



YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

2016 • **QUARTER 2** • SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION



www.AdventistMission.org

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On the Cover: This woman from Papua New Guinea is one of many who benefit from the ministry of Operation Food for Life. For more, read the story on page 20.

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 = stories of special interest to teens

Your Offerings at Work



Above: The Buhalu Medical Clinic and staff house in Papua New Guinea were made possible in part through the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

The first quarter 2013, Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped to build three Isolated Medical Outpost clinics in some of the most remote areas of Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands. These clinics provide the only easily accessible medical service to thousands of people living in these areas and offer a Seventh-day Adventist presence into these previously unentered areas. Thank you for your generosity!



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Dear Sabbath School Leader,

This quarter features the South Pacific Division, which includes the countries of Australia and New Zealand, and the island nations of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, and others.

The division is home to more than 38 million people, including more than 424,000 Seventh-day Adventists. That's a ratio of one Adventist for about every 89 people. The majority of Adventists live in the islands. Australia and New Zealand have a ratio of one Adventist for about every 400 people.

One of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects this quarter is aimed specifically at reaching secular people in New Zealand through family-friendly, health-conscious, practical-living *local* programming through the newly established Hope Channel New Zealand.

Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help to:

- produce local programming for the new Hope Channel New Zealand.
- build a family wellness center in Fiji.
- Children's Project: fund 28 children's discipleship centers ("lamb shelters") in Papua New Guinea, Trans-Pacific Union, and New Caledonia.

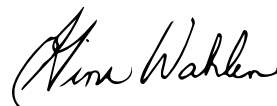
Another offering project is geared to reach the Fijian population through a family wellness center in Suva. According to the Fiji Ministry of Health, the country is experiencing a health crisis with the majority of the population suffering from non-communicable diseases such as diabetes. At the family wellness center, health education, cooking and exercise classes and more will be offered to the public.

Finally, the children's project this quarter is to help provide children's discipleship centers (better known as "lamb shelters") for many of the children throughout the islands who have no place to go for Sabbath School and other meetings, except under a tree.

We have many exciting stories from the South Pacific and I'm eager to share them with you and your Sabbath School members! In addition, I encourage you to share the video stories on our *Mission Spotlight* DVD, which can be downloaded *free* at www.adventistmission.org/videos.

Thank you for your dedication to mission and helping to connect your Sabbath School members with their spiritual brothers and sisters around the world.

Wishing you God's richest blessings!



Gina Wahlen, *Mission* quarterlies editor



It's You!

Part 1

Jean-Pierre

Jean-Pierre came from a family with deep roots in the Presbyterian Church. Missionaries had come to his village in 1845, and sometime later a Presbyterian church was built—the first on the island. Jean-Pierre's grandfather had been a missionary to the island of Futuna, 1,000 miles (1,600 km.) away. Everyone Jean-Pierre knew was a Presbyterian, and as an adult Jean-Pierre became an elder in his local church.

Then one day, Jean-Pierre's world changed. While working in Vanuatu's tourism and hotel industry he met Lana. As the two became close, Jean-Pierre learned that Lana was a Seventh-day Adventist. This was quite a shock for Jean-Pierre, especially the fact that Lana went to church on Saturday rather than Sunday. "It was like hitting a brick wall," he recalled.

Although the two eventually decided to get married, spiritually it was a struggle, as Lana went to her church every Sabbath, and Jean-Pierre went to his on Sunday.

"When it came to the Sabbath, I had to leave the house quietly, and with no disturbances," said Jean-Pierre. "And on Sunday, she would leave the house."

Jean-Pierre continued in his leadership role at the Presbyterian church, where he looked after the finances and preached regularly during the Sunday services. He also did leadership training.

Eventually Jean-Pierre and Lana had three sons, but they continued to live their separate spiritual lives. The boys worshiped with their mother on Sabbath, and Jean-Pierre continued to preach and lead out in his church on Sundays. But there was tension in the home that everyone could feel.

A Window Opened

"Then a new window opened," Jean-Pierre said. "My wife joined the Adventist Book Center [now known as the Hope Book Centre], where she became the manager. She would put some magazines on our table when I was preparing sermons. I enjoyed the magazines very much and found them helpful in my sermon preparation, not realizing that this was paving a way.

"When there were Adventist church functions, my wife invited me. I attended the Adventist men's conferences, although

I was still an elder in the Presbyterian church. I enjoyed these conferences very much, but still had this feeling that there was a wall in front of me that I kept hitting. In our home, there was Sabbath worship, and then Sunday. I could sense that something wasn't quite right, and I needed to find the answer to it."

Jean-Pierre struggled with the question of Sabbath and Sunday for some time before he finally found the answer.

PV14

In 2014, as part of the Mission to the Cities initiative of the General Conference, evangelistic meetings were held in Port Vila, the capital city of Vanuatu. The program, known as "PV14," focused on reaching as many people in the city and surrounding areas as possible. A transportation committee was organized, and Jean-Pierre was invited to be the transportation director for his village. In addition to transporting people to and from the meetings each night, this meant that Jean-Pierre would also be attending the meetings.

Mission Post

- Vanuatu is a part of the Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM).
- The TPUM consists of many island nations including American Samoa, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- The Vanuatu Mission was established in 1912.
- There are currently 21,354 Adventists worshipping in 85 churches and 130 companies in Vanuatu.

During the first two weeks, Jean-Pierre was more focused on his transportation responsibilities, but by the third week his attention was arrested in a very startling way. He tells about it in his own words:

"It's You!"

I sat down and looked up at the big screen. I was listening to Pastor Jean-Noel preach about the Sabbath—the very topic that had been troubling me all along. As I continued to listen and follow along in the Bible, I was convinced that this was the truth.

Then all of a sudden the pastor looked up and pointing straight at me said, "It's you!" I looked around to see if anyone was behind me, but there was no one. He did it again, pointing—"It's you, you that I'm looking at!"

I ignored him, trying to pretend it wasn't me. I waited before looking up again, but when I did there he was saying, "Today, it's you!" I paused, deciding not to look up at the screen again, but the moment I lifted up my head, he was still pointing at me and saying, "It's you." This time I looked at him with tears, and said, "Yes, it's me."

I made my decision. I'd been doing all these church things, but there was an inner feeling, something telling me, "This isn't right." I was convicted about the Sabbath, and accepted it. It was all I could do. I no longer felt this inner struggle and I experienced peace of mind. I knew that I had made the right decision to keep the Sabbath and be baptized as a Seventh-day Adventist. It reminded me of the story of Zacchaeus, when Jesus looked up into the tree and called him by name. 🌍

To be continued.



It's You!

Part 2

Jean-Pierre

The story thus far: Jean-Pierre came from a well-established Presbyterian family. He was a leader in his church, but married Lana, a Seventh-day Adventist. For years they lived separate spiritual lives, but Jean-Pierre became increasingly uncomfortable with the Sabbath/Sunday situation in his home. When invited to provide transportation for people from his village to attend Adventist evangelistic meetings in the city, Jean-Pierre accepted and attended the meetings each night. During the third week, Jean-Pierre decided to accept the Sabbath and wanted to be baptized.

During lunch on Friday I told my wife about my decision. I just told her straight—"I'm getting baptized tomorrow!" She cried out with joy, and I believe her prayers had been answered. I was happy and felt at peace.

After telling my wife, I went to talk with my Presbyterian pastor face to face, who also happened to be my uncle. "Uncle," I told him, "we will always be family; you'll always be my uncle. But there is something that I need to tell you, and it's important

that I tell you myself."

