

# INSIDE

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

Last year, we had the pleasure of joining attendees from around the world for a virtual ASI convention. With dozens of empowering seminars, discussions, Q&As, and more, we learned the importance of the three angels' messages and how they relate to our personal lives. The three angels' messages aren't just a catchy sound bite or magazine title. They are a pillar of the Adventist faith!

This year, we have the privilege of building off last year's theme. This year, we will learn how to take the three angels' messages into all the world. Grasping the importance of the three angels' messages isn't enough. We have a calling to share these messages with the world.

Our prayer is that this magazine will encourage, inspire, and guide you in your calling. The stories included in this edition highlight men and women who are witnessing in their personal lives and sharing the message of Christ with those in their circle of influence. As we learn to embrace and share the three angels' messages this August, we pray that you will soon have many stories to tell of your own—stories of God's leading, providence, and goodness.

May God bless and keep you this year. May He make His face shine upon you and give you peace.



Blessings,  
Kristi Jensen, Editor

# WHAT'S INSIDE?



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# Message from ASI Leadership

by Rodney Bowes

As I contemplate the challenges that face our world, I am encouraged by the hope we have in Jesus Christ. As I think about the difficulties that face our churches and supporting ministries, my heart is cheered by Jesus Christ. He is the answer to all the challenges that Satan can and ever will throw at us.

Our local church has been going through the *Discipleship Handbook* (which I highly recommend every Seventh-day Adventist read several times) and it has been a tremendous blessing to me. Chapter 13, entitled “Tell It to the World,” relates to this year’s ASI theme: Three Angels’ Messages: Into All the World.

The chapter opens with a quick

review of the three angels’ messages found in Revelation 14:6-12. These messages prepare the world for the imminent return of Jesus. Following the review is a quote from the book *Evangelism*. This quote has captivated my attention for over a year now:

“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light-bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention” (*Evangelism*, p. 119).

We are called to be watchmen to a

world that is blind and asleep. We are called to bring the light of the gospel to a world that is perishing in darkness.

*Discipleship Handbook* continues: “As Adventists, we commonly refer to our denomination as a ‘movement,’ a name that aptly describes our work as one that cannot afford to grow stagnant. It must be aggressively advanced in our own neighborhoods and towns, and to the ends of the earth.”

The remainder of the chapter goes on to describe six ministries every believer can be involved in to share this message with everyone in our circle of influence:

1. **Publishing:** All of us can take seeds of gospel truth with us everywhere we go and share tracts, books, and magazines with people we meet in stores, restaurants, gas

stations, etc.

2. **Health:** All of us can learn the basics of the Adventist health message and share it with those around us.
3. **Community service:** All of us can get involved in doing practical, helpful things in our communities.
4. **Education:** All of us can support Adventist education with our prayers, time, and financial contributions.
5. **Foreign missions:** All of us can pray for frontline missionaries and adopt projects to take the gospel to those who have never heard it before.
6. **Media:** All of us can share videos and audio recordings of present truth messages with those around us.

But, it is possible to do these things without a focus on the three angels' messages. The reality is that when any ministry loses its connection with these precious messages of Jesus, they have actually lost their value. Just publishing books, however good they may be, is not our work. Just healing people's physical bodies is not our work. Just teaching our children to read, write, and do arithmetic is not our work.

Our work is to proclaim the three angels' messages with boldness and power! We can only do this when we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Dear friend, let us focus our energies to thoughtfully consider what it means to take the gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of the three angels' messages to all the world!



Rodney Bowes has served as a pastor, evangelist, teacher, and medical missionary trainer. Since 1999 he has served in various ministries with a passion to share the present truth through health evangelism. He currently works as one of the divisional directors for LIGHT for projects in Africa and East Asia. He is also the president of Health Education Resources. He and his wife, Julie, and their baby girl, Sierra Victoria Grace, live in southern California.

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# Spared

by Daniel-Horst Woywod

**T**he year 1988 was very special. In the springtime of my life, I decided to get married. Since my bride came from Latin America, all kinds of preparations had to be made. We would be getting married at the end of the year in 1988. I was ready to travel and start a new part of my life.

I approached Christmas with feelings of excitement, counting every single day. Happiness, love, joy, hope, and thankfulness filled my heart on December 21, 1988, as I drove back home from a company Christmas party. I was ready for a three-month vacation and to become a husband and start a new life with my beloved one.

Amidst those happy feelings that evening, I turned on the radio to listen to the news. All of a sudden, I froze. What? What happened? Did I listen correctly? The radio speaker reported about a horrible air disaster: PANAM flight 103 traveling from Frankfurt via

London Heathrow to New York crashed at GMT 19:02 in a Scottish village called Lockerbie. All passengers died.

