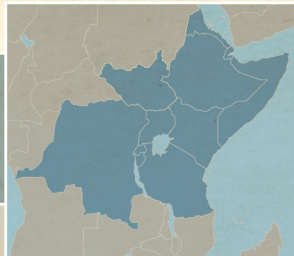




# YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

2023 • QUARTER 1 • EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION



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**On the Cover:** Godwin K. Lekundayo learned a valuable lesson about heaven's understanding of time when he led three-week evangelistic meetings in Tanzania. Story, Page 12.

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 = stories of special interest to teens

## Your Offerings at Work

These photos are of the Baraton International School, built on the campus of the University of Eastern Africa in Baraton, Kenya, with the help of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering collected in second quarter 2013. The building was completed, dedicated, and opened on March 13, 2022. Initially, the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering funds were to be divided between two projects: Baraton International School and housing for teachers and married students. However, church leaders later voted to use the funds only for the school. An incorrect photo featuring a wrong building was published in this space in third quarter 2016. We regret any unintended confusion this may have caused.



  
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This quarter we feature the East-Central Africa Division, whose territory includes 11 countries: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. In this region of 419 million people, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has 4.5 million members, or about one

Adventist for every 93 people. Three years ago, the ratio was one Adventist for every 100 people.

This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will assist six mission projects in five countries. You can find more information in the sidebar on this page.

## Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will support six projects in the East-Central Africa Division:

- Dormitory, Mugonero Nursing School, Mugonero, Rwanda
- Faculty housing, School of Medicine, Adventist University of Central Africa, Masoro, Rwanda
- Youth agricultural training center, Nchwanga, Uganda
- Multipurpose hall, Ethiopia Adventist College extension campus, Nekemte, Ethiopia
- Dormitory and multipurpose hall, Mwata Adventist School for Deaf Children, Mwata, Kenya
- Multipurpose hall, University of Arusha, Tanzania

## Special Features

If you want to make your Sabbath School class come alive, we offer photos and other materials to accompany each mission story. More information is provided in the sidebar with each story. For photos of tourist sites and other scenes from the featured countries, try a free photo bank such as [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com) or [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com). You could show the photos to listeners on a screen while you read the mission story, or you could print the photos to decorate your Sabbath School room or church bulletin board. In addition, you can download a PDF of facts and activities from the East-Central Africa Division at [bit.ly/ecd-2023](https://bit.ly/ecd-2023). Follow us at [facebook.com/missionquarterlies](https://facebook.com/missionquarterlies).

You also can download the PDF version of the *Children's Mission* magazine at [bit.ly/childrensmision](https://bit.ly/childrensmision), and Mission Spotlight videos at [bit.ly/missionspotlight](https://bit.ly/missionspotlight).

If you have found especially effective ways to share mission stories, please let me know at [mcchesneya@gc.adventist.org](mailto:mcchesneya@gc.adventist.org).

Thank you for encouraging people to be mission-minded!

# Reluctant Nurse

Christine



Christine's family was so poor that they sent her away to a boarding school to be raised by priests in Uganda. One priest became like a father to her. He took a special interest in her well-being, and he offered her guidance after she moved out of the boarding school and later graduated from nursing school.

Christine needed a nursing job, and the priest advised her not to stay in the city to work. "You might be attracted by the lures of the city life," he said.

Christine had always trusted the priest. But she wasn't sure that she wanted to live in the countryside. She thought life would be much more comfortable in the city.

As she looked for work, she saw an advertisement for nurses at a Seventh-day Adventist medical center. She was hesitant to apply for a job because she knew that the medical center belonged to the Adventist Church. In addition, she saw that the medical center was in the countryside, and she didn't want to leave the city. She put the job opportunity out of her mind.

Then the priest called her.

"Get ready," he said. "I am sending a car to take you to your new place of work."

"Where will I work?" she asked.

"Hurry up and get ready," the priest said. "The job opening will close soon."

Christine thought that the priest must have found an extraordinary work opportunity because he was making such a big deal about it. After being picked up, she was surprised when the car turned into the compound of the Adventist medical center.

She did not want to work in the countryside, but she didn't see any other choice. She reluctantly accepted a nursing job at the medical center, and she moved into local housing.

Christine experienced a series of shocks at her new job. First, living in the countryside felt like prison to her. Second, she was astonished to see people worshipping on Saturday. She couldn't imagine that God was present in such a community. It turned out that the closest church belonging to her denomination was too far away to worship at on Sundays.

"What can I do other than sit here in isolation?" she thought.

A steady flow of Adventists came to Christine's place to visit and pray with her. Every Sabbath, they sang, prayed, and studied the Bible with her. Christine's heart



was touched by their kindness. She enjoyed singing with them. Her heart slowly opened to the Adventists' unfamiliar worship style, but she worried what the priest would say if he knew.

Church members continued to visit her, and she persistently ignored their calls to join the Adventist Church. After three years, they stopped asking.

During that time, Christine reflected on their appeals and what she had learned during Bible studies. She even convinced her own sister to join the Adventist Church.

"They teach the truth," she told her sister.

Christine stopped going to her church, but she still wasn't willing to join the Adventist Church because she couldn't bring herself to worship on Saturdays.

One Saturday morning, a church member invited her to go to camp meeting. The invitation was like music to her ears.

"This is my day!" Christine thought.

She secretly took a change of clothing with her. She had seen many baptisms over the past three years, and she knew what to do.

When the pastor made an altar call, she walked to the front for baptism. Everyone who knew her was surprised. She had not told anyone about her desire.

Christine came out of the waters of baptism filled with joy.

Today, Christine credits God for bringing her to the medical center, whose full name is the Nchwanga Seventh-day Adventist Dispensary.

