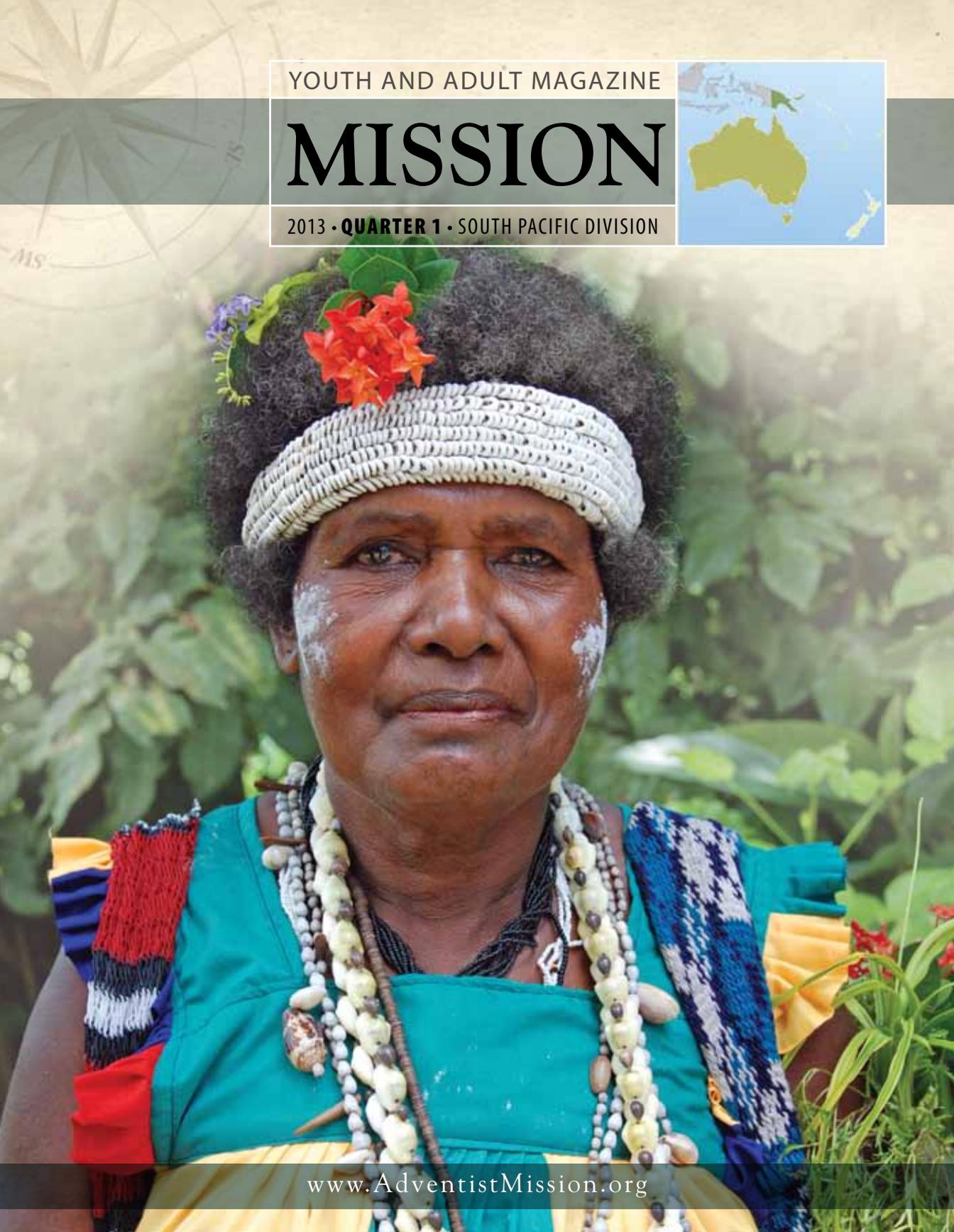


YOUTH AND ADULT MAGAZINE

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 = stories of special interest to teens

Your Offerings at Work



The children of Papua New Guinea and the other islands of the South Pacific say thank you for giving them flipchart pictures to look at as they listen to the Bible stories in Sabbath School. Adults like to listen to the children's Bible stories and see the flipcharts as well.


SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH®

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Dear Sabbath School Leader,

This quarter we feature the South Pacific Division, which includes Australia, New Zealand, and the islands of the Pacific south of the equator, including Cook Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and others.

The Challenges

Almost 37 million people live in this region, including more than 423,000 Adventists. That's a ratio of one Adventist for nearly every 87 people. However, New Zealand and Australia have ratios of one Adventist for about every 400 people. The majority of Adventists live in other island groups, such as Fiji (one Adventist in 32 people), Papua New Guinea (one in 28), the Cook Islands (one in 19), Vanuatu (one in 14) and Solomon Islands (one

in 13). The countries with the highest standard of living tend to have the smallest proportion of Adventists. This creates challenges, not just for reaching those who have not yet been reached, but for financing the work in the rest of the region.

While the ratio of Adventist to non-Adventist is high in many of the island nations, leaders have few resources to nourish their members. Children's leaders have no lesson quarterlies, no felts, and no pictures to hold the children's attention during Sabbath School and impress in their minds God's eternal lessons.

The South Pacific Division is focusing this Thirteenth Sabbath Offering on reaching the people in the island nations of the division through three proven methods: providing medical clinics in isolated regions, audio Bibles and Bible lessons for adults and children on MP3 players (commonly called "God pods"), and 15,000 Bibles in either English or pidgin (the trade language of the island nations) for children, who often are the only members of their families who can read well and who will share God's Word with their parents and extended families.

This quarter we can help reach even more people for Christ by giving a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

Yours for the kingdom,



Opportunities

This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help:

- build clinics in at least four isolated areas in Papua New Guinea
- purchase solar-powered MP3 players ("God pods") for Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu
- provide 15,000 Bibles for children in the islands of the south Pacific to use and share with their families.

An Urgent Need

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | Jan. 5



Kathleen and her husband, Sasa, enjoyed living in the remote village in south-central Papua New Guinea, where Kathleen taught school. But when Sasa began having trouble with asthma, the couple had to walk for hours on the muddy path to the nearest government clinic to get an inhaler to ease Sasa's symptoms.

Desperate Hike for Help

One night Sasa awoke wheezing and gasping for breath. Sasa's inhaler was empty, and Kathleen feared Sasa would die before they could get medical help. At first light the couple set out along the rugged path toward the clinic. They finally reached the clinic late that night, but it was closed. Neighbors told them that the nurse had gone to the provincial capital to collect his pay.

Kathleen feared that the nurse might

not return for several days. And even if he returned quickly, if he didn't have an inhaler Sasa could still die. Their only hope was to journey on toward the hospital in the capital.

They hiked to the only road in the region, hoping to find a public minibus to take them to the hospital, but they were too late. There would be no minibus until morning.

The weary couple came to a small village. They didn't know anyone there, but they stopped a woman and asked if any Seventh-day Adventists lived in the village. She led them to a house where a kind husband and wife welcomed them, fed them, and offered them a place to sleep. Kathleen and Sasa quickly fell into an exhausted sleep. Later Kathleen awoke to a voice. The wife was praying for them. Kathleen praised God for watching out for them, and she dozed off again.

In the morning the couple gave Kathleen and Sasa some food, and her husband led them to where they could catch a public minibus. An hour later one approached and stopped for the couple. When the driver learned how sick Sasa was, he drove them straight to the hospital in the capital city.

Doctors diagnosed Sasa with severe asthma, pneumonia, and malaria. When Sasa was discharged, the couple made their way back to the village.