I rushed to my desk where I had all my documents from my travel agency. I looked at the details from my tickets and was shocked. Yes, there was PANAM flight 103 that I had booked a couple of months before. No doubt! The copy of the ticket was in my hands. Deep and indescribable feelings flooded over me as I fell to my knees and thanked God for sparing my life. By His providence, I had canceled that ticket a month before, choosing to travel just a week later.

Almost 31 years later, in August of 2019, I had the opportunity to visit Lockerbie, the place of the air disaster. My son accompanied me while visiting the memorial site for the 270 victims. We saw the place where the wing of the airplane had fallen down and destroyed three houses with an exploding fireball. None of the inhab-

itants were found. The cockpit had crashed eight miles away, near an old country church. We talked with several people at Lockerbie's city hall and at the memorial site and saw the list of the names of 270 dead people—names engraved in stones at the cemetery.

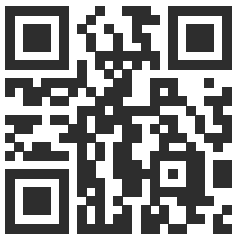
Today this is an unforgettable historical life experience for me and my family. There is a God who cares and rescues us, even in a world of evil. By His providence, a marriage, a new family, and a new generation were born. God rescues and gives comfort to the bereaved. Thanks and praise be to His holy name.



Daniel-Horst Woywod is a retired Project Engineer. Born into a strong Adventist family, he grew up with an interest in Bible prophecy. Daniel has also shared the gospel through Christian art. He is a world traveler and speaks English, Spanish, and Croatian. He married a beautiful Chilean and they have three adult children.

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# Peace: Surpassing Understanding

by Aileen Wood



**D**o any of you have a go-to Bible passage when you need peace? Mine has been Philippians 4:6, 7 (NKJV) for the longest time.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

I can’t begin to recount all the times I have been discouraged and ready to give up, and this passage has given me the strength I needed to keep going. I think of major exams, stressful decisions, precious hopes, and crushing disappointments, all eased by this beautiful promise.

After all, it has the formula for peace right in it: talk to God about it, thank Him for the answer, and then rest in God’s peace. It works every time.

It wasn’t till the last several years, though, that I really understood the full import of this passage. It’s a promise of peace that “surpasses all understanding.” I always thought of it as a peace that was deeper, quieter, more free than anything I could even imagine. And that’s true—God’s peace is all of this and more! But there’s something so much more beautiful to this phrase.

Sometimes, when we ask God for things, He sees that it’s in our best interest to say “No.” At the end of the day, we want Him to be in control, but it can be so painful in the moment. And that’s where this kind of peace comes in. It’s the kind of peace that doesn’t need to understand. It doesn’t need to know why. It trusts that God is bigger than human understanding, and it submits. It rests. And because it allows God to do the understanding, it brings peace. Overflowing, freeing, overwhelming peace.

Getting this part of the promise isn’t

always easy. It means that I can’t claim these words unless I’m willing to let go. I have to accept the fact that I won’t, and can’t, always understand the reasons God allows what He does. It also means trusting Him with all in this life that I can’t untangle.

But really, life is bigger than I can handle myself, and I’m so glad I can trust it to a loving God who knows all and controls all, aren’t you?



Aileen recently graduated from Southern Adventist University with a degree in Business Management, and she works for an Adventist bakery in BC, Canada. She’s married to her best friend, and spends her spare time exploring the outdoors with him or writing for her faith-based blog, [www.thecandidcanadian.com](http://www.thecandidcanadian.com), where she shares encouraging messages from the Word.



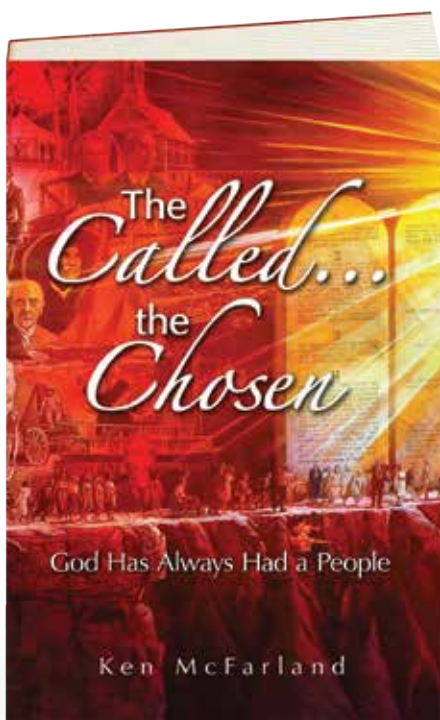
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# “They don’t build churches in North America!”

by *Julia Z. Lee*

**J**uan Sandoval needed to build a church. The question was, “How?”

It was 2018 and he was the brand new pastor of the Ooltewah Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tennessee. The congregation had been meeting in rented spaces for the past decade, and they were ready for a change. So when church leaders interviewed Sandoval for the position of pastor, they asked if he could lead them in constructing a place of worship.

