



YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

2018 • **QUARTER 2** • NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION



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On the Cover: Ida Elizabeth Davis tried to leave a meeting funded by a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, but a church member stopped her. Read her story on page 22.

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 = stories of special interest to teenagers



This quarter we feature the North American Division, which oversees the Seventh-day Adventist Church's work in the United States, Canada, the French possessions of St. Pierre and Miquelon, the British overseas territory of Bermuda, the U.S. territories of Guam, Wake Island, and Northern Mariana Islands in the Pacific Ocean, and three nearby states in free association with the United States—Palau, the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. The region is home to 360 million people, including 1.2 million Adventists. That's a ratio of one Adventist for nearly 300 people.

This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath projects are in the U.S. state of Arizona, in the Canadian province of Alberta, and on Ebeye Island in the Marshall Islands, and they share one thing: Adventist education.

In Arizona, the funds will help construct a new gym and cafeteria—the New Life Center—at Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School. I visited the campus of the 72-year-old school and saw that the current gym is falling apart, with an uneven floor and insulation sticking out the

ceiling. A student who was baptized at the school told me that he worried that the dilapidated building cast his new faith in a poor light among the many Native American families who attend community events there.

In Alberta, the Mamawi Atosketan Native School will receive funds to expand its educational program, particularly among high school students.

On Ebeye Island, the Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School will carry out urgent repairs on its three-story building. Walls are crumbling after being built with cement mixed with saltwater during a serious drought in 1987. The governments of the Marshall Islands and Japan have contributed generously toward the repairs, and the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help finish the work.

Special Features

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

This quarterly contains just a sample of the latest mission stories from the North American Division. Find more stories at bit.ly/nad-archive. You can always reach me at mcchesneya@gc.adventist.org.

Thank you for encouraging church members to be mission-minded!

Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will assist:

- Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School, Arizona, United States
- Mamawi Atosketan Native School, Alberta, Canada
- Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School, Ebeye Island, Marshall Islands

Praying for a Naughty Boy

MARSHALL ISLANDS | April 7

Elisa Albertsen, 21



Little Lomon didn't wear his school uniform on his first day of classes at Ebeye [pronounced: EE-by] Seventh-day Adventist School in the Marshall Islands.

On the second day, the five-year-old boy arrived for kindergarten wearing the required black slacks and gray polo shirt. But he struggled to sit still and listen to the teacher, Elisa Albertsen, a young missionary from the U.S. state of Alaska. He wanted to be out in the street, playing with friends who weren't in school yet.

Then Lomon began to pinch and punch the other children.

Elisa gave him a time out, seating him away from the other children. But Lomon refused to calm down. Instead, he started howling like a wolf. "Ooooooo!" he howled. "Oo-oo-oo-oooooo!"

Elisa took Lomon to the principal, but his behavior remained the same. Making

matters worse, many of the other 19 children in the kindergarten class also were having difficulty adapting to school. They bit and scratched each other and the teacher. One day, all 20 children made a dash for the classroom's glassless windows, hoping to jump out and flee into the street. Elisa somehow stopped them.

But Lomon represented the biggest challenge.

Elisa spoke with Lomon's aunt. She learned that the boy's young mother and alcoholic father lived on another Pacific island, so he was staying with his aunt and uncle on Ebeye, an island where more than 12,000 people live on just 80 acres (32 hectares) of land.

Elisa's heart went out to Lomon. "He didn't have the best home life, and it was his first time in school," she said. "I realized that he needed a lot of love and attention."

Then Elisa noticed that Lomon was coming to school with bruises on his body. His cousin showed up with a black eye. Elisa realized that something was going on in their home, and she spoke with the principal. But there was little that they could do in a culture where guardians and children often dismiss bruises as accidents and child protective services are nonexistent.

Elisa decided to stop telling Lomon's family about his misbehavior and to pray instead.

"I went home one day in tears and

asked God, “What am I supposed to do with him? I want him to be successful this school year,” she said.

She felt that a spiritual battle was raging in her classroom even though the children were only preschoolers.

“This is the age when they start to learn good and bad habits,” she said. “This is where Satan wants to get kids at a young age so he can disrupt their relationship with Jesus.”

Elisa felt impressed to pray daily—not only for Lomon and her difficulties in the classroom, but also for each student, each student’s family, and for God to fill the classroom atmosphere with His love. She compiled a list of names and prayed for each student and family member by name every morning and evening.

“I was very determined that my classroom was going to change,” Elisa said.

At school, Elisa began to keep Lomon after class as punishment when he was disobedient, and she prayed with him every time. Lomon didn’t know how to pray, so she taught him how.

“Dear Heavenly Father,” the boy said, repeating after Elisa. “Thank you for this day. Thank you for my food. I am sorry for disrupting class today and hurting a classmate. Please forgive me and help me to try harder to listen and be kind tomorrow.”

Mission Post

- The Marshall Islands is an island nation in the central Pacific Ocean. The Republic of the Marshall Islands, as the country is officially known, is located halfway between Hawaii and Australia.
- The Marshall Islands has two official languages: Marshallese and English.

One day while praying with Lomon, the boy said, “Miss, Miss, can I please push in all the chairs?” He wanted to help his teacher for the first time!

Within two weeks of starting the prayer list, Elisa noticed a major difference in the classroom.

Lomon began to clean up when other children made a mess. He tried to stop arguments by standing between the feuding children and asking them to hug.

The other children also started to act kinder. They learned how to say “sorry” and “please forgive me.” Those who were wronged learned to reply, “I forgive you,” and offer a hug. God’s love filled the classroom, Elisa said.

Teachers aren’t supposed to have favorites, but Elisa said Lomon became especially dear to her. “He was just a hurting child who wanted to be loved and to be in a stable environment,” said Elisa, who is 21 years old.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School make urgently needed repairs to its classrooms so it can continue to teach children like Lomon about our loving heavenly Father. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌐

The boy’s name has been changed. Lomon is a Marshallese boy’s name meaning “rough waters.”

By Andrew McChesney

Watch Elisa talk about her joy journal at the link: bit.ly/Elisa-Albertsen

Read about the joy journal on the website of Adventist Mission: bit.ly/ebeye-joy-journal

Dance Hall Becomes School

MARSHALL ISLANDS | April 14

Nojab Lemari, 66



Ask a woman to share this first-person account.

No Seventh-day Adventists lived on Ebeye [pronounced: EE-by] Island when the Adventist Church signed a U.S. government contract to oversee its sole hospital in 1980.

At the time, Ebeye, a speck of land with 12,000 people in the Pacific Ocean, was part of the U.S. territory of Micronesia, and I worked at the hospital as a nurse. My husband, Rellong, was Ebeye's police chief, and we wielded some clout on the island as a main tribal landowner.

The Adventist Church, which ran the hospital for four years, brought in a team of top administrators, doctors, and nurses. The new head nurse, Jerry Whitland, invited my husband and me to take Bible studies. We agreed, and he started coming to our home every evening.

Around that time, my cousin Tommy Kilma, an Adventist pastor, and two church leaders from Guam arrived on the island and asked my husband for permission to open an Adventist church and school. My husband spoke with other tribal leaders and received their consent to turn one of his buildings into a school. The building was a dance hall and bingo parlor, and my husband and I felt increasingly uncomfortable with that business as we studied the Bible at home.