Critical Caring

Life in remote regions of Papua New Guinea is uncertain. Illnesses that we might consider inconvenient can be life-threatening without medical help. Many people in the isolated mountain villages must journey days to reach medical treatment. Some don't make it.

On the westernmost frontier, the village of Tumolbil sits on the border between Irian Jaya and Papua New Guinea.

Jack grew up in the village, but left to study when he was a young man. While studying he became an Adventist. He returned to his village to share his faith. He was the only Adventist living there. Some people listened to him, but they had never heard of Adventists and were reluctant to commit to a church they hadn't heard of before.

Then fighting broke out along the border, and the government teachers and nurse fled, leaving the locals to fend for

themselves. Malaria, tuberculosis, and pneumonia broke out, killing many.

Jack took a short medical training course and did his best to help his people, but they needed a trained nurse and a better building for a clinic. Recently the clinic has been rebuilt as part of a division-wide effort of the Adventist Church to upgrade medical care in such isolated regions.

Today an Adventist nurse ministers to the villagers. And Jack has turned his attention to sharing his faith. Because the people have seen that Adventists are people who care, they are willing to listen to God's message of love. Today more than 200 villagers in Tumolbil and the surrounding area have accepted Jesus as their Savior and joined the Adventist Church.

Come and Help Us

But many more isolated regions are crying, "Come, and help us!" They still must hike for hours or days over some of the most rugged terrain in the world to carry their sick and wounded to receive medical help.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help provide at least four medical outposts in the most isolated areas of Papua New Guinea. The clinics will be stocked with the equipment the trained nurses need to minister to the needs of the people. And when the people know the Adventists care, they will listen to God's message of love. Their future is, quite literally, in our hands. Let's care as Jesus does and give sacrificially so that they can have life, both physical and spiritual. 

Fast Facts

- Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a mountainous island nation that lies north of Australia. About 6.3 million people live in PNG.
- While the country has several relatively modern cities, most of the people still live in small villages in the mountains, isolated from medical facilities. If someone becomes ill or is injured, they must hike or be carried hours—even days—to the nearest clinic.
- Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build at least four medical clinics in the most isolated regions of PNG.



Joy in the Morning

Wama

Wama and Siong jostled against each other as the bus splashed through shallow rivers, bounced over rocky roads, and slogged through muddy sandbars toward the village at the end of the road.

Wama and Siong had left this village filled with hopes for their future. Siong had found work with a mining company, and the family enjoyed their new life. While living in the highlands of Papua New Guinea, the couple had accepted Jesus into their lives and found greater joy than they had ever known. Now they were returning with heavy hearts, for the vehicle that carried them also carried the coffin of their daughter.

From Death, a New Life

Word had reached the villagers of the girl's death, and the villagers knew that Wama and Siong would bring their daughter home to be buried. Villagers gathered around the vehicle as it entered the village. Wama noted that the village hadn't changed much in the years they had been gone.

After the funeral the family visited their relatives and friends. They shared stories of their home in the highlands. One night as Wama and Siong lay on their sleeping mat listening to the crickets sing, she said softly, "I want to stay here and tell the people what we've learned about God. I want our sorrow to become a cause for joy."

Siong had the same thought. "That's good. I'll come back every chance I get, and as soon as I can, I'll join you. We can reach this village together." So Wama and the couple's 12-year-old son, Gary, remained in the village while Siong returned to work.

Sharing Glad News

Wama and Siong had left their home village to live in the highlands of Papua New Guinea several years earlier. They had known nothing about Adventists until some friendly Adventists invited the couple to attend evangelistic meetings. There they had learned what it meant to be a true follower of Christ, and they'd joined the Adventist Church. Wherever they lived they had found Adventists, but no Adventists lived in their home village. They promised God that they would share their faith in their home village and help

people find a deeper understanding of God's love through Christ.

Most of the villagers call themselves Christians, but few have a personal relationship with Christ. People noticed the couple's devotion to God. They heard the family singing hymns in their wood-and-thatch home. Some began asking questions, and Wama invited them to join her and her son as they worshipped God on Sabbath. And several people come.

Gary began leading the children, telling them Bible stories and teaching them songs about Jesus. He started a children's choir that is drawing a lot of interest, and he invited his school friends to worship.

Help Is Coming!

The couple met Gebob [GEH-bob], a teacher in the nearby city who was born in the village. After he became an Adventist he returned often to the village to share God's love. After ADRA installed

a water supply system in the village, the people realized that Adventists really care about them, and they willingly listen.

Darren, a youth leader in one of the large churches in the city, asked village leaders for permission to bring a team of teens to the village to hold seminars on health and family issues. On the day the youth were to arrive, heavy rains had flooded the riverbeds. Their vehicles couldn't cross the river, so the teens, determined to reach the village, fought their way across the river and walked to the village. They arrived exhausted to find the villagers waiting to listen.

The teens held several seminars that weekend on health and social issues; they included many of God's promises in their presentations. No one could remember meetings so well attended or gratefully received. During the farewell some villagers cried, for this was the first time outsiders had shown such care for them.

Mission Post

- About 6.3 million people live in Papua New Guinea (PNG). They speak more than 800 different languages and dialects.
- Most people who live outside the large cities live in traditional villages made of wood, bamboo, and thatch. They hunt and fish and grow vegetables in small garden plots. A major food source is sago, a tasteless starch made from the heart of a palm tree.
- Medical help is one of the most urgent needs of people living far from urban centers.
- For more on the isolated clinic project in PNG, watch this quarter's Adventist Mission DVD.

A Clinic for the Village

The villagers pleaded for a medical clinic in their village. They explained that they had to walk hours to reach the nearest medical clinic. Without a clinic, the village doesn't receive government medical supplies to treat their most urgent illnesses and injuries.

Plans are under way to build a clinic in this village that will serve several thousand people in the surrounding area as well. It will be staffed by Adventist nurses who will help spread God's messages of love and healing to thousands who've not yet heard.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will bring medical care to people throughout the islands of the South Pacific. Thank you. 🌍

His Mother's Prayers

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | Jan. 19

Enock



Enock slipped into his mother's home and saw her on her knees. *She's praying for me again*, he thought. *She keeps praying that I'll be a pastor. Some pastor I'd make*, he told himself. He wanted to slam the door, but instead he walked quietly to his room.

Ever since Enock's friends had introduced him to alcohol and drugs, his life had been sliding downward. He stopped attending church with his mother and joined his friends when they set out to steal. They even prayed to the devil for success in their robberies. He tried to forget his mother's prayers, but her words and her prayers spun in his head.

A New Hope

Enock had been expelled from three schools for his behavior, but his mother refused to give up on him. She found an Adventist school that would take him, and she sacrificed to send him there.

The chaplain took a special interest in him and prayed for him. At first Enock resented the chaplain's prayers, but in time his heart began to soften. He realized that the life he was living was not the path to happiness.

Some students invited him to join their singing group. At first he went just to hang out with them and watch them practice. But in time he joined in singing songs about God's love and Christ's sacrifice—songs he had not dreamed he would ever sing. Before long he agreed to sing with the group.

The walls that Enock had built around his life began to crumble. Far from his friends who had led him into drugs and theft, he realized he had gone from robbing people to raising funds for the needy! One day while talking to the chaplain, he asked for prayer. That day he confessed his sins and previous life and invited Jesus into his life.

A New Life

Again and again his mother's words reminded him that she had dedicated him to God and the ministry. But doubts filled his heart as he thought of the terrible

things he had done. “Will God really forgive me?” he asked the chaplain.

“God has already forgiven you,” the chaplain said. “He forgave you the moment you asked Him to.”