So he sat down on the other side of the table and I told him, "I think it's time that I tell you about the Sabbath and that I have this peace inside of me." He paused for a while. I think he knew what I was going to tell him. "Today is Friday. Tomorrow I'm going to be baptized and become a Sabbath keeper."

At first he was speechless. Finally, he looked up at me with this big, dark face, and said, "You've made the right choice." Here he was, a Sunday-keeping pastor, telling me this! I said, "Thank you. That's all I need to tell you."

From there I moved on to my colleagues—the other elders with whom I had been so close. I told them the same thing I had told my uncle, but they didn't believe me. The next afternoon they all came to see the baptism. As they saw me walking up, they said, "It's him!" Everyone was speechless.

After the baptism, I went over to the Presbyterian elders and told them about my inner struggle over the Sabbath. I explained

how the biblical presentations at PV14 had spoken to me and that I needed to stop pushing against the truth. Then I made an appeal for them to join me.

Called by the Board

After my baptism, the Presbyterian church board called me to appear before them three times. Each time they kept asking me questions and told me to leave the Adventist Church. After the third time I said, “This is the last time I’m testifying. Believe me, I’ve been struggling to find the truth, and I’ve found it. I’ve made my decision, and it’s final. I will stand on this decision until Jesus comes.”

I held the Bible in front of them and said, “This is the same book that you are holding. I call on every one of you to read it deeply and consider it as I did. Jesus tells us in John 14:15, ‘If you love me, keep My commandments.’

“Jesus said this,” I told them. “It’s as simple as that. The problem was, I wasn’t with Him, keeping His commandments. Now that I’ve made this decision, I have peace of mind. I am free! I’ve found the truth!”

I urged them, “Follow the path that I’ve followed. I tried it. It works. The heartache I faced, I don’t have anymore. Jesus has taken it away. Try it, Jesus will never fail you. He’s so real. It’s not too late. Make your decision now, before it’s too late.”

One of the elders who was there responded to Jean-Pierre’s testimony and was later baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Feeding the Lambs

Today, Jean-Pierre and his wife are delighted to provide a place in their home

Fast Facts

- The word “Vanuatu” means “Land Eternal.”
- Its people are mainly Melanesian, with more than 115 different cultures and languages.
- Vanuatu used to be called the New Hebrides but has been an independent republic since 1980.
- The country of Vanuatu is made up of more than 83 separate islands and is situated between Fiji and New Caledonia, about 1,400 miles (2,253 km.) east of Australia.

where children can come to learn about God. Known as a “lamb shelter,” this is a place where children (and their parents) come on Wednesday evenings for prayer meetings, Friday evening vespers, Sabbath morning worship services, and afternoon Pathfinder programs. Jean-Pierre and his family not only nurture them spiritually but provide meals as well. Approximately 30 people come each week, and five have already been baptized.

“This is the happiest thing that could have happened to me,” said Jean-Pierre. “I responded to the call, and received this wonderful blessing. I must say, I don’t regret the decision I’ve made. Now we don’t have a barrier inside our family any longer—we are all together now, and so blessed.”

One of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects this quarter is to help build more lamb shelters on many of the South Pacific islands, including Vanuatu. Thank you so much for giving generously. 🌍

The Glass Church, Part 1



FIJI | April 16

Pastor Joe with Asst. Pastor

Fiji lies in the center of the South Pacific islands. The capital city, Suva, is home to several international institutions of higher learning, including a university, a medical school, and a technical school. These schools attract the brightest students from throughout the South Pacific.

Some 500 Adventist students are enrolled at these schools. They have come to prepare for leadership roles in their own countries. But until recently there was no Adventist church nearby, no place where these youths could come to worship and bring their friends to fellowship or study in a welcoming atmosphere. For a while the group rented a hall at the university in which to worship, but increasingly the university needed all of its larger halls on Sabbath morning for lectures, leaving the Adventist students with no place to worship. For some, it

became too much trouble to find a church, so they stopped attending.

But thanks to your generous support of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, that scenario has changed. This is the miraculous story of how the Pacific Tertiary Evangelistic Center (PTEC) came to be.

Top Priority

When Pastor Joe Talemaitoga arrived at the Fiji Mission office in Suva as the new chaplain for Adventist young people, he was told that his top priority was to establish a church/evangelistic center to serve the many students attending the University of the South Pacific and surrounding educational institutions. The funds were available, but on an island where land is at a premium—especially in the capital city of Suva—church leaders had not yet been able to find anything suitable (and affordable) near the university.

The Meeting

One evening Pastor Joe and other mission leaders, along with several Adventist student representatives, met in a classroom on the university campus to consider a short list of available properties. None of the properties were ideal, but the group voted to purchase a steep block of land located about 2 kilometers (1.2

miles) from the main university.

It was after 10 p.m. when everyone left. As a group of students from the Solomon Islands walked along the street, they noticed a car stop in front of them. A man jumped out, ran up to a fence surrounding a large house sitting on a prime piece of property, quickly posted a “For Sale” sign, and left. “We should tell our chaplain about this,” they said.

The Ideal Property

At 7:30 the next morning Pastor Joe’s phone rang. He listened as an eager student described the property and its prime location. Thanking the student, Pastor Joe phoned the number on the sign at 8:00 a.m.

“Are you selling the property on Grantham Road? Near the university?”

“Yes. It’s the green house, with the green fence.”

Right after the call, Pastor Joe went to see the property. It was perfect. Located on a gentle rise just two blocks from the university and directly across the street from the largest cinema and shopping mall in Fiji, the pastor couldn’t imagine a more visible and accessible location. He immediately called the real estate company again and told them he was coming in to discuss purchasing the property.

“I met the gentleman who had hung up the sign—a Fijian,” recalls Pastor Joe. “I introduced myself as a chaplain and told him of our need. We were a nomadic group, I explained, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church wants to ground these young people in a permanent place. We could remodel the house into a church.”

Warm Memories

As the pastor spoke, he noticed tears

beginning to stream down the man’s face. “You know,” said the man, “as you were talking I remembered the things that I learned at the Suva Adventist Primary School. My mum sent me there for three years. I remember the Bible stories and the singing.”

Clearly, the man’s life had been positively impacted by his experience at an Adventist primary school. “I’m going to call the owner of our company now,” he said.

Before long, an Indian man walked in, looked at Pastor Joe and exclaimed, “Oh, it’s you! I know you! Some years ago an Adventist girl whom I work with invited me to come to the Tamavua Adventist Church during a visitor’s Sabbath. I came and you were the one speaking from the front!”

The pastor was silently grateful to the girl who had invited this man to church.

Another Kind of Investment

“So, why do you want to buy this property? For what purpose?” the owner asked.

“For a church for young people,” Pastor Joe replied.

“Not for an investment?” probed the owner.

“Not for your kind of investment,” said Pastor Joe. “But an investment in young people!”

The man smiled. “As Indians, we are delighted to sell property to a church or religious organization.” Then pausing, he added, “I need 10 percent in 48 hours.”

No problem, thought Pastor Joe. We have the money from the mission offering sitting in the bank. 🌍

To be continued.

The Glass Church, Part 2



FIJI | April 23

PTEC

The story thus far: When Pastor Joe Talemaitoga began his work as chaplain for Adventist young people in Suva, Fiji, he was told that his top priority was to establish a church/evangelistic center to serve the many students attending the University of the South Pacific and surrounding educational institutions. Through unusual circumstances, Pastor Joe quickly learned about an ideal property and met with the owner.

When Pastor Joe contacted the financial board leaders, there were mixed feelings about purchasing the new property. “We’ve already decided and voted,” some said. Nevertheless, they all agreed to meet Pastor Joe at 1:00 that afternoon at 7 Grantham Road in the center of Suva, just two blocks from the University of the South Pacific.