A kindergarten and elementary school opened in the building in fall 1980, and my eldest son, R.D., became one of the first kindergarten students.

We studied the Bible in our home for three years. Sometimes, the head nurse gave the study, and other times it was led by the hospital administrator or another Adventist connected with the hospital.

I faced a struggle. I was raised in a strict Sunday-keeping home, and my father, a church deacon, led the congregation on my native island of Namu whenever the pastor was away. But my husband and I saw that we were being taught the truth from the Bible, and we were baptized in 1983. We were the first Adventists on Ebeye.

My father did not approve of my new faith. About a year after being baptized, I visited my home island and was washing clothes when my father returned from church on a Sunday. "What's wrong with you?" he asked. "You are hanging out

Fast Facts

- The Marshall Islands include the Ratak (“sunrise”) and Ralik (“sunset”), two parallel chains of 29 coral atolls with thousands of tiny islets and hundreds of very small low-lying islands.
- The average altitude above sea level for the entire country is only 7 feet (2.1 meters).
- Because of its very low elevation, the Marshall Islands are threatened by the potential effects of sea level rise. The nation is the most endangered in the world because of flooding that some scientists link to climate change.

with white people now and breaking the commandments by working on Sunday?”

I opened my Bible and showed him two texts from the time of Christ’s crucifixion. In Matthew 28:1, I read, “Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb” (NKJV). Then I turned to Luke 23:54 and read, “That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.”

After that, my father never said another word about my keeping the Sabbath on Saturday. He understood that I had found the Lord of the Sabbath.

The Marshall Islands, where Ebeye is located, gained independence in 1986, and the next year we moved the school to a larger building, a former warehouse owned by our family. At the new location, the school expanded its curriculum to cover pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. My son R.D. completed all 12 grades at the school.

People have noticed that I am always smiling, and they ask why. I have had

some trials, but whenever there is a roadblock, God opens a way.

In 1987, my husband had to be airlifted to Hawaii for emergency treatment for an abscess on his lungs. The doctors weren’t sure that he would make it. We prayed, and my husband walked out of the hospital in just five days! He was in perfect health. I am thankful to God that his life was spared. He died in 2017 at the age of 67.

A few years after my husband’s health scare, we faced another medical crisis. A baby boy was born to my younger brother, an Adventist church elder on Ebeye. The boy’s head grew larger and larger, and we rushed him to the hospital. The doctor announced that he had fluid in his head and had to be airlifted to Hawaii.

When the plane landed in Honolulu at 3 a.m., I said, “Before we go to the hospital, let’s pray.” We prayed in the plane. We prayed again while waiting to see the doctor at the hospital. When the doctor examined the boy, he couldn’t find any fluid. The boy’s head had shrunk back to its normal size. He had been healed!

I believe in the power of prayer. I smile because of God. I give everything to Him, and I believe that He will provide everything. 🌍

Nojab Lemari, 66, retired from the hospital as the chief nurse and remains a major supporter of the Adventist Church on Ebeye Island. Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will pay for urgent repairs to the aging school building that Nojab and her husband gave in 1987.

By Nojab Lemari, as told to Andrew McChesney

Watch Nojab and her son R.D. at the link: bit.ly/Nojab-Lemari-RD

Power of a Ninth Grader

MARSHALL ISLANDS | April 21

**Kamlitha Bulles, 62, and
Harold Bulles, 60**



Kamlitha [pronounced: kam-LITHA] first heard about the seventh-day Sabbath from her teenage son, Fredrick, whom she had sent to the Seventh-day Adventist mission school on a remote Pacific island in the Marshall Islands.

But the mother of eight was determined not to leave her Sunday church. Kamlitha told her son that she wouldn't change her mind just because he was excited about his ninth-grade Bible class—and she wasn't going to embrace a church that worshipped on Saturday, the wrong day of the week.

“Search the Bible for yourself, and you will see that I am telling the truth,” Fredrick replied.

Kamlitha had chosen Ebeye [pronounced: EE-by] Seventh-day Adventist School for her eldest child because she wanted him to have a Christian education and the school was close to their home. It also had a

reputation for having student missionary teachers who taught better English than the English offered in other schools.

Fredrick kept sharing Bible truths and memory verses from school with his mother. He especially loved to recite Matthew 6:33, which says, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (NKJV).

He also defended the prophet Ellen G. White.

“I don't know what some people have against Ellen White,” he said. “All her writings point to the Bible.”

Kamlitha was impressed with her son's convictions and knowledge of the Bible. But she resisted his appeals and turned down repeated invitations to visit the Adventist church. She didn't object, however, when Fredrick announced that he had decided to be baptized.

In private, she prayed constantly, asking God if she was attending the right church and, if not, to reveal the true church.

Then a drought struck. The already scarce fresh water supply dried up on Ebeye, an island where 12,000 people, half of them under 18, live on just 80 acres (32 hectares) of sand. Kamlitha joined other residents in a daily trek to the dock to fetch water ferried in from a nearby U.S. military base, the island's main employer.

Standing in line for water, Kamlitha met

Andrea, a student missionary from Britain, who taught at the school. The two women met three days in a row, and on the third day, Andrea invited Kamlitha to study the Bible together. Andrea came to her home every day for a week.

“When she told the word of God to me, I was touched, and I wanted to be baptized,” Kamlitha said. “It was amazing. Every church in Ebeye had told me to come to their church, but I didn’t want to. Then I became an Adventist.”

Fredrick was delighted!

After her baptism, Kamlitha was invited to work as a teacher’s aide at the school and to serve on the church board.

She also started to pray for her husband, Harold. For two years, she prayed for Harold, a chain smoker who drank heavily every evening after returning home from his job as a food service supervisor at the U.S. military base. Then Harold agreed to study the Bible with an Adventist pastor, and he gave his heart to Jesus.

Kamlitha and Harold ended up sending all eight of their children to the Adventist school, and four of them were baptized. Two grandchildren also attended the school.

Harold, now 60, continues to work at the U.S. military base, and he also serves an elder at the Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist Church, which meets in the school’s main hall. About 60 people gather to worship every Sabbath.

“God is merciful,” Harold said. “He cares about our lives, and He really helps us. No matter what happens, He is always there for our needs.”

Kamlitha, 62, currently works as a Marshallese-language teacher at the Adventist school, and she gives Bible studies to friends and neighbors on Ebeye.

Fast Facts

- The clear water surrounding the Marshall Islands is home to more than 1,000 species of fish and 250 species of coral. It is considered one of the best places in the world to scuba dive.
- In October 2011, the government created the world’s largest shark sanctuary—an area covering nearly 772,000 square miles (2,000,000 square kilometers) of ocean.
- There are at least 22 shark species in the waters around the Marshall Islands, including Blue shark, Silky shark, Bigeye thresher shark, Pelagic thresher shark, Oceanic whitetip shark, and Tawny nurse shark.

Five people have been baptized.

Now, Kamlitha is making plans to return to her native Maloelap [pronounced: malo-LAP] Atoll to plant an Adventist church. No Adventists live on the island of 150 people.