“It was a top priority,” remembers Sandoval. “I really had no experience building a church... I told them I was willing to learn. I was willing to try and do everything, with God’s help, to make it a reality.”

Sandoval got the job, and now it was time to deliver. But where and how to start?

Ten years before, the Ooltewah group grew from the Collegedale Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Church,

deciding to split when they outgrew their meeting space. Over the years, Ooltewah met in rented places and most recently in a Methodist church. The arrangement worked, except that any meetings outside of Sabbath worship had to be held in member homes.

“We came to the conviction that we couldn’t be renting forever. We needed our own building if we wanted to hold evangelistic meetings, Vacation Bible School, socials, and other community outreach programs. And that really helped us realize that we need our own building to really live up to what God is calling us to do,” says Sandoval.

Fortunately, the congregation had managed to purchase a three-acre plot with a house—no small feat in an area with a booming housing market. Initially the plan had been to renovate the home, but the estimates kept ballooning, so the group decided to go the route of new construction. They demolished the structure and made plans for a more affordable warehouse-type

building with metal siding. But the style was a disappointing compromise for a congregation that had been dreaming of a church for so long.

As Sandoval beat the bushes for more ideas, he heard about “Go: Maranatha,” a mini-convention in Chattanooga, just a few miles from Ooltewah. He didn’t pay it much attention, until someone insisted that he attend.

“One of the church members elbowed me and was [like], ‘Pastor, what if we ask Maranatha if they could build a church?’” says Sandoval. “My first reaction was, ‘That’s only overseas in third-world countries. They don’t build churches in North America! That’s not a viable option.’”

Sandoval decided to go to the event anyway. There, he learned a great deal about Maranatha’s work around the world. He was also surprised to learn that Maranatha did plenty of projects in North America—including building churches in the United States.

After the program, Sandoval met

with staff from the Maranatha projects department. They told him about Maranatha's standard church design for North America, a blueprint for a simple and cost-effective building. Designed for smaller congregations, the plan includes a sanctuary, a fellowship hall and kitchen, Sabbath School classrooms, bathrooms, an audiovisual room, and an office. The design allows congregations to save architect fees and also have the option to use Maranatha expertise and volunteers for part of the construction, which provides generous savings.

Sandoval was delighted. He went home and jumped on Maranatha's website. "We ended up filling [out] their application, running it through our conference, and once they approved it, we sent it all in and that got the ball rolling."

Over the next couple years, Sandoval worked closely with Maranatha's team to get the project off the ground. There were several delays due to budgets, design adjustments, and other complications with new construction. Throughout the process Sandoval learned a lot.

"If you're considering Maranatha to help you, you're going to notice that this is not their first rodeo. They're very rich in experience, and they'll walk you through the process," he says. "They were very kind and patient in answering my questions."

In late 2020, Ooltewah finally broke ground on their church. In October of that year, a team of Maranatha volunteers arrived to help with framing, wood siding, roofing, window installation, and rough electrical and plumbing work.

"I feel so blessed to have volunteers from all over the country. You know, when the first few volunteers from Maranatha arrived, it started to actually hit me. I started to actually process it,"

says Sandoval. "And I was so touched when they asked me, 'How do you feel, pastor?' And I said, 'I feel like we're a family.' And their response was 'That's right. We're a family in Christ, and we're here to help you.' That melted my heart, and I realized that all the conversations we had had prior were now going to be a reality."

Roger Hatch, a longtime Maranatha volunteer and board member, has been serving as the construction superintendent for the Ooltewah project and worked with Sandoval during the planning phases. "I think the pastor is pretty amazed at what goes on, how fast it's going up. He's very appreciative of what we have accomplished in the past week. I think that this church will absolutely grow, leaps and bounds, once we get the doors open."

Already, the congregation is planning multiple outreach events where the church will be the headquarters. From food banks to tutoring courses for the Hispanic community to educational classes, the church will likely be used almost daily.

There's still a long way to go before the 87-member congregation can begin meeting under their own roof. Building a 5,000-square-foot church is no easy task and as with any major construction project, there will likely be more hurdles along the way. But Sandoval is undeterred.

"This process

has taught me a lot about faith in the sense that there were many days when I lacked faith, questioning whether this project was ever going to become a reality. And I saw how God would allow certain people and certain ministries, like Maranatha and our conference administrators, the local church, and also other investors [to join]...our building project," says Sandoval. "It has taught me to trust God in the process but to also trust other people, other ministries."



Julie Z. Lee is vice president of marketing at Maranatha Volunteers International, where she has worked for 14 years. She loves sharing the stories of how communities are being changed in profound ways through service in the name of Jesus Christ.