As they stood gazing at this prime piece of land, Pastor Joe told the group,

“I believe the Lord is leading this project, and I want you to consider buying this property. Personally, I’m convinced that this is the property for us—we shouldn’t be hidden away.”

After much thought and discussion, it was decided to move ahead in purchasing the Grantham Road property. The For Sale sign was taken down less than 24 hours after it was posted because the Adventists now owned the property.

Many Hurdles

Purchasing the property, however, was just the first of many hurdles the group would have to overcome before the Pacific Tertiary Evangelistic Center (PTEC) would become a reality.

The next challenge was the building itself. The group soon realized that it would be better to construct a new building, rather than try to re-purpose the existing structure. That meant, however, that they would need to approach the city council in order to re-zone the property for a church building.

When the group first presented their re-zoning application, the city council members were amazed.

“Did you have inside information?” they asked. “How did you manage to purchase

Fast Facts

- Fiji is a nation made up of more than 330 islands; only one-third are inhabited.
- A British colony for 96 years. Fiji gained its independence in 1970.
- Fiji has a population of 902,335. The majority live on the two largest islands—Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.
- At the end of 2014, there were 24,732 Adventist members in Fiji. Fiji receives an average of 70 inches of rainfall each year.
- About half of the population is ethnic Fijian, and almost half are of Indian descent.

this property?” “Did you know that you would be in the faces of thousands of people day and night?”

“No,” Pastor Joe replied, “but the Lord knew. That’s why he sent that man to put up the For Sale sign at 10:00 at night.”

The next step in the re-zoning process was to get the approval of the neighbors surrounding the property. While all of the residential owners were happy for an Adventist church to come to their neighborhood, one owner was not pleased. The newly acquired Adventist land fronted property owned by the Roman Catholic Church. Determined to block all efforts to re-zone the Adventist property, the priest and nuns consistently refused to meet with Pastor Joe and the Adventist group for eight months.

“No, we don’t want to negotiate; there’s no room for negotiation,” they repeatedly claimed before shutting the door. Nevertheless, the Adventists continuing

praying and kept trying to visit the Catholic parish.

During this time, investors had learned about the sale of this prime property and approached the Adventist group with very attractive offers—sometimes even promising to pay the Adventists double their purchase price. But Pastor Joe always said, “No. This is God’s time, and this is going to be His property.”

After eight months the day finally arrived when Pastor Joe went to the Catholic parish and the door remained open. Speaking frankly, a nun told the Adventist pastor, “We’ve been fighting among ourselves. Our leaders should have been more proactive in getting that property. And now we can see that there’s no way that you’re going to give it up.”

The final needed signature was placed on the re-zoning request, and the city council approved the Adventists’ application.

Eagerly Pastor Joe and his group moved forward, choosing an architectural plan featuring walls made of windows on either side of the new church known as the Pacific Tertiary Evangelistic Center (PTEC). “When people come out of the shopping mall and the cinemas, what will they see? We hope they will see Jesus. They’re going to get to see and hear about Him,” said Pastor Joe.

Today, more than 300 university students worship at PTEC. Within easy walking distance from campus, the church has become a gathering place for faith-building and evangelistic activities during the week as well as on Sabbaths. This transparent church truly shines as a bright light for all to see.

Visit the PTEC website at <http://ptec.adventist.org.fj>. 



“So This Is Sabbath!”

Lavinia and Ian

Deep In Our Hearts

“Deep in our hearts, we knew Sunday wasn’t the right day,” said Ian. “Our hearts were telling us to do the right thing. During family worship, the question always popped up—what about the Sabbath?” But Ian’s father lived with them, and they didn’t want to disappoint family or friends.

Ian, Lavinia, and their daughter Rozlyn continued attending the Methodist church, but their younger daughter, Rosemary, started going to the Seventh-day Adventist church. Often she reminded her parents of the Sabbath truth. The family struggled with their convictions for five years, sometimes praying and fasting as they asked God for direction.

Hard Times

Then unusual things began happening. “When we weren’t doing what we knew we should do, God started making the move for us,” Ian said. “We went through some hard times. We lost our house and had to move several times. I told Lavinia, ‘God is trying to tell us something.’ We were looking for an easy way to solve the problem, but God was saying, ‘Stand still and know that I am God.’ He was molding us for the transition to the Adventist Church, but we didn’t know it then.”

Then the Methodist pastor decided that some members could no longer serve in

Ian Rigamoto and his wife, Lavinia, were born into staunch Methodist families on the tiny island of Rotuma—technically a part of Fiji but with a language and culture of its own. Like many Rotumans, the couple moved to Suva, the capital of Fiji.

There, Ian and Lavinia were active in the local Methodist church and were raising their children, Rozlyn and Rosemary, in the faith. But the couple longed to learn more about the Bible.

One day Ian felt impressed to go into a video shop in Suva. There he found a series of DVDs on Bible prophecy by Seventh-day Adventist pastor Doug Batchelor.

Taking the series home, the family watched the DVDs and were soon convicted about the Sabbath. “We didn’t tell anyone anything,” Lavinia remembers, “but we were all convicted that we were worshiping on the wrong day. I told Ian, ‘If the seventh day is the right day, then we have to do something about it.’”

their positions, including Ian as a deacon. “I cried during the whole meeting,” Lavinia said. “Then I told myself that I shouldn’t be crying. Maybe this was the opening for us to leave.”

A Knock on the Door

Shortly after this experience there was a knock on the Rigamotos’ door. It was a woman named Theresa from the Adventist church. “She asked if we wanted to study the Bible, and we said ‘yes,’” Lavinia recalled. “It was so nice and interesting. We wanted to know more. I could see that my husband wanted to make the move, but his father was still with us. So we kept praying—‘Lord, please helps us to find a way.’”

Then one day, Ian’s father asked, “Please can I go to Rotuma? I’m tired of staying here.” They paid his airfare, and he was gone.

Just as Ian and Lavinia were convicted that it was time to keep the Sabbath, the Methodist head elder saw Ian at the market and said, “You’re supposed to be preaching this Friday—Easter Friday.” Ian felt conflicted—what should he do?

“It’s Now!”

That evening Theresa came for their Bible study. The topic was on the close of probation. Feeling convicted yet torn, Ian told Theresa, “After I preach on Friday, then I’ll come.” But something inside him kept telling him, “It’s now!”

Ian wrestled with his convictions all night, and by morning he had found peace. Following family worship he announced, “After work today I’m going straight to the Methodist church to tell them thank you, but now we’re going to the Seventh-day Adventist church.”

Fast Facts

- Rotuma is located approximately 400 miles (643 km.) from Suva, Fiji.
- The island of Rotuma is just 16 square miles (43 sq. km.) with a population of about 2,000 Rotumans living on the island itself.
- Eighty-five percent of Rotumans voted against opening their island to organized tourism.
- About 10,000 Rotumans live on the main islands of Fiji, in New Zealand, and in Australia.

That evening Ian fulfilled his promise. The head elder was speechless for five minutes. Then he said, “Oh, something must have happened for you to leave.”

“No,” replied Ian. “We fasted and prayed and asked God for the truth—and we have found it.”

Finding Peace

That Sabbath Ian and Lavinia joined their daughter Rosemary in worshiping at the Seventh-day Adventist church. They were baptized, and started hosting weekly Bible studies in their home.

“From the first Sabbath that we went to church there was a peace that I had never felt in my whole life,” said Ian. “I still experience that peace every Sabbath. And we look forward to our Bible study group each Wednesday. I thirst for His word.”