Many lives have been changed in the Marshall Islands because Fredrick attended Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School in 2003, Kamlitha said.

“I really thank God that He chooses us and works in us miraculously,” she said.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School carry out urgent repairs to its classrooms. Thank you for your mission offerings that will help more children—and their parents—learn about Jesus on Ebeye and beyond. 🌐

By Andrew McChesney

Watch Kamlitha and Harold at the link:
bit.ly/Kamlitha-Bulles

Mexican Gives Up All



MARSHALL ISLANDS | April 28

Nerly Macias Figueroa, 32

Ask a woman to share this first-person account.

Inspired by reading mission stories, I resolved at the age of 17 to leave my home in the Mexican state of Chiapas one day and become a missionary.

I remembered this desire after graduating from the university, but I didn't have any money to volunteer. Walking home one night, I prayed, "Lord, I want to be a missionary, but I can't buy the airplane ticket. If You want me to be a missionary, give me a job, and I will go."

Two days later, I received a telephone call from Southeast Adventist Hospital in the Mexican state of Tabasco.

"We have a job for you," the man said. "Just come for the interview."

The hospital hired me as its head dietitian, responsible for planning all meals.

It was an incredible answer to prayer!

A year later, I filled out a job application on the website of Adventist Volunteer Service. The principal of Ebeye [pronounced: EE-by] Seventh-day Adventist School in the Marshall Islands accepted my application.

I prayed, "Help me to go to Ebeye."

Three days before buying the air ticket, my uncle died. He had several outstanding financial matters, and my family didn't have the money to cover them. So, I handed over my savings. I called the Ebeye principal and explained that I didn't have the funds to come. He was understanding.

That night, I prayed, "God, if You gave me this dream of becoming a missionary, why can't I go? I'm working for You at the hospital, but I want to go abroad."

A year passed, and again I saved up enough money to go to Ebeye. But then my sister was badly injured in an accident, and I gave my savings to her. Again, I told the Ebeye principal that I couldn't come.

Two years passed, and I set aside my mission dreams. I had a good job and was earning good money. Then one night, as I was lying in bed and making plans to buy a car and a house, I remembered Ebeye.

I thought about the island for a week. I remembered promising God to become a missionary, but I argued with Him, saying, "I'm working at an Adventist hospital, so

I'm doing Your work. Why should I leave my job and go to another country?"

As I listened for an answer, all I could think was, "Ebeye, Ebeye, Ebeye."

So, I prayed, "OK, if You want me to go to Ebeye, just give me a U.S. visa."

The cheapest route to Ebeye from Mexico is to fly through Los Angeles, California, and Honolulu, Hawaii. For that, I needed a U.S. visa—which isn't easy to get in Mexico. I asked the Ebeye principal for a letter to take to the U.S. Embassy.

Shortly before the embassy interview, I said, "God, I really don't want to go as missionary because I have a good life now. I wished to go before, but not anymore. Please don't give me the visa."

At the embassy, the consular officer asked, "Why do you want a visa?"

"Because I'm going to be a missionary on Ebeye Island in the Marshall Islands," I replied.

The officer looked at his computer screen. He didn't ask for the letter from the school principal, and he didn't request any bank account information. He just looked at his screen. "OK," he said finally. "You will have your visa in one month."

With those words, I realized that God was opening the door for me to go and I needed to keep my promise to Him. So, I gave up everything—my job and my life in Mexico. I said goodbye to my family and moved to Ebeye, an island of 12,000 people in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

After a year on Ebeye, I have no regrets. When I started teaching the fifth grade, only one child in the classroom was from an Adventist family. Through the assistance of a friend in Hawaii, I gave Bibles to all my students for Christmas. Five of my students were baptized during the school year!

Mission Post

- An important word in Marshallese is "yokwe," which is similar to the Hawaiian "aloha" and means "hello," "goodbye," and "love."
- There are three Adventist schools in the Marshall Islands: an elementary school and a K-12 school on Majuro, and a K-12 school on the second-largest island of Ebeye.
- The first Seventh-day Adventist school in the Marshall Islands was founded in 1968 in the community of Laura on Majuro.

Some people ask me, "Why did you leave your job in Mexico? You don't have anything now."

I reply, "I have everything. I am happy here, and I know God has a plan."

What amazes me is that I tried to come to Ebeye for four years but only arrived in 2016. I think it is because God had a plan. I don't know what the plan is, but I know He has one and He will reveal it at the perfect time. 🌐

Raian [pronounced: Ryan] G. Villacruel, principal of Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School, has no doubt why Nerly arrived when she did. With 25 percent of her students baptized, her classroom had more baptisms than any other last school year! Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help the school carry out major repairs on crumbling classrooms. Thank you for your mission offerings.

By Nerly Macias Figueroa, as told to Andrew McChesney

Watch Nerly at the link: bit.ly/Nerly-Macias

Drawn to Him

Daniel Guiboshe, 56



The new chaplain, Daniel Guiboshe, felt like an outsider when he arrived a month late for the school year at Mamawi Atosketan [pronounced: MAMA-way a-TOSS-key-tan] Native School in Alberta, Canada.

The First Nations students and Seventh-day Adventist teachers already knew one another and were settled in. But one 11-year-old girl named Jojo Wolfe went out of her way to make him feel welcome. “During recess, she always tended to hang around me,” Daniel said. “She would cling onto me. I could never figure out why she did that. I just knew she did that a lot.”

The chaplain and little girl engaged in small talk about homework and friends on the playground. In the classroom, Daniel taught Jojo and her classmates about Jesus and the plan of redemption. The

Adventist mission school is the first place that many First Nations students hear about Jesus.

One day, Jojo surprised Daniel with a drawing of a purple bug.

“You’re the coolest pastor ever!” she wrote beside the hand-drawn picture. “You’re every nice to me,” she added, making a few grammatical mistakes.

Several weeks later, Daniel received a phone call from the school principal. Jojo had died over the weekend. She had been goofing around with helium at a birthday party, making funny voices. Complaining of lightheadedness, she had gone to bed and never woken up.

“I was shocked,” Daniel said. “I just couldn’t believe it. I thought about the time that I had spent with her and wondered, ‘Why? Why now? Why did she have to pass away so young?’ I still don’t

know why. That's one of the things that we will have to wait on until Jesus' return, I guess."

The teachers and students grieved the loss, and school was closed for a day.

Jojo's family organized a traditional three-day wake in a recreation hall on the First Nations reserve. People came from all over to eat, give speeches, comfort one another, and pay their respects at Jojo's casket. Teachers and students attended the wake, and the teachers prepared food in the school kitchen and brought it to the recreation hall every day.

"Just your presence at a wake says a lot to a family," Daniel said. "You don't even have to say anything. To them, just your presence says you care about them and you care about Jojo."

He said teachers and students came together as a family, reflecting the school's name, Mamawi Atosketan, which means, "Working Together," in the Cree language.

Today, Jojo's hand-drawn picture hangs in Daniel's office. It's the first picture that he ever received from a student at the school.

"She made me feel at home when I got here," Daniel said. "I want to remember her and what she did for me. She showed me that it's not about me. It's about what we can do for others."