A smile spread across Enock’s face. “I want to become a pastor,” he said.

The two sat in silence for several minutes. Then the chaplain smiled and said, “If God wants you to become a pastor, He will make a way.” He reached for a paper and gave it to Enock.

Enock stared at the paper. It was an admissions form for the Adventist college. He looked at the chaplain, questions filling his eyes. The chaplain nodded.

Enock began filling out the form. At the question asking for his three fields of interest Enock hesitated. Then he wrote “theology” in all three blanks. Then he stopped. The Adventist university was nearby, and he didn’t want to be around his own friends.

“There is an Adventist school on New Britain Island, far from the capital, Sonoma Adventist College,” his chaplain said as if he’d read the boy’s thoughts. Enock finished the application, and the chaplain mailed it.

A New Beginning

After graduating from high school, Enock visited his family. “I’ve prayed for you all these years,” his mother said. Instead of stiffening in anger as he had for years, he smiled and thanked her. His father and brother noted the changes in him and began attending church. And when Enock met some of his former friends, they were so inspired by his faith that they gave him money to help pay his school fees.

Now when Enock returns home during school breaks, some of his old friends ask him for advice. Enock prays with them and tells them that drugs and alcohol aren’t the answer—that only Jesus can help them.

Enock has found a ministry helping people who are struggling with alcohol, drugs, and spiritual darkness as he once did. He wants others to know that Jesus will forgive them and give them a new start in life, just as He did for him. His prayer for others is similar to his mother’s prayers for him, that they may have new life and new hope through Christ.

Enock thanks God that his mother never gave up praying for him. He thanks God, too, for Adventist teachers and friends who led him to Christ. Our mission offerings support Adventist schools around the world and are one of the most effective mission outreaches we have. Thank you for giving so that others can have a chance to choose Jesus. 🌍

Fast Facts

- Papua New Guinea (PNG) is made up of the eastern half of the island of New Guinea (the western half is part of Indonesia) and dozens of smaller islands surrounding New Guinea.
- Ever since Adventists first began work in PNG, education has been a focus of outreach. Numerous primary, middle, and secondary schools dot the islands. Sonoma Adventist College, located on New Britain Island, and Pacific Adventist University near Port Moresby, the nation’s capital, have been recipients of Thirteenth Sabbath Offerings to help educate Adventist young people for service to God and their country.

So Many Dreams

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | Jan. 26

Angela



I could never become an Adventist,” my father-in-law told me as we stood outside his house and watched some Adventists walk to church. “I like my pork!”

Pigs are an important part of the culture in Papua New Guinea, and my husband’s family owned lots of them. Families butchered pigs for feasts; bride prices often are paid in pigs. And pork is a big part of the local diet.

I wanted to know more about Adventists, about their beliefs and why they went to church on Saturday, but I worried about disrespecting my husband and his family. So I stayed quiet.

The Blue Doors

Then my husband and I went to England to study. Life was so different there. I thought, *There must be Adventists*

in England too. I began looking for an Adventist church. The search was more difficult than I had thought. One day I stopped on the street to pray to find an Adventist church, and when I opened my eyes, I saw a building with blue doors. A notice was pinned to them. To my amazement, it was a sign that announced that an Adventist congregation worshipped there!

The church was tiny, but the people were warm and kind. The pastor invited me to study with him.

I remembered how my husband had complained about all the offerings Adventists gave, and I worried what he would say when I told him I wanted to join the Adventist Church. I wondered if he would be angry that I no longer would eat pork. But when I told him, he was happy!

Another Little Church

When my husband finished his studies, we returned home to Papua New Guinea. I began attending the large Adventist church in town. But I wanted a little chapel in which to worship. So I hired a boy to help me build a little house on our property where I could worship God any time. It was simple, with a thatched roof, and about the size of the little church in England.

When the pastor came to visit, he saw the chapel and offered to dedicate it to God. Eagerly I agreed. I invited the neighbors and my family to join in the dedication. I prepared a huge feast, and the pastor invited a singing group from the big church.

Some of my Adventist neighbors began worshipping with me there, and in time other neighbors came, too. The pastor urged us to hold regular worship services in the chapel, so we did. Sometimes one of the elders from the big church came to speak to us; other times we shared Bible texts and songs of praise. Soon 20 of us were meeting every week in the little church. Without realizing it, we had started a new congregation.

Our little congregation decided to hold evangelistic meetings in our area on a large lot nearby. We were amazed when

1,000 people attended! A number of people had been studying with us, and we planned to baptize them at the end of the meetings. But to my surprise, my husband asked to be baptized as well! I cried with joy. Now we could work together to bring people to God.

Our congregation outgrew that little church, so we took the building apart and built a larger church on the same land. A retired Adventist pastor has come to lead us. We've started another church in a nearby community, and we plan to start two more.

Going Home

But still I wasn't satisfied. I was glad to share God's love with my neighbors, but what about my own family back in the village where I grew up? I started visiting my home village to share the gospel.

"You carried your husband off to church, and now you want to carry us there as well!" my brother said, laughing. "I'll have to move to another village so I can eat my pigs in peace!"

"Then I will build a church in that place," I told him. "You can't run away from God!"

We are giving Bible studies to our friends and neighbors in the village, and soon we will have a new congregation to meet in the new church. But there are other projects brewing as well. A local man has offered to donate land to build a school.

God has given me so many dreams. So many people need to hear about God's gift of love, and my husband and I want to share that gift with them. Your mission offerings help us share God's love in Papua New Guinea in so many ways. Thank you. 🌍

Mission Post

- More than half of South Pacific Division's 423,000 Seventh-day Adventists live in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Some 80 percent live in rural villages. They make a living as subsistence farmers.
- While more than 90 percent of the people in PNG claim to be Christians, many still live under the shadow of ancient worship systems, fearing deities they cannot see.
- Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will provide solar-powered MP3 players that can plant God's Word in the hearts of people who cannot read, even when no pastor or lay worker is present to teach them.

A Boy's Burning Faith

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | Feb. 2

Vahid



he earned the right to wear the bright-yellow neckerchief of a Pathfinder.

Finding Ways to Share

Vahid quickly realized that being a Pathfinder was more than wearing a uniform. He memorized more Bible texts, studied the Pathfinder law and pledge. He learned to be a good citizen and to share his faith with others. “Let’s have family worship!” he told his sister. She nodded, but she was shy about leading. “I’ll lead!” Vahid offered.

That evening Vahid asked his parents if he could have a short family worship each evening. His mother agreed, but his father wasn’t interested. After dinner Vahid called the family together. He read a Bible verse and explained what it meant. Then he prayed. Soon his family met for worship every evening. Vahid read his Bible and Sabbath School lesson every morning before school so he would be prepared for family worship that evening. It felt good leading the family worship.

Vahid’s confidence grew, and when his teacher asked him to lead the class in their twice-a-week religion class, he agreed. Some of the boys teased him, calling him “preacher boy.” But Vahid just smiled and shrugged. Other classmates admired his willingness to lead the class.

Vahid discovered that he loved to sing. He invited some of his friends to join a

Ten-year-old Vahid [vah-HEED] looked up and saw his sister walking toward him. He admired her smart uniform—green skirt, white blouse, and yellow neckerchief. He stood and trotted toward her. “When can I join Pathfinders and wear a uniform like yours?” he blurted.

“You’re old enough to join Pathfinders,” she said, smiling. “Come with me next Sabbath.”

