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ADVENTIST CHURCH  
*United for Mission*

# YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

2013 • **QUARTER 4** • TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION



[www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org)

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**On the Cover:** “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people” (Matthew 4:19, NIV). Greek fisherman cleans his nets.

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 = stories of special interest to teens

# Your Offerings at Work



Three years ago part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped purchase Bibles for children in Israel, Pakistan, and Sudan. These children received their Bibles while attending a summer camp in Israel. They’re grateful to have God’s Word to help build their faith and share God’s love with others. Thank you for your offerings to help others follow Christ.



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## Dear Sabbath School Leader,

This quarter features the Trans-European Division, which includes more than 20 countries and several island groups in Europe. The division is home to more than 200 million people, but only about 83,500 are Seventh-day Adventists. That's a ratio of one Adventist for about every 2,400 people. The Trans-European Division is the church's smallest division, yet its needs equal far larger regions of the world.

### The Challenges

The challenges of reaching the secular, postmodern world of Europe for Christ are complex. People are looking for relationships, but not with God. Restaurants and stores are busy, but churches are almost empty.

Greece is staggering under high unemployment and economic hardship.

A significant number of the 500 Adventists in Greece are immigrants who struggle to find permanent work to support their families.

The church is growing among immigrants, but the dominant religion often thwarts efforts to rent needed facilities for worship.

Macedonia is a small country north of Greece. Its few members are working hard to share the gospel with their neighbors and with visitors to their beautiful country. They want to establish a lay training center where they can learn the best ways to spread God's love.

Newbold College, located in southern England, is Trans-European Division's only four-year college-level institution. With about 300 students, it is a small school with a huge mandate—to train workers from throughout the division. One challenge is to keep its buildings strong and safe.

Bible 3-D is an innovative plan to introduce thousands of people to the Adventist faith through hands-on exhibits that introduce the story of redemption within each country's culture.

Yours for the kingdom,



Charlotte Ishkanian  
Editor, *Mission*

### Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will go to help:

- establish an evangelistic training center in Athens, Greece
- establish an evangelistic training center in Macedonia
- renovate the women's dormitory on the campus of Newbold College
- create Bible 3-D exhibitions in each union of the division
- CHILDREN'S PROJECT: establish Messy Church congregations in each field.



# Michel's Dream

## Michel

**M**ichel (Michael) had dreams, big dreams. He lived in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo), a country that cannot offer a great deal of hope to its young people. Although he had completed a university course, he couldn't find decent work. He wanted to improve his English so that he could one day teach in a university. He decided to make his way to Europe.

He arrived in Greece with great hope, but he quickly discovered that the country's faltering economy offered few job opportunities. Michel had no money, no work, no family, and no friends from his homeland. But he was not alone. He met many others who were stranded, as he was. He found a place to live with several other immigrants, and together they struggle to survive.

### Friendship in the Park

With no work, Michel often spent an hour or so in a nearby park. One day he met George, a man from Michel's homeland. The two began talking, and George quickly

turned the conversation to God.

Michel believed in God and often prayed. But George told him things about God that Michel had never heard before. Michel listened intently. When George invited Michel to attend the Adventist church with him, Michel smiled. He knew a few Adventists from the Congo and had read some Adventist books back home. "Sure, I'll go with you," he told his new friend.

On Sabbath Michel listened as the pastor urged the congregation to keep the Sabbath day holy, for God is holy, and He had created the Sabbath as a time to spend with God and worship Him.

After church Michel asked George more about the Sabbath. George opened his Bible, and the two began to study the Sabbath. George explained each Bible text about the Sabbath, and by the time the two had finished their study, Michel had no doubts that the Sabbath was God's holy day and that he must keep it holy.

Michel continued meeting George in the park, where George taught him other Bible truths. They studied Revelation, and Michel learned that this book was filled with precious information that he had never understood before.

Michel was excited about what he was learning and immediately began sharing

the good news with others he had met. On the day Michel was baptized, two others whom he had invited to church also were baptized. Now these new members are also sharing their new faith with others.

### Michel's Ministry

Michel and George continue sharing the gospel with those they meet in the park and through friends. "They are astonished at the truths the Bible contains," Michel says. Michel can't give each one Bible studies, so the pastor and other church members step in to help. His enthusiasm has fired up the church members.

"I still don't have a paying job," Michel says. "But God has given me work to do in Greece. So far six of those I've invited to the church have been baptized, and two of my housemates are coming to church.

"I want to work for God now, and I wait for Him to show me where I should go and

what I should do. I try to meet new people in the streets or in a small café or at the park and tell them what I've learned about Jesus."

### A Broader Ministry

Michel attends an international church whose members actively minister to immigrants such as him, providing food for those who need it and warm clothes for the winter. "We want to reach out to the people of Athens, one person at a time," he says.

The congregation uses their rented facilities for many different programs to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the people in the city they serve. And the congregation is growing rapidly. "When I first came here, we had about 50 members," Michel says. "Now more than 100 people from 16 different countries worship together here. We come from many cultures and speak several languages, but we are all seeking to follow God's path for us."

The Athens International Adventist Church is growing rapidly, and it needs a larger place to meet. But it's difficult to rent large halls in this city because of the prejudice from other churches.

"We see this congregation becoming the center for outreach to Athens," says Apostolos Manglis, president of the Greek Mission. "This evangelistic center will also house a training center to teach people such as Michel how to be even more effective missionaries in Greece. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help fund this project, which will make a tremendous impact on the people of Athens and of Greece. Thank you for helping us share the gospel in this needy country." 

### Mission Post

- Some 98 percent of Greece's 10.7 million people are at least nominally Orthodox Christians.
- It's difficult for other churches to rent a building for worship or to hold public meetings. The Adventist believers in Athens, the capital, cannot afford to buy a building to house a church. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help purchase a building that will house the growing international congregation, provide rooms for outreach seminars, and train lay people to share their faith with the Greek people.
- For more information on this project, watch this quarter's Adventist Mission DVD, available from your Sabbath School superintendent or online at [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org).

# Standing for Her Faith

GREECE | October 12

Victoria



Victoria is 14 and a student living in Athens, Greece. She attends a public school, and part of her studies includes religion classes twice a week. “Religion class is required,” she explains. “Only those children who aren’t Christians—such as Muslims and Buddhists—can be excused from these classes.

“Most of the students aren’t really interested in religion class,” she adds. “They don’t read the Bible or their Bible story, so they don’t know the answers to the teacher’s questions. The teacher asks questions about the story we’re studying, but the kids don’t raise their hands to answer. So the teacher looks at me. She knows that I know the answer.”

## Victoria’s Decision

After class some students asked Victoria how she knows so much about the stories the teacher discusses in religion class.

Victoria told them that she attends church every week, where she and the other children study the Bible together. “I read these stories in the Bible,” she answered.

On her way home from school, Victoria decided to take her Bible to religion class. *Maybe that will help the other students see that God is real and that His Word is important*, she thought. Victoria began taking her Bible to school. Sometimes the textbook missed important points in a Bible story, so Victoria asked the teacher for permission to read the story from the Bible. Often her teacher agreed.