When Daniel speaks to the children, he talks about what Jesus did for them and what they can do for others. He tells them his own experiences with Jesus. His main goal is to uplift Jesus and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

"It's like Jesus said, 'And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself,'" Daniel said. "I lift Jesus up, so

Fast Facts

- Canada is the second-largest country in the world, after Russia.
- Canada has the largest coastline in the world, with a length of 122,557 miles (202,080 kilometers). If you walked the shorelines of Canada with an average speed of 12 miles (20 kilometers) a day, it would take you 33 years to complete.
- The U.S.-Canadian border, officially known as the International Boundary, is the longest international border in the world between two countries.
- Canada is said to be a Latinized form of a word for "village" in an Iroquoian language of the St. Lawrence valley that went extinct by 1600. Most still-spoken Iroquoian languages have a similar word (such as Mohawk *kana:ta*, or "town").
- Canada holds the record for the most gold medals ever won at the Winter Olympics, taking 14 golds at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.
- The Hotel de Glace in Quebec is built every year using 400 tons of ice and 12 000 tons of snow. Every summer it melts away, only to be rebuilt the following winter.

the children will be drawn to Him."

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help the Mamawi Atosketan Native School expand its education program so it can teach more children about Jesus. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney

Watch Daniel at the link: bit.ly/Daniel-Guiboshe



Making Connections

Darlene Thiessen, 45

Ask a woman to read this first-hand account.

An eighth-grade boy named Adrius died during my first year of teaching at Mamawi Atosketan [pronounced: MAMA-way a-TOSS-key-tan] Native School, a Seventh-day Adventist mission school for First Nations children in the Canadian province of Alberta.

Adrius struggled with alcohol abuse, and he was intoxicated when a car hit him as he walked home one night. I felt terrible in the morning when I learned that school had been canceled because a student had died.

A second student died during my second year at the school. Francis Buffalo was a giant in stature, but he had a gentle, kind personality. He was talking with some friends beside a parked car when a passing car lost control and smashed into him.

The two deaths had a huge impact on me. I tried to hold back the tears at the boys' funerals. As a teacher, I felt so connected to the boys that I feared the tears would never stop if I began to cry. My

whole being ached, and I felt like I was going to burst.

Questions filled my mind after the funerals. I wondered what impact I had had on the boys. Did they see the love of God through the school? Did we give them enough that maybe they cried out to God in their last moments?

The boys' premature deaths remind me every day that I want to bring students to Jesus. I want the children to have a relationship with Jesus that will change their lives. As a teacher, I don't always see the results immediately, but I do get to catch glimpses that fill me with hope.

Once I joined ADRA on a mission trip to build an orphanage in Mozambique. I told my third-grade students where I was going and what I was doing. I told them how excited I felt. I prepared them for the substitute teacher.

But one little girl, Tiandra [pronounced: TEE-andra], believed that I had abandoned the class and wasn't coming back. She started misbehaving and ended up in the principal's office. When the principal asked why she had misbehaved, she exclaimed, her voice filled with attitude, "Haven't you heard of separation anxiety?"

The principal had to step out of her

Fast Facts

- The North American beaver is the national animal of Canada.
- The Canadian province of Alberta has been rat-free for more than 50 years.
- A bear cub named Winnipeg was exported from Canada to the London Zoo in 1915. A little boy named Christopher Robin Milne loved to visit the bear cub named Winnipeg, or Winnie for short. His love for the bear cub inspired the stories written by his father, A.A. Milne, about Winnie-the-Pooh.

office to laugh. Little Tiandra sounded so precious using grown-up language.

But Tiandra was correct in her self-assessment. She was misbehaving because she thought I had abandoned her. She and I shared a connection, and she looked forward to it so much that she felt abandoned when I wasn't there.

When I returned to Canada, I spent a day at home getting over jet lag. The principal called and said, "I have someone who needs to talk with you." She put Tiandra on the phone.

"Hello? When are you coming back?" Tiandra said.

"Tomorrow," I replied.

"OK," Tiandra said.

And that was it. Everything was OK. Our connection was restored.

All the teachers have a connection with the children. It makes a big difference for the children to be at school and to see our faces every day.

Last year, the third-grade students fell silent when I told them about Jesus dying on the cross. You could just see the look of awe on their faces that Someone loved

them so much. I told the children that it would be easier for me to volunteer to die for someone else than to give up the life of my son.

"God must love you so much to give up His Son's life," I said.

Wonder filled one little boy's face.

"Really, He did that for me?" he asked.

I remember a first-grade girl who faced turmoil at home as her brothers and sisters moved in and out of foster care. Her youngest sister was removed from the home, and her mother tried to get her back. The first grader was very concerned.

Then some children began to tease her. I found her sobbing outside the classroom one day and asked her what was wrong.

"The other children said that my sister is dead," she said.

I asked if I could pray with her, and she agreed. I held her hands and prayed for her sister. Afterward, I said, "It's in Jesus' hands. Do you feel better?"

It was as if the weight of the world had come off her shoulders. She went outside and happily played with the other children.

As a teacher, we have many little moments like this where we can show children the love of Jesus. I want to bring students to Jesus. I don't want to miss an opportunity to have an impact on a child for eternity.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help Mamawi Atosketan Native School expand its education program so it can teach more children about Jesus. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌐

By Darlene Thiessen, as told to Andrew McChesney

Watch Darlene at the link: bit.ly/Darlene-Thiessen

Talking With the Dead

ALBERTA, CANADA | May 19

Kim Harrington, 45



High school teacher Kim Harrington listened as 17-year-old Shelly described her conversation with her grandfather the previous evening.

Shelly and her grandfather had discussed her future as they sat on the deck of the house on a First Nations reserve in Alberta, Canada.

Then Shelly mentioned that her grandfather had been dead for several years.

“When I found out that he had passed away, the hairs on my neck stood up,” Kim said. “I felt that she had been in the presence of an evil spirit.”

Kim is a science and math teacher at Mamawi Atosketan [pronounced: MAMA-way a-TOSS-key-tan] Native School, a Seventh-day Adventist mission school for First Nation children in Alberta. Many of the 200 students come from families with traditional spiritual

practices and hear about Jesus for the first time at the K-12 school.

Shelly spoke many times about spirits with her teacher. After a pow-wow, she described seeing a centaur, a mythical figure that is half man, half horse, leaping from house to house on the reserve. She told of hearing ancestors speak from a tree in the yard of her house.

“She sat there quietly and heard voices that she thought were her ancestors,” Kim said.

She had at least two conversations with an apparition resembling her grandfather.

“On the porch, they had a conversation about what she wanted for her life,” Kim said. “The spirit didn’t tell her anything negative like, ‘Go jump in the lake.’ They just spoke, and she thought the conversation was a pleasant thing. She liked talking with her grandpa.”

Hearing about the conversations disturbed Kim, and she prayed silently for God to give her the right words. Kim began to ask questions.

“You have studied our Adventist beliefs,” Kim said. “Tell me, what do you believe the spirit was? Was it actually your grandpa? Who sent the spirit?”

Shelly was familiar with the biblical teaching that the dead are asleep and know nothing. Finally, she said, “Yeah, you are right, Mrs. Harrington, I get what you are trying to say.”