"I reluctantly went to Nchwanga, but God has been kind and gracious to me in this place," she says. "My experience at Nchwanga is the turning point in my life."

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help open a youth agricultural training center in Nchwanga, Uganda.

"Dear listener," Christine says, "please support the establishment of this discipleship training center that also will help turn around many lives in Uganda." 🌍

By Stephen Ssenyonga

## Story Tips

- Download photos on Facebook [bit.ly/fb-mq](https://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/eccd-2023](https://bit.ly/eccd-2023).
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives"; Spiritual Objective No. 6, "To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults"; and Spiritual Objective No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." For more information, go to the website: [IWillGo2020.org](https://IWillGo2020.org).

## Mission Post

- It is recorded that the first Seventh-day Adventist to enter Uganda was E. C. Enns, a German missionary working at Suji in the Pare region of Tanzania (then Tanganyika) who entered the country from South Nyanza, Kenya, in 1906. However, work did not begin in Uganda until more than 20 years later, in 1927. This long delay was most likely due to the local prevailing political and religious unrest in the region.
- Adventist missionaries entering Uganda found that it was already zoned among Anglican Protestant missionaries, Catholic missionaries, and Muslims. Accordingly, they were sent to Nchwanga and were expected to fail because they were sent into a disturbed area and the people of this area were naturally suspicious of anything coming from Kampala and Buganda. By providence, Adventists were able to establish a mission station in Nchwanga in 1927.

# Hole in Stomach

DRC | January 14

Marcel



Marcel felt like he was dying. His stomach hurt tremendously.

When he placed his hand on his stomach, it hurt even more.

He had no money, and he didn't know what to do.

In Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, no hospital would take him without a guarantee that he would pay for medical treatment.

Then someone told him about the Adventist Clinic of Kinshasa. Maybe they could help.

With the assistance of his children and wife, Charlotte, Marcel rushed to the 15-bed clinic.

To the astonishment of the family, the medical team didn't say a word about money. Instead, they showered Marcel and his family with prayer.

"The big surprise for my family and myself was the attitude of this medical team who demanded nothing and were only concerned with saving human life," Marcel

says. "In comparison, most hospitals will not accommodate someone who hasn't paid money first."

The medical team ran a series of tests and found that Marcel was suffering from a perforation of his stomach.

It was unclear what had caused the holes. A perforation can occur as a result of appendicitis, the swallowing of a corrosive substance or a foreign object, or a gunshot or knife wound.

Marcel's case was serious. The contents of his stomach might spill through the holes and cause a deadly infection. The medical team needed to perform an emergency operation. The operation was a complicated one. Three out of every 10 people do not survive the procedure.

Marcel was admitted to the clinic. However, the medical team didn't have all the equipment that was needed for the operation. Arrangements had to be made to secure it.

Finally, after the necessary equipment was obtained, the medical team brought Marcel



to the operating room. Anesthesiologists put him to sleep. Doctors opened him up, worked carefully to repair his stomach, and then sewed him shut.

Marcel is convinced that it was God, not the doctors, who performed the delicate operation.

“The intervention was too risky,” he says. “I was at death’s door. But to tell you the truth, it was God who operated. Such a surgery on the stomach is a matter of life and death, and I am alive.”

Ten days after the operation, it was declared a success.

“Honestly, my life is a miracle of God. He did everything,” Marcel says. “I cannot forget the spirit of prayer that I noticed in the Adventist clinic. The presence of God is so necessary in times of distress.”

Marcel said that he and his family would not forget about the clinic, the place where his life was spared. He said he would not forget about the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which operates the clinic.

“We ask the clinic to keep doing acts of kindness to everyone,” he says. 🌍

The clinic received part of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering to upgrade its facilities and equipment in 2019. Thank you for your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. But, as evidenced in Marcel’s story, the needs of the small, 15-bed clinic remain large in a city of 17 million people. Its medical team remains committed to leading people to Christ, one person at a time.

Marcel says he is one of those people.

“I came dying and came out alive!” he says. “Praise be to the name of God! I discovered Christ through these acts of kindness.”

By Georges Ntumba Mulumba, communication director at West Congo Union Mission

## Story Tips

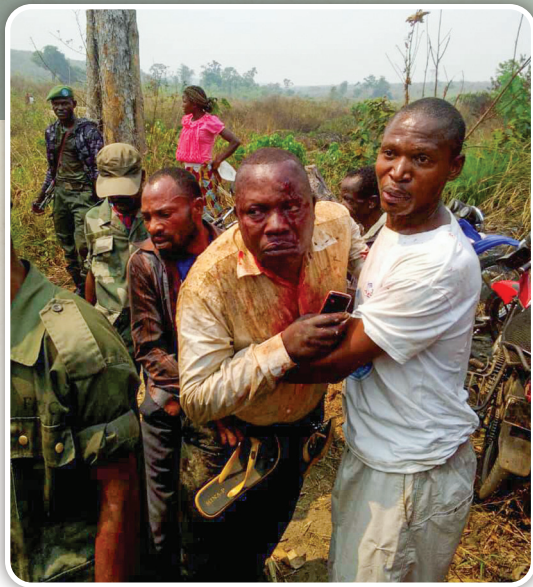
- Learn more about the Adventist Clinic of Kinshasa in the online *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* at: [bit.ly/clinic-of-kinshasa](http://bit.ly/clinic-of-kinshasa).
- Download photos on Facebook: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/ecd-2023](http://bit.ly/ecd-2023).
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Mission Objective No. 2, “To strengthen and diversify Adventist outreach in large cities”; Mission Objective No. 4, “To strengthen Seventh-day Adventist institutions in upholding freedom, wholistic health, and hope through Jesus, and restoring in people the image of God”; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives.” For more information about the initiative, please go to the website: [IWillGo2020.org](http://IWillGo2020.org).