“My [extended] family is no longer talking to me,” Lavinia added, “but that’s OK. The first Sabbath we went to church we came home and my husband said, ‘I could feel God’s peace.’ I told him that I felt it, too. Oh, thank you, Lord—so this is what you call Sabbath!” 🌍

Rescued From the Devil

NEW CALEDONIA | May 7

Pastor Felix Wadrobert



The New Caledonia Mission is one of the most challenging fields in the South Pacific Division. Its territory includes the Isle of Pines, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna islands. With a population of 280,000, there are 919 Adventist members, 6 Seventh-day Adventist churches, and 3 companies in the mission.

Pastor Felix Wadrobert is the president-secretary of the New Caledonia Mission. In the following story he describes a wonderful experience that took place in April, 2015 during evangelistic meetings held in New Caledonia.

Big Miracles

We had never seen so many baptisms—60 people! Every morning during the three weeks of meetings our church members came together from 5:30

to 7:00 a.m. for a 45-minute devotion, followed by 45 minutes of praying on our knees. At first, 60 members came, then 100, then 200 every morning. The church was in the process of praying and surrendering, and the Lord wrought big miracles! Not only baptisms, but real conversions. There were some people who, when they learned about the Sabbath, resigned from their jobs rather than work on God's holy day. One person had worked in the same place for 29 years and was about to retire, but gave it up for the Sabbath.

Then there was a young woman named Kelly who came to the meetings. I received a call about Kelly before the first meeting. "Prepare yourself," they said. "She's demon possessed. Bring someone to hold her."

A Dark Cloud

When Kelly arrived at the meeting, you could feel the presence of evil angels. She was sitting there, front and center, staring at me. And 250 non-Adventists were there at the meeting—it was packed!

As Kelly sat and stared, I prayed, "God, don't let her mess this up—people are watching to see if we are the true church."

You could feel this dark cloud over us, right in the midst of the crowd. Somehow I managed to finish the sermon, and Kelly stayed quiet. Then the other pastors and I went to talk with her.

We learned that Kelly had gone

Mission Post

- The New Caledonia Mission was first established in 1925.
- It is part of the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference.
- Sixty percent of the people in New Caledonia are Roman Catholic.

French is the official language, although a number of Melanesian-Polynesian dialects are spoken. English is widely used in tourist areas.

everywhere seeking for healing, but without success. That evening the other pastors and I were at Kelly's home until 2:00 a.m.

As we entered the home, we could actually smell a demonic presence. We learned that Kelly had gone to the witch doctors and had been in contact with the spirit world. As we began praying for her, she started lashing out and slithering along the floor like a serpent. We prayed even more earnestly.

Effective Prayer Meetings

By 5:30 a.m. we were back at the church, praying for this girl and for all the people who were coming to the meetings. Those early morning prayer meetings were a time for real revival and reformation among the church members; it was a revival that brought spiritual fire and energy. Then in the evening it was a revival and reformation for non-members! After a while so many people were coming to the meetings that we had to downlink the program so people could go to the church because the meeting hall was too small.

With Kelly, every single day after

praying with her we could see progress. First, she was able to say the name of Jesus, then she could pray, and then she was able to read the Bible—it was a process of deliverance. It was a way for her to make choices.

“This Is Your Home”

When she started to understand the truth, she didn't want to go into her bedroom. We told her, “This is your home, this is your room.” All of the pastors went with Kelly into her room and prayed with her. As we prayed and mentioned the name of Jesus, she had the courage to get up and start removing the satanic things in her house. She threw away all of them.

At the beginning of the meetings Kelly was coming half-naked, but in the end she was fully clothed and in her right mind. When she gave her life to Jesus, it was the greatest day of her life.

Today, Kelly is rejoicing in the Lord. She's clean, and she cut all of her diabolical relationships before baptism. She loves Jesus, and she loves the Seventh-day Adventist Church. What the Lord can do in one or two weeks is unbelievable! Now Kelly is winning her family to the Lord.

Your Gift

Part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will be used to build a much-needed lamb shelter for the children here. This is a place where they can meet for Sabbath School and other meetings.

Because we are a really small mission, we are especially touched by the contribution that the world church members are making to New Caledonia through the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering! Thank you!” 🌍

The Policeman's Dream

NEW ZEALAND | May 14

Sr. Sergeant David Laumatea



When Pastor Norman Hurlow and his team started praying for a way their church could minister to the community, little did they know that the answer would come through a policeman's dream.

The Papatoetoe Seventh-day Adventist Community Church (PAPSDA) in South Auckland, New Zealand, provided many opportunities for its members to be involved in ministry. But now they were about to embark into a totally new venture.

The Dream

Down at the local police station, the officers were looking for effective crime-prevention strategies. They were seeing a lot of people coming into the holding cells at the jail, having been arrested on misdemeanors. Then a few months later, they would see these same individuals back again, being charged with much more serious crimes. As the police officers

saw this pattern repeating more often, they asked themselves, "What if we could intercept these people the first time they come in?"

As they talked about it, the senior sergeant came up with an idea—what if we placed something in the cells that the first-time offenders could read? Something interesting, inspiring, and something that would encourage them to change their ways before it became too difficult.

Thus the idea of the *Crime 2 Christ* magazine came into being. The magazine would feature stories of well-known criminals who had given their lives to Christ. The sergeant knew, however, that the police department didn't have enough human or financial resources to turn the idea into reality, so he hoped to partner with a local church.

Adventists to "Birth" the Project

Then one night the sergeant had a dream. In his dream he saw a pregnant woman with the words "Seventh-day Adventist" written above her. Suddenly, he awoke and wrote down what he'd seen before going back to sleep.

The following morning the sergeant shared his unusual dream, stating that

the Seventh-day Adventist Church would be the one to give birth to this project. Another police officer spoke up: “I’m an Adventist, and I know a church that would be interested in helping—the Papatoetoe church!”

So the sergeant met with Pastor Hurlow. The pastor assured him that the church *was* very interested in partnering with the police in this community outreach project. He also explained that while the church could help with such things as layout and design, there weren’t enough financial means to support the project in a monetary way. But they would certainly pray about it.

“God Sent Me Here”

The following day a woman came to the police precinct saying that she wanted to talk with the senior sergeant. The officer was amazed as the woman said, “God sent me here. I don’t know why, but tell me what you are doing in the community.”

The sergeant shared the “Crime 2 Christ” magazine idea with her, and she said, “Now I know why God has sent me here to talk with you. We’d like to donate some money. I’ll go pray and talk to some people. Then we’ll get back with you.”

Meanwhile, the sergeant told Pastor Hurlow and his team at PAPSDA about the woman, and together they prayed that God would move the hearts of the people to give. A few days later the woman returned, telling the sergeant that she had \$10,000 for the project. The police officers and Papatoetoe church leaders were delighted! This was enough to produce the first issue of the magazine, featuring stories of three people who went from a life of crime to a life of Christ—a professional rugby player who plays for a

national team in New Zealand; Amos, a founding member of a huge gang called “The Head Hunters”; and a woman who went from abuse and crime, to Christ.

“More Than We Needed”

After the magazine was launched in May 2015, the same woman told the sergeant and the Adventist pastor that she had more money available for the next issue. “This was a real affirmation for the team of God’s leading and guiding of the process,” said Pastor Hurlow. “We didn’t even need to ask, but at the right time we had more than we even needed.

“When the police first came and spoke about this idea, it was a no-brainer,” Pastor Hurlow said. “This is where we sensed the spirit leading and guiding in our focus. Without even asking, this initiative came knocking and asked, Will you champion this?”