Kim prayed with the girl.

“She was confused because she thought the experience was positive,” Kim said. “She left with a lot of questions, but she said she was thankful for the prayer.”

Following that prayer, Shelly returned to Kim several times to ask for prayers when she was having family problems or a bad day. Kim saw something positive was emerging from the discussion.

“The talk about the spirits abruptly threw open the door to this prayer relationship,” Kim said.

Shelly started thinking hard about the presence of spirits in her life. Sometime later, she told Kim that she was approached by the spirit of her grandmother. She didn’t see a physical being, but she heard her grandmother’s voice. She listened for a minute or two because she missed her grandmother and wanted to talk with her. But then she remembered her conversations with her teacher about where spirits come from.

She firmly told the voice, “If you are an evil spirit, I want you to leave.”

Then she started singing songs about Jesus that she had learned at school. The spirit left.

Kim prays that Shelly is learning to place her confidence in God.

“I told her that God is always in control of her life, no matter what happens,” she said. “She was seeking advice from her grandpa and wondering about the future, so I reminded her that God has a plan for her even though she might not know what it is right now.”

Kim read to her the promise of Jeremiah 29:11, where the Lord says, “For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (NIV).

Fast Facts

- The Alberta Conference has 11,646 members in 67 churches.
- Seventh-day Adventist teachings were introduced into Alberta in May 1895 by two colporteurs, Thomas Astleford and George W. Sowler.
- The first Adventist pastor to settle in Alberta was Henry Block, who arrived in October 1899 to lead the German congregation at Leduc.
- Persecution came to Seventh-day Adventists in Alberta as early as 1902 and 1903. J.L. Hamren, of Wetaskiwin, was fined \$2 and costs for doing farm work on Sunday, even though the law prohibiting work on that day was not applicable to farmers. Hamren appealed his case and won a dismissal. Later a blacksmith in Leduc named Gebanus was fined \$10.70 for operating his shop on Sunday.

Kim wants her students to know that they belong to God and not to some spirit. She has pasted signs on the chairs in her classroom that say, “This seat is occupied by a child of God.”

“I want the kids to know that they are special and that God loves them no matter what,” she said.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help expand the school’s math and science program so more children can enroll and learn about Jesus. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌐

The girl’s name has been changed.

By Andrew McChesney

Watch Kim at the link: bit.ly/Kim-Harrington

Gas Station Encounter

WEST VIRGINIA, U.S.A. | May 26

John Peña, 57



One evening, a technical glitch disrupted operations at the gas station where John Peña [pronounced: PAIN-ya] was working in the U.S. state of West Virginia.

The timing couldn't have been worse.

Business was booming at the gas station's 23 pumps in the town of Mount Hope, but now credit cards could no longer be accepted, only cash. Making matters worse, the gas station's automated-teller machine stopped dispensing cash.

John and a female co-worker watched as a big Cadillac pulled up at a pump and its owner, a well-dressed black man, filled the tank. Moments later, the man entered the gas-station store.

"Sir, you owe \$40 and you need to pay for your gasoline in cash," John told him.

The man looked dismayed. "All I have are credit cards," he said, speaking with an accent that John couldn't place.

John spoke with his manager, who suggested that the customer leave his car at the gas station while he went to get some cash. The customer said, however, that he didn't have any way to get cash that evening. John sensed a goodness about the man. So, he said, "I'll pay for your gas. Leave your license, and I'll return it when you pay me back."

The man gratefully shook John's hand. "I'll be back tomorrow," he promised.

After the man left, the co-worker looked at John as if he had lost his senses. "You're going to lose that money," she scolded him.

"I believe he will come back," John said.

The next day, the man walked in with the \$40. "Is there anything I can do?" he asked as he handed over the money.

John didn't want a reward or any extra money. "No, we're good," he said. "God bless you. Have a great day."

"God bless you, too," the man said.

Unexpected Meeting

That evening, John shared the unusual experience with his wife, Sharon. But he promptly forgot about it when his father-in-law, Jim, stopped by to discuss the Bible. Jim was a Seventh-day Adventist and had been inviting John to visit his church for some time. Learning that evening that John wasn't scheduled to work the next Saturday, Jim renewed the invitation. John

relented. “OK, I’ll go this time,” he said.

John was born in a Sunday-keeping home in Cleveland and had attended an Adventist church a few times with his wife, who was raised Adventist but had left the church.

On Sabbath morning, John sat awkwardly beside Jim at the church in Beckley, West Virginia, waiting for the service to begin. After a few minutes, the pastor walked in the back of the sanctuary, and Jim said, “John, I really want you to meet the pastor.”

“Sure, I have some Bible questions to ask him anyway,” John said.

As the pastor walked up the aisle, John thought, “Do I know him from somewhere?”

The pastor shook Jim’s hand and then looked at John, puzzled. “Do I know you from somewhere?” he said.

The two men stared at each other for a moment. Then John exclaimed, “You’re the guy at the gas station!”

“Oh!” the pastor said. “You’re the guy who paid for my gasoline!”

After the church service, John and pastor Samuel Simuzoshya, a native of Zambia, explained to Jim how they had met.

“To me, it was a blessing,” John said. “I used to say that things were luck, but this was a blessing.”

Rest of the Story

The encounter with the Adventist pastor left a deep impression on John. He started to attend Sabbath church services at Beckley and, later, at an Adventist church in Spencer, which is closer to his home. His wife was baptized.

Then the Spencer church received part of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 2015. Among the Thirteenth Sabbath projects

that year were 35 evangelistic series in West Virginia.

The Spencer church, which has about 30 members, used its portion of the money to rent a large public hall for two weeks of evangelistic meetings led by one of its elders, William Iannacone. John joined church members in distributing literature and doing home visitations during the evangelistic campaign, but he did not go up to request baptism at the end of the meetings.

Two days before the baptism of two people from the meetings, the church’s pastor, Daniel Morikone, visited John at home to ask what was keeping him from being giving his heart to Jesus.

“I look at other people who are conveying the character of Christ and I don’t know if I’m clean enough,” John told him.

“If you keep looking at others and not at Christ, you will never want to be baptized,” the pastor replied.

The words cut John to the heart. The next day, he called the pastor and asked, “What do I bring to be baptized tomorrow?”

John was baptized with the others.

Reflecting on his path toward baptism, John said he was won over by seeing Christ’s goodness in church members. John, 57 and now a deacon at the Spencer church, hopes to bless his community in a similar way.

“I have lived here for 30 years, and people know me,” he said. “They see how I have changed after my conversion. I want to reach this community.” 🌐

By Andrew McChesney

Watch John at the link: bit.ly/John-Pena



I Walked Out

Ida Elizabeth Davis, 65

Ask a woman to read this first-person account.

When I was a little girl, my Seventh-day Adventist grandmother made me go to church for Bible study every Wednesday night in Beckley, West Virginia. On Sabbath mornings, I had to walk eight long blocks to the church. I had to go. I couldn't do anything but go to church and come back home.

