



# YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

2019 • **QUARTER 3** • SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION



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

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 = stories of special interest to teens

## Your Offerings at Work



Part of a 2016 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering funded children’s Sabbath School classrooms at two churches on Maré island in New Caledonia. Pictured is the classroom at Tedine Seventh-day Adventist Church. Read about Maré on page 14.



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## Dear Sabbath School Leader,

Andrew McChesney  
Editor



This quarter we feature the South Pacific Division, whose territory includes American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna Islands.

God is doing amazing things in this region of 40.5 million people with 518,016 Adventists, or a ratio of one Adventist for 78 people. I always pray for God's blessings during trips to collect mission stories, but this time I started praying extra early — four months before the trip began. Every morning, I asked God to provide the best stories.

God answered in a mighty way. As I traveled to six countries over three weeks, I noticed an incredible increase in the number of powerful mission stories. I am convinced more than ever that Jesus is coming soon!

### Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help to:

- “Save 10,000 Toes,” a campaign to prevent toe amputations through health services in American Samoa, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.
- Construct Hope TV and radio studios in Tongatapu, Tonga.
- Produce “Daniel Children’s Series,” a 13-part animated series for children aged 8-12 following the adventures of Daniel and his three friends, in Australia.

This quarter’s three Thirteenth Sabbath projects are diverse. “Save 10,000 Toes” aims to provide health training to prevent the amputation of the toes of people with diabetes. Across the South Pacific Division, doctors amputate 80 toes every day, the division’s associate health director Paul Rankin told me. He said 19 percent of the region’s population of 40.5 million suffer from Type 2 diabetes, a disease caused by poor lifestyle choices. The figure jumps to 47 percent in American Samoa, one of the seven countries that will benefit from the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

Another project focuses on bringing Hope Channel to Tonga. A 2016 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering made Hope Channel available to all homes in New Zealand, and many people have visited Adventist churches as a result. Let’s pray for a similar blessing in Tonga.

Additional information about the Thirteenth Sabbath projects can be found in the box on this page.

### Special Features

If you want to make your Sabbath School class come alive, visit our Facebook page at the link: [facebook.com/missionquarterlies](https://facebook.com/missionquarterlies).

You also can download the PDF version of the Children’s Mission magazine at [bit.ly/childrenmission](http://bit.ly/childrenmission), and Mission Spotlight videos at [bit.ly/missionspotlight](http://bit.ly/missionspotlight).

Thank you for encouraging others to be mission minded!

# Winning Drunken Parents

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | July 6

Talitha Hoyato, 19



Talitha Hoyato's parents were known as drunks and gamblers in Goroka, a mountainous town in Papua New Guinea. They were so busy drinking and gambling that they often forgot about their 8-year-old daughter at home. So, they didn't mind when a kind neighbor asked to adopt the girl.

The neighbor took little Talitha home and told her to call her "Mother."

Early in the morning, Talitha awoke to Mother's alarm clock at 5 a.m. She saw Mother slide out of bed and onto her knees, and talk out loud to God. Mother even mentioned Talitha's name. Then Mother opened a black book and read.

The next morning, the alarm again awoke Talitha at 5 a.m. She again watched Mother pray and read. Later that day, several guests visited the house and asked Mother for advice about personal problems. Mother prayed with the women

and offered advice from the black book, which Talitha learned was a Bible.

Talitha began to copy Mother. When the alarm went off, she also got into her knees and prayed. She read the Bible. Mother taught her to share what she learned in the Bible with others. As Talitha prayed, read, and shared, she saw that God answered her prayers. She believed in Him.

The years passed, and Talitha grew up. When she was 17, she was baptized.

Shortly after the baptism, Mother told Talitha that she needed to move back home to her birth parents.

"Do you mean it?" Talitha asked, weeping. "You really want me to go back?"

With tears, Mother replied, "Because you have accepted Jesus as your personal Savior, you have to let your birth parents know about Him."

Ellen White says in "Christ's Object Lessons," "If you have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, you are to forget yourself, and try to help others. Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself" (page 67).

Talitha's parents welcomed her home, and she befriended three younger siblings, two brothers and a sister whom she had never met. She set her alarm for 5 a.m. and got up to pray and read the Bible.

She tried to tell her parents what she had read, but they refused to listen. So, she

## Story Tips

- Pronounce Talitha as: ta-LEE-ta.
- Ask listeners how they can “witness wherever they go.” One answer is, like Talitha, they can read the Bible every morning at 5 a.m. and share what they read with friends, family, and others.
- Watch a video of Talitha at the link: [bit.ly/Talitha-Hoyato](http://bit.ly/Talitha-Hoyato).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Read another story about Talitha next week.

went to their bedside while they slept and told them Bible stories. She prayed over them. She remembered that her adoptive mother had said, “To convert a soul is not our business, it is God’s business.”

After a year, Mother agreed to go to church but expressed fear that the church members would make fun of her for drinking and gambling. Talitha told her not to worry.

“God sees the heart,” she said. “When Jesus was here, He mingled with people just like you. So, don’t worry about what others say. There is great joy in heaven when one sinner repents.”

Father didn’t say anything when Mother returned from church. Talitha invited him to join them, but he refused. “You are just a kid,” he said. “Don’t tell me what to do.”

Talitha kept praying for Father but changed her prayer when she read Daniel 4:28-37. She read that God changed Nebuchadnezzar into an animal so the

king would acknowledge Him.

“Dear Lord,” she prayed, “if you can change a king into an animal so he realizes that You are God, then look at my Daddy, who is only an ordinary man. Please do something that will cause him pain so he will acknowledge You.”

Shortly after Talitha began to pray this way, Father was arrested. Father, who worked as an electrical engineer, hadn’t completed a contract, and his employer sent him to prison. He began to believe in Jesus in prison. When he was freed after three months, he joined the baptismal class at church.

Talitha was overjoyed!

But one month later, Father died from typhoid fever. He was 45.

Talitha didn’t understand what happened, but she said God answered her prayers. “I expected my Dad to become an Adventist and for us to go to church together as a family, but that didn’t happen,” she said. “But I’m glad because Father died believing in Jesus. When Jesus comes, we will go to heaven as a family.”

Talitha, who is 19 and studying to become a schoolteacher, is glad that she has two mothers. “I always thank God for my adoptive mother, who taught me to be a disciple in my early childhood,” she said. “Now it has become part of me to witness wherever I go.” 🌍

Three years ago, part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped construct children’s Sabbath School classrooms in Talitha’s hometown, Goroka, in Papua New Guinea. Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offering.

By Andrew McChesney



# Two Black Eyes

Talitha Hoyato, 19

Nineteen-year-old Talitha Hoyato was shocked to see her roommate with two black eyes.

“What happened?” she asked.

Her 23-year-old roommate, Doreen, lifted her blouse to reveal that her back also was covered with bruises.

“My husband is a drunkard, and he did this to me,” Doreen said, weeping.

“Then you shouldn’t go back home,” Talitha said.

But Doreen went home at every opportunity. She had a 1-year-old baby who was being cared for by her mother-in-law in Mount Hagen, Papua New Guinea. She missed the child terribly.

Doreen found a sympathetic listener in Talitha. Both were studying to be teachers at Simbu Teachers College in Kundiawa, located about a three-hour drive away from Doreen’s home.

“My life is miserable, and I don’t know how to change and to be a good mom and wife,” Doreen said.

Talitha wondered how to respond.

Then she remembered seeing women with marital problems come to her mother for advice. Her mother had directed them to wisdom from the Bible.