The Papatoetoe church’s graphic designer did the design for the new magazine. In addition, Pastor Hurlow is responsible for connecting and providing a network of local churches. “We vet them, and make sure that they have the effective resources,” he explains.

One of the goals for the *Crime 2 Christ* magazine is to go national. “By May [2015] we’d already received requests from police stations all over the country. They all wanted this magazine,” said Pastor Hurlow.

And there’s already been at least seven baptisms as a direct result of people reading the *Crime 2 Christ* magazine.

“This is a real first in a secular country, where the government has agreed to partner with local churches to have this magazine in holding cells,” Pastor Hurlow said. “We’d love for prayers to continue.” 🌍



Lost and Found

Pastor Paul

Editor's Note: This story touches on the sensitive topic of child sexual abuse. We include it here to illustrate how God can take very difficult circumstances and bring hope, healing, and potential for mission and ministry.

Paul comes from a Samoan family but was born and raised in New Zealand. He was the oldest of seven children. He later learned that his parents had dedicated him to the Lord, hoping that one day he would become a preacher.

In spite of his parent's best intentions, however, Paul's childhood was riddled with trauma. Beginning at age 6 he was repeatedly sexually molested by an uncle. Filled with rage, Paul became disruptive at school, and life at home became a nightmare as he tried hiding in various places, hoping to escape his uncle. He couldn't tell anyone about it because the subject was taboo.

Living in a Box

By the time Paul was 8 he was living

on the street. At age 9 he was earning \$4 a week delivering milk and newspapers. In order to get a little more money for food, he worked pulling nails out of large wooden boxes used for shipping cars.

During the day he went to school, where he was given a hot lunch, and at night he slept in a car box. From time to time he went to the public pool where he could take a shower for 15 cents. Living in such conditions, he learned how to steal food, clothing, and other items. Before long, Paul got into drugs and alcohol, and at age 13 dropped out of school.

Working various jobs, Paul somehow managed to support himself. By the time he was 17 he eloped with Fiona, a girl he had known from church. Sadly, Paul still carried a lot of anger and often took it out on his wife. Sports was a big part of his life and Paul spent a lot of time playing football (soccer), boxing, and martial arts.

Life-changing Invitation

It was into this milieu that a life-changing invitation came to the young

couple. A friend of Fiona invited them to a small group Bible study. Even though they refused several times, the friend didn't give up.

"She relentlessly invited us to these Bible studies," said Paul. "To get her off our back, we went out of courtesy. We went once, and then we didn't stop going!"

The group was studying the book of Romans, and Paul and Fiona's hearts were deeply touched. "We would leave the Bible study and say, 'There must be more to this.' The gospel was too good to be true," Paul said. "We wondered, are we *really* forgiven? Set free? Did God really send His Son to die for me? The grace was just too big to fathom. It was profound. We kept reading the Bible and realized that "while we were yet sinners," Christ really did die for us. That broke us."

Full Surrender

After participating in the small-group Bible studies, Fiona and Paul attended the nearby Adventist camp meeting. "The preacher preached his heart out, and made an appeal," said Paul. "I looked up at the [tent] canvas, trying to hold back the tears. Two weeks later, I couldn't handle it anymore. I rolled out of bed and said, 'Lord, I'm yours.' It was a deep cry. I've never been so broken. I couldn't stop confessing sin out of my heart. Then I said to the Lord, 'I'm not getting up off my knees until I know what you want from me.' Then, the Lord answered! 'Paul, I want you to be a preacher.' 'Lord, is that you or me?' I asked. The answer came again: 'Paul, be a preacher!'"

Doors began opening, and Paul was accepted into the theology program at Pacific Adventist University in Papua New Guinea. After completing his

Fast Facts

- New Zealand is a beautiful country that lies east of Australia. It is made up of two large islands and several smaller ones.
- Only about 4.5 million people live in New Zealand, most of them on North Island. The largest city is Auckland, with just over 1.4 million people.
- The original settlers of New Zealand are Polynesians who came from other islands in the South Pacific. Today these people are known as the Maori and make up 14.6 percent of the population.

studies, he and Fiona returned to New Zealand, where Paul served as a pastor with the North New Zealand Conference for 13 years.

Gifted in Church Planting

Impressed to further his education and with doors miraculously opening, Paul and Fiona and their children moved to the United States, where Paul studied at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. While there, Paul and Fiona also worked hard to minister to second- and third-generation Pacific Islanders who lived there. Traveling all around southern California, the couple visited the islanders, bringing them food and encouraging them. Through this special ministry, many church plants were established.

In 2010 the family returned to New Zealand, where Paul now serves as the director for church planting and is ministerial director for the North New Zealand Conference. While his life is much different from when he was young, Paul hasn't forgotten about his past life and has a special ministry for reaching those who are living the life he once led. 🌐

“A Vile Criminal Like Me”

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | May 28

Philip and Maureen



Philip Vaki was a vicious man when he was sent to prison for 30 years. Convicted of armed robbery, willful murder, and intended murder, he later described himself as “ignorant, rebellious, reckless, and full of pride.”

He was also abusive, unfaithful, and drank a lot. Once he was locked behind bars, the parents of his wife, Maureen, urged her to leave him. “You don’t deserve that kind of life,” they told her. But Maureen wasn’t ready to give up.

Working for a sales and merchandising company in the capital city of Port Moresby, Maureen met with international sales representatives who were doing business in Papua New Guinea. This is how she met Dennis Perry from the Adventist-owned Sanitarium Health Food Company in Australia. In addition, Dennis was involved with Operation Food for Life, a charity focusing primarily on

meeting the physical and spiritual needs of the less fortunate in Port Moresby.

“I Saw There Was Still Hope”

When Dennis learned that Maureen’s husband was in prison, he began praying with her and gave her books to pass on to Philip. One of the first books Dennis gave was *The Great Controversy* by Ellen White. Maureen gave it to Philip, who read the first three pages and promptly put the book away.

In the meantime, Maureen, who was brought up in a Christian home, got on her knees every night as she cried out to the Lord for her husband. “In spite of Philip being the person he was, I saw that there was still hope,” Maureen remembers. “I knew that God would change him one day. I trusted God.”

As Philip sat in his prison cell the Lord was working on his heart. One day he decided to again pick up the book that Maureen had passed on to him. This time he read page after page of *The Great Controversy*; he couldn’t set it down! Before long Philip had finished the book and wanted more.

Dennis Perry was happy to hear of this and sent *The Desire of Ages*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, and more to Maureen so she could pass them along. As Philip eagerly read each new book, his life began to change.

Every week students from nearby Pacific Adventist University came to the prison to hold worship services and Bible studies. Philip faithfully attended, “and that’s where I

accepted Jesus and the Adventist message,” he said. He was baptized in the prison.

Sharing What He Learned

Once he became a Seventh-day Adventist, Philip wanted to share with his wife what he had learned. So when Maureen came to visit, Philip started giving the books back to her, urging her to read the material that had played such a significant role in changing his life. Maureen could see that her husband’s attitude, demeanor, and even appearance had changed radically. Eager to learn more, she began reading the very books that she had passed on to her husband. Before long, she too accepted the message and was baptized into the Adventist church.

Prison officials and prisoners alike noticed the drastic changes that had taken place in Philip’s life. No longer was he a vile, arrogant, rebellious criminal. Instead, he showed a genuine caring for others. He was asked to serve as elder of the Adventist church within the prison and he frequently led out in ministering to the other prisoners. In addition, Philip was asked to serve as the coordinator of Operation Food for Life within the prison. In this way, Dennis Perry and other volunteers were able to bring food, clothing, and other humanitarian items to the prisoners.