Encouraged by her teacher’s openness, Victoria asked for permission to invite her classmates to bring a Bible if they had one so that they could read the lesson together from the Bible. She wanted her classmates to know exactly how the story was written in God’s Word. But most of the children had only the New Testament, so they just listened as Victoria read the story from the Bible.

## God’s Blessing

“My classmates and my teacher respect my faith,” Victoria says. “This is unusual, for most children who don’t attend the state church are given a hard time about

their faith. I feel so blessed that God is giving me the courage to stand up for my faith and introduce others to the importance of knowing God's Word."

Victoria doesn't talk a lot in class, so it takes extra courage to stand up for her faith. One day Victoria's teacher saw the girl's father waiting for her after school. She told him, "You are blessed to have a daughter like Victoria."

### A Chance to Share

After class one day, one of Victoria's classmates stopped her in the hall. "Can we talk?" she asked. Victoria nodded, and the girls stepped away from the other children. Angela spoke softly about a problem she was having at home. "My father says bad things to my mother," she said. Angela's face turned red as she struggled to hold back tears. "I think they plan to get a divorce."

Victoria listened to her classmate in silence. When Angela was done, Victoria told her that Jesus could help her through

these difficult times. "You must talk to Jesus," she said. "Ask for His help. He loves you, and He'll help you. You just have to believe." The next day Victoria brought a Bible to give to Angela. In it she had written some Bible verses that Angela could read and share with her family. Victoria told her friend that she was praying for her and her family. Then Victoria prayed for Angela. "I wanted her to know that she can talk to Jesus just like she talks to her friends," Victoria said.

Victoria and her parents prayed for Angela and her family. Her parents encouraged Victoria to pray with Angela whenever possible, for in Greece people don't often allow someone of another faith to pray for them or talk to them.

A short time later Angela excitedly told Victoria that her mother had found the list of Bible verses in the Bible and that the family had read them together. "I told my parents that you had prayed with me," Angela said. "We're now reading from the Bible and praying together. My dad isn't arguing or yelling as much, and my parents seem happier. Thank you! Thank you!"

Victoria smiled. She knew that God was answering her prayers. "I hope that the kids in religion class will learn enough about the Bible and Jesus to love Him as I do. I want them to know that I stand for what I believe."

### Appeal

The people of Greece are often closed-minded about religion. It makes sharing God's love difficult. This quarter part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help the believers in Greece to reach out to others through personal evangelism and training. Thank you for helping share Jesus in this important project. 🌍

### Fast Facts

- Greece lies on a mountainous peninsula in southeastern Europe and includes more than 2,000 islands. No point in Greece is more than 60 miles (100 kilometers) from the sea.
- Although modern-day Greece came into being as a nation in the nineteenth century, Greek city-states existed 1,000 years before Christ.
- The capital city is Athens, a city whose history dates back to 1,400 B.C., and is central to the Greek advances in culture, philosophy, and the arts. Today the city has a population of about 650,000.

# The Brothers

GREECE | October 19

## Gabi



Gabi and his family strolled along a path in a park near their home in central Greece. The chilly autumn breeze rustled the dying leaves and sent some flying. As the path neared the street, the family saw two young boys begging. The boys walked awkwardly from car to car. Gabi heard their plea for coins and realized that they were Romanian, as Gabi's family was.

"Why are they begging?" Gabi's son, Samuel, asked, pulling his father's sleeve. Gabi didn't have an answer. He had no money to give the boys, so he guided his family toward home. But questions swirled in his mind. *Why are these boys begging on the street in Greece? Where are their parents?* But he had no answers.

### Gabi's Search

Gabi and his family had left their homeland of Romania and come to

Greece in search of work. But hard times had hit Greece as well, and they found no regular work. The family stretched the little money they made to pay their rent and buy meager food. But the memory of the Romanian boys begging on the street haunted Gabi. The next day Gabi searched for the boys, but they weren't at the traffic light.

Gabi met Peter, a man who knew the boys. "They're brothers," Peter said. "They've been hired to herd sheep for someone." Gabi sensed that the boys were in danger, but Peter didn't know any more. Gabi felt heavy hearted. He prayed for the boys' safety and searched for them. But he couldn't find them.

Seven months later Gabi answered a knock on his door to find Peter with one of the brothers. "This is Costel," Peter said. Fear filled the boy's eyes.

"Come in, Costel," Gabi said. "You're safe here." Sensing that the boy didn't believe him, Gabi continued, "This is your home now. You are part of our family, just as my children are."

### Found and Lost

Costel hesitated and then stepped into the room. Gabi showed him where he could put his few things. "You can share this room with my son," Gabi said. The boy looked around before placing his small bag and a few coins on the dresser. The next morning when Costel awoke, he counted

his coins. They were all there. *Perhaps this place is safe after all*, he thought.

The boy stayed a few days, and then he told Gabi that he was leaving. Gabi begged him not to go. But Costel shouldered his small bag and walked to the door. “Please,” Gabi said. “Come back anytime. I’ll be here for you.” Then the boy was gone, leaving emptiness in the home and a weight of sadness on Gabi’s heart.

A month later Costel returned looking thinner and more terrified. Gabi welcomed the boy back and learned that the new “friend” had taken the boy’s money and left him to fend for himself. “You have a place here as long as you wish,” Gabi reminded the boy.

Gabi asked Costel about his brother. “Cristi’s sick,” Costel said tearfully. “He’s forced to work.” Gabi promised to find Cristi and bring him home. But Gabi

couldn’t find Cristi. The family prayed that God would protect Costel’s brother. Months passed without word of the boy. Then Cristi appeared at Gabi’s door.

## The Reunion

Costel welcomed his brother and showed him where he’d sleep and where to put his things. “You’re home now,” Costel told his brother, echoing Gabi’s words to him. “You don’t need to be afraid.”

Cristi listened during family worship and showed interest in reading the Bible, so Gabi began sharing Bible truths with him. Costel, on the other hand, resisted God; He couldn’t accept that Jesus had died for him. But in time Costel began listening to the discussions Gabi and Cristi shared about God.

Gabi answered the boys’ questions and prayed for them. In time Costel opened up to God as Cristi had. Gabi invited the local Adventist pastor to come and study with the boys. During one study they came to the verse “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:15, NIV). Cristi offered his heart to God, and soon Costel did too.

Gabi and his wife celebrated the boys’ baptism by rededicating their own lives to Christ. The brothers spend hours reading the Bible and learning to worship God. Gabi and his family still struggle financially, but they thank God for sending these boys into their lives to teach the entire family what it means to share God’s love with others.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help provide an evangelistic center where people will learn to share God’s love with others in Greece. Thank you for helping make this dream a reality. 🌍

## Mission Post

- Greece’s economy has grown rapidly during the past 50 years. But the recent economic downturn has caused widespread unemployment and financial distress. The deteriorating economic situation is especially hard on immigrants from poorer countries of Europe and from Africa. The immigrants cannot find work, and they live at the bottom of the economic ladder.
- Adventist immigrants find many in their communities who are struggling with hopelessness. They share their faith in Christ and find ready listeners. Congregations are growing and need larger places to meet.
- Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will provide a permanent meeting place for the international Adventist church in Athens.

