

ADVENTIST
MISSION

YOUTH AND ADULT
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EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION




featuring:

THE LOST CHILD pg 16 | **CHOSEN OF GOD** pg 24




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 = stories of special interest to teens

Dear Sabbath School Leader,

This quarter features the East-Central Africa Division, which includes the countries of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda. The division is home to more than 286 million people, more than 2.4 million of whom are Seventh-day Adventists. That's a ratio of one Adventist for every 119 people.

The Challenges

Burundi and Rwanda are the two smallest countries in continental Africa. They also are the most densely populated. Although both countries have a high Adventist-to-population ratio, significant regions are underserved or have not yet been reached with the gospel.

Burundi has one Adventist for every 78 persons. However the majority of members live in rural areas, leaving the capital city, Bujumbura, with fewer members. Bujumbura is home to leaders in business, education, and government. These people must be given a chance to hear God's final message.

A small clinic serves the people of

Bujumbura and has introduced the Adventist Church to the people of this city. A proposed hospital built on church-owned land will go far in spreading the gospel message in this capital city.

Rwanda has one of the highest ratios of Adventists to population in the world: one Adventist for every 22 people. The country suffered greatly during the genocide of 1994. The Adventist Church's Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) lost its campus following the violence. The government has given the church a parcel of land in the heart of the capital city, Kigali, on which to build a new campus. With only a classroom block and administrative offices, the school is serving 2,200 students, most of whom are not Adventists. The most pressing need is a large hall to serve as a church and lecture hall. The building already is progressing. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete this building and bring together the students of AUCA for worship services, chapel, Weeks of Prayer, and other important gatherings as well as regularly scheduled lectures.

The church is blessed with a large population of children. But children's leaders lack the training they need to teach the children for eternity. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help train and equip children's leaders for ministry.

Yours for the kingdom,



Charlotte Ishkanian
Editor, *Mission*

OPPORTUNITIES

This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help

- build the first phase of a hospital in Bujumbura, Burundi
- complete a church multipurpose room at Adventist University of Central Africa in Rwanda
- train and equip children's ministries leaders in Rwanda.



FAITH THAT STANDS THE TEST

January 2 | John Bosco

Pastor John lives in northeastern Burundi, a tiny country in east-central Africa. The area is largely non-Christian, though some Christian churches exist there. Pastor John had been assigned to this region to plant a church. He knew that if he revealed that he was an Adventist pastor, it would prejudice the people to his work and open him to attack from both Christians and non-Christians. But wherever he went, he looked for opportunities to tell the story of Jesus.

The Invitation

Non-Christians in the community invited some Christians to attend a weekend of meetings. The purpose of the meetings was to challenge the people's Christian beliefs.

John decided not to attend the meetings. But as he walked down the street near where the outdoor meeting was being held, he heard a voice coming through a loudspeaker asking, "Was it Jesus or Simon of Cyrene who was crucified on the cross?"

Curious, John stopped to listen to the discussion. Several students from a Christian seminary repeatedly insisted

that it was Jesus who was crucified. But they didn't know where to find the texts to prove their point. As the men fumbled to explain their point, the listening crowd grew restless. Some of the Christians wondered aloud whether they could believe what their leaders had taught them.

Then it was the non-Christian leader's turn. He made a clear and convincing presentation. Then he challenged those present to accept his "truths" rather than Christianity. Some stood and agreed to accept the "truth" that the non-Christians presented.

Defending the Word

John stood and asked permission to speak. "I'm a Christian," he began. Then he read the Bible text that explained that Simon of Cyrene had been chosen from the crowd to carry Christ's cross. But Christ had been crucified.

John explained that many prophecies of the Old Testament pointed to Christ. Then he read several prophecies from the Old Testament and the verses in the New Testament that showed how Jesus had fulfilled these prophecies.

When he finished speaking, he challenged everyone listening to search God's Word for their salvation.

One of the leaders of the meeting asked, "Do you have proof that shows Jesus died for everyone?" John asked him to read Isaiah 53:5 to the crowd. The words of the prophecy rang out: "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (NIV).

A murmur rippled through the audience. Some who moments before had agreed to accept the non-Christian faith, now indicated that their faith in Jesus had been restored.

When the leaders of the meeting were unable to refute John's presentation, they ended the meeting.

Many stopped to ask John other questions about the Bible. John answered their questions and offered to meet the people in their homes and study the Bible truths in more detail.

Seeds of a Church Plant

John visited the people and studied with them. Many believed the truths John shared and asked how to follow Christ. Within a few months a small group of new believers was meeting in John's home. They formed the core of a new Adventist church that continues to grow.

Today 30 believers have been baptized. They have bought land and are gathering stones and other building materials to begin building their own church. But because prejudice runs high against religious groups that meet in homes rather than in churches, the believers walk an hour to worship with fellow believers in another village. Meanwhile they continue to share their faith with those who don't yet know Jesus as their Savior.

John hadn't planned to attend the meeting that had been organized to shake Christians loose from their belief in Jesus. But God led him there anyway. And once there, John opened God's Word and spoke of the faith that comes from knowledge of the Bible and stands against questioning. And lives were changed for eternity.

While one in every 78 people in Burundi is a Seventh-day Adventist believer, in some regions of the country the message of God's love is struggling to gain a foothold. Our mission offerings help spread this message where it's needed most. 🌍

FAST FACTS

- Burundi is a tiny country in east-central Africa. It lies east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, west of Tanzania, and south of Rwanda. Although Burundi is one of Africa's smallest countries, it is densely populated with a population of 8.9 million people.
- The capital city is Bujumbura [boo-juh-m-BOO-rah], a city of about 325,000 located on the shore of Lake Tanganyika in western Burundi.
- Burundi is one of the world's poorest countries, and the average life expectancy is about 52 years. One reason is that the country has one of the highest incidences of HIV/AIDS in the world.



A SONG AND A BOOK

January 9 | Célestin Kambayeko

War broke out in Burundi when Célestin was just starting high school. He fled his home, and for several years he lived as a refugee.

One day Célestin heard some people singing a song about Sabbath rest. He didn't understand what the words "Sabbath rest" meant, but the melody captivated him and aroused his curiosity. But in the tedious life of a refugee, he forgot about the people and their song.

Fire of Faith

Célestin married a young woman, and they made their home in the area. Then one day some visitors stopped at his home and offered to study the Bible with him. Célestin was curious and agreed to study with them. As they studied the Bible together, Célestin realized his hunger to know more about God. He asked lots of questions and read the Bible to find God's will.

In his search for knowledge, Célestin visited several different religious congregations, and eventually he joined a charismatic group. The group's leaders saw his zeal for God and invited him to become a lay evangelist. He was

ordained and began working for the church as an evangelist.

The Captivating Book

One day Célestin saw a man holding a book written in his native language. The title, *The Great Controversy*, attracted his attention, and he asked the man if he could borrow it. The man lent him the book, and Célestin scanned the pages, studying the pictures it contained. The pictures intrigued him, and he searched for the meaning of each picture in the accompanying text. As he read the book he learned that Sunday was not God's holy day, that it had been devised by men. At first this made him angry, for he had always worshipped on Sunday. But as he read of the blessings of keeping God's holy Sabbath, he remembered the song he had heard those Christians singing many years earlier, the song that had spoken of Sabbath rest.