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# Ministering in a War Zone

by *Iosif Sacuiu*

**K**lay's country, Myanmar, has witnessed more than 72 years of ethnic cleansing, rape, torture, murder, high-rank corruption, and forced displacement of civilians. Klay comes from one of the thousands of displaced families and has a fervent desire to go back and minister to his people—the Karen.

"I remember when I was nine years old, I became a Buddhist monk. I desired to know and do what is right so I could be good and worthy of heaven. At thirteen, I attended a Seventh-day Adventist high school, and I was convinced that there is truth in Adventism. I wondered how I should tell my father that I had become a Christian." When Klay's father found out, he grabbed a big knife in rage. "I thought I might die for Jesus at that time, but instead of coming toward me, he struck the pillars of the house in anger."

Despite the opposition he faced for

following Jesus, for Klay there was no turning back. After high school he volunteered for three years as a missionary teacher, praying continually that God would provide him an opportunity for further education. He almost gave up the idea, until one day a friend sent him a link to the Hartland College website. Then God worked miracles to answer Klay's prayers. Getting his citizenship and applying for a passport could have cost Klay his life, for he had to transit through enemy territory under cover of darkness during a time of intense war. But by God's grace, Klay was able to come to the US.

"My sponsors [who were missionaries themselves] struggled to raise funds for my tuition, and were only able to cover my first year. So, with much prayer, I applied to the Missionary Training Fund program. This enabled me to continue my studies."

Klay is pursuing a health ministry course enriched by Bible classes so

he can bring a wholesome education to the Karen people. "I want to open a school to help our church members fall in love with the Savior and better understand our beliefs."

To Missionary Training Fund donors, Klay says, "You are the answer to my prayers." Because of your gifts, many people will be reached by Klay's faithful ministry. He is eager to go back and share Jesus in that land of death and darkness.



Iosif Sacuiu is pursuing a major in Christian Elementary Education at Hartland College.

Originally from Romania, he became a Seventh-day Adventist at the age of 15. His desire is to become a career missionary with a focus on ministering to the orphans and neglected.



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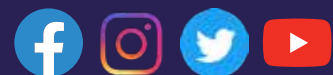
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# Promoting Entrepreneurship On College Campuses

by Karla Guzman



**T**he journey of entrepreneurship can be very exciting but also challenging, especially for college students who are lacking guidance, experience, and startup capital.

## What is LaunchU?

LaunchU is the culmination of a year-long process that encourages Seventh-day Adventist students to collaborate with peers and professors at their schools to start a business or nonprofit.

Throughout the school year, students and faculty work together to create a viable business plan for their startup and finally pitch it in front of a judge panel to win funding and mentorship.

The LaunchU Program empowers the collegiate community as it:

- Strengthens connections between students, faculty and business leaders,
- Promotes student entrepreneurship in the SDA community,
- Collaborates with all branches in the collegiate community and business community to create great things.

Oakwood University (OU), like many others, has largely benefited from the LaunchU program. Julian Waddell, business professor at OU, shares, “The biggest hurdle that student entrepreneurs encounter is access to seed capital and because of that, startup ventures aren’t pursued as regularly as they should be within a safe academic environment. Thanks to LaunchU, we have been able to develop our entrepreneurial ecosystem.”

This year, CoLab INC is excited to

keep promoting entrepreneurship in various SDA schools.

## Which Schools are Participating in 2022?

CoLab INC is hosting LaunchU Collegiate Pitch Events, at the following schools:

- Walla Walla University
- Pacific Union College
- Southern Adventist University
- Oakwood University
- Southwestern Adventist University

Check out our events calendar for specific LaunchU final dates and come watch students pitch their ideas for a chance of winning a share of \$10K.

## How Can Students Apply?

The program is open to any full-time undergrad students at any of the par-

ticipating schools.

It's easy for students to submit their business or nonprofit idea:

1. Submit any business or nonprofit idea by January 31st, 2022.
2. Create a business plan and pitch deck.
3. Pitch the idea before a judges panel at a live Final Pitch Competition.

### What Can Students Win?

This year we will be giving away a share of \$10,000 at each school, plus mentorship and admission to our Moxie Business Summit & Pitch Event\*:

- 1st- Place: \$5,000, 5 hours of professional mentorship and admission to pitch at CoLab INC Moxie Business Summit
- 2nd- Place: \$3,000 and 5 hours of mentorship
- 3rd- Place: \$2,000

### How Can I Get Involved?

If you're interested in helping students launch their business or nonprofit idea, we would love your help! Here are the three ways you can get involved:

It's easy for students to submit their business or nonprofit idea:

1. **Judge:** Become a LaunchU judge at one of our participating Seventh-day Adventist schools.
2. **Mentor:** Become a mentor to help guide young entrepreneurs in developing and scaling their businesses.
3. **Sponsorship:** Become a LaunchU sponsor to support entrepreneurship on Seventh-day Adventist Campuses.