## Mission Post

- In 1917, the founding of the Musofu Mission and the opening of a school in what is now Zambia served as a springboard for the Adventist Church penetration of the Congo. This mission attracted 130 young Congolese men who walked through the forest from the Congo to attend the Adventist school.
- In 1918, S. M. Konigmacher entered Congo in search of a site on which to open a station. Chiefs Lumina and Kakombe requested a teacher for the Congo territory of Sakania. Even though their request was not granted at that time, it was a prelude to the penetration of the Congo.



# Fiery Plane Crash



DRC | January 21

Pius

“I will never leave this God,” he told her. “He is wonderful.”

## Last Moments of Flight

The cause of the crash was unclear. The Soviet-built plane, operated by a local airline, apparently developed engine trouble shortly after taking off from the town of Kamako for a 90-mile (150-kilometer) flight to Tshikapa, located near the border with Angola.

The pilot looked for a place to land, but the engine problem got worse. As the plane lost altitude, smoke filled the cabin, and Pius saw the pilot emerge from the cockpit.

At that moment, he sensed a voice saying, “Follow the pilot.” He saw the pilot open an exit and jump out. He also jumped out. Moments later, the plane slammed into the bush and burst into flames. The plane went down about 2 miles (3 kilometers) from the airport.

In the aftermath of the crash, local Adventist leaders offered condolences to the families of those who died. The passengers included businesspeople and an Angolan mother.

## No Sabbath Flights

Pius, a lay evangelist who also works as a diamond dealer, had boarded the flight in hope of visiting a church plant of 15 people that he had opened after evangelistic meetings. But when he tried to book a direct flight to the town with the church, he learned that the plane would only depart on Sabbath.

He explained to the airline representative that he chose not to fly on the Sabbath.

“I can’t because I worship on Sabbath,” he said.

**A** Seventh-day Adventist miraculously escaped a fiery airplane crash as he sought to visit a church that he had planted in a remote region of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Pius, a 53-year-old Congolese lay evangelist, and the pilot jumped from the An-2 single-engine biplane moments before it hit the ground.

The other five people on the flight perished. “He survived with only his cellphone,” said his wife, Nicole.

She received confirmation about her husband’s condition via photographs sent by a friend shortly after the crash. Pius had a head and leg wound, but he had no broken bones.

The photos that she received on her cell phone showed her husband looking dazed and wearing a blood-soaked shirt, with a cell phone in his hand.

Nicole was unable to speak with her husband for three days, but his first words by phone were filled with praise to God.

“But the flight only goes on Saturday,” the representative replied.

Pius resolved to find another way to reach his destination that same day. After looking around, he bought a ticket on the doomed flight instead. He called his wife from the airport to announce his change in plans. He hoped to find another way to reach the town with the church plant.

That afternoon, Nicole waited for her husband to call that he had arrived at the alternative airport safely. But he didn't call.

Finally, a cousin called and asked, “How is your husband?”

Nicole said they hadn't spoken since morning and asked whether the cousin had heard from him. The cousin hung up without replying. Nicole immediately called back and demanded to know what was going on.

“Keep praying and serving God,” the cousin said. “The plane that your husband took crashed, and everyone died except your husband and the pilot.”

Nicole went to her bedroom and fell on her knees to pray. A short time later, a friend called to say that he had sent photos of her husband and the plane crash over the Internet. Nicole rushed to an Internet cafe to access Wi-Fi and to see the photos.

She was relieved to see that Pius was alive despite his injuries.

Nicole has many questions about what happened that day. She doesn't understand why her husband and the pilot survived but the others died. She doesn't know whether her husband's decision to keep the Sabbath played a role in the story. But she believes that he was delivered as promised in Psalms 91:14, where the Lord says, “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him” (NKJV).

“Be faithful to God because he can protect us at all times,” she says. 🌍

Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offerings that help plant churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo and around the world.

## Story Tips

- Download photos on Facebook: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/ecd-2023](http://bit.ly/ecd-2023).
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's “I Will Go” strategic plan: Mission Objective No. 1, “To revive the concept of worldwide mission and sacrifice for mission as a way of life involving not only pastors but every church member, young and old, in the joy of witnessing for Christ and making disciples”; Mission Objective No. 2, “To strengthen and diversify Adventist outreach ... among unreached and under-reached people groups”; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives.” For more information about the initiative, go to the website: [IWillGo2020.org](http://IWillGo2020.org).

## Fast Facts

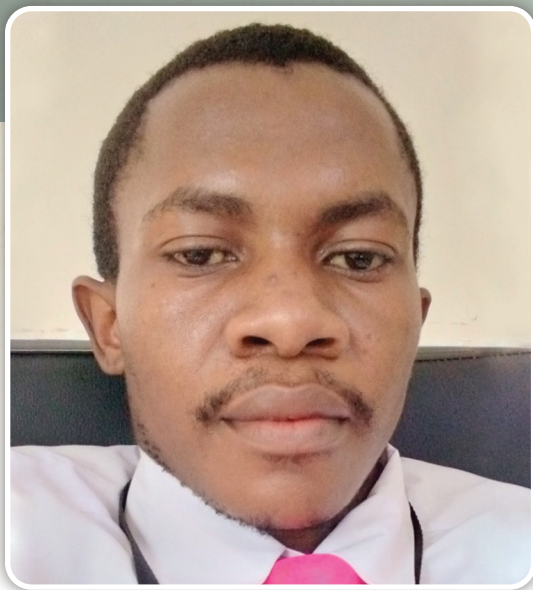
- Officially known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it is often referred to by its acronym, DRC, to distinguish it from the Republic of the Congo. The DRC is the second-largest country on the continent, after Algeria.
- Pygmies — in anthropology, ethnic groups whose average height is unusually short — are thought to have been the earliest inhabitants of the Congo basin. The Bantu peoples, who are thought to have entered the territory of modern Congo many hundreds of years later, now make up a large majority of the country's population.
- Lions, leopards, giraffes, and white rhinoceroses live in the grasslands and savanna woods of the DRC.