Vahid’s family didn’t attend church, but his aunt took his sister to Sabbath School. Suddenly Vahid felt grown up; he wanted to go with her. On Sabbath his aunt took Vahid to the children’s class, where he eagerly learned the songs and listened to the Bible stories and memorized his Bible text. He hurried home after church to eat so he’d be ready to return to church for Pathfinders. Soon

singing group. He taught them songs he had learned in church, and sometimes they sang during the school worship. Five of the boys began attending church with him.

Buoyed by his success, Vahid formed a neighborhood boys' singing group. At first the boys sang just for fun. But soon they were invited to sing at church and in people's homes as an outreach. "If we can sing, we can do more," they said. And the group named themselves the Soul Seekers and looked for ways to reach out to others. They visited former church members and shut-ins, singing and leading Bible studies.

Tragedy to Triumph

Then Vahid's father got seriously ill. His kidneys were failing, and he needed a transplant. But the family didn't have the money to send him to the Philippines, the nearest country where he could receive treatment for his condition.

Vahid's heart felt heavy. Without a miracle, his father would die. How would the family survive without him?

Vahid's father couldn't work, and with time on his hands, he began reading the Bible. He once had refused to join the family for worship, but suddenly he welcomed their prayers. When he was too ill to join the family, they prayed around his bed. He asked Vahid to invite the Soul Seekers to come sing and pray for him. Joyfully, the boys ministered to Vahid's father.

Vahid's uncle arranged for Father to go to the Philippines for treatment. Vahid felt a ray of hope. But when the tests showed severe kidney failure, hope for a transplant seemed slim. But the family and church members kept praying.

Then good news arrived from the Philippines. A second test showed that

Fast Facts

- Papua New Guinea is one of the most culturally diverse countries on Earth. The rugged mountainous terrain has isolated pockets of people for centuries. Villagers developed their own dialects and often cannot understand their nearest neighbors a day's journey across a steep mountain.
- Children living in many of these villages are the first generation to attend school and learn to read and write. This quarter the children's Thirteenth Sabbath project will help purchase 15,000 Bibles for children to share with their parents. Entire families can be influenced for God by one Bible placed in the home.

Father's kidney function was improving. "God is healing me," Father declared. His family rejoiced. The doctors were skeptical, but further testing showed continued improvement. In time Father's kidneys were functioning at an almost normal level.

Father returned home, and when he felt strong enough, he began attending church with the family. He asked Vahid and his friends to study the Bible with him. Mother joined the Bible studies as well, and one day Vahid's parents announced that they wanted to join the Adventist Church.

Today the family worships together, united in faith and thankful to God for healing Father's body and spirit. Vahid is thrilled that he and his friends were able to play a role in his parents' journey to God.

Our mission offerings help reach thousands of people in Papua New Guinea and across the South Pacific with the message of God's love. Thank you! 🌍



Saving the School

Serah

Serah [SEH-rah] walked slowly toward the sturdy old buildings that make up the Pisik Adventist Primary School. Grass grew through cracks in the concrete and stood knee high around the buildings. Serah had never attended this school, but her parents and her husband had. Her father-in-law had been a pioneer teacher at the school 70 years earlier.

The school had served the people on a tiny island in northern Papua New Guinea. As Serah walked, she thought of the generations of Adventist and non-Adventist children who had studied inside its walls. Then enrollment dropped as Adventists moved away and the locals realized that the public school on a larger island nearby was less expensive. With only one retired teacher and 15 students, the remaining members voted to close the school and invite the government to take over the buildings and start a public school on their island.

“Don’t let the government take over the Adventist school,” Serah’s father-in-law pleaded.

Rescue Plan

Serah’s heart ached for the school that had meant so much to so many. But what could she do? She and her family lived on a larger island not far away. She had a good job as a high school English teacher, and her children were doing well in school.

But she could not stop thinking about the mission school. She prayed about it every day, asking God what to do. She became convinced that God was asking her to return to the little island and save the Adventist school. It sounded crazy, even to her, to take her children out of a good school and forfeit her retirement benefits to accept a job for which she wouldn’t be paid. But she couldn’t deny God’s call.

She resigned her job and told the mission she would come as a volunteer teacher. The family packed their belongings and moved back to her home island. They settled into one of the vacant staff houses and planted a garden to provide food for the family. Serah’s

children had studied in top schools; now they would study in the lowest-rated school in the province. But Serah's faith was contagious, and the children believed in their mother's calling and God's power to meet their needs.

Learning From God

Every morning Serah awoke at 3:00 to ask God for instruction. The school fees were lowered, and volunteers began repairing the school buildings. Soon a few parents returned to enroll their children in the school. When people saw how much the school had improved, others returned.

For three years Serah worked tirelessly to improve the school's curriculum. Test scores rose from last place in the province to fourth place. People asked how this could happen.

Serah knew the answer. God had taught her. As an English teacher, she knew the importance of teaching English—reading, writing, and speaking. Government exams were given in English, and if the students didn't excel in English, they couldn't do well on the exams. She used several methods. One was to ask the students to

read a passage from the Bible each day. When they found a verse that spoke to their hearts, they were to copy it into their exercise books. The students' writing improved greatly. One 14-year-old student learned to write English in just two months and was able to take the national exam with his class. He scored high enough to continue on to high school.

Continuing Education

Serah's success in reviving the little mission school has led her to return to school herself. She's studying at Pacific Adventist University, where her thesis explores the importance of teaching English, the language of education in Papua New Guinea, at an earlier age in schools across the island nation. Her advisors believe that her research will make a major contribution to the education system in the country.

Serah is convinced that children who use the English Bible as one of their textbooks learn English faster and better than those who don't use it. She has seen firsthand that reading the Bible helps the students master the language. And she knows that it helps them grow spiritually as well.

Mission Post

- Many families in the South Pacific don't own a Bible. Parents often can't read or write well, and Bibles aren't available in every dialect. But a child who is studying English in school can read the Bible to their parents. In this way a single Bible in the home blesses entire families.
- Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help purchase Bibles for the islands of the South Pacific. Each Bible costs about US\$10.

Meeting a Great Need

Many children in Papua New Guinea come from families who cannot afford to buy a Bible. This quarter our children are raising money to help children in Papua New Guinea and across the South Pacific have a Bible they can read and explore. A Bible in a child's hands influences the entire family. Help our children give a great offering this Thirteenth Sabbath in order to buy 15,000 Bibles for the children across the South Pacific. 🌍



Run Away to God

Andrew

Six-year-old Andrew wandered down the steps of his parents' bamboo-and-thatch home in Papua New Guinea. The warm breeze pushed clouds across the blue sky of his mountain village. Andrew picked up a stick and swatted the wildflowers that grew in clusters surrounding his home.

"Andrew!" A voice called. Andrew whirled around and froze as he gazed at a man with a bright face and silver hair. The man seemed to float above the ground. And he had wings!

Andrew called out, "Papa! Papa! Come and see!"

Andrew's father ran to where the boy stood. "Look over there, above the bushes!" Andrew said, pointing. Papa squinted, but he saw nothing. "It's an angel," Andrew said, his eyes wide with wonder.

"Andrew," the angel's voice called again. "Get dressed and go to church." Andrew looked at his bare feet. When he looked up again, the angel was gone.

Papa went inside, and Andrew followed.

He grabbed his clean shirt and pulled it over his head as he ran out the open doorway toward the Adventist church. Andrew slowed as he approached the little Adventist church. He had never been there before, but he was sure this was the church the angel meant when he had said, "Go to church."

He entered the church and sat down on a wooden bench. Several families were singing praises to God. Something about being in that simple church touched him deeply, and he felt at home.

Surprise Opposition

After the worship service Andrew hurried home. His father met him, a stern look on his face. "Where have you been?" he asked.