As Célestin became convinced of the book's truths, he decided that he must keep the Sabbath. He didn't know of any Sabbathkeepers in his area, so he invited his family to join him in keeping the Sabbath rest in their home.

He shared what he was learning with friends, and some of them joined him in keeping the Sabbath.

The Search

The group met together for four months, but as they grew in number, they were worried that they would be accused of introducing new beliefs into their community and stirring up trouble. They decided that they must find an established church that kept the Sabbath, and they asked Célestin to lead the search.

One day as Célestin walked to the market he met some friends and shared with them what he had learned about the Sabbath. He told them that he was searching for fellow believers. To his joy his friends told him that a group of Sabbathkeepers had begun a church two hours' walk from Célestin's home. They told Célestin how to find the church.

On Sabbath morning Célestin got up early and walked to the area where the group of Sabbathkeepers was meeting.

The Sabbathkeepers welcomed Célestin and listened joyfully as he told them about his little group of believers. Later, when the pastor asked if anyone wanted to follow Jesus in baptism, Célestin accepted the invitation.

On his walk back home that afternoon, Célestin wondered to himself, *If I had died before I discovered the Sabbath truth, what would have been my end?*

Joyful News

Célestin returned to his little group of believers and related what he had discovered. "I have found a church that keeps God's commandments, including the Sabbath," he told them. "They are called Seventh-day Adventists, and they follow the Bible teachings we have discovered on our own."

The little group of believers agreed to visit the Adventist believers on the following Sabbath. As often as they could, they studied and worshipped together with the Adventist believers. After they were baptized, they decided to meet in their own community. Soon they were joined by a Global Mission pioneer, and today Célestin and his fellow believers are sharing God's love and truths with others in their community. They have a church built of mud bricks.

God uses many ways to bring truth into people's lives. God caught Célestin's attention with a song about Sabbath rest and with a book that drove him to study his Bible.

Our mission offerings provide literature and evangelism funds to lead people to Christ, including support for Global Mission pioneers. Thank you for giving. 🌍

MISSION POST

- About two thirds of the people living in Burundi are Christians, primarily Roman Catholic. One third of the population follows traditional African beliefs and worships spirits.
- With more than 123,000 Seventh-day Adventist Christians, Burundi has one Adventist for every 78 people.
- Nearly 90 percent of the people live in small settlements in the countryside. Likewise, most of the Adventists in Burundi live in the countryside, where they farm or raise cattle.



BURUNDI



THE STUBBORN WITCH DOCTOR

January 16 | As told to Benjamin Bidandaza

Simon grew up in a Protestant home in eastern Burundi. But he abandoned his faith when he became an adult. He met a witch doctor who offered to teach him witchcraft and give him power over evil spirits. Simon agreed, and the witch doctor sent him into the forest to find special herbs and sticks to use in his witchcraft. Soon he was learning the tools and secrets that the witch doctor promised would protect him from evil powers and curses.

Persistent Friend

Although Simon no longer attended church, his friend Samuel still followed Christ. The two men spent hours talking about their beliefs. Simon tried to convince Samuel to become a witch doctor, and Samuel tried to convince Simon to return to God.

One day Samuel excitedly told Simon about a church he had just visited. “I just attended some meetings held by Seventh-day Adventists,” Samuel told his friend. “I learned things I never knew before, and it’s the truth! I know it! I’m so convinced of this that I’ve decided to give my life to Christ in baptism. Simon, please, think about the

decisions you’re making. Give up this devil worship and follow Jesus.”

But Simon refused to listen. He became angry and refused to talk to his friend for days. But Samuel didn’t give up. He continued to visit Simon and talk to him about Christ. One night as the friends sat together, Samuel said gently, “Simon, I have shared with you what I know is the truth about God. But you continue to follow witchcraft. Please consider what your end will be if you don’t turn your life to Christ.”

Samuel’s words startled Simon, as if a sword had pierced his body. But he steadfastly refused to leave witchcraft. “I will continue to stick my magical rods in the ground and under my bed to protect my family from enemies,” Simon said.

The Challenge

One day Simon told Samuel that if he ate peanuts or sweet potatoes that had been roasted in the cooking fire, he would die. “I wouldn’t die,” Samuel said. “God will protect me from your evil spirits and show you that nothing bad will happen to me.”

“Don’t try it,” Simon warned, “unless you want to die.”

That night Samuel prayed, asking God to show him how he could prove Simon's beliefs were wrong. He became convinced that God would protect him as he showed his friend God's power.

A few days later Samuel went to see Simon. He brought sweet potatoes and peanuts along and placed them in Simon's cooking fire. When the food was roasted, Samuel pulled it from the ashes and ate it while Simon watched in fear. Nothing happened to Samuel. He didn't even look sick. When Samuel stood to go home, Simon feared that he would never see his friend alive again.

Several days passed, and Simon heard nothing about Samuel's fate. Then Samuel came to visit his friend. They talked about God's power over evil and the lies that Simon had believed. Once again Samuel invited Simon to put his faith in Jesus rather than witchcraft.

"Only God can protect people from witchcraft," Samuel said gently. "Trust Him to protect you from evil and provide for your needs."

Seeing God's Point

That night Simon tossed and turned, unable to sleep. He had so many questions and needed answers. Late in the night he got up and looked for the Bible that he had stashed away months earlier. He opened it at random to the book of Hosea. His eyes were drawn to chapter 4 and verse 12, which says: "They consult a wooden idol and are answered by a stick of wood. . . . they are unfaithful to their God" (NIV). The words frightened Simon. Samuel had eaten the forbidden roasted foods and nothing had happened to him. Could it be true that God had protected Samuel?

Several days later Samuel returned

with an invitation. "I've told you about my faith and the truth I've found in the Seventh-day Adventist Church," Samuel said. "I've invited you to follow me in this truth and worship God with me."

Simon told Samuel of his late-night search for his old Bible and his discovery in the book of Hosea. "My trust in witchcraft is gone," he said. Together the two men pulled the sticks from the ground around Simon's house and pulled the sticks from under his bed and burned them. Then Simon and his wife joined Samuel at the Adventist church.

Simon and his wife have been baptized. Now Samuel and Simon work together for lost souls in eastern Burundi.

Our mission offerings help reach people who have never heard of God's love and protection. Thank you for giving so others may live. 🌍

FAST FACTS

- Burundi is one of the smallest and most densely populated countries in Africa. Still it is largely rural, with small family-centered settlements rather than towns.
- The ethnic violence that devastated neighboring Rwanda spilled into Burundi, destabilizing an already fragile region. Thousands fled from one country to another seeking refuge from the fighting and genocide. Burundi suffered its own ethnic woes, and only recently has the situation stabilized.
- Burundi's life expectancy is about 52 years, one of the lowest in the world. This is due to a number of factors, including poverty, ethnic strife, and one of the highest incidences of HIV/AIDS in the world.