“My Mom said no one but God can change a person,” Talitha said. “God created us and knows how to mend us.”

She suggested that Doreen pray and read the Bible every morning.

One of the first things that Doreen had noticed when the two became roommates was that Talitha worshipped every morning. Talitha woke up at 5 a.m. and prayed and read the Bible. Doreen learned that Talitha’s birth parents were drunkards and that she had been raised by an adoptive Seventh-day Adventist mother who taught her to worship daily.

The next time Doreen returned to the dormitory from home leave, Talitha had a surprise for her. Talitha handed her sheets of paper onto which she had copied three Bible stories, including the life-changing experience of the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:1-42. She also had copied a mission story from the first quarter 2017 Mission magazine and a story from Children’s Mission magazine.

“You can read this if you have time,” Talitha said.

Doreen liked the stories and asked for more. Talitha told how she had started

## Story Tips

- Pronounce Talitha as: ta-LEE-ta.
- Watch a video of Talitha at the link: [bit.ly/Talitha-Hoyato2](http://bit.ly/Talitha-Hoyato2).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

## Mission Post

- Papua New Guinea has 1,045 churches, 3,182 companies, and a membership of 315,759. In a population of 8,317,000, that's one church member for every 26 people.
- Early Adventist work in Papua New Guinea was difficult because the government had divided the Papuan territory between three mission bodies — the Methodists, the Anglicans, and the London Missionary Society — and it was hard for any other missionaries to purchase land or work in these territories.
- Papua New Guinea has 29 Adventist clinics and health centers.

praying for her birth father a year earlier and he had rejected all entreaties to accept God. But then, as she kept on praying, he had been arrested for renegeing on a work contract and turned to God in prison. She said she was waiting for him to be released from prison so they could go to church together.

“If God can change my father, He can change your husband, too!” Talitha said.

Doreen was touched by the stories and began to pray for her husband every day. One morning, Talitha awoke at 5 a.m. and saw that her roommate was already awake and reading the Bible. She was thrilled.

Two months passed, and Doreen's mother-in-law called with surprising news.

She said that Doreen's husband, who had never worked in the garden, had dug and planted a big garden on his own.

“Are you joking?” Doreen asked.

“Come and see for yourself,” her mother-in-law replied.

The next time Doreen went home, she saw the garden. Her husband was trying to care for her and the rest of his family for the first time. He also stopped drinking. No one in the village could believe the change that had come over him.

Back in the college dormitory, Doreen thanked Talitha with a hug.

“Praise the Lord!” Talitha said. “God is working.”

Today, Doreen is having morning worship regularly, and she and her husband attend church together. She no longer has any black eyes.

“Now I am a happy mother with a happy husband,” she said.

Doreen is one of many people who have learned about God from Talitha. Although only 19, Talitha likes to talk about nothing else than Jesus and His righteousness.

“My adoptive mother taught me how to be a disciple from early childhood, and I always thank the Lord for giving me such a Mom,” she said. “Everywhere I go, I always like to share Jesus. When we talk about the news, I say, ‘See, that tells us that Jesus is coming soon.’ We need to be faithful and not lose our hope in Jesus.” 🌍

Three years ago, part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped construct children's Sabbath School classrooms in Talitha's hometown, Goroka, in Papua New Guinea. Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offering.

By Andrew McChesney

# No Retirement Plans

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | July 20

Okanama Kevi, 66



Many elderly Seventh-day Adventist pastors return to their native villages when they retire in Papua New Guinea and spend their last years at home and with family.

Not Okanama Kevi, a veteran pastor from Ura village in the highlands of the South Pacific country.

His life became even more busy in retirement as he felt called by God to start a full-time prayer ministry.

Pastor Okanama's name has become known across Papua New Guinea as God answers his prayers in a special way. Adventists and others call him on his cell phone and knock on the door of his family hut in a mountainous forest. He has compiled a long prayer list to raise to God every morning and evening.

One day, a pastor from another Christian denomination showed up at

Pastor Okanama's house. The visitor, Ricky, lived in another province and had heard about Pastor Okanama's prayer ministry while visiting Ura on church business.

Ricky arrived at the house with his heavily pregnant wife.

"Please, can you pray for my wife?" Ricky asked. "She is past her due date, and we are very worried."

Pastor Okanama anointed the woman with olive oil and prayed for her.

Two days later, the woman gave birth to a healthy baby girl.

The next Sabbath, Ricky went to the Adventist church with his wife and all six of their children, including the newborn girl.

Pastor Okanama immediately invited Ricky and his wife to join the church's baptismal class, which he oversaw. The



couple's five older children, ages 8 to 12, also began to study the Bible. After several months of study, the couple and their five children were baptized in August 2017.

"Now Ricky has left his church and his work as a pastor," Pastor Okanama said in an interview at his home. "He is a faithful member in our church."

Following Ricky's baptism, a senior pastor from his former church visited the Adventist church in the village. He was given time to speak after the Sabbath worship service. He stood up and, weeping, gave an emotional speech.

"I invested a lot in Ricky," he said. "Now he has left me and gone to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. You guys take good care of him and look after him well, just as I looked after him."

With that, he gave his blessing to Ricky's decision.

Ricky, in addition to working as a pastor, owned two small businesses selling stationary and renting cars. After he was baptized, he called Pastor Okanama to his workplace and asked him to dedicate his businesses to the Lord. The pastor did with joy.

"He is a fruit of my prayer ministry," said Pastor Okanama, 66. "Through this ministry I have prayed for many pastors."

He has no plans to retire. Do you? 🌐

Part of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 2016 helped construct children's Sabbath School classrooms in Papua New Guinea, including in the area near Pastor Okanama's home. Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offering.

By Andrew McChesney

## Story Tips

- Pronounce Okanama as: OH-ka-nama.
- Watch a video of Pastor Okanama at the link: [bit.ly/Okanama-Kevi-2](http://bit.ly/Okanama-Kevi-2).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

## Fast Facts

- Papua New Guinea occupies the eastern part of the world's second-largest island and is prone to volcanic activity, earthquakes, and tidal waves.
- There are very few roads, so air travel is very common.
- With more than 600 islands and 800 indigenous languages, Papua New Guinea is made up of four regions with 20 provinces.
- About 80 percent of Papua New Guinea's people live in rural areas with almost no modern conveniences.
- The world's only known poisonous bird, the Hooded Pitohui (*Pitohui dichrous*) is native to Papua New Guinea.
- Common foods include starchy vegetables (wild sago, breadfruit, yams, taro, sweet potatoes, and rice) complemented by wild greens, several varieties of bananas, and coconuts, mango, and other fruits.
- Papua New Guinea has three official languages: English, Hiri Motu, and Tok Pisin.
- The New Guinea Highlands runs the length of New Guinea, and the highest areas receive snowfall — almost unheard of in the tropics.
- Papua New Guinea's indigenous people used to practice cannibalism. They hung the heads of their enemies as decoration.



# Losing 90 Pounds

Herik Dun Siope, 46

**H**erik Dun Siope, who grew up in a Seventh-day Adventist home, was flying high as a martial arts expert in the Solomon Islands.

He represented Solomon Islands at the South Pacific Games in Tahiti. Then he represented his country at the South Pacific Games in Fiji. He won medals.

But then he got busy with work as an architectural drafter. He married and had four children. He rarely read the Bible or went to church. He stopped physical training and ate a lot of easy-to-fix processed food like fish and chips, chicken, and Coca-Cola. Eleven years passed, and Herik grew and grew until he reached 230 pounds (105 kilograms), far above his ideal weight of 145 pounds (65 kilograms).