# The Open Door

GREECE | October 26

Konstantinos



*[Ask a high school-age boy to present this first-person report.]*

Three years ago I learned that my mother had breast cancer. I was confused and devastated. How could God let this happen to her? Would she die and leave us alone? My friends didn't understand, and I felt that I had no one to talk to.

One day I saw her crying in her room. When she saw me, she called me into her room. "It's OK," she said, seeing the terror in my eyes. "God is with us and will protect us." She urged me to read her favorite psalms. "David's words bring me comfort," she said. "They'll help you, too."

## Finding God in His Word

I nodded numbly. How could I tell her that I wasn't sure that God cared about

me or what happened to our family?

Mother's surgery was successful, and eventually life felt normal again. But I still wondered if God really cared about me, just a kid.

One night I pulled my Bible from the shelf and let it fall open. It opened to the story of Job. As I read Job's story, I began to realize that if Job could have that kind of faith, I could, too.

I started reading the Bible again, and I felt God working in my life. The more I read, the more I learned, and the more I felt God's love in my life. I realized that God was using my mother's illness to teach me how much He loves me. What I didn't know was that God was strengthening my faith for what was to come next.

## Grandpa's Challenge

My grandfather was a traditional Greek man, strong and stubborn. My family is Adventist, and Grandpa picked at our faith whenever he could, accusing us and making us defend our faith. We began avoiding the subject of religion. My parents despaired that we would never convince Grandpa that God loved him.

Then we learned that Grandpa had pancreatic cancer. It had spread, and the doctors said he wouldn't live long. In his usual stubborn manner, my grandfather

began planning his funeral. But I knew that he was angry and discouraged.

He was hospitalized in great pain, but he refused visitors. He didn't want us to watch him die. But I went to see him anyway, to my surprise, he began asking me questions about God.

"Why do you think God made the Ten Commandments?" he asked.

Carefully I formed my response. "God gave us the commandments to guide us through life," I said. "He didn't make them to condemn us, but to draw us to Him."

My grandfather thought about that for a while. Then he asked, "How do you know Jesus loves you?"

As I struggled to find words to answer my grandfather's questions, I realized that God had been preparing me for this moment ever since my mother had become sick. Humbled and encouraged, I

pressed forward to answer my grandfather's questions with the Bible texts God had given me when I had doubted.

My grandfather and I had several conversations about God over the next few weeks. My parents were afraid to talk to Grandfather about religion because they did not want to make him angry. But God had opened the door for me to speak to him and give him hope in Jesus before he died. I was honored and amazed that God was able to use me, a teenager.

### A Changed Heart

Toward the end of his life Grandfather wasn't able to talk anymore. But I could see a calm in his eyes that I had never seen before. I am sure God used my experience to help my grandfather understand that Jesus had always loved him. I know that I will see my grandfather again when Jesus comes. And when we meet, we'll have eternity to talk.

I often think about Revelation 3:20: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in" (NIV).

My mother's illness helped me to realize that God was knocking on the door of my heart. And my grandfather's illness helped me to share God's love and open the door of his heart.

Our church in Greece is small. We have just a few hundred members in the entire country. But God has big plans for us, plans to lead us and teach us how to share His love with millions who, like my grandfather, haven't opened their heart's door to God's unlimited love. This quarter part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help us reach out to millions in Greece who still need to hear that Jesus loves them. 🌍

## Mission Post

- Although 98 percent of the population of Greece is Orthodox, religion for most people is focused on traditions and ceremonies, not on Christ.
- Protestants number less than 1 percent of the population. A little more than 500 Adventists currently live in Greece. That equals about one Adventist for every 20,000 people. The harvest is ready, but the laborers are pitifully few.
- Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help grow the church in Greece with an evangelistic center in the capital city, Athens.
- For more on this project, watch the Adventist Mission DVD or visit [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org).

# Learning to Lead

ENGLAND | November 2

Anette, Marija, Lyn



Anette was a new Adventist. She wanted to study theology, but she wasn't sure she could afford to study at Newbold College, the Trans-European Division's college and theological school. Her youth leader urged her to apply for a scholarship from the Danish Union. She applied and was accepted.

"I know that it was God putting the desire to study the Bible in my heart," Anette says. "I've learned so much at Newbold. We have abundant Bible study groups and discussion groups in which I've learned to accept others' opinions, even when they differ from mine. I've grown in these discussions."

Anette isn't sure what God's plan is for her. "I'll leave that in His hands," she says.

## Newbold's Ministry to Millions

Newbold College is Trans-European Division's only college-level educational

institution. Located outside London, England, it serves students from all 20-plus countries and numerous islands of the division as well as students from some 40 other countries around the world.

"Newbold is strongly multiethnic," says Philip Brown, principal of the college. "Students come to study for a semester or a year or four years, to earn a diploma or a degree. Some come to learn English, and others come to study theology. Most are Adventists, but some don't know who Adventists are. This mixture makes a rich environment to discover and learn."

## "If You Exist"

Marija [Maria] grew up in Macedonia. She often felt alone and discouraged and longed for acceptance. Often she prayed, "God, if You're alive, please help me!" One night she dreamed that an angel appeared and assured her that God loved her. She awoke filled with joy.

After high school Marija moved to England to work as a live-in babysitter and improve her English. But the family she was assigned to treated her badly. Once more she felt abandoned. Then she met another girl from Macedonia who invited her to church. Marija went, hungry for friendship and eager to immerse herself in English. The worship service was so different from what she had grown up with that she wasn't sure what to make of it.

After church a Macedonian family

invited Marija to lunch. They gave her a copy of *Steps to Christ*. She returned home and read the whole book that night. She prayed, *Lord, if You exist, please help me find another place to live and work.* Two days later God answered that prayer, and the family who had invited her to lunch welcomed her into their home as part of their family. A year later she gave her life to Christ and asked to be baptized.

Marija's visa expired, and she had to return home to finish her studies. Her family pressured her to give up her new faith. Miserable, Marija begged God to show her what He wanted her to do.

God pointed her back to England, to Newbold College, where she first encountered Christ. Today she's studying theology at Newbold. "God has given me all that He promised," she said. "I know that He will lead me the rest of my life."

## Planting Seeds

Lyn's parents worked for the church in her homeland of Madagascar. She enrolled at Newbold to improve her English so she could be a better translator. But God had other plans, and she stayed on at the school after she completed her studies.

"Newbold draws young people from so many different cultures," she said. "I've learned so much here."

Lyn met a young woman from Croatia who told her that she had never prayed before. The student told Lyn that she had come to learn English and had noticed that the students at the school are mostly Christian. She asked Lyn how to pray.

"Talk to God as you would a friend," Lyn urged her. "He knows your every motive, your every action, so you don't have to hide from Him. Just talk to him." The girl prayed her first prayer that day.

## Mission Post

- Newbold College is the Adventist Church's only four-year educational institution in the Trans-European Division.
- Students come from more than 60 countries on four continents to study at Newbold. Some stay for just a year, while other study for four or five years.
- Housing is important with such a multinational institution. It's imperative for the health and safety of the 240 students living on the campus that the dormitories be healthful environments.
- Part of this Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help renovate the women's residence hall at Newbold College.

When she finished her face was glowing. She had talked to God! After that the girl wouldn't miss a worship service on campus. Lyn prays that this young woman is continuing to let God nurture the seeds of faith planted in her life while at Newbold and be fruitful for His kingdom.