BURUNDI



THE BORROWED BOOK

January 23 | As told to Benjamin Bidandaza

The shadows lengthened outside the small hut in northern Burundi. Bénéoit [behn-WAH] sat inside, slumped against the wall in the semi-darkness, and wondered where his life was going. His marriage to a woman someone else had chosen for him had just ended, and he was tired—tired of fighting, tired of trying, tired of failing.

Benoit's parents had died, leaving him to provide for his younger brothers and sister. Often when he was troubled he went to the pub and lost himself in drink and dancing. But tonight he had no energy. He turned on the radio and twisted the dial to find some music to distract him.

He found a religious radio station and leaned back against the wall to listen. In the past he would have danced to the religious songs playing on the radio, but not tonight. Tonight he felt a longing for God and for peace.

New Hope

A religious program came on, and Bénéoit half listened to it. The man's words filled him with a peace that alcohol couldn't provide. He grew hungry to hear more about God. He

gave up going to the bars and spent his time listening to the religious programs on his radio. But he had no desire to return to church, not after the way the members had treated him when his marriage had failed.

One evening a friend came over, and the two men listened to a radio sermon together. The speaker said something startling, and Bénéoit asked his friend, "Is that true? Or is this man telling a bad joke?"

"It's no joke," his friend said. "Those words are straight from the Bible."

"The Bible!" Bénéoit said, surprised. "You've read the Bible? Our priest forbade us to read the Bible or even to touch one!"

Bénéoit's friend answered calmly, "The Bible is God's message to us. God wants us to read it so we'll know what He expects of us. Do you want to borrow my Bible?" he asked.

"Yes," Bénéoit said, suddenly interested.

The Borrowed Bible

Bénéoit's friend lent him the Bible, and Bénéoit began reading. He didn't understand it, but he found peace in its pages and relief from his problems.

Benoit bought his own Bible so he could mark the passages he wanted to remember. As he read, Benoit found passages that differed from what he had learned in church. He decided to find a church that taught the Bible as God had written it.

Benoit visited church after church, searching for the truth, the church that followed the Bible only. Then one Friday night he heard a radio program that challenged his thinking about God's will. The speaker of the radio sermon explained how humans had changed God's Sabbath to Sunday. As the speaker quoted Bible texts, Benoit grabbed his Bible and followed along. When the program ended, Benoit was convinced that God wanted him to keep the Sabbath.

Benoit learned that the radio program was sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and he decided to visit a church and see if these people really taught the Bible truths. He found an Adventist church not far from his home and visited the next week. As he listened to the message, God impressed him that this was the church that proclaimed God's truth. Benoit continued attending, and in time he gave his heart to God and asked to be baptized.

Facing the Future

But Benoit felt the painful sting of Satan's arrows in his life. His brothers, angry at his decision to become an Adventist, tried to poison him. But God protected him. Several times he narrowly missed dying in car accidents, but each time God saved him. Once while in the marketplace, he lost a large sum of money. Devastated, he prayed, wondering what to do. Then he heard a

voice over the marketplace loudspeaker announcing that a large sum of money had been found. He hurried to the marketplace office and reported his loss, even describing the bills he had lost. The marketplace manager returned the money to Benoit, convinced that it was his.

"When I see what God has done in my life," Benoit says, "I know that He is alive and ready to help those who trust Him."

Benoit is one of thousands of Adventists in Burundi. But many thousands more still need to hear the message of God's love. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a hospital in the capital city, Bujumbura [boo-juhm-BOO-rah]. Through this medical ministry, many more will have an opportunity to meet Jesus and accept Him as their Savior, too. Our offerings will help our fellow believers in this small country share their faith and reap souls for heaven. 🌐

MISSION POST

- Most of Burundi's 123,000 Adventist Christians live outside the cities. It's important that we reach the people in the cities where political leaders, business people, and educators live.
- The Adventist Church operates a small clinic in the capital city, Bujumbura [boo-juhm-BOO-rah]. This small clinic serves many people and is helping make people aware of the work of the Adventist Church.
- Recently plans were laid to replace the clinic with a hospital. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build the first phase of this hospital. For more information on the medical work in Burundi, watch the Adventist Mission DVD.



MANASSÉ'S SEARCH FOR GOD



January 30 | As told to Benjamin Bidandaza

Manassé [mah-NAH-seh] stood in the family garden and watched as people walked by on their way to the church down the road. Sometimes he wondered why people went to church, why they wasted a whole day singing and praying. Other times he wondered why his own family didn't go.

One Sunday he decided to follow the people to the church to see what happened there. He stood outside under an open window and strained to hear what was being said. The next Sunday he returned, but this time he went inside and sat down with other worshippers. He enjoyed hearing about God. But then a disappointment caused him to stop attending.

Finding God Step by Step

Later he learned of another church that met near his home. He visited and was welcomed warmly. He invited his parents to join him, and they went. Eventually the family joined this church.

Manassé was just 15, but his zeal for sharing God's love with others led many to join the church. He loved God's Word and found many new truths as he read. When he learned that some foods

are unclean, he stopped eating them. He gave up impure drinks and stopped talking foolishly. Though many people gave their lives to God through his witness, members of one church refused. They were Adventists, and he hated that they felt they knew more than he did about God. He wished he could teach them the errors of their ways.

Destroying Heresy

One day as Manassé passed the Adventist church, he stopped and walked around the building. Through a window he saw some literature lying on a table. *If I take those papers, no one else will be deceived by their heresy*, he thought. He opened the window and crawled inside, grabbed the papers from the table, and took them home. He would read them to understand their lies before he destroyed them.

But before he could read them, an Adventist neighbor visited him and offered to study the Bible with him. Manassé agreed, sure that he could show this man the errors of his ways. But as they studied together, Manassé realized that the Adventists follow the Bible and not heresy, as he had thought. He

realized that some things he thought were Bible truths weren't there at all! His own church believed lies!

Manassé determined to fast and pray to know which church taught the truth. He sought a quiet place to pray and walked toward a mountain. He passed by the Adventist church and saw that it was open. He slipped inside and knelt to pray. He continued praying every day for months before he realized that in spite of his feeling about Adventists, God was leading him to the Adventist Church. And so he obeyed and began attending worship with the "hated" Adventists. As he saw the evidence that this was God's true church, he put aside his prejudice and joined the same church from which he had stolen the literature.

Daring to Be a Daniel

Manassé shared his new faith with his classmates at school and received permission to hold a Bible study group at the school.

About this time the teachers were pressing the school to hold classes on Saturdays to prepare students for national exams. Manassé remembered Daniel's faithfulness and claimed the promise that God would stand with him as He had stood with Daniel. He refused to attend classes on Saturdays, and eventually he was expelled from the school. When his parents were told, they sent their son away from home.

Manassé stayed with an Adventist family until a pastor living near an Adventist boarding school offered to let him live with his family and study at the school. God had answered his prayers.

Reconciled

Manassé did well in school and

returned home to visit his parents during school break. They were amazed at how strong and tall and confident their son had become. When he told them that he was attending an Adventist school and doing well, his father asked forgiveness for sending him away.

Manassé's parents paid his school fees so he could continue his studies at the Adventist school, and he graduated with high marks. He returned home and taught his younger brothers and sisters the faith he loved. They now attend church with him.