One day, Herik's left foot began to ache dreadfully. Over the weeks, the pain crept up his leg. He sought medical treatment, but nothing helped. Finally, he couldn't walk.

Herik grew frantic. He knew no blood

was circulating in his leg, and he worried that he would lose it. He remembered God.

"Help me find medication," he prayed.

Shortly after he prayed, an elderly relative knocked on his house door in Honiara, capital of the Solomon Islands. The relative said he had felt a strong impression to visit and asked Herik why he couldn't walk. Herik told about the pain and lack of medication.

"OK, I'll help you," the old man said.

He prepared a home remedy and treated Herik daily. After three weeks, Herik could stand, but he couldn't walk.

"You've lost the muscle in your leg," the old man said. "You need to exercise your leg."

Herik thanked God for the healing and prayed, "God, I want You to use me. I want to be a blessing to others. Show me what Your plan is for me."

After praying, Herik felt convicted to lose weight. He was sleeping poorly at night and suffered back pain. When he walked, he had trouble breathing.

He knew that his leg pain had been connected to his weight.

But how to lose weight? Herik remembered Ellen White's book "Counsels on Diet and Foods" and began to read it. He was amazed as he learned that appetite brought sin into the world. He read, "As our first parents lost Eden through the indulgence of appetite, our only hope of regaining Eden is through the firm denial of appetite and passion" (page 59).

Herik made major changes to his diet. He stopped eating processed food and, after a fierce struggle, eliminated caffeinated drinks. He also stopped using sugar and dairy products. Instead he returned to God's original plant-based diet of fruit, vegetables, grains, and nuts. He also tried not to eat after 4 p.m. and took care not to overeat.

In addition, he began to exercise, first by walking daily and then also by learning simple workouts that he could do at home.

In 12 months, he lost 90 pounds (40 kilograms) — and was back at his ideal weight. He felt healthier and could do chin-ups and other exercises that he hadn't managed to do even when he engaged in martial arts.

Today, two years later, Herik is 46 years old and leads free fitness classes for overweight islanders in an Adventist-owned auditorium. More than 200 people of various faiths come to him to work out four days a week. He also provides seminars at the country's Health Ministry and works with private companies. His advice comes straight from Ellen White — and he says people are losing weight and feeling great.

"I realize that this is how God wants to use me, and it has strengthened my spiritual

## Story Tips

- Pronounce Herik as: HERR-eeek.
- Watch a video of Herik at the link: [bit.ly/Herik-Siope](http://bit.ly/Herik-Siope).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Read more about Herik next week.

## Mission Post

- Pioneer Adventist missionaries to the islands were G.F. Jones and his wife, sent by the mission board of Australasia. Landing on the island of Gizo on May 29, 1914, Jones obtained a local crew for his auxiliary ketch, the Advent Herald, and sailed for Viru on the west coast of New Georgia, where he established headquarters for the mission work and opened a school.
- Christianity, introduced by missionaries in the 19th and early 20th centuries, is the principal organized religion. The primary denominations are Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Seventh-day Adventist.

life," Herik said. "I thank God for the blessing that He has given me, so I can be a blessing to others in this small way." 🌍

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will support "Save 10,000 Toes," a project to fight diabetes on the Solomon Islands. "Save 10,000 Toes" — which refers to the amputation of the toes of diabetic people — started in December 2017 and finances Herik's community exercise program. Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offerings.

By Andrew McChesney

# Inspired by an Employee

SOLOMON ISLANDS | August 3

Geoffrey Samuel, 51



Geoff Samuel, chief executive of a housing construction company on the Solomon Islands, couldn't believe his eyes when an employee lost 90 pounds (40 kilograms) in a year.

He looked at his own belly and wondered, "Can I do the same?"

Geoff weighed 290 pounds (130 kilograms). For 10 years, he had suffered high blood pressure and hypertension. He realized that he was on a path to destruction.

Geoff was fully aware of the Adventist health message, having been raised in an Adventist home and having attended church schools. But his body was the complete opposite of what he knew. He made the evening meal the largest of the day, just like many Solomon Islanders, including Adventists.

Before meals, he prayed, "God, thank

You for the blessing of this food." He never thought about praying, "God, give me strength to control my appetite."

One day in early 2017, Geoff approached Herik, who worked for him as an architectural drafter.

"How did you manage to lose all that weight?" he asked.

Herik explained that he had followed a diet and exercise program inspired by Ellen White's book "Counsels on Diet and Foods."

"I can teach you what I did," he said.

"When can I start?"

"If you want, we can start today."

The two men left the office of Solomon Housing Limited and started daily 45-minute exercises on the beach, under trees, and at other places. It was hard work for Geoff as he tackled various exercises in 20-second increments.

"When I started, I couldn't complete 20 seconds," he said. "I counted, and I was happy if I could reach five seconds. I tried every day to improve on that number."

As he lost weight, other people joined them. Herik continued leading the group, and Geoff assumed the role of coordinator. Today, more than 200 people of various faiths gather to exercise four days a week in an Adventist-owned auditorium.

Each workout begins and ends with prayer. Once a week, time is set aside for personal testimonies, and Herik and Geoff stress the importance of diet. Their advice

comes straight from Ellen White.

“If you feel good now, how about applying changes to your life spiritually?” Herik asks.

“Imagine how you would feel if you prayed every morning, too,” Geoff adds.

As people see their bodies getting back into shape, the cry often rings out around the auditorium, “Hem waka!” (It works!).

Herik and Geoff aren’t medical experts, but they have noticed that God helps the body heal itself when people treat their bodies as God intended.

Geoff still has a way to go to reach his ideal weight. But he has lost nearly 80 pounds (35 kilograms) in 18 months and feels better than ever.

“I can run, climb, and jump!” he said with a big smile. “If I can do it, anyone can do it.” 🌍

Obesity is a major problem in the Solomon Islands and contributes to a number of health ailments, including diabetes. Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will support “Save 10,000 Toes,” a diabetes-fighting program in the Solomon Islands. “Save 10,000 Toes,” which was established in late 2017,

## Story Tips

- Watch a video of Geoff at the link: [bit.ly/Geoffrey-Samuel](http://bit.ly/Geoffrey-Samuel).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Read more about Herik last week.

## Fast Facts

- A Spanish explorer, Álvaro de Mendaña de Neira, first sighted the islands in 1568. Finding signs of alluvial gold on Guadalcanal, Mendaña believed he had found the source of King Solomon’s wealth and consequently named the islands “The Islands of Solomon.”
- It is thought that people have lived in the Solomon Islands since at least 2,000 B.C.
- The concept of money is relatively recent in Solomon Island culture; barter and alternative forms of currency such as shell money are still practiced.

finances Herik and Geoff’s community workout classes. Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offerings.

By Andrew McChesney

## TYPICAL 45-MINUTE WORKOUT

- All stand in circle for prayer.
- Trainer explains exercises for the day.
- Four-minute warm-up — muscle activation — with jumping jacks, squats, pushups. These are full-body weight exercises.
- Six-minute full-body deep-breathe stretches from head to toe.
- Eight-minute workout of the upper body, midsection, and lower body. Twenty seconds per exercise.
- Ten-20 minutes of full-body, deep-breathe stretches to relax all muscles.
- All stand in circle again to pray.