# Prayer of Faith

TANZANIA | January 28

Elia



Elia had a big problem. He had graduated from high school in Tanzania. He had been accepted into the University of Arusha, which belongs to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But he didn't have enough money for tuition.

The University of Arusha had not been Elia's first choice. He had put the Adventist university in third place on his list of five universities at which he would like to study. But then he had called his friend Joseph, a classmate from high school, to ask where he planned to study.

"Let's go to the University of Arusha," Joseph said. "It would be nice to be together."

Elia thought that it would be nice to be together with Joseph. They both applied to the University of Arusha, and they both were accepted to study for a bachelor's degree in education.

Elia and Joseph congratulated themselves and thanked God. But both lacked the money to cover their tuition at the university. They applied for state financial aid.

The week before his departure, Elia attended a week of prayer at the Yombo Seventh-day Adventist Church. The pastor asked people to write down their prayer requests on pieces of paper. To Elia's surprise, he found himself not writing down a prayer request but a prayer of gratitude.

"Thank You, God, for allowing me to enroll in the University of Arusha and for helping me receive financial aid to cover my tuition," he wrote.

He had not received any financial aid, but he wrote, believing that God would grant it.

On Friday, Elia and Joseph went to the bus station to book tickets for the 375-mile (600-kilometer) trip from Tanzania's capital, Dar es Salaam, to the university in the town of Usa River. After paying for the bus tickets, Joseph wondered out loud about their future.

"We have booked the tickets to Arusha but, as you know, we are strangers there," he said. "How are we going to survive with no financial aid?"



“Do you believe in God?” Elia asked.

“Yes, but ...” Joseph said.

Elia asked him again.

“Is not the God you believe in the same that I also believe in?” he said.

“Yes,” Joseph said.

“Because God allowed us to book the bus tickets, He will help us survive,” Elia said.

Later that day, Elia and Joseph received word that their financial aid had been approved. Joseph called Elia to express astonishment.

“The faith that you showed is overwhelming,” he said.

On Sabbath, Elia went to church and shared the good news. To him, it was a real miracle. The pastor prayed for him, and the church members wished God’s blessings on his stay at the University at Arusha.

Today, Elia is finishing his studies at the university. He has befriended many students who moved to the university after being dismissed from their universities over their observance of the Sabbath. He realizes that he would not have been able to keep the Sabbath if he had gone to another university.

“I started my university journey with high hopes of getting a better education, and I have not regretted my decision,” he says. 🌍

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help the University at Arusha expand with the construction of a new multipurpose hall.

“Currently, our University in Arusha has a shortage of buildings,” Elia says. “Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete a building with many classrooms and offices that will help many students obtain a wholistic education. God bless you as you plan to make your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter.”

By Andrew McChesney

## Story Tips

- Download photos on Facebook: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/ecd-2023](http://bit.ly/ecd-2023).
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives”; Spiritual Objective No. 6, “To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults”; and Spiritual Objective No. 7, “To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview.” For more information about the initiative, please go to the website: [IWillGo2020.org](http://IWillGo2020.org).

## Mission Post

- Tanzania has 3,078 churches and 2,424 companies. With 683,469 members, in a population of 57,474,000, that’s one member for every 84 people in the country.
- In 1903, the church in Germany chose two missionaries, A. C. Enns, a vegetable gardener who had received a ministerial diploma from Friedensau University in Germany, and Johannes Ehlers, who had been employed painting buildings at the mission in Germany, to pioneer the Adventist faith in East Africa.
- On November 25, 1903, Enns and Ehlers sent a message by phone that they had arrived safely and that they had been given South Pare territory by the German governor of Tanganyika. At Giti, they bought 25 acres of land from Chief Sekimanga for 100 German rupees.



# God's Time

Godwin K. Lekundayo

*Ask a man to share this first-person account. Introduce the story by saying that you are speaking on behalf of Pastor Godwin in Tanzania:*

**A**s a district pastor, I learned about heaven's understanding of time. The occasion: I was leading evangelistic meetings for three weeks in Tanzania.

Organizers chose the dry season for the meetings in Moshi, a city at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa.

But heavy rains started to fall after the first week.

Worried that the rain would keep people at home, I suggested that we reschedule the meetings for later.

To my surprise, the chairman of the local evangelistic committee, a lay person, refused.

"No, pastor, we are not going to postpone," he said. "We prayed about these meetings early enough, and our Lord heard our prayers and knew the rain would fall."

"So, what shall we do?" I said. "You can see that it is raining heavily."

## A Little Faith

"We have to have a little faith to believe

that our God can be sensitive about the time of the meetings," he said.

"Let's pray this way, 'Our good Lord, You can allow the rains to fall as much as You wish, but let there be no rain from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.'"

This way people would have 30 minutes to travel to the 4 p.m. meetings and 30 minutes to return home after the meetings ended at 6 p.m.

I wasn't sure about such a request, but I joined in the prayer.

The next morning, the rain fell in torrents. The downpour continued into the afternoon. But exactly at 3:30 p.m., it stopped.