Because of the clear changes in his life and his exemplary behavior, Philip was released from prison to parole after serving a little more than half of his 30-year prison term.

“Our Passion Is Compassion”

Philip now serves as coordinator of Operation Food for Life in Papua New Guinea. Maureen resigned from her job in order to join Philip in this special ministry. “Our passion is compassion as witnessed by our actions,” says the couple.

A big way the Vakis show their compassion is by opening their three-bedroom home to struggling young people. Along with four children of their own, the family has 20 to 25 children and youth living with them at one time. During the weekend that number often swells to 40. “These kids come from broken homes, and often they have been abused,” says Philip.

“We talk with them, cry with them, and spend time with them,” Maureen adds. They’re very emotional, and we have to just sit down and listen to them. And they all call us Mom and Dad.”

The Vakis strive to teach the young people to love the Lord “with all of their hearts.” They also teach them basic life principles from the Bible, encouraging them to stay away from drugs and alcohol.

“We don’t want these young people to venture out onto the streets,” says Philip. “It’s better to prevent than to cure. We want to educate them not only for now but for eternity.”

Dignity and Hope

Philip and Maureen encourage the young people to get involved in helping others by participating in Operation Food for Life activities, including bringing food and clothing to some of the neediest people in Port Moresby. “We teach them to give dignity and hope to people who are stigmatized, and that hope is only found in Jesus Christ,” says Philip.

“Last Sabbath was very emotional for me,” the former inmate continued. “When I saw the kids singing for the people living at the rubbish dump, it just dawned on me—how I used to be—and now God gives me these children to care for. That is the grace of God! If He can change a vile criminal like me, He can change anybody.” 🌍



The Church Is My Family

Stanley

Although he is only 15, Stanley is no stranger to violence and sorrow. His alcoholic father neglected to provide for his family and often came home drunk. One particular instance is seared into Stanley's memory—when his father and uncle had an especially violent argument and his father was stabbed in the back of the head. Amazingly, his father was able to make it to the hospital for treatment. Although he survived, the father abandoned his wife and children and went to Port Moresby, where he married another woman. Only later did his first family learn what had happened.

Stanley's mother struggled trying to provide for her children, and after a while remarried. Sadly, the step-father was even more cruel than the father had been, and often chased Stanley and his sister out of the house or threw them off a high porch.

Aunt Provides an Escape

It was about this time that Stanley's grandfather died. As the family gathered together to mourn, one of Stanley's aunts

arrived from Port Moresby. When she learned the difficult circumstances that Stanley and his sister were in, she told them that she would pay for them to attend a boarding school where they could be away from their step-father.

After a year, the aunt brought the two to her home in Port Moresby, but the place was too small for her own family as well as Stanley and his sister. Not wanting to send them back to where they would be mistreated, the aunt sent them to the Papua lowlands to live with her children's former babysitter—a woman named Lorna, and her family.

The Little Missionary

Lorna and her husband had a young daughter named Grace, who at the age of 3 was already a little missionary! Although her father was a former Adventist and no longer went to church, and her mother attended a Lutheran church on Sundays, they allowed Grace to go to a nearby Seventh-day Adventist church with her cousins.

Grace loved going to Sabbath School

and church, but wished her parents would come too. “Children need to go to church with their mom and dad,” she would tell them, “and I’m the only one without parents there!”

When she saw her parents smoking, drinking alcohol, or chewing betel nut, Grace’s little voice reminded them, “My Sabbath School teacher told us that stuff is bad! Smoking and alcohol and betel nut aren’t good for your body!”

Discovering the Truth

When Grace heard an announcement at church about some upcoming evangelistic meetings, she hurried home and told her parents, “Mom, Dad, I heard that there’s going to be a big meeting at the church! Why don’t you come with me to the meetings?”

To her delight, Grace’s parents decided to come and faithfully attended every night. “During those meetings I discovered the truth,” Lorna says, “and was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.” And she no longer smoked, chewed betel nut, or drank alcohol. “Life is much better than it used to be,” she exclaims. “I feel so free now!”

Fast Facts

- Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a mountainous island nation. The main island lies just north of Australia. Papua New Guinea shares the island of New Guinea with Papua, a province of Indonesia.
- About 7.3 million people live in PNG. While the cities are modern, many people still live in small villages in the mountains. Although they may see a village on another mountain ridge, it could take days to hike there, and it’s likely that they don’t speak the same dialect. More than 700 different languages and dialects are spoken in PNG.

Grace’s father, however, wasn’t yet ready to return. “It’s OK,” he told her. “You and Mom go, and I’ll come when I feel it’s time.”

Grace, however, hasn’t given up. “I always pray for my daddy,” she says. And she continues to remind him that he needs to quit his bad health habits!

“No Children Will Stay At Home”

When Stanley and his sister came to live with Grace and her family, Grace informed them that on Sabbath, “no children will stay at home—we’re all going to church!”

It didn’t take long for Stanley to feel at home in the Adventist church. “When I started coming here, I could see big changes for the better taking place in my life,” he said. “I could see a big difference.”

Stanley joined the Pathfinder club and enjoys the many activities. One of the deacons in the church noticed Stanley’s dedication and his humble spirit and invited him to help out in a branch Sabbath School each week. The deacon became a spiritual mentor to Stanley, who has recently decided to fully give his heart to Jesus. “That is my promise, and I will follow that promise all the way,” he says.

Although his own mother and father have forsaken him, Stanley has found a very supportive spiritual family within the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will make a big difference in the lives of the children in Papua New Guinea and other islands in the South Pacific where children have no place to gather for Sabbath School and other meetings except under the trees. The offering will help to provide several “lamb shelters” where the children can meet regardless of the weather. Thank you for giving generously! 🌍

A Healthy Interest

Ben



Editor's Note: This story was first published in the Teen Mission quarterly, third quarter 2006. Nearly 10 years later, I met Ben while visiting PNG. Read "The Rest of Ben's Story" next week. Here's the original story (slightly adapted for length) from 2006:

I grew up in a Christian home, but I didn't know a lot about God. When I was 12, I started reading the Bible. When I reached Leviticus 11, I read about the clean and unclean animals and was surprised to learn that pigs are unclean. In Papua New Guinea pork is a big part of our diet. I decided to ask my pastor about it.

"I read in the Bible that we aren't to eat pig, but we eat it. Why?" I asked him.

"Everything that God created He made good," the pastor said. "So we can eat pig—or any other animal."

The pastor's answer didn't satisfy me. I felt sure that there was more to this than what he told me. I told my family that I didn't want to eat pigs anymore. They

didn't understand why it mattered to me, but they didn't force me to eat unclean meats after that.

I'd heard that Seventh-day Adventists don't eat unclean foods, and I thought that perhaps they were the right church. So I began asking questions to learn more. The only person I knew who was an Adventist was a boy several years older than I. I told him I wanted to know more about his church. He invited me to visit, but the church was three miles [five km.] from our village.

Temptations Mount

When I finished primary school, my brothers killed and roasted a pig. They teased me about how delicious it was. I gave in and ate a bite. Afterward I felt terrible.

I faced other temptations at school—smoking, drinking, using drugs. I knew these things were bad, but when my friends teased me, I gave in. Soon I was smoking almost a pack a day.

My school went just to ninth grade, so

we often talked about where we would go to high school. I wanted to study at Kabiufa Adventist Secondary School. My friends laughed, so I applied to another school instead. I wasn't accepted, and I missed a whole year of school.

The next year my father surprised me and told me I would go to Kabiufa. He wanted me to quit smoking, and Kabiufa didn't allow smoking. I arrived at the school intending to quit smoking, but quitting was far more difficult than I expected.