# Making a Bed

Kinnie Aitorea, 18

Although Kinnee Aitorea is only 18, she was appointed a deaconess at the church at a Seventh-day Adventist boarding school in the Solomon Islands.

Kinnie was thrilled! Her mother was a deaconess, and she never thought that she also would be a deaconess.

The pastor called together the church's eight deaconesses — four students, including Kinnie, and four adults — for a meeting to discuss their responsibilities at Betikama Adventist College Church. He told Kinnie and another deaconess, her friend Wendy, that they had a very special job: to find out whether the girls in the dormitories had any urgent needs.

Kinnie and Wendy got right to work. They walked through their dormitory, a large room with bunk beds for 40 girls. They looked to see whether the girls had good sheets, blankets, and pillows. They looked to see whether the girls had clothes and school supplies such as pens and paper. When they saw a girl who might need

help, they stopped to talk with her.

"How are you?" Wendy asked. "How is school?"

"Do you need help?" Kinnie said.

Some girls said they needed clothes.

Others spoke about needing pens and paper.

Then Kinnie and Wendy saw Mitlyn Todonga's bed. One thin blanket lay neatly folded on the bottom of the bunk bed. There was no mattress to cushion Mitlyn from the hard wooden board where she slept at night. There was no sheet or pillow.

Kinnie and Wendy saw that Mitlyn also didn't have the proper white blouse and long black shirt that female students wore to class, and she lacked other things.

Kinnie and Wendy wanted to talk with Mitlyn, but they learned from the other girls that she was gone all day with the school choir for a concert at a museum in the country's capital, Honiara.

The other girls said it was Mitlyn's first year at the school. She was in the seventh grade and had arrived recently

from another island. Mitlyn's parents, who weren't Adventist, tried their best to help their daughter. Mother baked sweet cream-filled buns and made sour lemonade popsicles, and Father sold them. But the money wasn't enough.

Then the girls said something that made Kinnie feel sad. They said Mitlyn cried at night because some girls made fun of her for coming from a poor family. They talked mockingly to one another about her.

"She doesn't even have a proper bed," said one.

"Why did she come here?" said another. "Everyone else has a proper bed."

Kinnie and Wendy went to the pastor and told him about Mitlyn. "OK, let's go and get a mattress and clothes," he said.

The three made a trip into town. They bought a two-inch (five-centimeter) thick mattress, so Mitlyn would have a soft, comfortable bed. They also bought a brown sheet and a blanket covered with small flowers, a pillow and brown pillowcase, a white blouse and black skirt, writing paper, pens, soap, toothpaste, and a toothbrush.

Back at the dormitory, Kinnie and Wendy made up the bed and placed the clothes and other things on top.

That evening, Mitlyn returned from the choir trip and was shocked to see her bed.

"Whose mattress is this?" she asked the other girls.

"It's yours," said one.

"Someone brought it for you," said another.

"Who brought it for me?" she asked.

"Kinnie and Wendy brought the mattress for you and some clothes," a girl replied.

When Kinnie came to the dormitory later that evening, Mitlyn ran to her, crying.

"I never thought anyone would buy a mattress or clothes for me," she said. "You

## Story Tips

- Know that Betikama Adventist College has 520 students living in five girls' dormitories and six boys' dormitories and in the community.
- Ask listeners whether they have given or received a surprise gift and how they felt. Mitlyn said, "I really like the mattress because my mother and my father didn't buy it. Kinnie and Wendy bought it. I really treasure it — and I like the flowers on it."
- Ask what nice surprise your Sabbath School class can organize.
- Watch a video of Kinnie at the link: [bit.ly/Kinnie-Aitorea](http://bit.ly/Kinnie-Aitorea).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

## Mission Post

- The conch shell is an instrument used widely across the Pacific, including the Solomons. It is used as a traditional form of trumpet, summoning people to gather and signaling the start of important events. The blowing hole is created by removing the end of the shell or making a hole in the side.

have done a very big thing! My Dad will be very happy for what you did for me."

Kinnie felt so happy to see Mitlyn's joy. She saw that God has a plan for people to help others.

"It's OK," Kinnie said, giving Mitlyn a hug. "It's God's work to help others." 🌍

Thank you for helping others with your Sabbath School mission offerings.

By Andrew McChesney

# Working on Sabbath

NEW CALEDONIA | August 17

Sophie Buama, 44



Sophie Buama accepted Saturday as the biblical Sabbath when the pastor spoke about the Fourth Commandment at evangelistic meetings.

But she didn't quit her job in New Caledonia, a French territory in the South Pacific.

Sophie worked four days a week — Tuesdays to Fridays — at a supermarket in Mebuet, a village on the tiny island of Maré. A coworker, Celine, ran the supermarket the other three days.

Sophie felt terrible about working on Sabbath. The sun set between 5:30 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. on Fridays, depending on the season. Sophie was supposed to lock up the supermarket at 7 p.m.

She didn't want to quit because jobs were hard to find and her salary fed the whole family. She prayed for God to change her work schedule.

One Friday evening, Sophie was at

work, fretting about working on another Sabbath, when she received a phone call from Celine. Her coworker said she was in New Caledonia's capital, Noumea, on another island and unable to book a plane ticket back to Maré.

"Could you please fill in for me tomorrow?" she asked.

"No, tomorrow I'm going to church," Sophie said. "You know tomorrow is my day to worship my God."

A short time later, Sophie received a text message on her cell phone from the supermarket owner, who also was in New Caledonia's capital.

"You have to open the shop tomorrow and work on Saturday," the owner wrote.

Sophie texted back, "No, tomorrow is my day to worship God, so I won't open the supermarket."

After a moment, the owner replied, "No problem. Close the supermarket."



Sophie was worried, and she spoke with a female church member.

“Don’t fear man,” the member replied. “Fear God.”

On Sunday, the coworker was still away, so Sophie opened the supermarket. The owner, who had managed to fly back, came to work, and she was furious.

“This supermarket has never closed on Saturday, and I don’t want it ever to close again on Saturday,” she said.

Sophie reminded the owner about her

beliefs and added, “If you want to fire me, you are free to do that.”

Sophie kept her job. A few weeks later, the owner allowed her to take off four days to travel with her teenage daughter, Catherine, to the capital. But when Sophie returned, the owner said she had to work four days to make up for her absence. Two of the days fell on Sabbath.

Sophie tried to swap days with her coworker, but the owner insisted that she do the work. Sophie worked both Sabbaths, weeping as she rang up sales. At night, she struggled to sleep.

In desperation, she prayed, “God, help me to be free on Sabbath.” She asked the church to pray for her as well.

A few days later, the owner announced a new work schedule. Sophie had been working extra hours every day at the owner’s request, and it was costing a lot of money in overtime pay.

“From now on, you will only work from Sunday to Wednesday,” the owner said.

Sophie couldn’t believe her ears! A big smile filled her face as she rushed home and broke the news to her husband.

Today, Sophie makes less money, but she doesn’t mind. She can worship God on Sabbath.

“My salary is not important, but my time with God is important,” she said. “My joy is to be free on Sabbath.” 🌍

Part of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering three years ago helped build two children’s Sabbath School classrooms on Maré, including at Sophie’s church. Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offerings that help children — and adults — learn about God.