Our meeting started at 4 p.m., and I preached until 6 p.m. The rain started again at 6:30 p.m.

The weather followed this schedule for two weeks.

Rain poured down until 3:30 p.m., stopped, and then started again at 6:30 p.m.

One day, a visitor arrived at the meeting site at 3 p.m. to get a good seat.

He waited for some time and, seeing the heavy downpour, decided that the meeting would be canceled and left.



The next day he asked whether we had met.

“Of course,” I replied. “We didn’t ask God to stop the rain at 3 p.m. We asked for 3:30 p.m., so you should have been sensitive about that.”

“I’ll never make that mistake again,” the man said.

After that, he waited until 3:30 p.m. to make his way to the meetings, and he never got wet.

## 12 Baptisms

On Sabbath, we suddenly realized that we had forgotten to ask the Lord to stop the rain for the morning worship services. But God knew our weakness, and no rain fell from 9 a.m. until noon.

On the last Sabbath, I baptized 12 people in a river. As I brought the last person out of the water, the rain started to fall.

“You are so blessed,” I told him. “You are being baptized by the river water and by heavenly rain.”

The experience taught me that God is sensitive to time. While God may not face time constraints as we do, He does expect us to be sensitive to time, too, and to be good stewards of time. Paul tells us, “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time” (Ephesians 5:15-16, NKJV).

If I had gone overtime in those evangelistic meetings, people would have had to walk home in the rain. Some may have caught colds or simply not returned. Time management is important.

Let me invite you to join me in praying to the Lord to be sensitive to time: “So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Psalms 90:12). 🌍

Thank you for your timely Thirteenth Sabbath Offering that will assist six mission projects across the East-Central Africa Division, including the construction of a much-needed multipurpose hall at the University of Arusha in Tanzania.

## Story Tips

- Watch a short YouTube video of Pastor Godwin at: [bit.ly/Godwin-time](https://bit.ly/Godwin-time).
- Download photos on Facebook: [bit.ly/fb-mq](https://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/ecd-2023](https://bit.ly/ecd-2023).
- This mission story illustrates Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5 of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives.” Read more online at: [IWillGo2020.org](https://IWillGo2020.org).

## Mission Post

- During World War I, Tanzanian church workers, although bereft of the Western missionaries and deprived of all financial support, were not idle. S. G. Maxwell, on arriving in 1921, found fully prepared candidates who had been waiting for baptism for six years. He also found that of the 277 members in 1914, 246 were still practicing Seventh-day Adventists.
- The first baptism in Tanzania was conducted in 1908 and involved six people: Andrew Senamwaye, David Chambega Masumba, Abraham Salim Seivunde, Yohana Kajembe, Phillip Mmbaga, and Lazarus Omari. Later, some of those who were baptized became evangelists and were sent to the Lake Zone and opened the Bupandagila Mission.
- The first Tanzanians to be ordained as pastors were Paul Kilonzo and Elisa Manongi. The ordination was held in 1932 and both of them were from South Pare.

By Godwin K. Lekundayo, president of Northern Tanzania Union Conference



# Life-Altering Classes Part 1

TANZANIA | February 11

Henry



Henry did not belong to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but Adventists kept encouraging him to study accounting at the church-run University of Arusha in Tanzania.

Henry, however, found that he could not enroll at the Adventist university because he didn't have sufficient funds. With great disappointment, he pondered his future. An Adventist pastor heard about his predicament and offered him encouragement.

"Keep thinking about going to the University of Arusha," he said.

The pastor's family also urged Henry not to give up.

Henry applied for government financial aid for his education — and waited. And waited. Several months of painful silence passed. Then the University of Arusha contacted him with exciting news.

"The government has approved your application for financial aid in full," a university pastor said. "Report to the University of Arusha for admission and registration."

Henry arrived on the campus with great hopes. He had plans to accomplish many great and wonderful things after his graduation. He was 22 years old, and his whole future was ahead of him.

His first impressions of the University of Arusha were good. The campus had beautiful scenery and was located close to Arusha National Park. He occasionally saw zebras and gazelles wander through the campus. Mount Meru, the fifth-highest mountain in Africa, stood tall to the west, and on clear days he could see Africa's highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, from the classroom window.

He found that the University of Arusha had an international student body, with young people coming from Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and elsewhere. He was intrigued to learn about the various cultures of the other African countries.

He especially liked the teachers. To his surprise, most teachers lived on campus and were easily accessible for assistance, even after normal classroom hours. Their teaching style reminded him of how a parent cares for a child. The teachers treated him like a son. Every class opened with prayer.

He immersed himself in his studies at the Seventh-day Adventist university. As he studied, he spent a great deal of time comparing the Adventist faith with his family's own religious tradition. He found

himself attracted to the Adventist faith. He never missed Sabbath worship services, Wednesday night prayer meetings, and weeks of prayer.

Still, he regularly attended his church's worship services on Sundays. He considered himself to be a devout member of his family's denomination. He even served as the treasurer of a club of University of Arusha students who belonged to his church's denomination.

For Henry, one of the attractions to the Adventist faith was the meals served at the university cafeteria. The cooks prepared strictly vegetarian food. Prior to arriving at the university, Henry had read that the ideal human diet consists of seeds, fruits, and vegetables, and no meat. Studying at the university provided him with an opportunity to put into practice what he had read earlier.

After three months of a strict vegetarian diet, he saw no changes to his health. Then one day he was invited by friends for a lunch of mutton off campus. That night, Henry couldn't concentrate. He struggled to study, he felt like his prayers were weak, and he didn't sleep soundly. That was the moment that he decided that a vegetarian diet was the best for him.