## Training Thought Leaders

Newbold's professors don't teach subjects; they train students to think for themselves, evaluate answers, and solve problems. The school creates leaders for the Trans-European Division and the world.

But the school faces challenges. It must keep its classrooms safe and its dormitories healthful places to live. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help upgrade the women's dormitory at the college, creating a more healthful environment for leaders of tomorrow. Thank you for helping make Newbold a gateway to quality Adventist education. 🌍



# Finding Her Niche

Melissa

**M**elissa moved into her dormitory room at Newbold College. She smiled when some of the other students stopped by to greet her. Her English wasn't as good as she thought. *Oh, how I wish I had studied English more seriously,* she thought.

But she learned quickly, and didn't feel so alone when she realized that many of the other students knew less English than she did. She marveled at the international makeup of Newbold. Students from four continents were studying there, and some knew almost no English.

## Teaching and Learning

Kim,\* her roommate in the dormitory, was from Korea, and the two worked hard to understand each other. Their conversations often wandered from school to work to personal lives. One day Kim grew silent for several minutes, thinking. Then she looked at Melissa and asked, "How can I believe in God?"

The question surprised Melissa, who thought that Kim was a Christian. "Can

you teach me about God?" Kim continued. Melissa wondered where to begin. She had grown up in a Christian home, and her grandfather had been an Adventist pastor. But she felt at a loss for words. Where do I begin? she prayed.

Kim and Melissa spent a lot of time that year talking about God. Melissa realized that God was using her to introduce her roommate to Jesus. During their conversations Melissa learned what it means to share her faith. And in sharing, Melissa's own faith grew. Sometimes Kim asked Melissa to pray with her. Melissa prayed, and then Kim prayed the prayer in Korean. Melissa would become so excited about their conversations that often she couldn't sleep. "I was seeing Kim's faith grow, and it amazed me," Melissa said.

## "How Do I Pray?"

One night when the lights were out, Kim whispered that she wanted to pray. The two girls were silent for several minutes, and Melissa wondered why her friend was silent. Then Kim whispered, "Melissa, how do I start?"

"Pray to God as you would talk to a friend," Melissa said gently. And Kim started praying.

Another evening Kim prayed, "Thank You, God, for a good day. Melissa, how was Your day?" Melissa was surprised, for she

was not used to people interrupting their prayer to talk to someone in the room. Then she realized that prayer could be more than a dialogue between God and a person. It could be a conversation among friends. Kim was actually teaching Melissa how to relate to God. It was so neat to see her getting to know God.

Near the end of the school year Kim told a group of students that she had become a Christian. Melissa swallowed hard to keep from crying. *God used me to help lead Kim to Jesus*, she thought. *This is why I'm at Newbold—to prepare me to help others find God.*

## Finding Her Niche

Melissa understands more clearly now why God has called her to study theology at Newbold College, the Trans-European Division's only senior college. She, along with the majority of students studying at Newbold, is part of the majority of students from outside England, where the school is located. Besides the more than

20 countries and islands of the Trans-European Division, students come from Africa, Asia, North America, South America, and elsewhere in Europe.

Melissa doesn't feel like a minority in her studies, either. About one third of the students in her theology classes are women. "It doesn't mean that we all will become pastors," she says. "But several will. I just want to prepare myself to serve God wherever He calls me. Thinking about that excites me."

"I get homesick," she adds truthfully. "It's a two-hour flight home to Norway, where I grew up, and I can't go home often. But I'm not sorry that I am studying here. Our professors and lecturers challenge us academically. They make us think for ourselves. And they encourage us in our faith.

"I'm glad I'm here. I know God is training me, preparing me, for the future," she adds. "I don't know what that something will be, but I know it won't be nothing."

## Newbold in Need

Newbold College is a small school with a big job. It provides critical education opportunities to students enrolled in a number of programs. Finances are always tight, and the school must meet high standards. Constant upgrades must be made to meet national requirements.

One critical need is to upgrade the women's dormitory, the dormitory where Melissa introduced Kim to Jesus. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete these upgrades and assure a safe and healthy environment for the women who call their dormitory home during their studies. 🌍

\*not her real name

## Mission Post

- The Trans-European Division (TED) is made up of more than 20 countries. It's the smallest of the world's 13 divisions, with about 83,500 members. About one person out of every 2,400 in TED is an Adventist.
- Educating Adventist young people for service is a top priority of church leaders, and Newbold College is instrumental in providing that training. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help upgrade the women's residence hall to provide a safe and healthful environment for the women who are preparing themselves for service to God and their church.

# A Significant Life

ENGLAND | November 16

Mervi



I was born in Estonia, a small country that was part of the Soviet Union during Communist times. In this atheistic environment my father was an Adventist pastor.

My parents were honest with us children about the dangers we could face as Christians. We knew that our father had once been locked in a mental institution because of his faith. I learned to remain quietly on the sidelines, not wanting to bring attention to myself.

My siblings and I attended public schools, for there were no Adventist schools. As I grew up, my faith and my courage grew as well, until I was ready to stand for my faith and was baptized into the Adventist Church.

## Hope for a Bright Future

Communism fell, and slowly our freedoms increased. After high school

I studied linguistics, the science of languages. I completed my degree and was offered a job with a linguistics research group. With the promise of a good income, I relaxed. Gone were the days of wondering what the next meal would be and if I'd have a coat for winter. I would be able to take care of myself.

The next year I was offered a job as a lecturer. I was dizzy with success. My supervisor urged me to pursue my Ph.D. But soon I realized that something was missing. Life began to feel . . . insignificant. I realized that years from now what I was doing would not matter.

When I told my supervisor and colleagues that I wanted to take a year off and study theology, they couldn't believe me. They thought I was crazy. "You have your name on the door of an office in a major university," they said. "Why would you want to leave that?"

I could understand their concern. Even my parents questioned my decision. "Will

## Fast Facts

- Newbold College, inaugurated in 1901, is located an hour outside London, England.
- Homer Salisbury, who would become Newbold College's first principal, stated the school's enduring goal as follows: "The one great object always kept in view will be to lead the students to learn how to think, and to think correctly—to teach them how to learn anything for themselves." That goal, along with the Adventist Church's high standards, has guided what would become Newbold College for more than a century.

you return to the university and work on your Ph.D. after you've studied theology for a year?" they asked. I nodded. Even I wasn't sure why I was leaving such a great position to study theology. I told people that I wanted to experience a different culture and new people, but in truth a voice in my head was urging me to step in this direction. Perhaps after a year of studies the voice would leave me alone, and I could return to my linguistics studies.

### Life-changing Path

I left the university and enrolled in theology courses at Newbold College, the Adventist college in England. I enrolled in several religion courses that interested me, and I found great joy in studying religion. I found spiritual mentors and professors who challenged my worldview. Before the year ended, I knew that I wanted to complete a theology degree. I realized this course of study was far more than an intellectual diversion. It was

becoming a life-changing experience.

At the end of my first year at Newbold I returned home. I talked with my family and visited the university. I saw my name on the office door, but it brought me no joy. I saw no future in this place. I knew that God wanted me to continue studying at Newbold. I told the university staff I was not coming back. I accepted the path that God had shown me.