By Andrew McChesney

## Story Tips

- Pray for Sophie’s village, Mebuet. Sophie and her husband are the only Adventists in the village of 1,500 people.
- Ask what advice could be given to workers who face a Sabbath conflict. Sophie’s said, “Pray to God and put God first. Then you will see the miracle that God can perform for you.”
- Read about how Sophie’s husband, Georges, prayed 10 years for her conversion in the Children’s Mission magazine or at: [bit.ly/saved-by-finger](http://bit.ly/saved-by-finger).
- Watch a video of Sophie at the link: [bit.ly/Sophie-Buama](http://bit.ly/Sophie-Buama).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

## Mission Post

- The first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to work in the island group were Captain G.F. Jones and his wife, who sailed from Sydney for Noumea, New Caledonia, on Oct. 23, 1925. The islands were some of the most difficult areas in the South Pacific.
- The New Caledonia Mission comprises Isle of Pines, Loyalty Island, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna Islands.

# Angels in the Storm

NEW CALEDONIA | August 24

Annie Paama, 48



Annie Paama was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist home in the South Pacific islands of New Caledonia. But she left the church at the age of 16 and moved in with her boyfriend, Leonce. Soon they had two children.

Leonce drank. He often came home intoxicated, and inevitably a major argument followed. Sometimes he hit their young children.

One evening, Annie heard Leonce yelling as he walked up the hill to their house outside New Caledonia's capital, Noumea. She realized that he was drunk.

A light rain was falling. Weather forecasters had predicted that Cyclone Erika would batter New Caledonia that night and urged people to stay indoors.

Annie didn't want to be trapped at home with a drunken, violent man. She grabbed her 3-year-old daughter, Morgane, and 8-month-old son, Leonce Junior, and

thrust them in the car. Sliding behind the wheel, she sped away.

Annie drove until the needle on the fuel tank showed empty. Parking near a tree, she was unsure about her whereabouts but certain that this was the safest place in the storm. A fierce wind whipped the car, and a chill swept the interior. Annie realized that she hadn't brought warm blankets.

She looked over at her children. They were sound asleep after the long drive. She remembered God for the first time in years.

"God, if You exist, I want You to look after my children and me tonight," she said.

A deep weariness overwhelmed her. She leaned back the driver's seat and looked up out the driver's side window. Then she blinked hard and looked again. To her astonishment, the clouds rolled back, and the heavens opened. She trembled in fright as she stared upward. Thousands of angels were walking busily back and forth in the heavens. She craned her neck, hoping to see God's throne. Then the heavens closed, and a ladder extended from the sky to the car. It resembled a giant rope ladder.

Three angels descended the ladder. They were a bright white, whiter than any white that Annie had ever seen. She couldn't see their faces clearly, only that they were tall, had wings, and brightly shone with a white light. One angel stood in front of the car and extended his giant wings, reaching

## Story Tips

- Pronounce Leonce as: LEON-s.
- Ask listeners how God led them to Him. Annie said that night was a turning point in her life. “I wouldn’t be in church today if God hadn’t given me that experience,” she said.

Watch a video of Annie at the link:  
[bit.ly/Annie-Paama](http://bit.ly/Annie-Paama).

Find photos for this story at the link:  
[bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

to the back of the car. The two other angels stood on each side of the car, also covering it with their wings.

Annie was terrified and shook with fear.

Then she felt the car gently being rocked like a mother rocks a baby cradle. A pleasant warmth filled the interior.

Abruptly, Annie’s fright vanished, and she felt a sense of peace. Her eyes grew heavy, and she slipped into a deep sleep.

Annie awoke to the sound of birds chirping. Looking out the window, she saw the ladder descend again from the sky. The angels folded their wings and ascended the ladder.

As the angels left, Annie began to shake — not from fear but from cold. The warmth had left the car.

As the enormity of what had happened sank in, Annie realized that her prayer had been answered in a remarkable way. She immediately gave her heart to Jesus.

“I will never go back to the worldly life again,” she prayed. “I promise to live for You.”

Somehow, Annie had enough fuel in the car to drive to her mother’s house. Her mother, who opposed her boyfriend and had refused to help her for years,

welcomed her for the first time with open arms. She provided money for fuel.

Later at home, Annie found that the house had emerged from the cyclone untouched. She tore down pictures of Bob Marley and cannabis from the walls, collected her jewelry, and threw them into a fire. The flames were still burning when Leonce returned from work. Seeing his puzzlement, Annie explained that she had given her heart to Jesus. Then Leonce asked about the previous night.

“Where were you and the children?” he said. “I came home and found it empty.”

Annie described how she had heard him yelling drunkenly and fled to avoid a fight. Leonce shook his head slowly.

“That wasn’t me,” he said. “I didn’t drink yesterday.”

Annie kept her promise to serve God. She married Leonce and was rebaptized. She also became a deaconess at the Bethany Seventh-day Adventist Church, a position that she has held for about a decade.

Leonce, after hearing the angel story, put aside his violent ways, and Annie is praying for his baptism.

Their children, now teenagers, can’t believe that they were part of such a remarkable night. They wish that they could experience something similar today. Annie tells them that they can.

“You have to keep a relationship with God and talk to Him,” she says. “Then He also will reveal Himself to you.” 🌍

Thank you for your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering three years ago that helped build two children’s Sabbath School classrooms on Maré, an island in New Caledonia.

By Andrew McChesney

# 'Hi, Hope Channel'

NEW ZEALAND | August 31

William Arama, 49



William Arama, a pastor in the northern town of Kerikeri in New Zealand, read the e-mail with interest.

"Hi, Hope Channel," it said. "My wife and I are moving to Kerikeri soon. We will be looking for a church to attend. A while ago, we saw a program hosted by a man at a gym in Kerikeri. I am wondering if he will be contactable when we get there. We also love your programs. Yours in Jesus' name, Colin Horsfall."

Joy filled William's heart as he read the letter. It felt good to know that someone was watching his program and that hearts were being touched. Now this couple wanted to come to his church. He was amazed.

William wrote back that he was delighted Colin and his wife were enjoying Hope Channel. He explained that Kerikeri, located about 155 miles (250 kilometers) north of New Zealand's biggest city, Auckland, was a small town of 7,500 residents. He said the Adventist congregation met at 10 a.m. every Sabbath in a chapel in a retirement community.

"We would be happy for you and your wife to join us," he said. "Call me if you need help."

"Thanks," Colin replied a short time later. "We will catch up soon."

William had arrived in Kerikeri a few years earlier to plant the town's first Seventh-day Adventist church. Only one Adventist family lived in the town at the time, and William didn't know anyone. After praying about how to move forward, he decided to open a gym.

"God gave me this brilliant idea and said, 'Why don't you start up a gym?'" William recalled. "I started a gym because I knew I would meet a lot of people."

He did meet many people through the gym — and he also began to contribute to Hope Channel New Zealand, the local affiliate of the Adventist Church's international channel. Hope Channel began broadcasting free-to-air to every household in New Zealand with funds from a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 2016.

One of the programs that Williams made for Hope Channel featured him offering exercise tips in the gym. In the program, he described how people are worried about their physical health and asked, "Well, what about your spiritual health?"

This particular program had an impact on Colin and his wife, Robyn, who were preparing to move from Kaitaia, a town about 60 miles (100 kilometers)

northwest of Kerikeri. The couple attended a church belonging to another Christian denomination in that town.

The Sabbath arrived when Colin and Robyn showed up in William's church for the first time. The church's 12 members welcomed them warmly, and they enjoyed the sermon and lunch afterward.

"Everyone was friendly and made them feel welcome," William said. "And they just kept coming back."

He learned that Colin, 75, was a medal-winning cyclist in the country's main cycling competition, World Masters Games. He saw that Robyn loved to watch Hope Channel and, after seeing him on television, would greet him on Sabbath, saying, "I've seen my favorite pastor during the week."