My grandmother raised me, the youngest of seven siblings, and she was strict. I couldn't wear short dresses. I had to read the Bible every Friday evening. Nobody could do any work from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. She did allow me to go to other churches on Sundays. The only life that I had was school and church. That's how I was raised.

When I was 14, I moved to New York to live with older siblings. I was exposed to the big world and stopped attending church. After college, I worked as an accountant for an insurance company on Wall Street and later worked as a

government auditor in Washington. I started attending Sunday churches.

Then one night I had a dream. In my dream, I was plowing a plot of land. My grandmother used to have a tractor come in and plow her land for a garden, so when I woke up, I thought, "Maybe this is a sign that I should go home." My husband and I had been wanting to build a house, so I decided to build it on land that I had inherited from my grandmother, who had died years earlier.

My husband, also a U.S. government employee, wasn't thrilled with the idea of owning a home in West Virginia, but the house went up while we still worked in Washington.

After we retired in Beckley, I began to wonder why I had left all my friends in Washington to return to my childhood home. I made new friends, but I asked God, "Why am I here?"

Around that time, I received a flyer in the mail with an invitation to a Bible prophecy seminar. I asked my new friends to join me, but they refused to go. Finally, I made up my mind to go alone.

On the fourth night of the seminar, the preacher spoke about the beasts of Daniel and Revelation, and I realized for the first time that I was attending an Adventist evangelistic series. For some reason, the Adventist connection had not sunk

Fast Facts

- About 75 percent of West Virginia is covered by forests.
- Declared a state by President Abraham Lincoln, West Virginia is the only state to be designated by presidential proclamation.
- Because of its mountains, West Virginia is sometimes referred to as the Switzerland of the United States.
- West Virginia is considered the southernmost northern state and the northernmost southern state.
- The first rural free mail delivery was started in Charles Town, West Virginia on Oct. 6, 1896, and then spread throughout the United States.
- In 1947, Chuck Yeager, a native of Hamlin, West Virginia, became the first person to fly faster than the speed of sound.

in when I registered at the start of the meetings or on the subsequent evenings.

I remembered my strict upbringing and felt a renewed sense of loneliness. Here I was sitting alone; not one friend had wanted to accompany me. I thought, “If I keep coming to these meetings, I could lose all my friends.”

The meeting had just started, but I got up and rapidly walked toward the door.

The woman who had registered me on the first night stopped me at the back of the hall.

“Where are you going?” she asked.

“I’ve heard this stuff all my life,”

I replied.

I told her about my grandmother and how she would not let me go anywhere and do anything except read the Bible

and go to church. But that was just an excuse. I really felt alone and wanted a friend at the evangelistic meetings.

The woman, who I later learned was Bible worker Naomi Tricomi, smiled and made me feel welcome. She invited me to stay for the rest of the meeting. Her friendship was just what I needed.

I returned to my seat—and came back for the rest of the monthlong series. Every evening, Naomi greeted me with a smile and a hug. She couldn’t sit with me because she was working, but I knew that I had a friend in the room.

As I listened to the presentations, memories flooded over me from my childhood. I felt like I was a little girl in church again. When the preacher asked who wished to be baptized, I came forward. I felt at home.

I was among 16 people who joined the Adventist Church in September 2016 through those meetings—one of 35 evangelistic series that were organized across West Virginia and funded by a 2015 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

Looking back at my 65 years, I realize that the church and the Bible have always been embedded in me because of my grandmother. God has always protected me. Now I’m beginning to understand why God called me back to West Virginia. I’m able to move forward and focus on what God wants me to do. 🌍

Ida Elizabeth Davis, 65, is currently the Women’s Ministries coordinator at the Beckley Seventh-day Adventist Church.

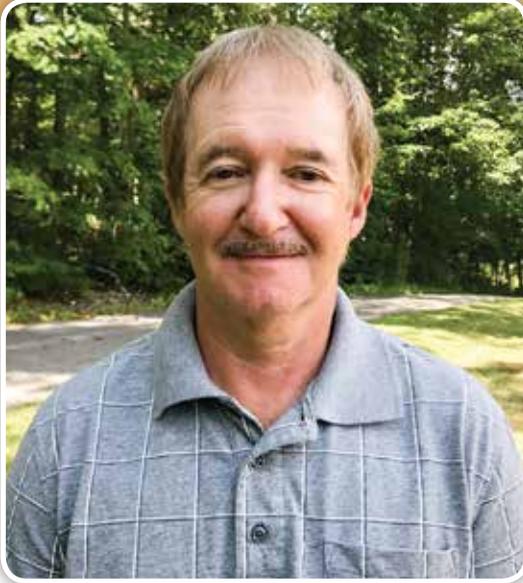
By Ida Elizabeth Davis, as told to Andrew McChesney

Watch Elizabeth at the link: bit.ly/Elizabeth-Davis

Letter From Heaven

WEST VIRGINIA, U.S.A. | June 16

Clifford Long, 61



A surprise letter arrived one day in Clifford Long's mailbox in the U.S. state of West Virginia.

The handwritten message asked whether he would like to enroll in a Bible correspondence course to learn what the Bible teaches about the Sabbath, the state of the dead, and Jesus' Second Coming.

Clifford and his wife, Cathy, didn't go to church regularly, but they had been talking about finding a place to worship. Their conversations, however, always ended with the question: which church is right?

"A lot of stuff didn't make sense," Clifford said. "This church said they were right, and that church said they were right. I didn't know enough to decide where to go. Then this came in the mail."

Clifford began the Bible studies. He took each new lesson with him to the power plant, where he worked as an operator, monitoring machines and

burning coal to turn the turbines that generate electricity. He and one other man worked the night shift, and they had some free time. Clifford pored over the lessons at the plant. "I really liked them and could not wait to send them in and get the next one," he said.

He was particularly curious about the Sabbath. As a boy, he had gone to a Sunday church, but his father had raised doubts in his mind about whether he was worshipping on the right day.

"My Daddy used to say, 'Why do these people take Sabbath on Sunday when the Bible says Saturday?'" Clifford said. "That stuck in my mind."

When the focus of the Bible study turned to the Sabbath, suddenly things began to make sense. Clifford saw that God had set aside the seventh-day Sabbath at Creation and had never changed it to another day. But he wondered why many Christian churches worshipped on Sunday. When he finished the Bible studies, he signed up for another, and then a third. He completed three sets of Bible studies by Discover, Amazing Facts, and the Voice of Prophecy.

Then the power plant was shut down in 2015. Employees had been warned five years earlier that the day was coming,

Mystery of the Letter

It remains unclear how Clifford Long's name ended up on Delsie Knicely's mailing list.

Delsie said the letter addressed to Clifford was among 300 handwritten messages that she mailed when she became the Bible correspondence school coordinator for her local church in 2014. The 300 names came from a list of people who had written in to request Bible studies.

The pastor of Clifford's church, James Volpe, said Clifford or Cathy might have returned a card requesting Bible studies after the Adventist Church's Mountain View Conference, whose territory covers West Virginia, teamed up with the Voice of Prophecy to mail Bible study invitations to every home in the state in 2012.

but Clifford and others had hoped that somehow the plant would survive. Clifford was forced into early retirement after 27 years at the plant.

Rather than despairing, however, he rejoiced that he had more time to study the Bible and no longer faced any Sabbath conflict at work.