The friends I made weren't a good influence. We skipped classes and sneaked out to smoke. My teachers told us that if we had a problem we could talk to them about it, but I denied my problems and refused to ask for help.

Reality Check

My grades suffered, and I knew that my father would be disappointed if I failed, so I focused on studying more. I knew that I needed to stop smoking, but it was so hard. I realized that I couldn't quit on my own and decided that I had to ask God to take control of my life. Every morning I prayed that God would take away the desire to smoke.

As the semester ended, we waited anxiously for our report cards, which would tell us whether we would return the next year, come back on probation, or be expelled. I prayed that I would be allowed to return. When the deputy headmaster [vice principal] gave me my letter, I read that I was on probation, but could return. He told me, "You must change your attitude if you wish to return." I promised that I would. I later learned that all my friends had been expelled.

I arrived home determined to stay away

Mission Post

- The Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM) was organized in 1949.
- With 240,205 Adventist members, the Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM) has the highest membership of any territory in the South Pacific Division.
- There are 962 churches and 2,852 companies within the PNGUM

from cigarettes. I told my mother that I wanted to attend the Adventist church nearby, and she was glad. Then she told me that when she was younger she had attended the Adventist church. She encouraged me and even promised to go with me sometime.

When I returned to school, I told the pastor that I wanted to commit my life to Jesus and join the baptismal class. I really enjoyed learning more about God. I felt that I was finally beginning to understand who He is.

A New Chapter

With God's help I'm now free from tobacco. I know there'll be other temptations, but I've asked God for help. I tell my friends that I've made a promise to God and that I want to be faithful to Him.

Soon I'll be baptized. My mother has kept her word and is attending church. Together we pray that our entire family will unite and worship God together one day.

Ben Pilisi is completing his final year at Kabiufa Adventist Secondary School. He hopes to study accounting. Pray that Ben will continue to follow God and be a witness to his family. 🌐

The Rest of Ben's Story

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | June 18

Ben



Editor's Note: In 2006, a story about Ben Pilisi was published in the Teen Mission quarterly (see last week's story). A decade later I met Ben and learned the rest of his story.

Ben comes from the village of Bush Bata, located in the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. Ben's father, hoping to see positive changes in his son, sent him to the Kabiufa Adventist Secondary School. While there, Ben gave his life to Jesus and was baptized. Now He tells the rest of his story:

After finishing high school, I was accepted into Sonoma Adventist College, where I studied accounting. After graduating in 2008, I was called to serve in the Western Highlands Mission as the accounts clerk.

While serving at the mission, I didn't forget my home village, which is just a 45-minute drive away. I wanted to reach the

villagers for Christ. I believed that if I could help the people with their physical needs, they'd be more open regarding spiritual needs. I knew that one of their greatest needs was water. Every day we had to walk a long distance to fetch water from a well and then carry it back to the village.

The water project idea started in 2011. Mobilizing the village youth, I explained that we needed to be organized so that an NGO* could assist us. I then went to the ADRA-PNG** office. They came to my village, did a feasibility study, and determined that the project could be done. It would be the largest gravity fed water supply system in the country. ADRA would implement the project, and it would be government funded— fifty percent from the Madam Governor and fifty percent coming from our Member of Parliament (MP). The director from ADRA-NZ,*** Victoria Fray— came to oversee the implementation.

Our dream eventuated in 2014, but

* Non-governmental Organization. An NGO is any non-profit, voluntary group which is organized on a local, national or international level.

** Adventist Development and Relief Agency-Papua New Guinea (ADRA-PNG)

*** ADRA-New Zealand

before the project even started there were whisperings coming from the community that the project would fail because of the local topography.

The elite, educated people told me, “You need to have a big community meeting.” So we gathered in front of the respected elders. They questioned me about how the project would be implemented, and asked if the water was successfully implemented, how would it be sustained? The water source was 12.5 kilometers (7.7 miles) away and the water would have to flow down and up, like a snake. “No! It cannot work,” they proclaimed.

After answering all their questions I said, “Now listen. You think that this project is impossible. You think, ‘We *know* that it’s impossible for the water to reach us.’ But let me tell you that because God is gracious, you will still drink the water. As human beings, we may think it’s impossible, but with God it is possible.”

Then the hard work began. After eight and a half months of grueling labor by the ADRA-PNG team—under the leadership of Sinedou Luguna—they opened the taps on December 16, 2014. Now the people in four large villages and six sub-villages were drinking fresh, clean, water.

As the taps were turned on village by village, people were crying, “Thank you! This is what we’ve been waiting for!”

Finally, we reached my village—the last one on the line. There are five to ten houses to a tap, sometimes two to three houses, depending on their location. We have 115 taps in my village, plus ten more that villagers bought to go to their houses.

As the taps were opened and water came rushing out, everyone was in tears. The old ladies sang traditional songs and cried, “Take

care of that precious thing, and let this water remain generation after generation!”

Having clean, accessible water has impacted the entire community and has opened ways for witnessing.

We’re now seeking to establish a church there. When I’m available, we gather at my house for worships; but when I’m at the mission, Joe meets with this small but growing group.

Young children are coming to Sabbath School and staying for the worship service. Even though their parents worship in the Pentecostal church, they support their children coming to Adventist meetings because of the positive changes we are making in the community.

Some of the older folk attended a series of Adventist meetings held by a local church elder in a neighboring village. He spoke our local dialect, and the message went deep into the hearts of the hearers. They’re asking, “Why didn’t we hear these messages earlier? We should have become Seventh-day Adventists when we were young!”

My father, aunts, uncles, and cousins, are all in the Pentecostal church. I pray that they will come to know and understand Bible truth, and will recognize the Seventh-day Adventist Church as God’s last-day remnant church.

My mother was once an Adventist, but she joined the Pentecostal church when she married my father. When I became an Adventist, she soon joined me. She’s proud of me and praises God about the changes in the villages. She tells me, “God heard our cries. You became a church worker, and God used you to bless many people.”

I wouldn’t be here today if it weren’t for God. God had a bigger plan, and He changed me so that I can be used to bless others. 🌍

Thirteenth Sabbath Program

➤	Opening Song	“Hark! the Voice of Jesus Calling” <i>Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 359
➤	Welcome	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
➤	Prayer	
➤	Program	“Across the South Pacific”
➤	Offering	
➤	Closing Song	“Rise Up, O Church of God” <i>Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 615
➤	Closing Prayer	

Participants: One narrator and two readers.

Props: Flags (or pictures of flags), from the following countries: Vanuatu, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea

Narrator: This quarter our mission focus has been on the South Pacific Division, and we’ve heard some exciting stories from many of the islands, including (raise flag when appropriate country is named): Vanuatu, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea.

Reader 1: In the island nation of Fiji, the government recognizes that its people are facing a severe health crisis. Four out of five Fijians are dying from non-communicable diseases [NCDs), and that number is rising.

Reader 2: There are four main types of NCDs: cardiovascular diseases, cancers, respiratory diseases, and diabetes.

Reader 1: Many risk factors make a person vulnerable to NCDs, such as tobacco use; physical inactivity; an unhealthy diet high in salt, sugar, fat and

processed foods; and drinking alcohol.

Reader 2: About 95 percent of NCDs are due to lifestyle choices. Our day-to-day decisions, what we do, what we eat, have a huge impact on our health.

Reader 1: Of course, Seventh-day Adventists have been aware of these health laws for more than a century, thanks to the inspired writings of Ellen White. However, knowing what’s good for us and putting it into practice are often two different things!