### About CoLab INC

We believe launching an idea should be easier, which is why we facilitate

workshops, pitch events, and one-on-one coaching sessions to help entrepreneurs and nonprofit founders to develop and scale their ideas.

We're entrepreneurs too! Our nonprofit is funded by successful industry leaders who are passionate about giving back by helping you achieve your goals. Our board members, LaunchU judges, and advisory board members have launched businesses from a wide range of industries. They want to help you succeed with your business or nonprofit.

Get involved today by visiting [colabinc.org](http://colabinc.org)!



Karla Guzman is the LaunchU Event Coordinator. Karla is a Walla Walla University alumna, with a degree in International Development. She is passionate about helping young entrepreneurs connect with business professionals.



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# What God Does With “Impossible”

by Kayla Reay

**T**he story of Madison College is inspiring. It began with two young men, Edward Sutherland and Percy Magan, who were fully dedicated to doing God’s will. They came together as teachers who felt called to set up a school that followed the principles of true education. So they set out to look for where it would be established.

The two men found a property, but it was a rocky and barren plain. When Ellen White told them this would be the site for a training school for young people, that it would be known across the country, and that its effects would be worldwide, the two men sat on a rock and cried. The place looked hopeless, but God had a plan and a promise to fulfill, and these men were willing to be the workers.

At the beginning of 2020, our group of young people had plans for the future. We had just begun a new ministry, Madison Missions, and found a beautiful property in Victoria, Aus-

tralia. We opened up a health retreat with a five-year plan to finally see the establishment of a training school after the Madison order in our country.

The retreat was open for a month when the first round of Covid-19 restrictions hit Australia, forcing us to close. When we first prayed and decided to take on the property and vision, it already seemed impossible, but now having to close just after taking over—it felt like our time to sit down and cry at how hopeless the situation looked.

“When God opens the way for the accomplishment of a certain work and gives assurance of success, the chosen instrumentality must do all in his power to bring about the promised result. In proportion to the enthusiasm and perseverance with which the work is carried forward will be the success given” (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 263).

We had to come up with a solution. We started speeding up our five-year plan: instead of launching industries in a couple of years’ time, we began a week after closing the health retreat.

With so many young people on the property, each with separate talents, passions, and personalities, we branched out into multiple businesses. We opened Beehive Community Services, where we began our first deliveries of firewood and plant-based meals on April 19. The meals expanded to include pies, baked goods, and fresh fruits and veggies—many grown on our onsite market garden. Most recently, we started Beehive Tree Services with a team of three experienced arborists, and our plans to grow and expand are not yet complete.

We also considered the model of our health retreat. The next unexpected step was the change from the “normal” health retreats that have been running in Australia to a new model pointing directly to our Maker and Healer, Christ.

When restrictions were lifted, we opened up our retreat, The Maker Heals, where we received guests, Adventists and non-Adventists, pointing them toward the true Healer. It was a blessing to see each guest gain a



stronger relationship with God while also experiencing the physical benefits promised us in His Word.

We had one week with the guests before the restrictions hit again, and harder. We had to close once more.

Despite the challenges and setbacks Satan has continued to put in our path, and how impossible our mission seems at times, God's promises have never seemed so real. God has brought us through each time, and His Word continues to sustain us.

We've begun filming for an online health retreat that has the potential to reach around the world. The businesses continue to grow and expand with God's blessing and we are still on our path to set up a training school here in Australia.

From the outside, what we've taken on as a team looks and seems impossible, and by earthly standards, it is. If

we didn't have the promises of God and the assurance that He will accomplish this work for us, none of us would be standing where we are today. God has led each of us here to this property for this time and mission. We're a part of His plan, and the excitement of how He will continue to guide us is unexplainable!

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and his teaching in our past history" (*Life Sketches*, p. 196).

Our vision for Australia is to train and send young self-supporting missionaries into God's vineyard. There has been incredible progress this year. So many prayers have been answered! But this is a pioneering work, and there's still much to be done. We appreciate your prayers and help in any way. Right now, we are leasing a property (Abide Wellness Retreat) which was

built for the very purpose of Adventist mission. Our goal is to enter a purchase contract by raising \$1 million. By God's grace, we will keep this property in the hands of God's people where it may be a light on a hill that cannot be hidden!

You can find out more about our team and vision by checking out our website, [www.madison.org.au](http://www.madison.org.au), and viewing our new documentary, *Madison Story—A Journey from Past to Present*, which you can find on the Eastward Missions YouTube channel.



Kayla Reay is currently a full-time volunteer for Madison Missions. She spends her time at her home in Victoria, Australia, when she's not around the country traveling with the ministry's canvassing team. Her jobs usually include working in media, canvassing, and cooking.