"I went to church, like the angel said," Andrew answered, puzzled at his father's anger.

"Do *not* go to that church again!" his father said, his words punctuated with a swat across Andrew's back.

But the next Saturday Andrew remembered the bright-faced angel's command. He slipped out of the house and ran up the muddy path to the little thatch church. He returned home to another stern lecture and a beating. *What did I do wrong?* he wondered, tears spilling down his face.

After Andrew's third beating, he stopped attending the Adventist church and worked with his parents in the family's garden. But he didn't forget the angel's command, "Go to church."

Andrew's village had no school. One day Andrew announced that he was leaving home to attend school. His parents allowed him to go. He walked for miles to another village where he could study. An Adventist family took him in. He tended their garden and went to church with them on Sabbath.

Andrew completed just two years of school before he had to stop studying. His adopted family helped him understand what it meant to follow Jesus.

Called to Serve

Years passed, and Andrew grew to adulthood. He wanted to serve God, but he had so little education. One day a pastor visited Andrew. During their talk the pastor suggested that Andrew attend the lay workers' Bible school.

Andrew hung his head. "I can't," he said. "I've had only two years of studies." The pastor returned and again invited Andrew to study at the Bible school. After a third invitation, Andrew agreed to pray about it. As he prayed, he realized that God was indeed calling him to prepare to become a lay pastor. "Help me," he begged God.

The next day Andrew met two strangers in the village. He offered them some simple food. After eating, Andrew asked them why they had come to his village. "We came to see you," one man said. "God has called you to serve Him, and we will help you."

Only after the men had gone on their way did Andrew realize that he hadn't mentioned his plans to study at the

Mission Post

- The South Pacific Division has some 423,000 believers. More than half of them live in the islands that make up Papua New Guinea.
- Many people living in the island nations of the South Pacific can't read well. But they are eager to hear God's message. One way to hear is by using MP3 players that contain the Bible and some children's Sabbath School lesson materials in pidgin, the local trade language.
- Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help provide hundreds of MP3 players, or "God pods," so that more people can hear God's message of love.

Bible school or his prayer for God's help. *Surely God sent these men to encourage me*, he thought.

The next day his sister brought Andrew an English Bible. Andrew couldn't read English, but he knew that he would have to learn to succeed in school. He opened the Bible and stared at the letters that seemed more like a line of ants crawling across the page. But as he watched, he began to recognize words that he could understand! Andrew realized that God was preparing him to serve.

Andrew completed the Bible school program and now works as a lay pastor in a mountain village in Papua New Guinea. He loves to share how God has led in his life from the time he was a boy.

Thanks to our mission offerings over the years, the land of Papua New Guinea has proven fruitful. Almost 250,000 Adventist believers live and share their faith here. 🌐

The Bridge That God Built

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | Feb. 23

Maye



Pastor Frank carefully descended the steep mountainside toward the raging river in the gorge below. He was on his way to hold meetings in a mountain village in the heart of Papua New Guinea. Because there are no roads in the area, the only way to reach the village was to follow the narrow path.

Pastor Frank reached the bottom of trail and made his way to the bridge that crossed the torrent. The bridge was not made of steel or even wood, but had been woven from bush vines. Pastor Frank was used to such bridges, and he crossed the river without trouble.

When word reached the village that the pastor was coming, happy church members ran to greet him. With 21 other churches in his district, Pastor Frank didn't get to each village often.

A tropical rain fell most of Sabbath, but it didn't hamper the villager's high spirits. Pastor Frank taught them Bible truths, baptized new believers, married couples who had been waiting months, and dedicated babies that had been born since his last visit.

The Dangerous Trip Home

When it came time for Pastor Frank to return home, one of the believers asked to accompany him to the mission station. As they walked along the trail that led to the river, they met some people who announced, "Turn back. The river has washed away the bridge. It's impossible to cross."

But Pastor Frank told his companion, "We are on God's errand; He will make a way to cross the river."

When the men arrived at the river, they saw for themselves that the heavy rains had torn the fragile bridge from its moorings and washed it away. The rain-swollen river flowed so fast and so deep and so wide that there was no way they could cross. The two men prayed that God would make a way for them to cross the river. They tried to find a place to cross, but their path was blocked by jungle and boulders.

As they stood on the bank of the raging river wondering what to do next,

a huge log came hurtling down the river. Suddenly the current threw the log into the air, and it came to rest on the two riverbanks, just like a bridge.

Quickly the men climbed down the muddy bank and stepped gently onto the log. Pastor Frank tested the slippery log and decided that it was safe. The two men carefully walked across the log and scrambled up the bank on the opposite side. Almost immediately the log crashed back into the swirling water and hurtled downstream.

Still standing in the slippery mud, the two men offered a heartfelt thank-You to God and then clambered up the slippery path toward the pastor's home.

God Made a Way

They met some men on the trail who knew that the vine bridge had been washed out. "Where have you come from?" the strangers asked in surprise.

"We came from the village on the other side of the river," Pastor Frank answered.

"Impossible!" the strangers said. "That bridge was washed out yesterday!" Then Pastor Frank told the men about the bridge that God had provided. The strangers didn't believe the pastor, so they followed the pastor's footprints to the riverbank. They saw a gash in the mud where a large log had lain. But they saw no log. Then the men knew that God really had made a bridge so that His servants could safely cross the dangerous river.

Continuing God's Work

God's message continues to spread throughout the isolated villages in the mountains and swampy regions of Papua New Guinea. Our mission offerings help make this work possible.

Mission Post

- Thanks to pioneer missionaries, dozens of isolated villages now have grass landing strips and can be accessed by the church's mission planes. But even today church workers slog for miles to reach some isolated villages.
- Such isolated communities can still hear the gospel using solar-powered MP3 players, or "God pods." One MP3 player can help several families hear God's message of love.
- Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will provide MP3 players for Papua New Guinea and other isolated areas of the South Pacific.

Several years ago part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped provide a new mission plane, so that more villages could hear God's message for the first time. That offering helped provide flipcharts that are bringing simple Bible stories to life for the children and adults in these villages.

This quarter a portion of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help provide MP3 players to villages, so that people can hear God's Word even when a worker isn't present. And it will provide at least four desperately needed medical clinics in some of the most isolated regions of the mountainous region, so that villagers who once had to walk for days on dangerous trails to receive medical care can now find help nearer their village homes.

Thank you for sharing so that others can have a chance to hear God's message of love for the first time. 🌍

Maye Porter and her husband, George, served as missionaries in Papua New Guinea and other regions across the South Pacific for 30 years.



Standing Tall for Christ

Maxwell

Pain shot through Maxwell's knee, and he fell to the ground in agony. His soccer teammates helped him off the field and to the campus nurse. When the pain persisted for more than a few days, the nurse urged Maxwell to see a doctor.

Surprise Diagnosis

The doctor frowned and pointed to a shadow on the X-ray of Maxwell's knee. "Your pain isn't from an injury," he said soberly. "You have a tumor, and it could be cancer. We need to remove the tumor as soon as possible."

Maxwell sat stunned. *I have cancer?* he thought. He needed to pray and decide what to do. He needed to tell his parents.

"Someone has placed a curse on you," Maxwell's father told him on the phone. "Come home, where we can treat you with traditional medicines." Maxwell didn't believe in curses or magic; but he said goodbye to his friends at Fulton College in Fiji and flew back to his island home in the South Pacific. As he traveled, he

wondered if his father was right, whether someone had cursed him. Certainly some people were angry with him.

A New Life

Maxwell grew up on a small island in Vanuatu [vah-noo-AH-too]. There people worshipped stones and trees. They treated injuries and sicknesses with herbs from the forests that surrounded their thatched homes.