Because of Manassé's faithfulness, his brothers and sisters don't have the same Sabbath problems their older brother had. Because of his faith, the Adventist Church is now well known in his area. Manassé encourages those who face difficult situations to stand firm for God. "God stands at our side, and no one can remove us from His hand," he says.

Our mission offerings support the work in Burundi and throughout east-central Africa. 🌍

MISSION POST

- While Burundi has a relatively high percentage of Adventists (one person out of every 78 is Adventist), most of the believers live in rural areas.
- The capital city, Bujumbura, is the largest city, with about 325,000 residents. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help expand the Church's small medical clinic into a fully functioning hospital that can minister to residents and national leaders and point hurting people to the Savior



THE DAUNTING TASK



February 6 | Mr. and Mrs. Zephyrin Bizabalimana

Zephyrin [ZEF-rihn] walked up the mountainside, breathing in the fresh scent of the eucalyptus forest. The morning sounds—crowing roosters, chattering children, bleating goats—reached his ears as he walked past a small village. He greeted a man walking toward his farm, homemade hoe slung over his shoulder.

Zephyrin, 29, is a Global Mission pioneer in the hills of northern Rwanda. Although Rwanda has one of the highest ratios of Adventists, some areas still have no believers. When he first came to this district two years earlier, he'd found just three Adventists.

Teaching to Reach

Zephyrin studied the people's needs, searching for a way to make friends for Jesus. He asked the chief for permission to teach adults to read and write. The chief agreed and gave him three rooms to use. Then he invited people to attend the classes.

Zephyrin was surprised when 126 people showed up for class. Armed with only a blackboard and some chalk, he began teaching several groups of adults. Eight months later most of the people

could read and write at least a little. He formed new groups to study advanced reading and writing. When these groups graduated, they could read the Bible in their own language.

Zephyrin started and ended class with prayer, and bit by bit he told the class members about God. When they asked, he explained the Bible truths to them. As interest increased, Zephyrin arranged to hold evangelistic meetings. And the people came.

Surprising Turnout

About 500 people came to the first meetings. Zephyrin taught them for two weeks and then followed up with visits for a month. He held another two-week series of meetings and a one-month follow-up. He repeated this six times for a total of nine months, all the while continuing to teach literacy classes. With each series of meetings, the attendance grew.

And the people responded. Almost 200 were baptized in the first baptism. One man was a fortune-teller who earned a living consulting the traditional gods. He brought his wife to the church. Another man was a

religious teacher in another church. Most of the members of his former church followed him.

Rosette, the wife of the local school headmaster, was one of the first to ask to be baptized. Zephyrin was concerned that her baptism would make her husband angry, for he hadn't attended the meetings. But he attended her baptism and said, "Who knows that maybe I will be baptized too?"

The headmaster kept his promise and was baptized during the next series of meetings. He has invited some of the church's new singing groups to present programs in his school. He hopes to generate some interest in the Adventist faith near the school and start another group of believers there.

FAST FACTS

- Rwanda lies directly north of Burundi and between Uganda, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Like Burundi, Rwanda is a small country with a high population, with almost 10 million people.
- Rwanda is a hilly country with farms on all but the most rugged land. During the growing season Rwanda looks much like a green patchwork quilt has been tossed across the landscape.
- The equator runs just north of Rwanda, but, because of the country's elevation, it maintains a temperate climate year round.
- The capital and largest city is Kigali, with a population of 656,000.

Busier than Ever

Zephyrin was busier than ever. He continued teaching literacy classes while he held evangelistic meetings, visited interested families, and conducted the early-morning worship services and Sabbath services. And God continued to bless. Within a year the number of believers grew from three to 300!

The church's mission headquarters purchased some land on which to build a church. They provided cement for the foundation and metal sheets for the roof for a church to seat 500. The believers are buying the burnt bricks to build the walls.

Zephyrin continued his evangelism and his baptisms. Today the church has 439 members plus many children and visitors. In addition, several smaller groups have formed in neighboring locations.

One new member, a widow, lived three miles [five kilometers] down the hill from the new church site. She loves God's truths, but the church was too far for her to walk, and there's no public transportation. So she offered a piece of land on which to build a simple chapel. Some 70 people now attend the church built on her land, most of whom are members of the mother church. Visitors from the nearby village often stop by to ask about the church or to worship with the believers. Following recent evangelistic meetings, the membership grew to 90.

God has children throughout Rwanda who haven't yet heard that He is coming soon. Your mission offerings help support Global Mission and other church planting efforts. Thank you for giving so others may hear. 🌍



THE LOST CHILD

February 13 | Prince Bahati

Denise!” her mother called. “Come!” Her mother grabbed the little girl’s hand and pulled her toward home. “Soldiers! They’re coming! We must hide!” Denise didn’t understand her mother’s words, but she felt her mother’s fear. Denise saw her father tying a bundle.

Fleeing From Death

The little family ran down the dusty trail that quickly became crowded with people fleeing for their lives. It was 1994.

They walked for hours, hiding in the tall grass or the small forests when someone thought soldiers were nearby. At last the family reached the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo where they could stop and rest.

The family settled into a refugee camp made of lean-tos and plastic tarps that offered a little shelter from the hot sun and the pounding rain. But at least they were safe—they thought.

Suddenly Alone

Then men with knives and guns entered the camp, and people screamed and fled. Denise ran too. But where were Mama and Papa? Denise followed

the crowd, calling for her parents. But no one answered.

Weary, Denise sat down to rest. A man offered to carry her on his shoulders. She felt safe. But then he became tired and put her down. “Come,” he called as he walked on up the road.

Suddenly the sound of gunfire and screams tore the air. Denise scampered off the road and hid until the shooting stopped. Then she joined others seeking safety. She saw people lying on the road. Then she saw him—the man who had carried her. He was lying so still. Somehow Denise understood that he was dead.

Denise walked on, blindly following the other people. Sometimes she called out, “Mama, Papa,” but never heard an answer. Denise found a family who allowed her to stay with them in exchange for work. She suffered their abuse. She fled the home and found an orphanage where she could stay.

She heard that the fighting was over, and she wanted to go home and find her parents. But where was home?

Long Walk Home

Denise remained in the orphanage

until she was old enough to leave. Then she began the long walk back to Rwanda. She slept in the bush at night. As she walked she often asked God why He had made her suffer so much. She didn't hear God answer, but when she grew discouraged and hungry, people shared their food with her and gave her hope to keep walking.

A New Family

At last Denise arrived in northwestern Rwanda. There she met a kind man and his wife who befriended her. When she told them her story, they urged her to stop wandering and stay with them. They invited her into their home and shared their food. They treated her well and spoke to her with love. They told her about Jesus and how much He loves her. She learned that they were Seventh-day Adventists.

FAST FACTS

- Rwanda is a small but densely populated country in east-central Africa. Kigali, the capital city, has a population of 656,000.
- Three fourths of the people in Rwanda live outside the cities on small farms scattered throughout the hilly region. Principal crops are sweet potatoes, beans, bananas, corn, grains, and fruits, which provide the families' primary source of food.
- The two main people groups in Rwanda are the Tutsi and the Hutu. In 1994 war broke out between these groups, and almost a million people died. Thousands fled to refugee camps, where they remained for years before returning to their homeland.