Around that time, Clifford and his wife, Cathy, met the woman behind the mail-in Bible studies. Delsie Knicely, a farmer and evangelist, asked in a letter whether she could call them to answer any Bible questions. Later, she visited the married couple in their home. Cathy and Delsie immediately became good friends.

In October 2015, Delsie invited the couple to attend an evangelistic series led by her at the Valley View Seventh-day Adventist Church in the town of Bluefield. Clifford and Cathy eagerly came every evening. They learned how

the Roman Catholic Church had replaced the Sabbath with Sunday and how many Protestant churches had accepted the change. They realized that many sincere Christians worship God on Sunday because of tradition, not realizing that they are breaking God's law.

During the meetings, Cathy was told by doctors that she needed to undergo nasal surgery, but she refused to schedule the procedure until after the meetings.

"She kept putting the surgery off," Clifford said. "She told me she didn't want to miss the meetings for nothing!"

The evangelistic series, which were attended by about 25 people, mostly church members, resulted in two baptisms—Clifford and Cathy. The meetings were among 35 evangelistic series organized across West Virginia with funding from a 2015 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

Clifford, now 61, expressed joy about the meetings and the initial letter offering Bible studies. "I know that God sent me this," he said. "I was just thinking about which church to go to, and there it was!"

He wants other people to take the Bible studies, too, and he has shared them with his two adult sons and neighbors.

"I think the Bible studies are awesome. You really learn a lot," he said. "I really think that these Bible study lessons need to be given a higher priority because they really work." 🌍

By Andrew McChesney

Read Delsie Knicely's own story at the link: bit.ly/powerhouse-for-God

Watch Clifford at the link: bit.ly/Clifford-Long



Demons Talk to Me

Pierre Ortiz, 24

Pierre, the head boys' dean at Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School, was preparing to go to bed near the start of the school year when his telephone rang. His assistant was calling to say that David, one of the 28 boys in the dormitory, wanted to go for a late-night walk.

The boy's dean dressed quickly. He knew little about David other than that the 17-year-old sophomore had belonged to a street gang. David's mother had sent him to the boarding school in the U.S. state of Arizona because she feared for his life in the state capital, Phoenix.

David walked silently beside Pierre for several minutes. It was a clear, moonlit night.

Reaching a gully, the two sat down and chatted about the twinkling stars and star constellations in the night sky.

Then David abruptly said, "Demons talk to me sometimes."

"What do you mean?" the dean asked.

"Demons talk to me," the teen said. "Sometimes they tell me to hurt someone

or tell me to do things that I don't want to do."

"Why do you think that is?"

"I don't know, but it has gotten worse since I came here," David said.

The dean suggested that it would be a good time to pray. He bowed his head and asked God to be part of the conversation.

Opening his eyes, he said, "I think I know why they are getting worse."

"Why?" David demanded. "Tell me."

"Because you only knew demons and evil before you came here," Pierre said. "But now you are coming into contact with Jesus and goodness. The devil doesn't like that."

David paused for a long moment.

"Mr. Ortiz, I don't understand church," he said. "It's so forced. You have to listen to the speaker and do all these things."

"David," the dean said. "What was it like being in a gang?"

"It was awesome!" David said. "We were like a family. We never saw the leader, but he would give us orders in envelopes pushed under the door, and we would go out and do them. We were a family."

"I see," Pierre said. "You didn't see your leader, but you received orders and went out and did them. Your reward was that you had this family."

Pierre smiled. "David, this is church," he said. "Church is a family. But instead

Fast Facts

- Arizona is home to the majority of the Navajo Nation, the largest Native American reservation in the United States. Covering about 27,425 square miles (71,030 square kilometers) of Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico, the Navajo Nation is larger than any of the 10 smallest states in the United States. Its capital is seated in Window Rock, Arizona.
- The first college established by and for the Native American community is in a Navajo Nation area of Arizona. Founded in 1968 as Navajo Community College, it is currently known as Diné College.

of going out and spreading cruelty and bad things, we do good things.”

David seemed to grasp what the dean was saying. He began to cry. The dean hadn't thought that David was capable of crying, but tears slid down his cheeks. His sobbing sounded like the whimpering of a puppy.

“Mr. Ortiz,” David said, “God isn't going to want me.”

“You don't know that,” the dean said. “You don't even know Him.”

“I've killed before, and I know that none of you has killed,” David said. “So, I don't think God is going to want me.”

Pierre told David that the Bible was filled with stories about murderers who had been forgiven by God. “If we took all the murderers out of the Bible, it would be a very small book,” he said. “God loves murderers, too.”

“I have something else to tell you,” David said. “The demons sometimes do more than talk to me. They take over my body. I start shaking and foaming at the

mouth, and I can't stop it.”

The dean's heart went out to the whimpering teen. “This is why we are here at Holbrook,” he said softly. “This is God's ground, and Satan doesn't have power here. If you feel bad things happen, we can pray for you and fight that battle with you.”

By this time, it was 1 a.m. and growing cold. Pierre prayed with David again, and the two walked back to the dormitory.

Pierre doesn't know whether David has accepted Jesus into his life. The last he heard, David had returned to Phoenix and rejoined the street gang. But Pierre is glad that he had an opportunity to take a moonlit walk with a struggling student at Holbrook school.

“I have a very small window to reach these kids,” said Pierre, 24, who has served as head boys' dean for two years. “Our 65 students come and go and may not be here tomorrow. But we have to trust that God will bless the seeds that we are planting. My prayer is that wherever the students go, God will manifest something amazing in them.”

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School build a new gym and cafeteria to replace worn-out buildings on the 72-year-old campus. Thank you for your mission offerings. 🌍

The boy's name has been changed.

By Andrew McChesney

Watch Pierre at the link: bit.ly/Pierre-Ortiz

Thirteenth Sabbath Program

➤	Congregational Song	“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name” <i>Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 229
➤	Welcome	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
➤	Prayer	
➤	Program	“It Hurts When You Say His Name”
➤	Offering	
➤	Closing Song	“I Will Sing of Jesus’ Love” <i>Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 183
➤	Closing Prayer	

Note: The narrator doesn’t need to memorize the story, but he or she should be familiar enough with the material so as not to have to read it. Remember, you can supplement the story with photos from the Mission Quarterlies’ Facebook page.

This quarter we have met people from Ebeye [pronounced: EE-by] Island; the Mamawi Atosketan [pronounced: MAMA-way a-TOSS-key-tan] Native School in Alberta, Canada; West Virginia; and Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School in Arizona. Today we will hear one more story from Holbrook that reminds us that the great controversy is very real—and Jesus is coming soon.

It Hurts When You Say His Name

The 14-year-old girl was invited into the pastor’s office to discuss why she had skipped classes. Instead of focusing on her misbehavior, the meeting turned into a vivid unfolding of the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

School case manager Giselle Ortiz noticed that something wasn’t right

after being summoned to the meeting between Dezba, an eighth grader, and Phil Vecchiarelli, then-pastor of Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School in the U.S. state of Arizona.

When Pastor Phil mentioned the name of Jesus, the girl’s body jerked violently and she cried out, “Shut up!” Then she

relaxed slightly and whispered, “Pastor, it hurts when you say His name.”