Maxwell and his brother traveled to another island to complete high school. There he was introduced to Adventist young people who worshipped in the school cafeteria on Sabbath. He was impressed with their dedication to God and their careful study of the Bible. He skipped his work assignment and joined the Adventists for worship. He told his brother about the Adventists, and before long both boys asked to join the Adventist Church.

Maxwell graduated from high school and returned home to his island to teach in a primary school. He and his brother were the only Adventists in the village. One day the Adventist pastor asked Maxwell to take over a Global Mission project that another pioneer had started. Maxwell agreed, and he began studying with people and holding cottage meetings. His brother

joined him, and soon 12 more villagers were baptized.

The Confrontations

Maxwell and the new believers gathered local materials to build a church. But some villagers didn't want another church in their area, and while Maxwell was away, they tore down the church.

The members built the church again, but the enemies tore it down again. The troublemakers took Maxwell to court, accusing him of building the church on their land. But Maxwell proved that the land was his, and the judge ordered the villagers to leave the church alone.

The next Sabbath, while the new believers worshipped, the troublemakers destroyed the believers' gardens. Some wanted to fight, but Maxwell, his father, and the chief quieted the people. "God has called me to raise up a church in this village," Maxwell said. "You don't want to get in God's way."

A Dream and a Loss

Maxwell continued serving God in his home village for 18 months. Then he was offered a scholarship to study theology at Fulton College in Fiji. His family didn't want him to go, but Maxwell was determined. His dream was to serve God. He left the church members in his brother's care and set off for Fiji.

His studies went well, and he enjoyed spending free moments with students from throughout the Pacific region. Then he injured his knee while playing soccer. His parents were convinced that Maxwell's enemies had cursed him.

He arrived home limping in pain. His parents took him to a traditional healer who treated him with healing leaves. But

Fast Facts

- Vanuatu is a chain of some 80 small volcanic islands lying northeast of Australia. Several active volcanoes dot the islands, including Mount Yasur on the island of Tanna.
- Vanuatu is a tropical island chain with a humid climate. Its beautiful beaches and volcanic mountains draw tourists from around the world.
- The people of Vanuatu, known as ni-Vanuatu, are Melanesian in origin. Official languages are English, French, and Bislama, a form of pidgin English.

the pain continued to get worse. Maxwell begged his parents to allow him to have surgery, but they refused. After a few months he could no longer walk. The pain kept him from eating and sleeping.

Finally his parents sent him and his brother to the capital city, where doctors examined him and told him that his tumor had spread, and his leg must be amputated. He agreed; he would do anything to stop the pain.

Standing for God

Maxwell wondered if God had a place for a one-legged soldier. But he's learning that God can do anything.. "I want to grow strong enough to return to college and continue preparing to serve God," he says. "I trust God's love as I face the difficulties in my life. I want to stand tall for Jesus, who died for me."

Our mission offerings are helping build new congregations of believers in Vanuatu and throughout the world. Thank you for giving so that others can hear God's voice and choose to follow Him. 🌍



Ready to Serve

Nurse Nancy

Nancy smiled with joy as she took up her new duties. The sick and injured could receive quality medical care close to home instead of walking for miles in the steamy heat to the government clinic.

Saying Thank You

“This job is my way of thanking God and my church for all they’ve done for me. When my father couldn’t pay my school tuition, the mission sent me to an Adventist secondary school and then to nursing school. During this time I accepted Jesus as my Savior. I’ve worked as a nurse and taught nursing for many years. Now I want to use my gifts to share my faith with others.”

Nancy lives a short walk from the clinic and can tend to people whenever she is needed. She cleans and bandages injuries, gives medicines and provides care, and if necessary, she sends those who need further care to the only hospital on the island, more than two hours away by vehicle.

Marie arrives at the mission clinic for her regular prenatal checkup. If this clinic weren’t here, she would have to walk several hours in the hot sun to the government clinic. Another woman arrives with a gash above her eye. Nancy speaks soothingly as she cleans the wound and stitches it closed. She urges the

Nurse Nancy stood outside her little home and studied the sea. She had worked as a nurse and nursing instructor on this small island in Vanuatu most of her life. Now it was time to step aside and let someone younger carry the load.

But Nancy wasn’t ready to retire. She looked into the sky and prayed, “Father, I want to keep on serving You. Please show me where You want me.”

“I Want to Serve”

Then Nancy learned that the aging aid station in her home village was being rebuilt and upgraded to a full clinic. Her eyes sparkled with excitement. She knew what God wanted her to do. Eagerly she traveled to her village. “You’ll need a nurse,” she told the pastor. “I want to volunteer.”

The pastor smiled. God had sent the most qualified person on the island to work in the new clinic. Nancy’s love for God would make her a fine ambassador to the people who sought her care.

Fast Facts

- While nearly all children attend primary school, most do not continue beyond the most basic years, making Vanuatu one of the least-educated countries in the South Pacific.
- Most people in Vanuatu are subsistence farmers, growing only enough food to feed their families.
- Christianity is the most common religion in Vanuatu; but cargo cults, such as John Frum, centers their worship on the belief that one day their founder (usually an American) will come to the islands bearing extravagant gifts for those who are faithful.

woman to return in two days to check for infection. Without the clinic's care, this woman's injury could have proven deadly.

Personal Ministry

Even more than sharing her medical expertise, Nancy loves sharing God's love with the people she serves. Many people in the area have no faith in God. "I'm so happy to give back to God and my church," she says.

Nancy's favorite patients are the mothers and their babies. She weighs and measures the infants and gives them their vaccinations. She tells new mothers how to keep their infants healthy and well nourished.

Nurse Nancy knows how important the Adventist clinic is to the thousand people who live in the rural area surrounding it. "I've seen patients who would have died without proper medical help. I've seen babies who were malnourished and struggling. Their

mothers were desperate to help their infants. With the proper medical care, so many will heal and thrive who before might not have survived. I wish everyone in the South Pacific islands could have a clinic such as this," she says wistfully.

Clinics for South Pacific

Several years ago the South Pacific Division began a program to upgrade aging medical clinics across the South Pacific. Some clinics were little more than thatched-roofed huts with limited supplies and an aid worker with only the most basic training. Churches across the division began adopting a clinic, paying for medical equipment and building materials, and sometimes sending members to rebuild the clinic. Trained nurses are being called to staff the new clinics, and the government provides medicines.

But some remote areas in of the South Pacific still have no access to medical care. Building a clinic to serve these isolated regions will be more costly because the materials will have to be airlifted into the region. But without a clinic, thousands of people are at risk. They must walk for days to reach a clinic or hospital to receive treatment for diseases or injuries. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build at least four medical clinics in the most isolated regions of Papua New Guinea or one of several other island nations across the South Pacific.

Once a clinic is established, the people realize that Adventists care about them. They warm to the gospel message and seek a better life through Christ. Our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help strengthen outreach in these uttermost places of the world. 🌐



The Hidden Village

Mamau School

Joel Toa ducked his head and pushed tree limbs and vines out of his way. He slogged across hidden streams and through thick foliage that grew wild on the hillside. He had been hiking more than an hour, looking for a home he had been told was somewhere in a clearing in the thick undergrowth.

Joel had helped run a series of evangelistic meetings about a half hour outside the capital city of Vanuatu. He and his colleagues were following up on the interested people who had attended the meetings. They noted that several of those who had attended the meetings were Adventists who didn't live near an organized company or church. During one such visit, the people had told him about a family who worshipped alone in a small village through the jungle.