Henry was astonished at how Adventists celebrated the Lord's Supper. He had never seen people pair off two-by-two for foot washing. Foot washing, combined with the eating of bread and the drinking of grape juice, gave him a new understanding of the meaning of true forgiveness and complete humility.

Sabbath afternoons were extra special. Teachers and other students often invited him over for lunch. He was surprised that no one ever asked if he were an Adventist before extending an invitation to him. After Sabbath lunch, he attended afternoon programs at the university chapel or went out for nature walks. Sometimes, he just sang with friends until sundown.

As the months passed, he gained insights into a new way of life with Christ that were changing his life. 🌍

## Story Tips

- Download photos on Facebook: [bit.ly/fb-mq](https://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/ecd-2023](https://bit.ly/ecd-2023).
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## Fast Facts

- The shortest war in recorded history was fought in 1896 in Tanzania between the United Kingdom and Zanzibar. It lasted only 45 minutes.
- Tanzania is the home of the coconut crab, the largest crab in the world.
- The use of the left hand to greet someone is considered rude in Tanzania.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help expand the University of Arusha with the construction of a much-needed multipurpose hall. Thank you for planning a generous offering that will help introduce students like Henry to a new life with Christ. Henry's story will conclude next week.

By Andrew McChesney



# Life-Altering Classes Part 2

TANZANIA | February 18

Henry



*Last week: Henry found himself attracted to the Seventh-day Adventist faith after enrolling at the Adventist University of Arusha in Tanzania. He enjoyed worship services, vegetarian meals, and Sabbath activities. But he remained a devout member of his family's denomination.*

During his second year of studies, Henry met a young Adventist woman named Doreen from Kenya at the University of Arusha. She was among the university's many international students, including those from Rwanda, Uganda, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and elsewhere. Henry, who was from Tanzania, was interested in learning more about various African cultures, and he was especially interested in learning more about Doreen.

Henry and Doreen became close friends. They followed each other everywhere. They helped each other with their studies, and they prayed together. Sometimes, they engaged in vigorous debates about the cultural

differences between their two countries, Tanzania and Kenya.

At first, Henry and Doreen didn't speak about their religious differences. Doreen thought that Henry was an Adventist. Her assumption was understandable because Henry actively participated in religious activities on campus. He helped lead worship services, and he sang in the student choir. When she learned that he was not an Adventist, she and he began to discuss God every chance they got.

Then Henry was invited to attend a spiritual retreat for university students in Rwanda. The retreat was organized by the Adventist Church's East-Central Africa Division, whose territory encompasses Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, and eight other countries.

It was Henry's first visit to Rwanda. He had only known the country for its slogan, "Land of a thousand hills and a million smiles." Now he got to see it with his own eyes.

Returning to Tanzania after the trip, he was



asked to speak about Rwanda at a special program for church leaders. He was surprised that he, a non-Adventist, was asked to talk.

Inspired by the trip, Henry was ready to go to the next spiritual retreat of university students, which was held in Kenya the following year. It was his first visit to Kenya. He sang with his university's choir at the retreat, and their music received high praise from the other students. He found that the meals were delicious, the schedule was well organized, and the lodging was comfortable. The experience increased his appreciation for the Adventist faith. The retreat in Kenya was extra special because he was able to attend with Doreen.

Henry graduated from the University of Arusha with flying colors. He was among the top students in his class.

After graduation, Henry continued to worship on Sabbath. He kept in touch with Doreen. Five years after graduation, he decided to give his heart to Jesus in baptism. After that, he proposed to Doreen, and the two were married.

Today, Henry and Doreen have three children. Henry works for Tanzania's government as a civil servant, and he serves God as the treasurer of the local Adventist church.

He expressed joy that part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help expand the facilities at the University of Arusha with the construction of a much-needed multipurpose hall.

"The multipurpose building will help attract and accommodate more students to the university," he says. "I hope that many students, through their time at the university, will receive the truth and accept Jesus Christ as I did. Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will have a great impact on the University of Arusha." 🌍

Thank you for planning a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

By Andrew McChesney

## Story Tips

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## Fast Facts

- Tanzania is home to Mount Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa. It stands 19,341 feet (5,895 meters) above sea level and 16,100 feet (4,900 meters) above its base on the plateau. Three of the largest African lakes are also found in Tanzania: Lake Victoria in the north, Lake Tanganyika in the west, and Lake Nysa in the southwest.
- The Tanzanian mpingo tree produces the costliest timber in the world. The mpingo is also known as the music tree of Africa, as its wood has been used to make traditional musical instruments since ancient times.
- On the Tanzanian flag, the green represents nature, the yellow represents the mineral deposits of the country, the black represents the people, and the blue represents the country's large lakes.
- Tanzania's Serengeti National Park is home to over 1.7 million wildebeest.

# Pastor or Politician?

TANZANIA | February 25

Jacob



Jacob first felt that God was calling him to become a pastor when he was a 7-year-old boy in Tanzania.

But as a teen, he found himself at the crossroads of either becoming a pastor or a politician.

It seemed that becoming a politician was the easier path.

So, he put God to the test.

Jacob faced intense pressure to enter politics. Several politicians urged him to join them in their work. Their overtures were very powerful. They said Jacob exhibited the essential characteristics for becoming a politician and promised him that the work would be easy and the pay would be high.

Their offers clashed with Jacob's childhood desire to become a pastor.

Complicating matters, he couldn't seem to find the money to pursue theology studies at the University of Arusha, the only Seventh-day Adventist university that offers pastoral training in Tanzania. He needed a substantial amount of money to cover tuition fees,

accommodation, and food. Jacob had no hope of qualifying for government financial aid or a scholarship.