Denise loved these people who wanted to help find her family. But when they found no living relative, they asked Denise's permission to adopt her. She agreed. At last she had a home again and someone to care for her.

The couple often talked to Denise about God. They introduced her to Jesus, and soon she accepted Him as her Savior.

The Search for Family

But often at night Denise wondered about her birth family. Her adoptive father took Denise to Kigali [kee-GAH-lee], the capital city. He introduced her to the manager of the Adventist radio station, the Voice of Hope Radio, and there she told her story. The announcer invited anyone who knew anything about Denise to call in.

Denise learned that her father had died in a refugee camp. But she never learned what had happened to her mother. She learned that she has other relatives in Rwanda, and one day she would like to meet them. But she is torn. She loves her adoptive parents and the God they taught her to love. "They have given me spiritual roots and a hope for the future," she says.

Although her earthly father is dead, Denise knows that her heavenly Father loves her unconditionally. It is He who kept her alive as she wandered across several countries in search of a home and a family. "So many people perished during the genocide, and yet God preserved me," she says. "He saved me when I didn't even know Him, and He brought me from death to new life in Jesus."

Our mission offerings help bring new life to those who wander in darkness. Thank you for sharing. 🌍



BECOMING SOMEBODY FOR GOD



February 20 | Alphonse Mugirianeza

[Ask a man to present this first-person report.]

My name is Alphonse [ahl-FOHN-she], and I live in Rwanda. One of my friends in primary school was a Seventh-day Adventist. We often talked about God, and we even studied the Bible together. After he moved away, I continued to read the Bible. I found things there that I didn't understand, and I had lots of questions but no one to ask.

Later when some other Adventist friends invited me to attend their church, I went. The pastor's sermon answered my questions. I continued attending the church, and accepted Jesus as my Savior. I was about 15.

Tests and Trials

My mother had just died, and when my father learned that I was attending the Adventist church he told me to stop going. I was a teenager, still under my father's rule. But I knew that I had to make my own decision about my faith. He finally allowed me to go to church, but he refused to let me share my faith with him. He warned me that if I joined the Adventist Church, I would have to

find someplace else to live.

Then my father became sick. I assured him that God loved him, and he often overheard me praying for him by name. His attitude toward God and my faith changed. He said I could be baptized into the Adventist Church.

I asked my father to let me call the local church elder to pray for him. He agreed, and the local elder and several other church members came to visit Dad. They spoke to my father and asked if he believed in Jesus. My father nodded. They prayed for him, and that day he accepted Jesus as his Savior. Three days later he died.

Sudden Responsibility

Suddenly I was the teenage head of our household, with a younger brother and sister to care for. Shortly after Father's funeral, I took the national school exams that allowed me to go on to high school. God blessed me, and I passed, in spite of my troubles.

My brother and sister went to live with friends, but I felt responsible to pay their school fees. I was still in school,

and I saw no way to earn money while I was studying. So I quit school and joined the army. I wasn't comfortable being a soldier, but the pay helped my brother and sister stay in school.

After three years in the army I was released and returned home to pick up my life. I had many financial difficulties, but I completed high school. My friend, the church elder, helped me. After I graduated he urged me to go to Kigali [kee-GAH-lee], the capital city, to work.

I found work as a carpenter's helper and then as a security guard. My employer allowed me to study at the Adventist university during the day and work as a guard for him at night. In this way my wages paid my school fees. But then my employer returned to his home in Kenya, and suddenly I had no job. Without work I couldn't continue my studies.

MISSION POST

- The Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) was established in Rwanda in 1984 to serve the entire French-speaking region of Africa.
- Following the genocide in 1994, the region where the university was located remained unstable, and the government eventually took over the school campus and gave the church a piece of land in Kigali, the capital city, and compensatory funds with which to rebuild the university.
- Today the university has just one large building that houses classrooms and administrative offices. But it serves more than 2,200 students, the majority of whom are not Adventists.

God Provides

I asked my friends to pray with me that God would allow me to continue my studies. They encouraged me, saying that God is faithful if we trust Him. I remembered how God had provided before, and I clung to His promises.

My friends suggested that I tell the dean of students about my problems. The dean listened and prayed with me. Then he arranged for me to work as a security guard while I continue my studies.

I live with several friends in a small room near the campus. My job pays just enough to cover my tuition and rent. I pray a lot about money for books and food, and God always provides. Some days I eat only one meal a day to make my meager funds go as far as possible. But when I need it most, God provides the funds.

I am studying to earn a degree in education so I can fulfill God's calling for me to teach. Although I struggle, God is blessing me. I have passed every class I've taken. Through prayer and faith I am seeing my impossible dream of an education coming true before my eyes.

Appeal

The Adventist University of Central Africa, where I study, is building a new campus in the capital city, Kigali, following the destruction during the genocide. More than 2,200 students study here, many of whom are not Adventists. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete the campus church-multipurpose center, a central part of the campus. Thank you for helping build this university that ministers to so many who don't know Jesus as we do. 🌍



BROTHERS BOUND BY GOD

February 27 | Pierre, Deo, Esdras

Pierre stumbled down the red-dirt road, following others who walked in front of him. He didn't know where he was going, but he knew that he had to get away from the death that pursued him.

Pierre was 9 years old when the Rwandan genocide took the lives of 800,000 Rwandans and destroyed his life as he had known it. Pierre's father, a pastor, had gathered his nine children together and told them solemnly, "I don't know what will happen. If you live, you must remain faithful to God. Remember the Sabbath. Remember your faith."

When soldiers came, the family fled to the church for refuge. But the soldiers set fire to the church. Pierre could still smell the smoke, could still hear the screams of those dying around him. Somehow he had managed to escape the building and flee without being shot. But what had happened to his family? He didn't know.

Pierre followed others who fled to neighboring Burundi. He survived in a refugee camp until he was told that it was safe to return to Rwanda. Once again he walked the dusty road, this time toward his home.

He found his town. He found a pile of ashes where his church had been. He found bones. Somehow he knew that only he had survived. He was alone. His father's words rang in his heart: "Stay faithful to God, no matter what."

New Hope, New Sorrow

Pierre's aunt, who lived in neighboring Uganda, came searching for his family. She took Pierre home to live with her. Together they built a new life. Over time the sharp pain of his loss became a dull ache. His faith in God grew stronger. Then, without warning, his aunt died in an accident. Once more Pierre was alone. He was 14 and didn't know what to do or where to turn. All he had was his faith.

The Rwandan government provided free education to genocide survivors, and someone helped Pierre enroll in high school. He shared a room with two other boys, Esdras [EHS-drahs] and Deo [DEH-oh], who had lost their families in the genocide, too. The three boys became as brothers, bound together by loss and tragedy.

Pierre finished high school and was awarded a full scholarship to study at

a national university in Rwanda. But he turned down the offer. He wanted to study at the Adventist university in Kigali [kee-GAH-lee], even though his genocide survivor benefits wouldn't pay all his costs. "You're crazy!" his friends told him. "Take the scholarship!"