**"I was in prison, and you visited me." –Matthew 25:36**

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# Robbers!

by Abigail Duman

**K**nown for their cruelty and fear-producing tactics, robbers are a constant threat for people in Congo's rural communities. While Congolese missionary for Train Them 2 Fish, Thomas Ongasa, understood the risk in his humble country home, he didn't expect to be paid a visit one night as he and his family slept.

"Don't move," the robber's voice cut through the darkness like a knife. Machetes gleamed in the moonlight as strange men in masks flooded the room. "Let's kill him and then take everything he has."

Ongasa awoke to a living nightmare in his room when he heard the staccato command of the ringleader. As he quickly rose in his bed, he felt the sting of machete blades fall across his arms and knew that heavenly intervention was his only hope for survival.

Suddenly, a commanding voice broke into the murderous plans. "Do not lay a hand on him," a tall man in a mask stepped forward.

"We have killed many others," the ringleader sneered. "We will do the same to him."

Another robber lunged toward the bed with his machete in hand, but before he could hurt God's missionary, the tall stranger used his powerful arms to shove the would-be murderer out of the way. "You will not kill him," he asserted.

Ongasa watched as an argument ensued among the robbers. The ringleader's shoulders finally slumped in defeat. One by one the evil men slunk from the room, followed by the tall man in disguise. While the robbers ransacked the house, the tall stranger's firm command was carried out. No one touched Ongasa or his family.

"He didn't act like a robber. And while most Congolese aren't very tall, the man who intervened stood head and shoulders above the others," Ongasa recalls. "I believe God sent His angel to give me more time on this earth. And as long as God sustains me with life, I will be His faithful witness."

The robbers stole everything of value they could find. It took time for Ongasa to recover financially from their visit, especially when he moved his family to a safer (but also more expensive) area. But he praises God for the extra time he has been given to lead people

to Christ. Today he continues to train and mentor Bible workers and church planters and coordinate free medical outreach to needy communities. He has a special burden for Congo's needy children and single mothers. As a result, thousands have come to know Jesus as their personal Savior and experienced freedom from the oppression of spiritual darkness. While this is encouraging, there are millions remaining who haven't yet heard the gospel message.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support for Pastor Ongasa. Your support enables him to continue to minister full-time in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a leader for Train Them 2 Fish International on the front lines of the gospel field.



Abigail is a freelance author and copyeditor living in West Virginia with her husband and their two sons. She spent five months in DRC where she first met Pastor Ongasa and heard his powerful testimony. Today, she continues to support the gospel work in this spiritually-dark country.

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# Employed by God

by Karen M. Phillips

Unemployment is a real stress factor for most people. Due to COVID-19, the number of Americans who lost their jobs in 2020 swelled to more than 14 million. Unemployment shot up from 3.8% in February to 13% in May, according to the Pew Research Center. Most Americans cannot afford to live on one income, and losing one's job can be catastrophic and unnerving.

I lost my job even before COVID-19 became an issue. In October 2019, the company I was working for told me they were doing a reorganization and no longer would be employing an HR Manager. They stated that these duties would be outsourced. However, the week before, my boss had given me a written warning on some truly made-up issues. These were things we could have easily discussed. I supposed she was trying to cover her bases. To top it off,

the contractor she hired was a friend of hers. Needless to say, I was very upset. This was not the first time I had lost a job due to "reorganization." However, my husband had a good-paying job and this helped with the stress level moving forward.

My newfound down time gave me an opportunity to take care of some medical issues, clean out my storage room and closets, and learn some new vegan recipes. Boredom and isolation began to set in as I was used to a very busy schedule. Every day, I did my hour of Bible study and prayer, pleading with the Lord to give me a "calling." I'd go on my three-mile walks and discuss with Him that I didn't want to work in the secular world anymore and that I wanted a "calling."

Nothing happened. Months passed and I continued my discussion with the Lord. The angry thoughts about losing my job kept creeping in. I didn't know what to do with them but knew they

were only making me bitter. The Lord instructed me to pray for my boss every time one of those negative thoughts entered my mind. Her salvation was much more important to focus on than the wrong she had done to me. As Matthew 5:44 tells us:

"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

Not only did I pray for her, I started praying for everyone who had been in the office with me. I also kept praying for God to use me, whether in small or big ways. I was His vessel.

The first part of July, my husband and I went to a camp meeting at Red River Outpost Center near Stanton, Kentucky. This was a double treat since our son also worked there. One of the speakers was Gabriel McClover. He and his wife, Vonnell, along with

their five children, own a vegan restaurant called "The Vineyard" just north of Atlanta. He spoke about his passion to spread the health message through a community outreach program called the "10-Day Challenge." That weekend, Gabriel and Vonnell fed some of their wonderful food to 200 camp meeting attendees. I was privileged to help them serve on Sabbath. Little did I know I would be working with them again very soon.