Back at Newbold I joined a student outreach group and a church ministries team, helping to coordinate all the ministries on campus. One day I realized that my insignificance had been replaced with a sense of being part of something far bigger than I was. I realize that God has given my life significance. By worldly standards, my life may seem small, but in reality I am stretched and blessed in new ways here. My life is not financially secure, but it is fulfilling. God is taking me places I never thought I'd dare go, and I am fulfilled even as I look into an unknown future.

### God's Plans for the Future

I will graduate soon. As I look into the future, I know that God has made an incredible change in my life. He has taken me, a quiet girl from nowhere, and called me to His work. He has plans for me, and I am excited to see where He will lead me.

God has special plans for each of us. Many young people in the Trans-European Division find God's plans while studying at Newbold College in England. It's a small school with a big job. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help refurbish the women's dormitory at the college, making it possible for even more young people to study there and find His path to a significant life in Him. 🌍

# It's Messy!



## Messy Church kids

women in Stanborough Park Adventist Church outside London adapted the Messy Church program for their community. And it works! When the program first began, most children were from Adventist homes. Today these children are asked—nicely—to stay home so that non-Adventist children can attend Messy Church and learn to love Jesus.

### A Ministry for Families

What is Messy Church? Think Vacation Bible School on steroids. Children from infants to 13 meet in age-appropriate groups to hear a Bible story and do a craft that will help cement the lesson in their minds. When the theme was the parable of the sower and the seeds, one group of children created grass caterpillars by stuffing soil and grass seeds into a nylon stocking, tying knots every few inches, and then adding pipe-cleaner antenna and googly eyes. They took their grass caterpillars home, watered them, and watched them grow. “Mine is still growing,” 7-year-old Eleanor says proudly. And she remembers the story of the sower who scattered seeds, some on rocky soil, some on dry soil, and some on good soil. She knows that Jesus wants her to scatter seeds of His love just as the sower scattered seeds of grain.

After a craft that can be truly messy,

“Please!” Nine-year-old Thomas\* stood just inside the church door, tears streaming down his face. “I’ve tried everything I know to get my parents to come to Messy Church, but they won’t come. Please—may I come without them?”

The woman at the registration desk gave Thomas a hug. “Of course you can come,” she said, drying his tears. She motioned for a church member standing nearby to come and introduced Thomas to her. Thomas smiled gratefully and led the woman to the craft room, where Messy Church was about to begin.

### A Unique Program

A 9-year-old begs to attend church? You bet—if it’s Messy Church. Messy Church is an outreach program that began in 2004 in an Anglican church in England. Its purpose then and now is to provide a family-friendly worship experience for children and their parents who wouldn’t normally attend church.

In 2009 some energetic Adventist

the children and their parents clean up and join other age groups in rousing and energetic songs of praise. Then they gather in the fellowship hall for a healthful dinner prepared by more volunteers.

“Children love Messy Church,” coleader Judy says. “We’ve seen plenty of children drag their parents through the door so they won’t be late for Messy Church. And some parents have found that their children or grandchildren have turned down an afternoon at the park, choosing Messy Church instead.”

### Growing Faith

What started as a rather small undertaking now numbers upward of 200 to 250 people in attendance at the once-a-month service. But children must bring a parent, a grandparent, or a guardian. After all the main purpose of Messy Church is to create a family-friendly worship experience. But parents aren’t the only ones who bring their children.

Mary is the mother of four and a foster parent to five children. She brings all the children to Messy Church. The foster children had been abused and largely ignored at home, and Mary wasn’t sure how they would respond to Messy Church. But they loved it! Later Mary wrote a letter of thanks to the leaders of Messy Church. “We are not Adventists, but we love coming here. You provide a lovely service and a healthful meal. We’re not vegetarians, but we enjoy it very much. You have inspired us to eat more healthfully at home. Thank you so much for inviting the community to this event.”

When a friend invited Matt and his two children to Messy Church, he wasn’t sure whether they would enjoy the program. But when 5-year-old Abby

## Messy Church

- Leaders of Messy Church report that many people have come to Messy Church after seeing the banner outside the church. They’re happy that such a quality program is offered free of charge.
- Parents come with their children, help with their crafts, and listen to the Bible stories. Several have joined a community Bible-study group, and others volunteer to help make the program a success.
- Some young adults who once attended the Adventist church now come with their children. The program is building bridges to bring them back.

called the program “epic,” Matt decided to return the following month. A struggling dad, Matt appreciated a good-sized bag of leftover food from the dinner. And the friend who had invited him was so thrilled with the family’s enjoyment of the program that she asked if she could help with the craft program.

### Sharing the Success

The Stanborough Park Messy Church is a pilot program that has become a smashing success. The Trans-European Division wants to introduce the program throughout the division and help each region adapt it to their needs. Part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help fund the adaptation of Messy Church in each of the regions of the Trans-European Division. Soon families across Europe will have an opportunity to get acquainted with Jesus and His family of faith in their own countries thanks to Messy Church, the fun way to worship God. 🌍

\*Names have been changed.



# God's Path to Peace

Ilija

When I was in my 20s, I was a professional musician, one of the best in Macedonia. I played with some of the best singers and bands in the country. My family was rich, and life was easy. Then our family fortune failed, and we lost our house. I developed health problems and had no peace.

I left Macedonia and went to Canada, looking for happiness. I married a Serbian girl, and we settled down. I found work performing for weddings, and eventually made enough money to buy a home and a restaurant. But then my wife left me, and I grew despondent. I gambled away my money and lost everything. I returned to Macedonia in search of peace, but I didn't find it. I sensed that my problems were the result of witchcraft, so I attended some séances and visited fortunetellers. Things only became worse.

## New Friend, New Hope

One day I was invited to travel to Australia and play in some concerts.

Every evening as I read the Bible, demons tortured me. I couldn't sleep.

There I met Petko, a fellow Macedonian musician, and we became friends. Petko was different; he talked about Jesus and God. I knew little about God, so I listened. He asked to read the Ten Commandments to me, and I agreed. When he read the fourth commandment, I stopped him and asked him what "Sabbath" meant. Petko explained that Sabbath was the seventh day, Saturday. This was strange to me, and Petko didn't know a lot more than I did, so he offered to introduce me to Trifun [TEE-foon], a friend of his. "He knows lots more about the Bible than I do," Petko offered.

When I met Trifun, I told him I found it difficult to believe that God exists or that He cared about me. "Jesus cares so much about you that He died for you—and all the people in the world," Trifun said.

“But I’m not a good person,” I answered. “I’ve done a lot of bad things, things I’m sure God won’t forgive me for.”

“There is no sin too great for God to forgive if you believe in Jesus and repent,” Trifun replied.

Trifun gave me a book on the life of Christ to read. “If you don’t understand something, ask God to explain,” he said. I read the book, and it changed my life.

## Difficult Journey

I began meeting regularly with Trifun, Petko, and his wife to learn about God and the Bible. I began attending a wonderful church in Sydney with them, and studied the Bible with the pastor. But my journey toward truth was not all smooth. The devil tried his hardest to distract me, to keep me from praying and studying the Bible. Every evening as I read the Bible, demons tortured me. I couldn’t sleep.

