They knew that it had taken effort to reach their village.



Little children waved excitedly at Anita and clustered around her. One little girl who ran up to Anita pinched the white skin of her arm. A little boy nervously reached out his hand to tug on her red hair. The village children had brown skin and black hair, and this was the first time they had ever seen anyone who looked like Anita.

Inside the church, her mother pulled Anita's Sabbath shoes from the bag, and Anita slipped them on. Now she felt ready to worship God.

Later that afternoon, Anita put her flip-flops back on for the long trip home. She was tired but happy.

Every Sabbath, the long trip to a new church was an adventure. Best of all, every Sabbath, Anita got to worship God. Anita liked being a missionary kid!



This story happened nearly 40 years ago, but missionary kids today still make adventurous trips to church thanks to your mission offerings, which support missionary families all around the world.



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