Reader 2: Pastor Luke Narabe [na-RAW-bee], president of the Fiji Mission, says that embracing a healthful lifestyle challenge is important to him as a leader, and he wants to be a good role model. “We are emphasizing healthy lifestyles for our ministers, too,” he says. “God has given this church a special health

message, and it's an opening wedge.”

Reader 1: Working with the health department of the South Pacific Division, the Fiji Mission health department offered a week-long “Health Promoting Church Initiative” training program to all ministers and elders throughout the mission.

Reader 2: Special training, workshops, and food demonstrations took place, educating all toward a more healthful lifestyle.

Reader 1: “We invited the government to come and observe,” said Pastor Narabe, “to see the strategy that is being put in place to fight NCDs—food, exercise, and so on, and we gave each participant a big folder packed with materials showing leaders what they can do to ensure that their local church is involved with this program to impact their community.

Reader 2: Government representatives told the Fiji Mission president that “there is no other organization that has a solution for our health crisis. But we know that the Seventh-day Adventists have a very special message—you have the solution to the NCD crisis!”

Reader 1: And during a large congress of religious leaders held in the capital city of Suva, it was acknowledged that “there is no other church that has been blessed with the message of health like the Seventh-day Adventists.”

Reader 2: In light of strong receptivity to the health message, the Adventist church in Fiji has already successfully conducted numerous health expos, vegetarian cooking classes, food demonstrations, and more.

Reader 2: “We want to do as much as we can *now* to help the people of Fiji,” says Pastor Narabe, “because we know that time is short, with people dying at a

younger age, from NCDs. We want them to come to Jesus.”

Narrator: Today we have the opportunity to support the mission of our brothers and sisters in Fiji through the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. A portion of this offering will be used to construct a wellness center in Suva. This center of influence will have a special kitchen for food demonstrations and cooking classes. During the lunch hour, guests will find healthful food available—either to eat there or take-away. There will be a small gym for exercise classes. Health programs will be offered, and a counseling room and prayer room will be available. Ministry will be taking place at the center every day, impacting the community. “We believe,” says Pastor Narabe, “that the wellness center will be one of the tools that the church will use, by God’s grace, to reach out to some of the most difficult groups of people to reach. We thank the world church for their support.”

Reader 1: The country of New Zealand is known as one of the most pristinely beautiful places on earth. Once known as “God’s country,” this land down-under is becoming increasingly secularized with four out of ten New Zealanders now declaring themselves “non-religious.”

Reader 2: But in a land where people don’t like strangers knocking on their doors, God has opened a window for the Seventh-day Adventist message to be broadcast into the majority of living rooms, 24/7, bringing hope into every home.

Reader 1: “Opportunity to broadcast on a satellite platform is very limited,” says Dr. Brad Kemp, president of the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference. “There were no spaces left, then we were offered one. The cost was marginally more, but with

greater reach, so we took it. The DTH (satellite platform) will reach more than 2 million homes out of 4.5 million in the country. We have the potential coverage of 69 percent of all homes. We'll also cover 11 major regional centers with free-to-air broadcasting."

Reader 2: With the key message of "Bringing Hope to Every Home," the new Adventist television station will offer full-message programming that looks at wholistic life, encouraging viewers to "Live more. Love more. Learn more."

Reader 1: As much as possible, local people will be producing the television programs. "When people hear their own accent they want to watch," says Dr. Kemp. "The edge is local content—that sets us apart from other religious broadcasters. The [Thirteenth Sabbath] offering is going to be so helpful to us, as it will provide funds for producing local content."

Reader 2: The station will have 168 hours of content to fill each week. Plans are already in place to produce contextually relevant material that will appeal to a New Zealand secular audience. In addition, programs will also be shared with many of the South Pacific islands.

Reader 1: But this isn't just about television. "We need to have an end-to-

end process," explains Dr. Kemp.

Reader 2: All of the programs will be connected to free offers on the website. Intuitive software will bring the viewer and ministry together, and strategic plans are in place that will connect people through media to the local church.

Reader 1: Dr. Kemp says, "We believe strongly that to get into the homes of people, we've got to use media. We have a real opportunity to impact New Zealand in a way that we've never been able to before. That will be coupled with our churches becoming centers of influence. I don't think that door is going to be open forever. Let's move while we have the opportunity."

Reader 2: Thank you for giving generously to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, helping to provide important local programming to reach people through Hope Channel New Zealand.

Narrator: Throughout the islands of the South Pacific children and youth are some of the most active members of the church. Sabbath School, AY meetings, Adventurers, and Pathfinders are some of the many activities in which they are involved. Frequently, however, these groups have nowhere to meet except under a tree or the open sky. When it

Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

Next quarter the East-Central Africa Division (ECD) will be featured. Special projects include dormitories and a cafeteria at the Adventist University of Central Africa in Kigali, Rwanda, and a lamb shelter for children at the Juba Adventist Central Church in South Sudan.



rains, their meetings must be canceled. Today we have a wonderful opportunity to provide funding for 28 children's discipleship centers—also known as “lamb shelters.” These sturdy structures will provide space and shelter for the younger members of our church family in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia. Thank you for supporting mission by giving generously to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

[Offering]

Leader's Resources

For more information on the cultures and history of Vanuatu, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and other countries within the South Pacific Division, visit your local library or a travel agency, or visit the websites listed below.

For helpful information and pictures visit the following:

Vanuatu: www.southpacific.org/guide/vanuatu.html

Fiji: www.fiji.travel

New Caledonia: www.lonelyplanet.com/new-caledonia

New Zealand: www.newzealand.com

Papua New Guinea: www.tpa.papuanewguinea.travel

You may also find the following denominational websites helpful:

South Pacific Division: www.spd.adventist.org

Papua New Guinea Union Mission: <http://adventist.org.pg>

Trans Pacific Union Mission: <http://tpum.adventist.org.fj>

New Zealand Pacific Union Conference: <http://nzpuc.adventist.org.nz>

Hope Channel New Zealand: www.facebook.com/hopechannelnewzealand/; www.hopechannel.org/nz

Be sure to download your free *Mission Spotlight* DVD, featuring video reports from around the South Pacific. Download or stream from the Adventist Mission website at: www.adventistmission.org/dvd

An offering goal device will help focus attention on world missions and increase weekly mission giving. Ask your Sabbath School council to set a quarterly mission offering goal (set the goal a little higher than last quarter and divide it by 14, one part for each of the 12 regular Sabbaths this quarter and two parts for Thirteenth Sabbath). Chart the weekly progress toward the quarter's goal on the goal device.

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.

YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

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SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

PACIFIC OCEAN

HOWLAND ISLAND
BAKER ISLAND

KIRIBATI

3 TUVALU

NAURU

TOKELAU

SOLOMON ISLANDS

PAPUA
NEW GUINEA
Port Moresby

INDONESIA
EAST TIMOR

WALLIS AND FUTUNA

AMERICAN SAMOA

VANUATU

2 FIJI

NIUE

3 NEW CALEDONIA

FRENCH
POLYNESIA

TONGA

COOK ISLANDS

1 Wellington

NEW ZEALAND

Canberra

AUSTRALIA

CONFERENCE	CHURCHES	COMPANIES	MEMBERS	POPULATION
Australian	421	105	58,219	23,110,000
New Zealand Pacific	142	85	18,646	5,019,000
Papua New Guinea	951	2,798	238,273	7,179,000
Trans-Pacific	498	562	105,824	2,196,000
TOTAL	2,012	3,550	420,962	37,504,000

PROJECTS:

- 1 Hope Channel Studio, Auckland, New Zealand
- 2 Family Wellness Center of Influence, Suva, Fiji
- 3 Children's Discipleship Centers in Papua New Guinea, Trans-Pacific Union, New Caledonia