One night God spoke to me and told me to leave the world behind and follow Him. I fasted and prayed, like the Bible says. The pastor and other church members prayed for me until the demons fled, leaving me alone after years of torment. I continued my studies with the pastor, and two months later I was baptized into the Adventist Church. I played my clarinet for the ceremony—my testimony of how God had changed me.

## New Life

God called me back to Macedonia. It was difficult to find my place at first, but I shared what God was doing in my life with anyone who would listen. My mother and sister listened. They saw the difference Christ was making in my life, and they both accepted Jesus as their Savior.

## Fast Facts

- Macedonia is a small country with about 500 Adventists among the 2 million people living here, a ratio of about one Adventist for every 3,700 people.
- Many younger people, including Adventists, are leaving the country to search for better job opportunities elsewhere in the European Union. The remaining Adventists are determined to share their faith and grow God’s church through literature, outreach, and missionary activities.

My former friends had nothing in common with me anymore. I tried to share what God was doing in my life, and some listened. Others turned away. God led me to a wonderful woman who is now my wife. I’m studying to become a Bible worker.

I’m leading a house church in a resort city here in Macedonia. We’re sharing literature and offering people Bible studies. It is not always easy, but God sends us to people who are hungry for the gospel. Thousands of people come to this city every year to relax. We want to introduce them to God and send them home totally changed.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build an evangelistic center in this city, a beacon of light on a hill, where people can come to learn more about God. It will be a true missionary center, a place to train Adventists from all over Macedonia to share God’s love and be lights for Him in this dark world. From here we will share the news that that Jesus can change their lives, just as He changed mine. 🌍



# Growing Believers

Tatiana and Klime

Tatiana wrung her hands as she prayed, “God, can You hear me? Why don’t You answer?” Her son was in trouble, and Tatiana prayed every day, but it seemed that God wasn’t answering.

## The True Way

One day while praying, Tatiana thought, *Surely with all the religions in the world, there must be one religion that follows God’s way in every matter.* Tatiana began praying that God would show her His true church.

She found a Bible and began reading it. But it was so difficult to read that she set it aside. Later she tried it again. But again she found it too difficult to understand. She cried to God, “I believe that this Bible is Your Word, and I believe it can lead me to You, God. Please send someone to teach me about the Bible.”

## The Man With the Bible

Two days later Tatiana answered a knock at the door and saw a man standing there, holding a Bible. “Would you like to

study the Bible?” the man asked. Stunned, Tatiana realized that God had sent this man to her. She opened the door wider and invited him in.

The man sat down and opened his Bible. Tatiana sat nearby and picked up her Bible. Together they prayed and read portions of the Scripture. He explained what the texts mean, and gradually Tatiana began to understand what God was telling her.

The man, George, returned several times a week for three months. Tatiana invited her husband, Klime, to join them, but Klime would leave when George arrived. However, when Tatiana and George began studying prophecy, Klime stayed to listen.

Tatiana and Klime began reading the Bible on their own. They found passages that puzzled them and asked George about them. But George was a new believer too, and he didn’t always know the answer. Tatiana asked George what church he attended. George explained that he was a Seventh-day Adventist. “Does your church follow everything that the Bible teaches?” Tatiana asked hopefully.

“Yes,” George said. Then he explained that there was no Adventist church in the city, so the handful of members meet in their homes.

## Mission Post

- Adventist members in Macedonia number about 550 amid a population of about 2 million. But a significant number of believers have left the country in search of work elsewhere in Europe.
- Those who remain are mission-minded and are working hard to share the Adventist message with others. They are focusing their efforts on sharing the gospel in Ohrid [OH-rid], a resort city on the shores of Lake Ohrid in southwestern Macedonia.
- Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a missionary training center in Ohrid to help teach believers how to reach people for Christ throughout the country.

## Willing to Follow

Tatiana studied the Ten Commandments and realized that she shouldn't have idols or icons in her home. She destroyed the icons so that they wouldn't be a stumbling block to her or to others. When she realized that her body is the temple of God and that she must keep it pure, she tried to quit smoking. But she couldn't quit on her own. She asked God to help her stop. "Make them like poison to me," she asked. In two or three days she had stopped smoking.

An Adventist pastor contacted the couple and asked to meet them. The couple was so impressed with how the pastor explained truths about God that Klime immediately asked to be baptized. He was seriously ill and feared that he would die. Tatiana also wanted to be baptized. But her job required her to work on Sabbaths. Tatiana quit her job and

found work on a farm. It was difficult work, but she had Sabbaths free.

## Growing Believers

The nearest Adventist church was 90 miles away, so Tatiana and Klime invited the handful of believers to worship in their home. They share their new faith with anyone who will listen.

Klime receives lengthy medical treatments every two days, so he takes his Bible or a Christian book to read aloud to other patients who are also receiving treatment. Most appreciate the hope they find as they hear God's words spoken to their hearts.

Tatiana likes to share her faith with Albanians who live in her neighborhood. She gives them copies of *The Great Controversy*. One man came to her and said, "Someone stole my copy of *The Great Controversy*! Can you give me another one?" Tatiana gladly complied.

Tatiana has invited her neighbors to worship with them in their home, and several have come for worship. One woman read a book that Tatiana had given her three times and asked to be baptized. She's preparing now for baptism.

Klime and Tatiana continue to be on fire for God. The little congregation is growing, and one day soon they will outgrow Tatiana and Klime's home.

This quarter part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build an evangelistic center in their city that will accommodate their congregation, provide seminar rooms for outreach, and include training facilities for believers from throughout Macedonia who want to come and learn how to share God's love more effectively. Thank you for helping grow strong, healthy believers in Macedonia. 🌍



# The Test

Christian and Sanja

*[Ask a teen boy and girl to present this first-person report.]*

**Christian:** I'm Christian, and this is Sanja [SAN-yah]. We've grown up together in the Adventist church in Macedonia. Ours is a small country just north of Greece, and the church there is very small, with fewer than 500 Adventists in the country. We have more members on the books, but many have moved to other countries in Europe looking for work and better living possibilities.

**Sanja:** Christian and I have just begun high school. We are studying in a special school that focuses on subjects that will prepare us for our future careers. I want to be a doctor.

Schools in Macedonia are crowded, and most operate on two schedules, with students attending class in the morning for two weeks and then the afternoon and evening the next two weeks.

Everything went well for the first two weeks of school. Then the next two weeks we went to school in the afternoon. This

meant that in the winter, we wouldn't be able to attend classes on Friday, for the sun sets as early as 4:00.

**Christian:** The church members knew about the school issues and were praying with us. My mom went to the school to talk to the principal and the teachers about our dilemma and to request that we be allowed to miss the classes that met after sundown on Friday evening.

"We don't make exceptions for religious beliefs," the head teacher said. "If these students won't attend all their classes, they must change schools." She walked into her office and closed the door. The conversation was over.

Mom went to see the director of the primary school I had attended to ask for advice. The woman asked about us and where we were studying. "Don't worry," she said. "My husband and the director of the high school are friends. We'll see what we can do to resolve the problem."

Mom thanked the primary school

director and left. A few minutes later her phone rang. It was the primary school director. She had just talked to the high school director and made an appointment to talk about the issue. Suddenly there was hope.