A few weeks later, the McClovers were asked to come to the Black Hills Health and Wellness Center (BHHWC) near Rapid City, South Dakota, to train the staff on the 10-Day Challenge and sign up participants from the community. They also planned to offer 2-Day detoxes and a free cooking school. Through my son, Robert, and a series of God-ordained circumstances, I found out they needed volunteers to help out

with this community outreach.

I knew this was my calling. I answered with a quick "YES," and was on the road the next day for the 8 ½ hour trip to BHHWC. With this being my first-ever mission trip, I wasn't sure what to expect.

I quickly discovered that God had sent me to a true sanctuary. The setting of the center was breathtakingly beautiful. There were lofty red-soiled cliffs, babbling brooks, scenic overviews, and flourishing houses and farms along dirt-covered roads. We enjoyed early morning walks in the cool air.

However, the days in the commercial kitchen were long. They varied from 8-9 hours to one that was almost 15 hours. Our group shared the responsibilities of washing, peeling, grating, blending, chopping, seasoning, cooking, baking, etc. Whatever Vonnell

needed us to get done, we got done.

We laughed and sang our way through sweet potatoes, breads, salads, soups, grains, and puddings. I'm amazed we didn't wear out the commercial dishwasher with the amount of dirty dishes we accumulated! We were even able to help the BHHWC cooks prepare food for 60 Maranatha volunteers who were to arrive the day after the Challenge ended.

Liz was one of the participants who signed up for the detox and the 10-Day Challenge. Last year, she had a double mastectomy and hysterectomy along with chemo treatments. She was ready to get her life back on track and restore her energy. It was a joy holding the cooking class in her beautiful home and teaching her that vegan food is not hard to prepare. She was all smiles when we left.

As a treat one day, we took a break

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from work and were chauffeured by a BHHWC staff member to do some sight-seeing. I had been to Mt. Rushmore before as a child, but not Crazy Horse. A Sabbath afternoon drive through Custer State Park was also fun.

Here are some of the things I learned:

- God wants to use us and always hears our prayers when we say, "Here am I, Lord—use me."
- He equips us for the mission.
- The days are long and exhausting but the Lord sustains us.
- People you meet are forever treasures.
- Things don't always go as planned.
- Sometimes there are disappointments, but God does not send us on a mission to fail.
- There are little surprises that are welcomed and unexpected.
- His angels are watching over us as we travel to do His work.

- We never go home unchanged.

In *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, Ellen White writes the following:

"We must educate, educate, educate, pleasantly and intelligently. We must preach the truth, pray the truth, and live the truth, bringing it, with its gracious, health-giving influences within the reach of those who know it not. As the sick are brought into touch with the Life-giver, their faculties of mind and body will be renewed" (p. 262).

I didn't go home unchanged. During that two-week period, I knew the Lord had a purpose for me learning the things I did at BHHWC. I've come back with a renewed interest in health ministry. I'm offering the 2-Day Detox to my friends and family and also reaching out to my neighborhood community to conduct vegan cooking classes. When the body is healthy and the mind

is cleared, the voice of the Holy Spirit can be better heard and understood.

So here are my challenge questions: Are you willing to be employed by the Lord? Are you praying for Him to use you? I pray you will answer "YES," as I did, and GO.



Karen Phillips works full-time for the Lord. She is a church clerk, the ASI Mid-America VP of Communications, a HeReturns staff member, does volunteer HR work for FITT Challenge ministry, and enjoys vegan cooking. She and her husband have four adult children and three grandchildren.

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# Generations of Love: An International Children's Care Story

by Makala James

In ministry, every act of giving and service is like the planting of a seed. This is especially evident in orphan care. It can be tempting to think that a small act of kindness yields a small impact. Yet, when considering that your kindness may inspire others to commit acts of love, then your impact grows exponentially. When you plant the seed of a zucchini squash, multiple zucchini will grow from one seed! Giving to help an orphan child is just like that.

Second Corinthians 9:10 says, "He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness."

Thanks to the support of caring people just like you, International Children's Care (ICC) exists to help orphan children, an act of love that makes a BIG difference. The mission of ICC is to provide orphaned and abandoned children with the loving care they need

to heal physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Children are placed in family homes with a mom and dad, where they can learn about Jesus and receive the love and special care they need.

The act of supporting an orphan child will provide blessings for generations to come. There is no better example of this than in the life of a woman named Nadi.

## **Longing for Family**

A child of war, Nadi never knew her parents. They died in a rebel insurrection when she was only six months old. During the 1990s and early 2000s, war tormented the Democratic Republic of Congo. Many children received an inheritance of trauma from the ongoing insurgent warfare. Nadi felt this trauma deeply. She longed for what she had never known: a family.

A long period of suffering marked Nadi's earliest memories. She and sixteen other orphans were placed into

the care of nuns. The nuns did not have the resources to care for those suffering children. They desperately needed help. The children needed care that only loving parents could provide.