Joel followed the man's directions and finally found a small cluster of traditional houses spread along a rutted dirt road that didn't appear on any maps. Eventually

he located the Adventist family who worshipped alone. Joel invited the family to study the Bible with him, and they gladly agreed.

The little group met together to read the Bible by the light of a kerosene lamp. Slowly it dawned on Joel that this couple could not read or write.

The New School

Joel invited a couple to come and teach this couple to read. They agreed, and they quickly realized that a lot of others in the settlement couldn't read or write either. In fact, none of the children who had come to listen to the singing and the Bible lessons had ever held a pencil before. Joel learned that there was no government school in the area. "We need to start a school," he told his new friends.

A school! The children were excited to learn that they might have a school in their village. A few days later a man stopped Joel to talk to him. "This is my land," he said gesturing around him. "If you build a school, you can have this land."

The young man's father heard of the plan and came to see for himself. He

measured off a 13-foot [four-meter] square for a classroom. Joel explained that many students would want to study at the school—more than would fit into such a small classroom. Joel stepped off a much larger area, one that would hold about 60 children. The older man smiled and nodded. Joel asked the villagers to cut trees and gather materials for building the school.

Joel enlisted volunteers to help build the two-room school. Every weekend and holiday the men walked 90 minutes to reach the village from the nearest accessible road. They carried in their own food and water.

A few months later the school building was completed, and a volunteer teacher arrived to teach literacy to 56 adults and children. In four months the students had learned how to read the Bible. Their confidence grew as they realized that they could learn to read and expand their horizons.

Growing for Jesus

The school continues to grow, and today has 180 students. More children come every week, children like Mary.

Mary had watched as children climbed the newly graveled road toward the new school. She wanted to attend school too, but her aunt, with whom she lives, wasn't sure. One day when Mary saw the children walking to school, she slipped out of her aunt's house and followed them. When they arrived at school, Mary stood near the forest, unsure what to do next.

She watched the children enter their classrooms. She listened as they sang songs about Jesus. A teacher saw the little girl watching and motioned to her to come. Mary walked shyly to the smiling teacher.

Mission Post

- Many children attending school come from families whose parents never attended school or who studied only a few years. Parents want their children to study and work toward a better life than they've had.
- By giving such children a Bible, we can not only teach God's love and laws to the children, but bring the entire family to Christ.
- This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath children's project is to raise funds to buy 15,000 Bibles to give to children whose families don't have one. These Bibles will unite many families in Christ through the children.

"Do you want to go to school?" she asked. Mary nodded.

Just then a young woman carrying a baby approached. It was Mary's aunt. "May she come and study here?" the teacher asked. Mary's aunt thought for a moment, and then nodded soberly. Yes, she could study. Today Mary is studying at the Adventist school in the village, learning to read and write and worship Jesus.

Growing in Faith

Bible studies continue, and the class has outgrown the home they have met in. Maranatha International has erected a simple church on the school grounds to serve the congregation, which has grown from four members to 34 in four years. The church, which has been extended with a tarp to seat 100, is full on Sabbaths.

Thanks to faithful lay workers and generous mission offerings, life in Mamau village will never be the same. 🌍

The Devil's Lies

VANUATU | March 23

Max



The island of Tanna is part of the island nation of Vanuatu. It's a sleepy island known for its active volcano and a religious cult known as John Frum.

John Frum, Man or Myth?

Followers of the John Frum cult believe that many years ago a man named John Frum, apparently an American seaman, appeared to leaders during a traditional ceremony. They say that John Frum told them he had come to rescue them from the missionaries and colonial officials. He instructed them to stop following the White man's ways, to throw away their money and clothes, to take their children out of school, and to go back to living in their traditional ways. These traditional ways include drinking kava, a mild narcotic, and worshipping the magic stones their ancestors had given them.

The cult's leaders insist that John Frum lives in their sacred volcano, Yasur, which means "god," and speaks with the leaders at night during the secret ceremonies.

At one point the cargo cult included a significant percentage of people living on Tanna Island. But Adventist lay leader Max Senembe [SEHN-ehm-bee] is working hard to lead John Frum followers to Jesus Christ.

From Prophet to Praiser

John N. was a member of the John Frum cult. "John Frum came in the form of a spirit and told the people, 'Don't go to school. Don't go to church. Hold on to your customs,'" John said. "So I took my children out of school. I became a spokesperson for the cult's leader. In time I realized that keeping my children out of school would not serve their best interests, so I sent them away to school. But I continued to be a spokesperson for the demon that called himself John Frum.

"Then someone found out I had been sending my children to school, and they took me to the community court. The leaders didn't like what I had done, and they threatened to beat me. Because the cult lived as a commune and shared everything, it would have been difficult and dangerous to stay with them. So I offered to quit the cult and move my family away from the village. They agreed."

Adventists Step In

Adventists in the area where John lived invited his wife and children to attend church. The children liked the programs and attended regularly. John's son invited him to join them, and he began to attend. When the lay pastor, Pastor Max, held a weeklong evangelistic series, John attended. There he learned basic truths of the Bible including who Jesus is, what the Sabbath is, and about the real Second Coming. Max studied the Bible with John and his family. It took two years, but eventually the entire family joined the Adventist Church. Other leaders in this cult have abandoned their cult beliefs and accepted Jesus as the only true God.

Pastor Max has made the John Frum cult his mission field, working hard to identify the members of the cargo cult and talking to them about Jesus. "John Frum is dead," he says. "He's not coming

back. Jesus is alive; He loves you, and He is coming back—not with a shipload of goods, but to take His followers to heaven." Many cult members are realizing that they've spent their lives worshipping a demon, not a god. They're listening to God's words and leaving this cult. But others still cling to their beliefs and their traditions.

A Constant Witness

While Max shares his faith with those in his district and shepherds the 300 members in four Adventist congregations, others share God's message of love through health ministries.

Adventists have renovated its two medical clinics on the island of Tanna. Adventist nurses care for the people's health needs and share God's love through their ministry. They hold out-clinics and vaccination days in the villages surrounding the clinics. They teach healthful living and disease prevention to parents, and teach maternal and child health to expectant and new mothers. People are learning that Adventists care about them. They appreciate the health care they receive at reasonable cost and are glad that they no longer have to walk for hours in the hot sun to the government clinic to receive medical care.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build more medical clinics in isolated, difficult-to-reach places in the islands of the South Pacific. Thank you for sharing so that others can know that God cares for them and wants them to be in good health and worship Jesus, who will come back. He won't be bearing gifts; He'll be taking His believers home. 🌍

Mission Post

- The area around the Adventist clinic in southeastern Tanna is also home to many who follow the John Frum cargo cult. Their hope is that one day John Frum will come bearing extravagant gifts for his faithful followers.
- The false teachings of the John Frum cult twist the parallel truths in the Bible and blind people to the truth.
- Medical clinics operated by caring Adventist nurses and MP3 players containing the Bible in pidgin, the trade language of the South Pacific, will help spread God's truths to the people who need to hear.

Thirteenth Sabbath Program

➤	Congregational Song	“Sound the Battle Cry” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , no. 614
➤	Welcome	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
➤	Prayer	
➤	Program	“Mission in the Clouds ”
➤	Offering	While the offering is being taken, ask the children to sing “Jesus Loves Me” in pidgin.
➤	Closing Song	“Working, O Christ, With Thee,” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , no. 582
➤	Closing Prayer	

Participants: A narrator and one or more persons to tell the story of Len and Mavis Barnard. *[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 large map of the South Pacific Division. *[Scan the map on the back page of the quarterly and project it onto a screen, or draw a map on a large piece of paper.]*

Narrator: The South Pacific Division is made up of Australia and several island nations. While most of the 423,000 members live in the island nations that are scattered across the South Pacific, most of the financial resources lie in Australia and New Zealand, where members are far fewer.