But Pierre refused to listen. He wanted to study at the Adventist university. "God will provide," he told them. When Esdras and Deo realized how determined Pierre was to enroll in the Adventist university, they applied to study there as well. They were, after all, brothers.

The boys were accepted at the Adventist university. They share a small room in a house near the university. The boys pool their money, but they never have enough for proper food. Even so, sometimes they share their meager food with others who have even less.

The Difference Is Jesus

Esdras and Deo noticed differences between their former teachers

and the staff and students at the Adventist university. The teachers at the university were personally interested in the students' needs and shared their concerns. They counseled them and prayed with them. Prayer was not just a formality; it was the lifeblood of the school.

Pierre invited Esdras and Deo to join him at worship services on Sabbath and during the week. Larger worship services were held in an open stadium on the campus, for there was no church building in which to worship. But still they went. Before long the boys began to understand why God was so important in Pierre's life.

During a recent Week of Prayer at the school, Esdras and Deo gave their lives to God and are preparing for baptism. Pierre rejoices that the brothers once bound by tragedy are now brothers bound by a faith in God that is stronger than death.

Like Pierre and his friends and thousands of others who survived the genocide in Rwanda, the Adventist University of Central Africa is rising from the destruction as well. The government took over the original university campus, which was located in a still unstable region of Rwanda. They gave the church land on a hilltop in Kigali, the capital city, and funds to help rebuild the campus. Today 2,200 students are studying at the still-unfinished university. More than half of these students are not Adventists.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete a church multipurpose building on the campus, providing students with a place to worship and share their faith with others who, like they, are learning that God cares deeply for them. 🌍

MISSION POST

- The Adventist University of Central Africa is located in Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda. It serves more than 2,200 students, most of whom are not Adventists. But its ministry is hampered by a lack of a central meeting hall in which to hold worship and other large meetings.
- Last year a new church multi-purpose building was begun on campus to meet this pressing need. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete this building that will minister to all the students regardless of their faith.



FINDING CHRIST IN A REFUGEE CAMP



March 6 | Laurent Hagumakwiha

Like many people in Rwanda, Laurent's [loh-RAWN] life was turned upside down during the 1994 ethnic fighting that came to be known as the genocide. He had been a secondary school teacher, when he and his family fled the violence.

They made a temporary home in a refugee camp. Laurent's family looked to him for leadership and financial support. With no schools in the refugee camp in which to teach, he made a living by selling homemade beer.

Laurent's conscience bothered him when he sold the beer. He asked God for another means to earn money.

Unexpected Discovery

He met a woman in camp who wanted to talk to him about God. When she told him that Saturday was the Sabbath, God's holy day, Laurent argued that Sunday was the Lord's day. She gave him a copy of *The Great Controversy*. "Read this," she said.

Laurent read the book and was amazed to discover Bible truths he had never known. In its pages he discovered God's love expressed in new and beautiful ways, the plan of salvation

through Jesus, and the promise of His second coming. This book convinced Laurent that the woman had been right.

Laurent's life changed. He stopped drinking—and selling—beer and gave up other unhealthful habits.

Laurent learned that this woman was a Seventh-day Adventist. He had known other Adventists in Rwanda, but he had dismissed them as ignorant people who didn't know anything. Suddenly he realized that these people knew more about God than he did!

The woman invited him to worship with their group of believers on Sabbath, and he went. He continued worshipping with this group and asked to be baptized.

But Laurent was disappointed. "I thought that when my sins were washed away in baptism I wouldn't sin anymore," he explained. "But I soon realized that I was still a sinner with the same struggles as before."

Laurent realized that his fellow believers also were not perfect. He prayed and searched God's Word for answers to his questions. He found peace in knowing that he was following God's will for his life.

Building a New Life

Laurent and his family made their way back to Rwanda. There he found an Adventist church. The members welcomed him warmly.

He found a job teaching in a Protestant secondary school in another village. Laurent learned that some Adventist children attended his school. He arranged to meet with the children on Sabbath, but the school refused to allow the Adventist children off the campus to worship or to let them share their faith with anyone. And Laurent was not allowed to bring his family onto the school grounds to worship with the students. So he worshipped with his family at home and then went to the school to lead the Adventist children in their worship.

Laurent shared his faith with others in the village. And in time they held evangelistic meetings outdoors on a hillside. It was the rainy season, and Laurent prayed that God would hold back the rain during the meetings. “Often the clouds hung heavy, and we could see the rain in the distance, but God held back the rain,” Laurent says. Following the meetings 19 people were baptized.

With the help of the local mission, the little group of believers bought the piece of land on which the evangelistic meetings had been held. Although they still don’t have a church, they held other evangelistic meetings on the site. Following those meetings 60 people were baptized.

Praying to Serve

Laurent wanted to do more for God. He felt God calling him to return to school and prepare to become a minister. In faith he and his wife agreed that he should leave his family behind in the village, where his wife teaches, and enroll in the Adventist University of Central Africa to study theology.

Laurent doesn’t know exactly how God will provide for him and his family while he studies, but he knows that God has a thousand ways to provide. “I know God wants me to work for Him, and He won’t let us down,” he says.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a church multipurpose building on the campus of the Adventist University of Central Africa. More than 2,000 young people, many of whom are not Adventists, are training at this university. Our offering will help reach them with God’s message of love. 🌍

MISSION POST

- Following the genocide, the government of Rwanda has worked to bring equality and normalcy to the lives of its citizens. Children who lost their parents during the genocide have the right to free education through university level, paying only for their lodging. Thus thousands have hope for a brighter future.
- Students who attend one of the dozens of Adventist elementary and secondary schools or the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) also have the opportunity to meet the Savior as they prepare for the future.
- Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete a church multipurpose building on the campus of AUCA.



KENYA



CHOSEN OF GOD

March 13 | Hannah Kanini

The moment you choose to follow those Adventists, you will cease to be my wife!” Hannah’s husband’s angry words pierced her heart, but she remained quiet.

Trouble at Home

For 15 years Hannah had served as a pastor with her husband in a town outside of Nairobi, Kenya. Her ministry was fruitful and filled with joy. People respected her and the work she was doing for God. But trouble was brewing within her family.

Her husband became jealous of her work. One day when she went to the church headquarters to receive her pay, she was told that she had resigned her position and no longer worked for the church. Hannah was stunned. She realized that her husband must have written the letter of resignation to force her from the ministry.

Hannah returned home and tried to be a caring wife. But her husband became more demanding. He refused to give her money to buy food. She became depressed. Feeling like an outcast, she quit attending church.

Crisis of Faith

Hannah needed to get away and pray. She didn’t have enough money to take a bus, so she walked. Without food to eat, she became weak. A pastor friend found her and took her to his home where his wife fed her. There they prayed together for three days. Then Hannah returned home.

As Hannah walked toward her home, she heard someone preaching in an outdoor market. She stopped to listen. The man’s words touched her deeply, and she followed along in her Bible. Although she had been a pastor, she had never heard these things before. And yet there they were in her Bible. She couldn’t deny that what she heard was the truth.