Jacob decided to test God. He had been faithful in returning tithe and offerings, and he resolved to claim the promise of Malachi 3:10, which says, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

Jacob prayed, "My dear Lord, I will wait for a call to either become a politician or to join Your work. I will accept whichever call comes first."

To him, the chances of being called to work as a politician seemed far higher than that of being called to become a pastor.

Shortly after the prayer, Jacob received a phone call from a district pastor, who invited him to preach at one of his churches the following Sabbath. Jacob accepted the invitation. After preaching that Sabbath, he was



moved to hear the church members, including the pastor, praise God for his sermon.

Jacob began to preach regularly at various churches. Then he was invited to work as an associate chaplain at an elementary school. After some time, Jacob felt impressed to step aside from his work as an associate chaplain and establish a media and IT company. He prayed to God to use the company to provide the money to enroll at the University of Arusha. He prayed that God would provide enough money that he wouldn't have to ask any church members for help.

"I see that You are calling me to ministry," he prayed. "Please give me the assurance of being able to pay tuition and accommodation fees at the university."

Soon the media and IT company began to generate enough funds to cover most of the university's monthly expenses. Several friends living abroad unexpectedly offered to contribute money as well. Jacob wondered whether the time had come to enroll at the university.

Then he was called to serve as the associate pastor of a church near the university campus. It was an unusual call because, in Tanzania, such calls usually are reserved for theology graduates.

Jacob accepted the call and enrolled at the university.

Today, Jacob is wrapping up his studies at the university. His preaching already has had an impact on young people. A series of sermons that he prepared on practical faith was well received, and he is developing them into a book. As he looks back, he has no doubt that God called him to gospel ministry at the age of 7.

"The series of miracles that have happened to me prove that God called me when I was young," he says. "This testifies to the fact that God calls people from childhood even now as He did in ancient times." 🌍

This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help expand the University of Arusha

## Story Tips

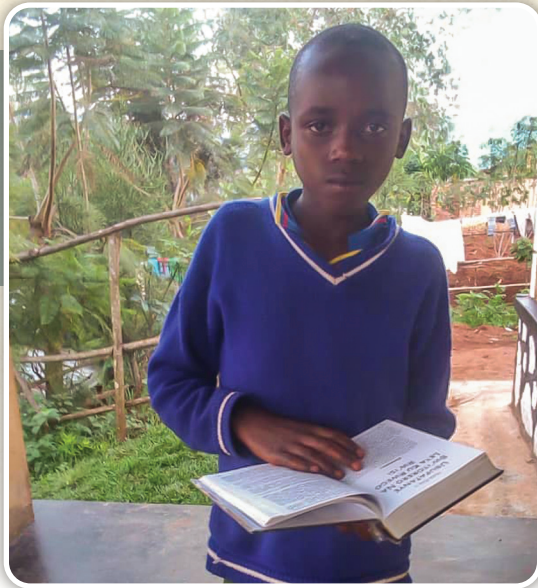
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## Fast Facts

- Christianity is the largest religion in Tanzania, representing 60 percent of the total population. A recent study found that 27.7 percent of the population was Protestant and 25.6 percent was Catholic. The Pew Research Center reports that 36 percent are Muslim, 2 percent practice traditional religions, and 1 percent are unaffiliated.
- The unofficial national dish of Tanzania is ugali, a porridge made with millet or sorghum flour.

with the construction of a multipurpose hall, part of which will house the theology department and classrooms for ministerial training. Thank you for planning a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering to help students like Jacob answer God's call to ministry.

By Andrew McChesney



# Escaping Controversy

Claude

Claude was habitually drunk by the age of 12. He was seeking an escape from the controversies that had scarred his young life in Rwanda.

Claude grew up in a family mired in conflict. From an early age, he heard Father and Mother constantly arguing. Mother also quarreled with her mother-in-law, and, after those arguments, sometimes left home for days at a time to stay with her own mother. Mother pleaded with Father to move the family to another town, away from his relatives, but he refused, saying that he couldn't leave his kin.

To Claude's alarm, Father suddenly fell seriously ill. He took medicine but grew worse. He went to the clinic, but the doctor was unable to help and sent him to a bigger hospital. There, Father was diagnosed with malaria. Father spent many days in the hospital, and Claude heard people say that he would die. However, instead of dying, Father began to act strangely at the hospital. The doctor sent Father to a psychiatric hospital. After many treatments, Father recovered and returned home. But the treatments left him deaf, unable to hear.

Instead of celebrating Father's miraculous recovery, suspicious relatives and neighbors cast doubt on whether he had had malaria. They whispered that Mother had tried to poison him. Mother couldn't bear the rumors and finally got a divorce, leaving Claude with Father. Father sent Claude to live with his grandmother. After Father remarried, he called for the boy to return home.

Claude was scarred by his difficult childhood. He felt alone in the world. He began to drink beer until he was habitually drunk. As a 12-year-old boy, he was desperately unhappy.

One day, after a few drinks, he noticed that a neighbor boy was walking along the road with a copy of Ellen White's book *The Great Controversy*. On the book's cover was a picture of angels in white. Claude was astonished at the title, *The Great Controversy*. He knew that the word "controversy" meant to have a disagreement or an argument. He had seen many disagreements and arguments. If the book was about a great argument, he thought, why were there angels in white on the cover? He was very curious.



“Can I borrow your book?” he asked the boy. The boy could see that Claude was drunk. He didn’t mince his words.

“If you repent, you will stand like these angels that you see on the cover,” the boy said. “If you repent, you will stand in the presence of Jesus when He comes back in glory.”

The boy’s words hit Claude like a bolt of lightning. He instantly became sober. He felt great guilt over his misdeeds. He remembered that the neighbor boy went to church every Sabbath.