In fact, Papua New Guinea accounts

for more than half of the believers in the South Pacific Division. Yet the majority of Adventist believers live in rural or even isolated villages scattered across the mountainous terrain. Many survive by raising gardens on the steep mountainsides near their traditional village homes. Some areas are so isolated that the people live much as they have for thousands of years.

Only recently has cannibalism been wiped out in the most isolated areas of the country.

Entire villages are changed when they have a chance to hear God's message of love. But reaching them has been an ongoing struggle to push back the darkness and claim lives for Jesus Christ.

Storyteller(s)

Len Barnard stood outside the small bush hospital on the coast of Papua New Guinea (PNG), a rugged and mostly untamed island nation north of Australia. [*Locate Papua New Guinea on the map.*] Here and there dark patches on the mountainside marked villages that could be reached only by hiking for days on dangerous trails. *Someday I'll visit those villages*, he thought.

A plane flew overhead and landed at the air base nearby. *Someday I'll fly over those mountaintops for God*, he added. Len, a trained army medic, loved the native people and yearned to help them.

God Will Make a Way

When the war ended, Len applied for mission service. But the church had no money for more missionaries. Disappointed, Len and his wife, Mavis, prayed for God's will. They found it in an invitation to work for a government hospital in PNG. "Before I go," Len announced, "I'm going to learn to fly!" And he did. He had no plane, but he was sure God would provide.

The young family arrived at their new post in northern PNG. "Lots of lepers here," the hospital administrator said. "Learn all you can about leprosy before you take up your post." Len spent weeks watching doctors treat leprosy, asking questions, and learning how to amputate limbs. Meanwhile Mavis learned to cope

with the heat and lack of comforts she had known back home.

Mission Post

A year later the mission president invited the couple to start a leper colony in the highlands. They rejoiced that at last they could be missionaries! But they were not prepared for what being a missionary really meant.

The couple flew to the highlands, boarded a crowded jeep, and bounced to the end of the rutted road. Several New Guinean porters carried their luggage up a muddy path. Two hours later, tired and breathless, they arrived at the site for the new leprosy colony. The government official pointed to a grass-roofed hut. "That's your house," he said. "It's only temporary," he added, seeing Mavis' tear-filled eyes.

Five weeks later, while mission officials were visiting to lay plans, Len was awakened from sleep by a crackling noise. "Fire!" he shouted, dashing into the larger room to awaken the mission leaders. They ran outside seconds before the house was engulfed in flames. The Barnards had lost everything but their lives.

So many people came to be treated that the mission added two nurses and a doctor to the staff.

"If only I could get out into the villages and treat people before their disease advances so far," Len told Mavis. "I must reach them." The villages Len spoke of were still steeped in cannibalism. "If only we had a plane," Len told one church administrator. "We could build air strips and reach these people in hours instead of weeks."

"Too expensive," the official responded. "Perhaps someday."

God's Mission Plane

Len and his porters hiked for days over rugged, dangerous terrain, treating people who needed medical care and preaching the gospel. *If only we had a plane*, Len thought. But it would take 18 years before Len flew the mission's first plane to PNG.

The mission plane carried workers to new fields, ferried mission officials to meetings, and rescued the injured and the sick in hours rather than days. When new regions opened, Len urged the believers to build a church and an airstrip. Len Barnard flew through impossible weather and landed on tiny grass airstrips.

Then tragedy struck. As Len checked the cylinders on the propeller, the engine suddenly fired, spinning the propeller and knocking Len to the ground, his left leg nearly severed.

One passenger compressed the wound until an ambulance arrived. The crew lifted Len into the ambulance and sped to the hospital where doctors examined him.

"We'll have to amputate," the doctor said.

"Try to save my leg!" Len begged. "I'm a missionary pilot."

"There's no chance," the doctors said as they wheeled him into surgery.

Len awoke following surgery with his leg in a cast. Doctors still didn't think his leg could be saved, but Len recovered from the accident, and eight months later he returned to his work in PNG. He visited every mission outpost, thrilled to see native workers only a generation from heathenism working faithfully for Christ. He pioneered more airstrips and stretched the mission's horizon across the vast mountain jungles of PNG.

After 25 years in PNG, Len and Mavis

reluctantly turned their work over to younger pilots and ministers.

Battling the Darkness

The work that the Barnards pioneered represents the same mission spirit that powers the work in Papua New Guinea today. This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering reflects the passion to bring Christ and His Word to unreached people.

Len Barnard had a vision to use a plane to reach the uttermost parts of PNG. Today the mission has two planes, one of which our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped provide.

Len's vision was to reach the people through the medical work. Today's offering will help establish at least four medical clinics in the most isolated regions of PNG. He wanted to teach God's Word to people who had never heard. Part of today's offering will provide solar-powered MP3 players ("God pods") to continue bringing God's plan of salvation in remote villages.

Our children's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help provide 15,000 Bibles for children. Many adults still cannot read or write. They rely on their children to read God's Word to them. Entire families can be strengthened in Christ through a single Bible.

Let's continue to battle against spiritual darkness. Let's give a sacrificial offering so that thousands in the South Pacific can hear that God loves them and wants them to prepare to live with Him forever.

Adapted with permission from *Wings Over New Guinea*, written by Goldie M. Down and published by Pacific Press Publishing Association.

[Offering]

Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

Next quarter the East-Central Africa Division will feature special projects including a medical clinic in southern Tanzania, an elementary school in western Kenya, an administration building at Lukanga Adventist University in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and an evangelistic center/training school in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Leader's Resources

For more information on the cultures and history of the South Pacific, 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, and other activities that you can download and print to make mission more fun for children. Go to www.AdventistMission.org. Point to "Resources" and click on "Children's Activities" in the drop-down menu. Go to "Activities" 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.

An offering goal device will help focus attention on world missions and increase weekly mission giving. Ask your Sabbath School council to set a quarterly mission-offering goal; then chart the weekly progress toward the quarter's goal on the goal device.

Print off line drawings of medical supplies each clinic needs to minister to the people such as bandages, splints, a stethoscope, a blood pressure cuff, and simple medications such as aspirin, antibiotics, and malarial treatments. Each week that the offering goal is reached, add a medical supply.

Remind members 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. Encourage members to double or triple their weekly giving on Thirteenth Sabbath.

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SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

PACIFIC OCEAN

HOWLAND ISLAND
BAKER ISLAND

KIRIBATI

TUVALU

NAURU

TOKELAU

SOLOMON ISLANDS

PAPUA
NEW GUINEA

EAST TIMOR

Port Moresby

WALLIS AND FUTUNA

AMERICAN SAMOA

VANUATU

FIJI

NIUE

TONGA

FRENCH
POLYNESIA

AUSTRALIA

COOK ISLANDS

NEW CALEDONIA

Canberra

Wellington

NEW ZEALAND

INDIAN
OCEAN

CHURCHES	COMPANIES	MEMBERS	POPULATION
Australian	421	98	56,741
New Zealand Pacific	135	60	17,998
Papua New Guinea	904	2,812	247,756
Trans Pacific	461	581	101,084
TOTALS	1,921	3,551	423,579
As of 12/2011			36,669,000

PROJECTS:

- 1 Build clinics in at least four isolated areas in Papua New Guinea
- 2 Purchase solar-powered MP3 players ("God Pods") for Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu
- 3 CHILDREN'S PROJECT: Provide 15,000 Bibles for children in the islands of the south Pacific to use and share with their families