When the service ended, Hannah started toward home, deep in thought. Suddenly she heard a voice behind her. “You, chosen of God, stop!” Hannah turned to see the man who had just preached.

“I saw you while I was preaching,” he said. “God showed me that I must speak to you. That’s why I called you ‘chosen one.’”

Hannah realized that God was

answering her prayers for help. The man invited her back to the meetings, and Hannah agreed to come. Then she walked home.

Hungry to Know

To her surprise Hannah learned that her husband and children had been attending the same meetings she had just attended. The family continued attending the meetings. A conviction grew in Hannah's heart that no matter what happened, she must obey God and follow the truths that the pastor so clearly outlined.

The next day she went to find the pastor and talk about spiritual things. She explained that she too was a pastor, but that the pastor's sermons had stirred a hunger to know more. They talked for two hours about God's will, about the

Sabbath, and about other truths that were new to Hannah.

Hannah's husband continued to attend the meetings until the pastor presented the Sabbath message. Then he quit going. Sensing Hannah's desire to follow God completely, he threatened her. "The moment you follow those Adventists, you will cease to be my wife!"

Hannah said nothing, but she knew that she would join these people who obeyed *all* of God's truths, no matter what it cost her. The truths she was learning were freeing her from the spiritual chains she had been bound with for so long. She decided to take her stand and become a baptized member of the Adventist Church.


Again her husband threatened her. "If those people are going to baptize you, let them be your husband."

Fleeing to Freedom

Life at home became intolerable. Hannah was forced to take her children and flee to her parents' home. The Adventist pastors visited her there and shared the truths she had learned to love with her family.

Soon they held evangelistic meetings in her parents' village. Thirty people were baptized, including Hannah's parents. Hannah's father donated land for a church. Today 60 people worship in that village.

Today Hannah is working as a Global Mission pioneer in the village where she once pastored. The work is difficult, but Hannah continues to share God's love and the truths that changed her life.

Your mission offerings help support the work of Global Mission pioneers such as Hannah who are teaching others God's saving message. 

FAST FACTS

- Kenya lies on the eastern coast of Africa. The official languages are English and Swahili, a trade language used primarily in Kenya and Tanzania to the south.
- Kenya is home to the East-Central Africa Division, which also includes the countries of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, and Tanzania.
- Some 2.4 million Adventists live in eastern Africa, or one person for every 119 people. The division serves people from hundreds of ethnic and language groups. However, the three most-used languages are English, French, and Swahili, the trade language of eastern Africa.



KENYA



THE CHILD BRIDE

March 20 | Christine Kamwanga

When 8-year-old Christine returned home with her father's cattle, she sensed excitement in the air. Her mother and aunties were chatting as they prepared food for a feast. Christine's older sister was getting married.

Christine is a Maasai [mah-SAI] girl who lives on the plains of southern Kenya. The Maasai people are nomadic, cattle-herding people.

Every morning before dawn Christine let the cattle out of their thorn-bush enclosure and led them out to graze. She wanted to go to school, but her father refused. "Girls don't need to read and write to get married," he said. In the Maasai culture girls are married at about age 13, and sometimes even younger, often to men who are much older and already have several wives.

Substitute Bride

On the day of the wedding feast, Christine brought the cattle home early so she could watch the festivities. She saw the man that her sister was to marry talking to her father. He was almost her father's age and looked angry. Her sister was nowhere around.

Suddenly the man came to her, picked her up, and started toward an old car. Christine cried out in terror, but the man held on to her tightly. He opened the car door and pushed her in. Then he got in, and the car sped off.

Only when the car stopped in front of a small house and the man ordered her out did she realize that her father had given her to be this man's bride instead of her missing sister. Tears welled up in her eyes.

"You're my wife now," he said with a gruff voice. "You will do as I say." The man's mother came out of the hut and told the frightened girl to go fetch water. Christine took the water jug and followed the woman's pointing finger in the direction she should walk.

That night 8-year-old Christine wept bitterly in the darkness. She was frightened and alone. She missed her mother and feared her new mother-in-law. With no warning, she had lost all hope that she would ever get to go to school.

Christine stayed with the man's mother, who treated her cruelly. Every night Christine cried herself to sleep.

Rescued

Several weeks later a woman arrived at the door with a police officer and a children's welfare officer. They took Christine away, and the police officer arrested her husband for marrying a girl who was too young to marry. Christine was frightened, but she was glad to get away from this man and his mother.

As the woman drove across the Kenyan plain, she spoke kindly to Christine. "I'm taking you to school, where you can live and study and be safe from the man who took you from your family," she said. Christine could hardly believe her ears. School! Christine could go to school! She realized that her dreams didn't have to die after all.

When they arrived at the school, the woman took Christine into her home. A few minutes later, her sister entered the room. Christine fell into her sister's

arms and wept for joy. She wouldn't be alone, even at school!

Dream Come True

A few days later Christine started classes. Her sister helped her adjust, and soon she was doing well in her studies. When the school term ended, some of the girls at the school went home for a few days. But the headmistress [principal] explained to Christine that her father was angry with her and her sister, and it wasn't safe for them to go home. So Christine and her sister remained at the school.

The school Christine and her sister attend is an Adventist school for Maasai girls, most of whom have been rescued from early marriages or difficult family situations. The girls learn responsibility and teamwork as they prepare for a future in which they can become whatever they dream. Many of the girls complete high school, and some have gone on to university. Christine would like to be a doctor so she can help her own people.

Christine's father is no longer angry with her and her sister. He's proud of his daughters and what they're becoming. Christine is learning more than just how to be a citizen of the world. She is learning to be a citizen of heaven as well. "Jesus has rescued me from sin and given me hope for a future and a new life that I never dreamed possible before," she says.

The Maasai Rescue and Rehabilitation Center, started by private individuals, now receives help from our mission offerings to rescue girls from unwanted marriages and educate them for a life with Christ. 🌍

FAST FACTS

- The Maasai people are a nomadic, cattle-herding people who live in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. Their cattle are their wealth, and they move from place to place in order to find fresh grazing land.
- Most Maasai live in small houses, called *kraals* or *bomas* (Swahili), made of sticks and plastered with animal dung.
- Few schools exist for the Maasai, and most are many miles from the tiny villages. Parents think that an educated daughter won't make a good wife. Only after a girl proves that she can be more valuable to the family with an education will her parents accept her desire to attend school.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH PROGRAM

OPENING SONG	“Christ for the World,” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 370
WELCOME	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
PRAYER	
PROGRAM	“Building for Tomorrow”
OFFERING	While the offering is being taken, ask the children to sing one or more of the songs that they have learned this quarter.
CLOSING SONG	“Lead Them, My God, to Thee,” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 653
CLOSING PRAYER	

Building for Tomorrow

Participants: Three speakers—a narrator and two reporters. *[Note: participants do not need to memorize their parts, but they should be familiar enough with the material that they do not have to read everything from the script. Practice so that participants can feel comfortable adding inflection where appropriate.]*

Props: A map of the East-Central Africa Division. *[Download the Adventist Mission PowerPoint from the Adventist Mission website, scan the map on the back page of the quarterly, and project it onto a screen, or draw a map on a large sheet of paper.]*

Narrator: This quarter we have focused on the East-Central Africa Division. This region includes the countries of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda. Although the church struggles to get a foothold in some of these countries, 2.4 million Adventists live there. That’s one Adventist for every

119 people, an admirable ratio.