Colin and Robyn soon asked for Bible studies, and they are preparing for baptism.

William — pictured left, with Colin and Robyn — firmly believes that Hope Channel is opening many doors in New Zealand, which has a highly secularized society.

"This is how God is able to speak to those who probably are dealing with issues that they don't want others to know. They don't want to be seen in church," William said. "But through Hope Channel, they can sit comfortably in their homes and hear God's message." 🌐

Thank you for your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in second quarter 2016 that helped Hope Channel go free-to-air to every home in New Zealand. Thank you also for your regular Sabbath School mission offerings that spread the news of Jesus' soon coming around the world.

By Andrew McChesney

## Story Tips

- Pronounce Kerikeri as: kerry-kerry, rolling the r's.
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq)

## Fast Facts

- According to Guinness World Records, the longest place name in the world is Taumatawhakatangihangakoau-auotam-ateapokaiwhenuakitanatahu, a hill in Hawkes Bay, New Zealand.
- New Zealand is home to the giant weta, the heaviest insect in the world. It is heavier than a sparrow and looks like a giant cockroach.
- In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to give women the right to vote.
- Sir Edmund Hillary, the first person to climb Mount Everest in 1953, was a New Zealander.
- Fifteen percent of New Zealand's population are Māori.
- Although it is about the size of Japan, New Zealand's population is just over 4 million, making it one of the world's least-populated countries.
- The Māori name for New Zealand is "Aotearoa." It means "the land of the long white cloud."
- The kea, a bird native to New Zealand, is known for pulling windscreen wipers off cars and eating the strips of rubber from windows.

## Mission Post

- New Zealand Pacific Union Conference has 83 churches, 26 companies, and 13,167 members. In a population of 4,792,000, there is one church member for every 364 people.

# Gangster to God

NEW ZEALAND | September 7

Jayson Rogers, 36



Jayson Rogers cried out to a God who he didn't know at the age of 12.

"I don't know how or why," Jayson recalled. "I was lonely at night, in the dark, crying into my pillow."

Twelve-year-old Jayson, the youngest of nine children, was staying with an aunt and uncle in northern New Zealand when he prayed for God to intervene in his life.

His parents deemed him uncontrollable, and he had been kicked out of school. Although only a boy, he was breaking into homes and stealing cars. At the age of 10, he had bought his first car with his first wages — earned by helping his father at a construction site. The vehicle was a "rust bucket," he said, but he only wanted it for its license plates. Over the next few years, he placed those license plates on nine cars that he had stolen.

Jayson didn't sense an immediate answer

to his nighttime prayer, and about a year later his parents took him back home to New Zealand's biggest city, Auckland.

Jayson sank deeper into crime. When he was 15, he stole his first marijuana plant and moved in with his girlfriend, Krystal, at her parents' house. He joined a street gang and grew and sold marijuana for several years. Then he became addicted to meth and sold the drug to support his own habit for 11 years.

"I was heavily involved with gangs and the underworld," he said. "I was known for home invasions, kidnapping, and extortion. I had three cooks and four distributors working for me in a syndicate."

He also carried wads of cash. Every two to three days, he earned 10,000 New Zealand dollars (U.S.\$7,000) from meth sales.

Then one day a man named Andrew approached him at the public swimming pool and invited him to free kickboxing classes. Jayson jumped at the opportunity, hoping to improve his intimidation and street-fighting tactics.

Jayson joined a group of other gangster-types at a sports hall on Wednesday evening. Andrew led the group in an hour of sweat-inducing exercise. Then he brought out a pile of Bibles and announced, "Let's gather around the table and share."

## Story Tips

- Watch a video of Jayson at the link: [bit.ly/Jayson-Rogers](http://bit.ly/Jayson-Rogers).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

## Mission Post

- As early as 1874, an interest in Seventh-day Adventist teachings was kindled in New Zealand by publications sent from friends or relatives in the U.S.
- In October 1885, U.S. Adventist minister S.N. Haskell came to Auckland from Australia and lodged in the boardinghouse of Edward Hare who, with his wife, became the first converts in New Zealand. Within four weeks a small group began to observe the seventh-day Sabbath in Auckland.

Jayson was shocked and wanted to leave. But for some reason he stayed.

As Andrew spoke for 30 minutes, Jayson raged against God in his mind. He thought, “Who is God? I am God in my world. I have workers, my own minions. I am well respected and highly looked up to. I am God.”

He returned to reality when Andrew ended the meeting by reading Jesus’ words in Matthew 6:19-20, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.”

Jayson was confused. How could he lay up his jewelry in heaven out of the reach of rust and fellow thieves?

He pondered the matter all week and returned to the class the next Wednesday. After several weeks, Andrew asked him if he would like to help lead the class. Jayson was surprised and pleased. To qualify as an instructor, he took a first-aid course at Andrew’s church, Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Community Church.

Soon Jayson was attending Sabbath worship services with Krystal and their seven children. He accepted Jesus and, after 21 years living with Krystal, he asked for her hand in marriage. The church celebrated its largest family baptism when he, his wife, and five of their children were baptized on the same Sabbath. The two youngest children were dedicated to Jesus that day.

Jayson, 36, said his life has changed completely over the past three years.

“We no longer live with six-foot fences, baseball bats, sawed-off shotguns, and Rambo-style knives,” he said. “We now live with white picket fences, and I own my own handyman business.”

He still co-leads the kickboxing class, which has yielded at least six baptisms. A tear slid down his cheek as he thought about his parents. “I used to receive phone calls from my worried Mom every day,” he said in an interview in an Auckland diner. “She witnessed firsthand the ugly nature of what I had become. Now I don’t hear from her, and I take that as a good thing.”

He hopes to point his parents and others to Christ.

“Now I am peaceful, happy,” he said. “I wouldn’t change it for anything. I am God’s disciple now, and I want to share the Word as much as I can in any way He wants me to.” 🌍

By Andrew McChesney

# Always Pressing Forward

FIJI | September 14

Joeli Rabo, 67



Joeli Rabo, an insurance agent in Fiji, looked up from his hospital bed and into the face of his distraught aunt.

“Son, you have to leave that church. Don’t bring it to the village,” she said. “It’s a curse to you. Much more bad luck will come if you bring that new belief into our village. You worship on a different day. It’s the wrong day. Now you are suffering the consequences.”

Joeli looked down at his bandaged arms. Both had been broken in a car accident. Two of his nephews had died.

When Joeli was baptized earlier, he had a burning desire to share his faith with his home village, Nabouciwa. But he received a hostile reception from the villagers, many of whom were relatives and belonged to another Christian denomination. Still, Joeli organized evangelistic meetings, and 10 people were baptized. Then he

secured a plot of land to build a church. He scheduled a day for the new church members to join him in clearing the land for the building.

The day before the land clearing, Joeli got up early to drive his 27-year-old nephew to the Nadi airport. Also in the Subaru sedan were the nephew’s mother and two younger brothers, and Joeli’s own 13-year-old son.

Around 4 a.m., Joeli fell asleep at the wheel, and the car veered off the road. The 27-year-old nephew and his 16-year-old brother were killed instantly. Their mother and the other nephew, who was 13, were hospitalized with serious injuries. Joeli’s arms were broken. Somehow, his son escaped uninjured.

Joeli’s aunt came to the hospital to talk him out of his plans to build the Adventist church.

Joeli looked up at her from his bed.