As the war continued, it became increasingly dangerous to travel. Word spread of a place where orphans could receive care, but the trip would be difficult. Nadi gathered her belongings, which all fit into one small plastic bag. She only owned a single set of clothes. The orphans traveled the war-torn country, first to Goma, and then to one of the great lakes of Africa, Lake Kivu.

On the island of Idjwi in the middle of that lake, a special spot of land had been purchased for children. No war or fighting had ever taken place on that island. There, a new Children's Village would be built to care for orphans just like Nadi.

Nadi was one of the first children to live at Patmos Children's Village, the ICC location in D.R. Congo. Houses

were built where mothers and fathers could care for children as a loving family. Finally, Nadi experienced the family life she had always longed for.

As Nadi grew up, many of her ICC siblings attended college or work training, but nothing seemed to be a good fit for her. One thing was certain, though, Nadi always enjoyed helping other children in the home.

Years passed, and Nadi got married. Then, in 2013, Nadi realized her calling. She and her husband decided to become house parents at Patmos Children’s Village. Now, Nadi is a mother to the motherless, providing love and care to children in desperate need of a family.

**Your Generational Impact**

“Since I started working, I have been so happy to care for children,” says Nadi. “I know that I am reciprocating



the kindness I was treated with since childhood. I remain thankful to the sponsors who helped me up to maturity. You have been my savior as Jesus has been Savior to all of us. My thanks go straight to God for His protection and care.”

Your gifts of love have a generational impact on God’s children. Learn more about ICC by visiting [InternationalChildrensCare.org](http://InternationalChildrensCare.org) or calling 800-422-7729.



Makala James is the Southwest Regional Representative of International Children’s Care.

She lives in Texas with her husband, Denny James, and also serves as the ASI Southwest VP of Communication. Makala’s articles can also be found in the Southwestern Union Record, Texas Conference *Flame*, and other local publications.

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# Every Piece a Bullet

by Meiring Pretorius

Rwanda is still busy healing from its deep and sensitive scar. The horror of the satanic killings that began on the morning of April 7, 1994 is still fresh in the minds of survivors. More than one million victims lost their lives in the most inhumane and brutal genocide.

As I was reading some of the stories of forgiveness in the Genocide Memorial Museum, I realized that only God's grace can bring true healing and reconciliation. It is times like these which create fertile soil for God's forgiveness, acceptance, and grace.

Rwanda is open for the everlasting gospel. The evidence was seen during Ted Wilson's evangelistic campaigns of 2016, where 105,000 people responded to the gospel and were baptized. This

mass baptism shook Rwanda. Everyone was astonished at the results.

However, even though there was success during the evangelistic campaigns, people still needed to be grounded in their relationship with the Saviour. Unfortunately, many converts fell away and their faith grew cold. A change in strategy was needed. When the first container of Bible lessons from Light Bearers arrived, the Rwanda Union Mission put another strategy in place.

The Rwanda Union Mission has embraced the TMI (Total Member Involvement) initiative from the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and uses the Bible lessons as the basis for accomplishing this goal. The Bible lessons are now used as the primary evangelistic tool. The union decided that every member

should reach one soul by using the lessons. This has proven to be highly effective. The Rwanda Union Adventist membership stands at 979,902. The goal is to increase the membership to one million.

The Rwanda Union Mission sees the lasting effect and success of these lessons and now uses them in all public evangelism programs. The Bible lessons help establish new members in their faith and relationship with God. The union plans to use the Bible lessons in accordance with Christ's method of winning souls.

"Every piece of literature is like a bullet in the gun of a good soldier. He cannot lose bullets and they must hit the hearts of souls," says the evangelism director as he trains lay members in using the Bible lessons

effectively. “Mingle with people. Create friendships. Supply their needs. Win their confidence,” he believes is God’s mandate to every member. Only the method of Jesus will bring true success in reaching souls. As members follow this method and win the confidence of their friends, they then introduce the Bible lessons. The success can be clearly seen in the number of recent baptisms: 61,381 souls have embraced the truth of Jesus.

Sabbath morning, while visiting Rwanda, the evangelism director took me to one of the baptisms in the North Rwanda Conference. It was a high and joyful Sabbath as we witnessed 632 souls going into the watery grave, all the result of the Bible lessons. The conference plans to continue using Light Bearers’ materials as the foundation for all soul-winning efforts. Not only are the lessons touching hearts for eternity,

they also provide healing for the many broken and bruised hearts of those who survived the genocide. Spiritual bullets are penetrating hearts for Christ in Rwanda.



Meiring works on the ground where Light Bearers literature is sent and writes regular reports on the progress of the literature work in these areas.



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One lady who was in prison told us that the homemade “Thinking of You” card meant more to her than the whole gift package because she had five children at home.

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