Several countries within this division have suffered civil disturbances in the recent past, including the two countries that will receive part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. While we’re not here to talk about death and destruction, it’s important to know that the church is rebuilding in these nations, and the believers look forward with hope.

Today we will talk about the two smallest countries in continental Africa: Burundi and Rwanda. They lie in the heart of Africa. [*Locate Burundi and Rwanda on the map.*] Although these countries are tiny, they are densely populated. Most of the people live in rural settlements and earn their living farming on small patches of rich volcanic soil.

Our first report comes from Burundi.

Reporter 1: Burundi is a small but densely populated country. Most of the people live in family settlements and farm the land near their homes. Approximately one out of every 78 people in Burundi is a Seventh-day Adventist, and most believers live in these rural settlements. Relatively few Adventists live in the capital city, Bujumbura [boo-juh-m-BOO-rah], a city of about 325,000 people. Yet this city is the center of business, government, and education in the country.

For many years now a small clinic has served the basic health needs in Bujumbura. The clinic is located on prime land in the center of the city. And although it is small, it has attracted the attention of several well-known international organizations that use it for routine medical care for its employees. For years now it's been the dream of the church leaders to expand its services to reach more people in this large city.

Recently the church has been given the go-ahead to build a hospital on the land it owns. Eventually it will include a 60-bed in-patient hospital, an emergency room, intensive care facilities, a maternity ward, and a dental clinic. Part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering

we give today will help complete the first phase of this hospital. It will truly be the right hand of evangelism as it serves the larger community in the capital city of this nation.

Narrator: Rwanda lies directly north of Burundi [*locate Rwanda on the map*]. Three projects will help the believers in that country move forward and build for tomorrow. _____ [*Name of reporter*] will tell us about them.

Reporter 2: Rwanda has one of the highest ratios of Adventists in the world, with one Adventist for every 22 people.

In 1984 the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) opened its doors to serve the French-speaking people of Africa. Located on the side of a mountain an hour outside the capital city, Kigali, it was a beautiful setting for a university. In 1992, 445 students were enrolled.

Then in 1993 the ethnic fighting broke out. The university was closed and students were sent home. The region where the school was located remained politically unstable, and eventually the Rwandan government took it over for a military base. The church was given land in Kigali and a financial compensation that allowed the university to begin building again.

Today the Adventist University of Central Africa has 2,200 students, mostly non-Adventists, even though it has no dormitories, no cafeteria, and only one completed building. The greatest need, according to the university's leadership, is for a meeting hall—a combination church and multipurpose building where large

lectures, worship services, Weeks of Prayer, and other community-building activities can take place.

So urgent is the need for this worship and lecture hall that building began more than a year ago. Our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete the building and help the university move forward as a light on a hill in Rwanda.

In order to continue building a strong church in Rwanda and ensure a bright future, we must focus on the children of the church and the community. While we have several elementary schools in Rwanda, work for children in the local churches often lags behind because of lack of proper training for the children's leaders.

Part of today's offering will help fund training and provide materials to strengthen the church's ministry to children in more than 1,400 Adventist churches across the Rwandan Union.

Narrator: The believers in Rwanda and Burundi are praying that you will help hold up their hands of ministry so that the work may move forward in Africa. And while we are giving to help make these projects a reality, our children are

giving to their own special Thirteenth Sabbath project.

The government of Rwanda, in an effort to educate its youth, pays salaries of teachers in public and private schools, including Adventist schools. This makes education almost free to Rwandan children. However, there are thousands of children who still cannot attend school because their parents lack funds to buy their school uniform. Our children want to make a difference for these children, many of whom are not from Adventist homes and have not heard the message we love.

Funds from the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help purchase up to 1,000 school uniforms for children attending Adventist schools in Rwanda. Our children are excited to make a difference in someone's life. Let's support them in their mission giving as well.

And keep in mind that 25 percent of today's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering goes to these projects. The remaining 75 percent joins the mission offerings taken on the other 12 Sabbaths to support the work of God around the world.

[Offering]

YOUR OFFERINGS AT WORK

Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering three years ago is helping to build this medical clinic at Bugema University in Uganda. It will offer medical treatment not only for students and staff members of the university, but also for the community surrounding the school, which has no other nearby medical facility.



For more information on the cultures and history of east-central Africa, check the travel section of a local library. Visit a travel agency for brochures featuring photos of these countries.

Visit our website for additional photos, recipes, language pages, puzzles, and other activities that you can download and print to make mission more fun for children. Go to www.AdventistMission.org. Click on "Resources" and "Children's Activities" in the pop-up menu. Go to "4th quarter" and select the activity you want.

Adventist Mission DVD is a free video that features stories from the featured countries as well as the worldwide mission of the Adventist Church. Ask your Sabbath School superintendent to make you a copy of it. Or go online at www.AdventistMission.org to download one of the DVD programs.

Embassies and Tourism Offices sometimes can provide interesting information on their country. In North America, contact:

Embassy of Burundi, 2233 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 212, Washington, DC 20007. Telephone: (202) 342-2574. Fax: (202) 342-2578.

Embassy of Kenya, 2249 R. Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008. Telephone: (202) 387-6101. Fax: (202) 462-3829. E-mail: information@kenyaembassy.com; Website: www.kenyaembassy.com.

Embassy of Rwanda, 1714 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009. Telephone: (202) 232-2882. Fax: (202) 232-4544. Website: www.rwandaembassy.org.

Remind members also that the ongoing work of the world church depends on the weekly Sabbath School mission offerings. On the twelfth Sabbath, report on mission giving during the quarter.

FUTURE THIRTEENTH SABBATH PROJECTS

Next quarter the Euro-Africa Division will be featured. Special projects include:

- Multi-ethnic churches in Brussels, Belgium
- A church for the Roma people of Bulgaria
- School in Madeira, Portugal

Third quarter 2010 will feature the Trans-European Division.

MADVENTIST MISSION

FIRST QUARTER 2010
EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION

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East-Central Africa Division



UNION	CHURCHES	MEMBERS	POPULATION
East African	3,946	620,520	46,910,000
East Congo	191	87,134	9,365,000
Ethiopian	812	167,961	79,935,000
Rwanda	1,472	445,556	9,609,000
Tanzania	1,742	406,850	40,213,000
Uganda	811	193,210	29,194,000
West Congo	526	315,321	38,086,500
Burundi Association	257	113,929	8,856,000
Eritrea Mission	3	521	5,006,000
North East Congo	876	123,394	19,063,000

Total 10,636 2,474,396 286,237,500
 (as of December 30, 2008)

PROJECTS

- ① Hospital in Bujumbura, Burundi
- ② Church multipurpose church building, Adventist University of Central Africa, Kigali, Rwanda
- ③ Train children's ministries leaders and provide supplies to teach children, Rwanda
- ④ CHILDREN'S PROJECT: school uniforms for children, Rwanda