Pastor Phil opened his Bible and began to read promises about Jesus’ power to conquer demons. Every time he mentioned Jesus, the girl reacted forcefully and screamed, “Shut up!”

Then she interrupted the pastor. “I have a voice inside, and he is telling me that you are lying and that book is a book of lies,” she said.

“Jesus is Lord,” Pastor Phil said calmly. “You can have freedom, and this voice will leave forever if you accept Jesus as Lord.”

It was like a boxing match, with the girl screaming, and the pastor fearlessly pushing back. Giselle prayed silently, claiming Bible promises and thanking Jesus for the imminent victory. As the pastor read another promise, Dezba doubled over in pain and fell to the floor.

“Why do you think nothing happens to me?” Pastor Phil said. “It’s because Jesus is more powerful, but you need to surrender to him.”

Dezba rolled around on the floor, screaming, “It hurts! It hurts!”

Then she sprang to her feet and fled out the door into the hallway of the boarding school’s administration building. Giselle ran after her, worried that she might try to leave the campus. Dezba turned around and looked at Giselle. The expression on her face was indescribable. Giselle knew it wasn’t the girl looking at her, and she swallowed back the fear in her throat.

Outside the building, Giselle sat down with Dezba on concrete steps. Pastor Phil soon joined them.

“You just need to claim the name of Jesus,” the pastor said. “Until you claim the name of Jesus, this won’t leave you.”

Dezba fell to the grass, screaming.

Finally, she said, “I accept! I accept!”

“Are you accepting Jesus into your life?” the pastor asked.

“Yes, I’m accepting Jesus into my life,” she said, her voice filled with pain.

In an instant, it was over. The evil spirit left, and Dezba lay motionless.

“Do you feel tired?” Pastor Phil said.

“Yes,” she said softly.

Giselle was overcome with emotion and began crying.

“It was beautiful to see that victory,” she said later.

After a while, Dezba went to the girls’ dormitory and, with Giselle’s help, set apart her room for Jesus. The two copied Bible promises onto posters and hung them on the walls.

That was not the only incident in which Giselle, a 27-year-old graduate of Southwestern Adventist University, and other Holbrook employees have seen the great controversy firsthand. Once, during a meeting with a girl in Giselle’s office, the girl started playing with her lips and staring in the corner. The girl said she saw her dead stepfather there. Giselle felt a coldness fill the room, and she immediately prayed and rebuked the evil spirit. The spirit left.

Students have reported supernatural activity—seeing and hearing things—in the dormitories. When Giselle first joined the school, working as an assistant in the girls’ dormitory, she felt a dark presence fill her apartment one night. She heard a voice in her mind say, “You have to pray right now.”

She sank onto her knees and prayed, “Lord, I don’t know what is happening, but I ask that you protect

the girls and me with your angels.”

In the morning, the girls’ dean, who lived above Giselle, told her that the previous night she had felt a presence in her room and an invisible hand had started pressing her into the bed. She had been terrified and couldn’t move. Then, in a flash, the hand had left.

The presence had left after Giselle’s prayer.

Such encounters remind Giselle that the great controversy is real and that Jesus is coming soon.

“I didn’t realize until I came here that every time we are absent or do not push forward God’s kingdom, evil advances,” she said. “I can see that in our kids. If I do not constantly provide light in their lives, the darkness takes over and I have to start at the beginning again.”

Giselle said she loves mission work, and she wouldn’t trade her job for any other.

“It is not enough to just speak up front in church every once in a while,” she said. “We are called to walk and cry with people. Mission work can leave you exhausted, but I have never felt more alive. That is the beauty of working with God. He will do things that you didn’t think were possible. It is a blessing to be part of His work and to truly connect with people who need Him.”

Jesus is coming soon! This quarter, we have heard stories about how the Holy Spirit is being poured out on schools in Canada, the Marshall Islands, and the United States. We have heard about the power of evangelistic meetings. Today, the question is: What are you doing for mission? Like Giselle at Holbrook school, are you excited about mission and feeling more alive than ever before? Let’s do our part for mission today by giving a big Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

The girl’s name has been changed. Dezba is a Navajo girl’s name that means “war,” signifying uncertainty and strength.

By Andrew McChesney

[Offering]

Giselle Ortiz, 27, case manager.



Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

- A holistic inner-city church plant in an unnamed country
- The first Adventist church in Sejong, South Korea
- A boarding academy in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
- A youth evangelism training center at Tokyo’s Setagaya Church in Japan
- Six city health centers in Taiwan



Leader's Resources

Be sure to download your free *Mission Spotlight* video, featuring video reports from around the North American Division and beyond at the link: bit.ly/missionspotlight.

Following are sources of information that may be helpful in preparing for the mission segment of Sabbath School.

Marshall Islands:

Marshall Islands government website rmigov.com
Ebeye SDA School Facebook page bit.ly/EbeyeFB
Wikitravel bit.ly/WikiMI

Canada:

Canada's government website bit.ly/CanGov
World Travel Guide bit.ly/TravelCan
Alberta's government website
Mamawi Atosketan Native School mansl.ca
Mamawi Atosketan Facebook Page bit.ly/MamawiFB
Lonely Planet bit.ly/LonelyAlb

United States:

U.S. government website usa.gov
World Travel Guide bit.ly/WTGUSA
West Virginia's government website bit.ly/WVGov
Lonely Planet bit.ly/LonelyWV
Arizona's government website az.gov
Holbrook Indian School bit.ly/HolbrookIS
Holbrook Indian School Facebook page bit.ly/HolbrookFB
Visit Arizona bit.ly/AZVisit

Seventh-day Adventist

North American Division nadadventist.org
Guam-Micronesia Mission gmmsda.org
Adventist Church in Canada adventist.ca
Alberta Conference bit.ly/AlbertaSDA
Mountain View Conference mtviewconf.org
Arizona Conference azconference.org

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

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

YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

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North American Division

UNION	CHURCHES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Division (Military)	1	19	0
Atlantic	581	119,275	35,281,560
Canada	384	69,345	36,225,000
Columbia	703	146,768	52,259,004
Lake	499	87,087	36,136,084
Mid-America	454	69,418	27,494,143
North Pacific	445	100,210	14,577,317
Pacific	710	225,820	53,244,305
Southern	1,122	286,686	64,337,833
Southwestern	572	114,989	40,625,754
Guam-Micronesia Mission	22	5,500	424,000
TOTAL	5,493	1,225,317	360,605,000

PROJECTS:

- 1** New Life Center, Holbrook SDA Indian School
- 2** Mamawi Atosketan Native School, Alberta, Canada
- 3** Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School, Ebeye Island, Marshall Islands

Guam

Federated States of Micronesia

3 Marshall Islands

Papua New Guinea

MIDWAY ISLANDS

JOHNSTON ISLANDS

Ottawa

Washington D. C.

1

2

3

GREENLAND

ATLANTIC OCEAN

BERMUDA

THE BAHAMAS

MEXICO

PACIFIC OCEAN

MIDWAY ISLANDS

JOHNSTON ISLANDS

CANADA

U. S. A.