“Auntie,” he said, “You have only one son. If I died on this hospital bed for your son to become an Adventist one day, I’d thank God for the opportunity to give my life for your son’s life.”

The aunt turned away. She had tears in her eyes.

Although Joeli had spoken with confidence, he wasn’t sure about building the church. He prayed during his month in the hospital, “Dear God, I don’t know whether I am doing Your will.”

But when he left the hospital, he had



no doubt that the church must be built. He could say with Ellen White: “Suffering has been the portion of the people of God from the days of the martyr Abel. The patriarchs suffered for being true to God and obedient to His commandments. The great Head of the church suffered for our sake; His first apostles and the primitive church suffered; the millions of martyrs suffered, and the Reformers suffered. And why should we, who have the blessed hope of immortality, to be consummated at the soon appearing of Christ, shrink from a life of suffering?” (“Testimonies for the Church,” Vol. 1, page 78).

Joeli realized that suffering can happen while spreading the gospel because the devil is angry. The church opened within a month.

Joeli was happy that his village had a church, but he longed to plant another church, this time in a village called Kiuva. But he didn’t want tragedy to befall anyone. So, he and other church members decided to pray and fast twice a week as they went door to door in the village.

“Lord, I had a bad experience in my own village,” Joeli prayed every day. “Now I am taking the gospel to another village. Please don’t allow a bad experience like last time. Please guide me in all that I do so I don’t experience the same thing again.”

To his astonishment, one of the villagers took a liking to the Adventists and invited Joeli to hold Sabbath worship services in his home. He later donated a plot of land to build an Adventist church.

Joeli said prayer and fasting helped the church to be planted easily.

Then he went to a third village, Buretu. Again, he and the church members prayed and fasted. To their joy, the village chief and his family were baptized.

## Story Tips

- Pronounce Joeli as: jo-LI.
- Watch a video of Joeli at the link: [bit.ly/Joeli-Rabo](http://bit.ly/Joeli-Rabo).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

## Mission Post

- Fiji has 166 churches, 101 companies, and 26,487 members. In a population of 878,000, there is one Adventist for each 33 people.
- There are two Adventist schools in Fiji: Navesau Adventist High School and Suva Adventist College.

But tragedy struck before Joeli could construct a church building. The chief died of diabetes. Villagers wondered whether the chief was being punished for becoming an Adventist.

Joeli said the devil used the chief’s death to attack the Adventist work, and he believes that the church building will go up. He also is looking forward to this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, which will help prevent diabetes deaths by funding a health project called “Save 10,000 Toes.”

Joeli said God will prevail in the village. Speaking in an interview, he remembered what happened after he told his aunt that he was willing to die for her only son. Later, her son and his four children were baptized and became Adventists.

“When I visited my auntie before she died, she thanked me for sharing the message with her only son,” Joeli said. “God controls everything.” 🌍

By Andrew McChesney



# Funeral Conversion

Kositela Tito, 33

Nobody wanted to help Tito when his father died.

“You can’t have a church funeral for him,” said one.

“Just go bury him,” said another.

The people in the remote Fijian village of Nakavika turned their backs on Tito’s father because he had become a Seventh-day Adventist. The other villagers, including Tito, belonged to another Christian denomination.

Tito wanted his father to have a proper funeral, and he appealed to the village chief, who happened to be his cousin. The chief granted a church funeral — on the condition that Tito built an Adventist church for the funeral.

Tito built a small shed, and he and other relatives crowded inside for the funeral. An Adventist pastor gave a sermon about the state of the dead.

Tito listened in shock. He always had thought that people went to heaven when they died. But the pastor described death as a sleep and pointed out that Jesus also

called death a sleep in the story of Lazarus in John 11.

Tito’s sister handed him a Bible to read as the pastor spoke. Tito saw that the words in John 11 matched the pastor’s words.

The pastor then turned to 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and read that the dead would wake up in their graves at Jesus’ second coming. He read, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.”

Again, Tito looked in the Bible and saw that it matched the pastor’s words. He had never read the Bible during worship services in his own church.

When the mourners gathered for a meal after the funeral, Tito grabbed the arm of an Adventist guest.

“Please come with me to my family’s house,” he said. “I want to know more about what happens when people die.”

The church member accompanied him home and gave him a Bible study about the state of the dead. Tito wanted to know more, and he invited the man to return for more Bible studies.

But Tito’s wife, Vika, didn’t want any part of the Bible studies. She shut herself and their two young children in another room when the church member visited.

After two months, Tito reached the Bible study about baptism, and he announced that he wanted to be baptized.

Vika wept when she learned about his decision.

“I chose you because we have the same beliefs,” she said. “If this is your church, then it is better for us to separate. We have two kids. You take one, and I’ll take the other.”

Tito was sad, but he would not be swayed.

“Vika, from now on God will be No. 1 in my life and you will be No. 2,” he said. “But I promise you one thing. If my love for you was 50 percent before, now it will be 100 percent.”

After the baptism, Tito told Vika that he wouldn’t stop her from attending her church on Sundays. But he asked her not to cook or do laundry anymore on Saturdays. He said he would do both on Sundays.

A month passed, and Vika noticed that her husband truly wasn’t the man whom she had married. When he finished his work as a schoolteacher for the day, he no longer went out to drink with friends. He didn’t invite friends over for conversations filled with smoking and cursing. Instead he came straight home from work and spent time with her and the children. He didn’t drink, smoke, or curse.

One day she called him over.

“Tito, I have really seen something different in you,” she said. “You are not the Tito that I knew before. We used to fight, but not anymore. We had many differences, but not now. We have a lot of family time together. Please, I also want to know this truth.”

Tito had been praying for Vika, and her words thrilled his heart. They prayed together, and he arranged for Bible

## Story Tips

- Even though Tito’s first name is Kositela, everyone calls him Tito.
- Watch a video of Tito at the link: [bit.ly/Kositela-Tito](http://bit.ly/Kositela-Tito).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq)

## Fast Facts

- The first word in the native Fijian language you’ll need to learn is “Bula,” which means “hello,” because you will hear it everywhere, although most people in Fiji speak English as well.
- Many islanders raise their eyebrows as a nonverbal way of saying “yes.”
- The Meke is a celebration of culture through traditional storytelling and dancing using songs that is performed at Fijian festivals.

studies. Soon she was baptized.

Today, Tito, 33, teaches Sabbath School in addition to his classroom at school. Vika teaches the children’s Primary class. Tito is giving Bible studies to the villagers, and two have been baptized.

He has faced trouble at school because of his faith. One day, he arrived to find someone had urinated on his desk. Another day, someone scrawled an obscenity about him on the school wall. The school principal had to call the police when a drunken villager threatened him with a knife. But Tito is determined to share the gospel. He prays, “God, I am willing to share Your words to the rest of this community. Please use me in these last days.” 🌐

By Andrew McChesney

# No Leg, New Life

13<sup>th</sup> SABBATH | September 28

Lepani Kuruduadua, 60



*The narrator doesn't need to memorize the story, but he or she should be familiar enough with the material so as not to have to read it.*

Lepani Kuruduadua felt like his life was over.

The retired schoolteacher accidentally cut his right leg with a knife while repairing a church in a Fijian village, Naqarani. The wound didn't heal and, because Lepani had diabetes, only got worse. Finally, the doctor said the leg had to be amputated.

After the operation, Lepani lay in bed for months, wondering what was left in life. He felt especially sad because he had joined the church 17 years earlier but had never used his two good legs to lead anyone to Christ. Now he had only one leg.