**Sanja:** On Monday the school director called us and said, “We will excuse Sanja and Christian from classes that fall on your Sabbath.”

**Christian:** The head teacher came into my class and asked, “Who’s the guy who wants to skip classes on Friday?” I stood up and told her my name.

“OK,” she said. “Thank you.” And she left the room.

Some of my classmates wondered what was going on. I hadn’t talked about my religion since we all were new in school. “Why are you skipping classes?” they asked after class. I explained a bit of the situation, and some asked, “Could we join your church so we can skip classes too?” I knew they were joking.

**Sanja:** It’s been six weeks now, and we haven’t had any serious problems. None of our teachers have given us a difficult time. Our classmates know that we leave school for religious beliefs. We make up all our work. It’s important that we do a good job because our faith is on the line. We must be sure to honor God.

Our ways are not God’s ways. Things aren’t always as we wish them to be. Sometimes God has other plans. I’m so grateful that God overruled in our situation so we can honor Him here, in this school, where so few people are believers and so few know who Adventists are.

Mom told me that an Adventist girl in

## Fast Facts

- Schools in Macedonia are crowded, and most hold two shifts of classes in order to accommodate more students. Students attend school in the morning for two weeks and then attend classes in the afternoon. This creates problems because on Friday classes run well into the Sabbath during the winter.
- Pray for Adventist students in Macedonia who face challenges because they want to keep the Sabbath. Some have been expelled from school.
- For more on the people and the work of the Adventist Church in Macedonia, watch a segment from the Adventist Mission DVD.

another town is having great difficulties getting permission to miss classes on Friday. She faces expulsion unless the minister of education steps in, and he doesn’t want to interfere. We’re praying for her—and for other young people in Macedonia who face similar problems.

**Christian:** The Adventist Church in Macedonia is small, as I said. But we are working hard to make it known in our country. Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help us share our faith with far more people from Macedonia and across our part of Europe. With the funds we will build an evangelistic center in a resort city on a lake. Thousands of people visit this resort every year. We want to meet them and share God’s Word with them. Your offering will help us make this happen. Thank you for helping us grow the church in Macedonia. 🌍

# The Invitations

MACEDONIA | December 21

Rasim



Rasim stood shyly on the fringe of his neighbor's small yard. It was the first time he had attended the children's Bible club at Auntie Jadranka's [yah-DRAHN-kah], and he wasn't sure what to do.

"Come, sit down with the other children," Auntie Jadranka said, beckoning him to an empty spot on the ground. Rasim sat down among the other children and relaxed. He listened intently to the story Auntie Jadranka told and tried to follow the other children as they sang songs about Jesus. From that week on, Rasim joined the children for their Bible club. He didn't know much about Jesus, but he was happy to learn.

## Another Invitation

Auntie Jadranka invited Rasim to go to church with her on Sunday, and he agreed. He enjoyed church and went every week until his father told him to

stop going. Rasim obeyed, but he missed Sunday school.

Several months later Rasim began going to a man's house to read the Bible. It wasn't as interesting as the children's Bible club, but he enjoyed the candy the man gave the children. Then his father told him to stop attending the meetings. Rasim obeyed.

## Uncle's Challenge

Rasim's uncle came to visit. He learned that Rasim was interested in God gave him some books. "I'll teach you about God," he told the boy. "Jesus is not God. And He didn't die on a cross for you or anyone!" Uncle said.

Rasim listened respectfully to his uncle. He read the books his uncle gave him. But he doubted what the books said. If this is true, he thought, what about the things I learned from Auntie Jadranka?

## The Neighbor

Rasim knew that his neighbor, Bio, was a Christian. Rasim decided to talk to him about God, but he wasn't sure where to start. "My uncle says that Jesus didn't die on the cross," Rasim challenged. To his surprise, Bio didn't argue. He simply opened his Bible to Matthew and read the story of Jesus' crucifixion.

"OK, maybe you're right that Jesus died on the cross," the boy said, "but Jesus isn't God."

Bio turned to John 13:13 and read: “You call me “Teacher” and “Lord” and rightly so, for that is what I am” (NIV).

Rasim realized that he was wrong. He began studying the Bible for himself. The more he learned, the more convinced he became that Jesus is God. One day he could no longer listen to his uncle’s teaching. “I’m sorry, Uncle, but the Bible speaks the truth. Jesus is God, and He died for our sins.”

Rasim continued reading the Bible Sabbath and discovered the Ten Commandments and the Sabbath truth. He wanted to follow God. When Bio invited him to attend the Adventist church, Rasim agreed.

## Seeing God Work

One morning Rasim got up early to attend a prayer service at the church. His father saw him and told him he couldn’t go. Rasim returned to the house and prayed. “God, please help my father allow me to go to church.”

Rasim dressed and walked outside. “I’m

going to church,” he said.

“Go,” his father waved him away without anger. Rasim hurried away, thanking God for changing his father’s heart.

Late one night Rasim’s father awoke to find Rasim reading the Bible. “Close that book or I will burn it,” he said. Then he went outside.

Rasim read the next verse: “Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me” (Psalm 50:15, NIV). Rasim prayed, “Please deliver me as You promised in Your Word. I will honor You.”

Just then his father returned. Rasim held his breath, but his father said nothing. In minutes he was asleep. Rasim read the Bible for another half hour, praising God for giving him peace to read.

Life wasn’t easy for Rasim. Often he sensed Satan attacking him, accusing him that he wasn’t good enough to follow God. But then he sensed another voice saying, “Go to God, worship Him and serve Him.” Rasim grew to recognize these voices and chose to follow God.

## Accepting God’s Invitation

Rasim took his stand for God and asked to be baptized. He knows his battles are just beginning, but he has found a home and a family in the church. Church members are determined to encourage Rasim and help him grow in Christ.

Adventists in Macedonia are few, but they are determined to share God’s invitation for salvation with others. Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help them build a training center so that believers can share God’s love more effectively with others. Thank you for giving so others can hear and accept God’s invitation to spend eternity with Him. 🌍

## Mission Post

- Rasim met Christ when a neighbor shared her faith. Many Adventist believers are seeking creative ways to share their faith. They’re uniting to give out literature and talk to vacationers in Ohrid [OH-rid], a resort town in southwestern Macedonia.
- Part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help build an evangelistic center in Ohrid that will provide a church for the congregation there and training for those who come to the city to share their faith.

## Thirteenth Sabbath Program

➤	<b>Opening Song</b>	“Christ for the World,” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 370
➤	<b>Welcome</b>	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
➤	<b>Prayer</b>	
➤	<b>Program</b>	“Any Way We Can”
➤	<b>Offering</b>	While the offering is being taken, ask the children to sing “Jesus Loves Me” in Greek or Macedonian. See page 31 in the <i>Children’s Mission</i> for words.
➤	<b>Closing Song</b>	“Rise Up, O Church of God,” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 615
➤	<b>Closing Prayer</b>	

**Participants:** Three to six speakers—a narrator and two or more reporters. If your group is small, two reporters can take turns presenting the project reports. [Note: participants should be familiar enough with their material so they can present it with appropriate emphasis.]

**Props:** A map of the Trans-European Division. (Scan the map on the back page of the quarterly or download it from [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org) and project it onto a screen.) A PowerPoint presentation listing each project as it’s presented will help listeners keep track of the projects they’re giving to.

**Narrator:** How does one share the gospel with people who are too busy or too wrapped up in their own concerns to care about God? The leaders of the Trans-European Division (TED) are grappling with this question and have come up with some exciting answers.

Many people living in the TED are considered secular and postmodern. Their lives focus on material gain, circles of

friends, and secular pastimes. Restaurants and theaters are busy; churches are not. God is not part of most of the peoples’ lives.

“We must reach people any way we can,” one division leader said. And God is showing them innovative ways to do just that. Our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering today will help fund some of these outreach efforts.

**Reporter 1:** Imagine children pulling on their parents' hands, begging them to hurry—to church! In a region of the world where as few as 10 percent of the population attend church regularly, families are discovering that Messy Church is a fun way to spend time together and learn about God.

Messy Church is a program similar to Vacation Bible School, but it meets once a month. Each program focuses on a Bible story and includes a craft that helps cement the story in children's minds. A rousing song service and a family meal follow, providing fellowship time for all ages.

Children and adults alike are spreading the word that Messy Church is “awesome,” “epic,” and “so much fun.” Many beg to return after just one visit.

Children must bring an adult—a parent, grandparent, or guardian—so the entire family can benefit from the program. Judging by the success of the pilot program at Stanborough Park Adventist Church outside of London, this program will make a huge impact in other areas of the TED as well. Part of today's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help train leaders from across the TED to adapt Messy Church for their own regions.

**Reporter 2:** Another unique program focuses on the history and culture of a country to guide people through the Bible's story of redemption.

The program, called Bible 3-D, was tested in Iceland, where producers used the nation's history and biblical roots to introduce long-forgotten Bible truths. They created an interactive walk-through exhibit that included the country's oldest and most precious Bibles, photographs, and exhibits relating to the stories that

make up the country's history.

“We need to draw people's attention to Christ any way we can,” said Janos Kovacs-Biro, division ministerial and Sabbath School director. “Everyone loves stories, especially stories of their history as a people. They love to touch and experience things for themselves. We created this exhibition to appeal to these senses.”

The exhibition coincided with evening meetings held in the same building in the heart of the capital city. Turnout exceeded expectations, and comments from those who attended were positive and exciting.

“Every country has its own story,” Kovacs-Biro says. “We want to find those stories and use them to build a bridge to link people with the Savior. This program shows great promise.” Today's offering will help produce similar programs throughout the TED.

**Narrator:** It's exciting to find new ways to turn people's hearts to Christ. Countries with very small Adventist populations face unique challenges.

Greece and Macedonia are ancient and yet modern countries that lie adjacent to each other. They both are predominantly Orthodox countries with fewer than 600 Adventist believers.

**Reporter 3:** Greek Mission leaders have learned that it's difficult for Greek Adventists to reach Greek Orthodox. But immigrants, who are experiencing great changes in their lives, are far more open to hearing God's message of salvation.

Just a few years ago the Greek Mission rented a hall to house a growing international congregation in Athens. Today that congregation has grown from a handful to more than 150 members.

The congregation is rapidly outgrowing its facilities and must find a larger, more permanent place to worship.

The mission plans to purchase a building that can be used as a worship center for the international congregation; an evangelistic center in which to hold seminars to reach out to the community; and a lay training center where members can learn how to approach their neighbors, colleagues at work, and people on the street with the gospel of Christ. It's a big assignment for one building and one congregation, but the members are eager to move forward to bring others to Jesus in Athens, Greece.

**Reporter 4:** Fewer than 500 members live in Macedonia. But they share a zeal for the gospel seldom seen in other European countries. Members translate evangelistic books and Sabbath School materials into Macedonian to use for outreach and training. They're eager to make their church known to the people of their country.

Church members in Macedonia have a vision to establish a missionary training and outreach center in one of the country's prime vacation spots, a resort city on Lake Ohrid [OH-rid]. Thousands of visitors from throughout Europe visit this ancient city every year to relax, rejuvenate, and enjoy the spectacular views. Church members are reaching out to the visitors with literature, testimonies,

and prayer. And people are responding.

But the believers want to learn how to reach those within their boundaries more effectively. A parcel of land has been purchased in the city on which to build a church for the small but growing congregation of believers. The building will house a lay training center where Adventists can learn ways to share their faith more effectively wherever they are in Macedonia.

**Reporter 5:** Outreach includes traditional as well as innovative projects. Newbold College, the division's only four-year college, trains young people from across the Trans-European Division and from more than 40 other countries. Today's offering will help renovate the women's residential hall to provide a safe and healthful place for young women to live while they prepare to serve their Savior.

**Narrator:** Outreach can be traditional or innovative, but it must capture people's attention in order to reach their hearts. Today's offering will strengthen infrastructure and reach out in new and energetic ways. Let's help the people of the Trans-European Division share the gospel so that others can hear and respond to the Savior's call to "come to me" (Matthew 11:28).

*[Offering]*

## Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

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

- a primary school in northern Benin
- a primary school in Dakar, Senegal, in westernmost Africa
- CHILDREN'S PROJECT: Library books for the schools in Benin and Senegal.



Second Quarter 2014 will feature the Southern Asia Division.

## Leader's Resources

For more information on the cultures and history of Greece, Macedonia, England, and the other countries featured this quarter, check the travel section of a local library or visit a travel agency and ask for brochures.

Visit our website for recipes, language pages, and other activities that you can download and print to make mission more fun for children. Go to [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org). Click on "Children's Mission Magazine" in the "Mission Resources" box. Then click on "Activities" on the left side of the screen. Select the activity or resource you would like to download or print.

Adventist Mission DVD is a free video that features stories from the Trans-European Division and the worldwide mission of the Adventist Church. Ask your Sabbath School superintendent to make you a copy of it for use by other divisions. Or go online at [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org) to download one of the DVD programs.

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 and remind Sabbath School members to prepare their Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the next week.

# YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

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# TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION

Norwegian Sea

North Atlantic Ocean

North Sea

Baltic Sea

Mediterranean Sea

	CHURCHES	COMPANIES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Adriatic	103	13	3,707	9,654,000
Baltic	89	0	6,531	6,768,000
British	257	42	33,878	67,560,000
Danish	45	1	2,527	5,681,000
Finland	70	5	4,952	5,387,000
Hungarian	105	18	4,700	9,972,000
Netherlands	56	8	5,059	16,694,000
Norwegian	62	2	4,555	4,952,000
Polish	116	32	5,781	38,222,000
South-East European	210	8	7,968	16,080,000
Swedish	36	3	2,757	9,447,000
Attached Fields (Cyprus, Greece, Iceland)	18	12	1,111	12,462,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,167</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>83,526</b>	<b>202,879,000</b>

Statistics as of October 2012

## PROJECTS

- 1 Evangelism center in Ohrid, Macedonia
- 2 International church/evangelistic center, Athens, Greece
- 3 Renovation of women's residence hall, Newbold College, England
- 4 Bible 3-D exhibition illustrating God's love through great controversy themes throughout the division
- 5 CHILDREN'S Project: Messy Church, a family-oriented activity-centered outreach to families throughout the division