Ten months after the amputation, Lepani received an artificial leg and relearned to walk. He thought day after day, "I've got to do something for God,

even though I only have one leg." As he prayed, he remembered a village that his church had wanted to evangelize. He remembered that an Adventist family lived in the village. He decided to ask the family to help organize evangelistic meetings.

He took a taxi to the village and was greeted at the door by Anna, the daughter. He learned that her parents, whom he had hoped would help with the meetings, had moved across the island to Nadi. "How do you worship now?" he asked Anna.

The young woman replied that she sometimes worshipped with Nico, a neighbor who didn't belong to any church.

"Let's have a short prayer," Lepani said. "I want to visit Nico's house."

As Lepani and Anna approached Nico's house, the door suddenly burst open, and

## Thirteenth Sabbath Program

|   |                     |  |
|---|---------------------|--|
| ➤ | Congregational Song | “O Worship the King”<br><i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 83 |
| ➤ | Welcome             | Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher                                 |
| ➤ | Prayer              |  |
| ➤ | Program             | “No Leg, New Life”   |
| ➤ | Offering            |  |
| ➤ | Closing Song        | “How Great Thou Art”<br><i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 83 |
| ➤ | Closing Prayer      |  |

a man ran out. “You’re the visitor that I’ve been waiting for!” he exclaimed.

Nico invited the visitors inside and related an incredible story. He said he had prayed and prayed for someone to speak to him about Jesus. He had promised God that he would join the church of the first person who came to his house. That very morning, as he was gathering firewood in the bush, he felt a strong impression that the long-awaited visitor would show up. He rushed home, but no one was there. He took a shower and had just emerged when he heard Lepani’s voice outside.

“I want to join your church,” Nico said. “Next Sabbath, I’ll come to your church with my wife and three daughters.”

Lepani prayed with him and expressed joy over his desire to join the church. But he said, “Next Sabbath, I’ll come to you, and we will open a church in your house.”

For the next seven months, Lepani worshipped every Sabbath in Nico’s home.

### Story Tips

- Pronounce Lepani as: le-PAN-ee.
- Watch a video of Lepani at the link: [bit.ly/Lepani-K](http://bit.ly/Lepani-K).
- Find photos for this story at the link: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).

Other villagers joined them. After Lepani organized evangelistic meetings, 16 people were baptized, including Niko, his wife, and two of their three daughters.

As the congregation grew, the church moved out of the house and into its own building.

Lepani, now 60, is delighted, and he hopes to plant a church in another village this year. Then he plans to plant a church in a third village next year.

He said the loss of his leg changed his life. “What I couldn’t do with two legs, I am

able to do with one leg,” he said. “I have realized what I am supposed to do.”

Part of today’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will support “Save 10,000 Toes,” a program to prevent diabetes and help

people with diabetes in Fiji and six other countries . Thank you for your generous offering. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney



*Lepani Kuruduadua, 60, left, speaking with a friend, Senitiki Roqara, 55, inside Naqarani Seventh-day Adventist Church in Naqarani, Fiji. Read about Senitiki, who also only has one leg, in the Children’s Mission magazine or at the link: [bit.ly/one-leg-fiji](http://bit.ly/one-leg-fiji).*



*Lepani standing outside Naqarani Seventh-day Adventist Church in Naqarani, Fiji. He injured his leg while repairing the church, leading to its amputation. With one leg, he has planted a church in a nearby village and plans to open a second church soon.*

## Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering next quarter will help the East-Central Africa Division to:

- Construct classrooms at Goma Adventist University, Democratic Republic of Congo
- Build three auditoriums at Philip Lemon Adventist University, Democratic Republic of Congo
- Expand health services at Kinshasa Adventist Clinic, Democratic Republic of Congo
- Open field headquarters, Wau, South Sudan
- Establish Juba Adventist Secondary School, South Sudan
- Construct Kisumu Adventist Hospital, Kenya
- Build four children’s Sabbath School classrooms, Ethiopia

## Leader's Resources

Be sure to download your free **Mission Spotlight** video, featuring video reports from around the South Pacific Division and beyond. Download or stream from the Adventist Mission website at [bit.ly/missionspotlight](http://bit.ly/missionspotlight). A **printable mission bank image**, which children and adults can color, can be downloaded at [bit.ly/bank-coloring-page](http://bit.ly/bank-coloring-page).

### Online Information

Following are sources of information that may be helpful in preparing for the mission segment of Sabbath School. For more information on the cultures and history of the countries featured in this quarterly, visit your local library or a travel agency, or visit the websites listed below.

### Websites

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Australia: government website | <a href="http://australia.gov.au">australia.gov.au</a>       |
| Information Planet            | <a href="http://bit.ly/InfoPlanAust">bit.ly/InfoPlanAust</a> |
| Fiji: government website      | <a href="http://fiji.gov.fj">fiji.gov.fj</a>                 |
| Nations Online                | <a href="http://bit.ly/NatOnFiji">bit.ly/NatOnFiji</a>       |

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| New Caledonia: government website | <a href="http://gouv.nc">gouv.nc</a>                   |
| CIA World Factbook                | <a href="http://bit.ly/CIANewCal">bit.ly/CIANewCal</a> |

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| New Zealand: government website | <a href="http://govt.nz">govt.nz</a>               |
| New Zealand Tourism             | <a href="http://bit.ly/AboutNZ">bit.ly/AboutNZ</a> |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Papua New Guinea: government website | <a href="http://bit.ly/GovPNG">bit.ly/GovPNG</a>       |
| Lonely Planet                        | <a href="http://bit.ly/LonelyPNG">bit.ly/LonelyPNG</a> |

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Solomon Islands: government website | <a href="http://bit.ly/SIGov">bit.ly/SIGov</a>         |
| World Travel Guide                  | <a href="http://bit.ly/WTGSollsl">bit.ly/WTGSollsl</a> |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Seventh-day Adventist                |  |
| South Pacific Division               | <a href="http://spd.adventist.org">spd.adventist.org</a> |
| Australian Union Conference          | <a href="http://adventist.org.au">adventist.org.au</a>   |
| New Zealand Pacific Union Conference | <a href="http://bit.ly/NZPUionC">bit.ly/NZPUionC</a>     |
| Papua New Guinea Union Mission       | <a href="http://adventist.org.pg">adventist.org.pg</a>   |
| Trans Pacific Union Mission          | <a href="http://bit.ly/TPUMSDA">bit.ly/TPUMSDA</a>       |

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

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

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# YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

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## SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

| CONFERENCE                           | CHURCHES     | COMPANIES    | MEMBERSHIP     | POPULATION        |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Australian Union Conference          | 429          | 107          | 61,338         | 24,487,000        |
| New Zealand Pacific Union Conference | 146          | 50           | 20,474         | 5,378,000         |
| Papua New Guinea Union Mission       | 1,045        | 3,182        | 315,759        | 8,317,000         |
| Trans Pacific Union Mission          | 530          | 701          | 120,445        | 2,333,000         |
| <b>Division Totals</b>               | <b>2,550</b> | <b>4,040</b> | <b>518,016</b> | <b>40,515,000</b> |

## PROJECTS

- 1 Produce "Daniel Children's Series," a 13-part animated series for children aged 8-12 following the adventures of Daniel and his three friends, in Australia
- 2 "Save 10,000 Toes," a campaign to prevent toe amputations through health services in Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Kiribati, and Tonga
- 3 Construct Hope TV and radio studios in Tongatapu, Tonga