“Can I go with you to church next Sabbath?” he asked.

The boy smiled. “Yes,” he said. “Please come with me.”

On Sabbath, children and adults welcomed Claude at church. He felt happy and loved, and he enjoyed the Sabbath School program. He returned to church the next Sabbath and the next. He began to read the Bible. He read other spiritual books borrowed from children at church. In one book, he read about a boy who wanted to be a witness to others. In the story, the boy asked his father, “How can I teach the Word of God to other children?” His father replied, “Write your favorite Bible verses on pieces of paper and give those pieces of paper to other children.”

Claude loved the idea, and he immediately began writing his favorite verses on pieces of paper and giving them to other children. Soon some of those children started to go to church with Claude. Four of them have given their hearts to Jesus in baptism.

Today, Claude is a 15-year-old high school student. He still gives away Bible verses.

“I love Jesus,” he says. “Because of the cross, I now know that Jesus has forgiven me, and I thank Him. I will keep sharing the Word of God as I prepare for Jesus’ Second Coming.” 🌍

Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offerings that help spread the good news about Jesus’ soon return in Rwanda and around the world.

By Andrew McChesney

## Story Tips

- Know that the photo shows a young Claude.
- Challenge listeners to find ways to be a good witness like Claude. As a Sabbath School class activity, they could write their favorite Bible verses on pieces of paper to share with others later.
- Download photos on Facebook: [bit.ly/fb-mq](https://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/ecd-2023](https://bit.ly/ecd-2023).
- Join the global church in 2023 and 2024 in the mass promotion and distribution of *The Great Controversy*. Visit [greatcontroversyproject.com](https://greatcontroversyproject.com) for more information or ask your pastor.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Objective No. 6, “To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults”; and Spiritual Objective No. 7, “To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview.” For more information, go to the website: [IWillGo2020.org](https://IWillGo2020.org).

## Mission Post

- David Elie Delhove (1882–1949), a young pioneer worker from Belgium, began the Adventist work in Rwanda shortly after World War I. He was given a 125-acre (50-hectare) plot, 11 miles (24 km) north of the town of Nyanza on a low ridge known as the Hill of Skulls, a spot the natives believed had once been cursed by the Rwandan king. Here the foundations were laid for Gitwe Mission.

# Construction Saves Lives

RWANDA | March 11

Eustace A. Penniecook



It was a dream come true. For years, a desire had been growing to open a school of medicine in Rwanda where young people could study to become doctors and nurses. Graduates of the school would not only be able to treat the sick but also to lead them to the feet of the Master Physician, Jesus Christ.

Now, with the assistance of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, the buildings were taking shape on the campus of the Adventist University of Central Africa on the outskirts of Rwanda's capital, Kigali.

Every day, more than 300 construction workers were busily putting up walls, installing roofs, and laying floors.

But before the clang of hammers and the buzz of saws pierced the morning air, songs of praise drifted upward from the sprawling construction site.

What was going on?

The workers were worshiping God with some of the university students.

Several theology students were so excited

about the new school of medicine that they didn't want to wait for the school to turn out mission-minded doctors. They wanted the school to start winning souls for the Lord even before it opened. So, they decided to invite construction workers to sing hymns, read the Bible, and pray with them every morning.

At first, only a handful of construction workers paused to join in the morning worship. Perhaps the other workers were eager to get to work.

But as the days and weeks passed, the number of worshiping construction workers grew and grew. Their bosses, the contractors who had hired them to build the school of medicine, noticed their interest in the morning worship and made time for them to sing and learn about the Bible.

As the months passed, the theology students began to look for construction workers who were interested in knowing more about Jesus.

"Can you imagine," they told the workers,



“this school of medicine is being built for future health leaders so they can bring souls to Christ.”

The construction workers were amazed to hear about the objectives of the school of medicine. Their hearts were attracted to Jesus even as they were building the school of medicine.

Construction workers started showing up earlier to work to hear the Word of God. They came to the construction site not only to earn money but also to hear the gospel message.

“The good news of the gospel is that Jesus came to die for you,” the theology students said. “This school of medicine is to bring more people to that knowledge.”

Finally, the construction of the school of medicine was finished, and it was inaugurated by the presidents of the country Rwanda and the General Conference.

Twenty-seven construction workers gave their lives to Jesus at the time of the inauguration. Eighteen women and nine men who had been attending the morning worships decided to live for the Lord.

“Think about this,” marveled Emile, the student pastor who led the theology students in conducting the morning worships. “Lives are already being transformed for heaven, and the students have not even arrived” to study at the school of medicine. 🌍

The school of medicine at the Adventist University of Central Africa has space for 35 students after the completion of its first phase. Now teachers are arriving from around the world to train those young minds for a life of service on the university campus outside Kigali, Rwanda. Thank you for your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter that will help build homes for those new teachers.

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By Eustace A. Penniecook, missionary from Costa Rica and teacher at the new school of medicine

## Story Tips

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## Fast Facts

- The first baptism in Rwanda took place in 1924 with two candidates: Yohana Ruvugihomvu and Petero Rukangarungu. In 1925, the first woman, Maria Nyirabigwagwa, was baptized.
- In 1961, Pastor E. Semugeshi became first the Rwandan national to lead the field, until he was forced to flee to Tanzania 1963, with many other Tutsis, following political turmoil inside the country. In 1977, he returned from exile and led the field until 1980.
- The Adventist Church in Rwanda faces challenges in the area of education, with the increased need for qualified teachers, and health ministry, to develop and maintain new health programs such as family planning and prevention of drug addiction and use of alcoholic beverages.
- Rwanda has 1,844 churches and 694 companies. With 863,972 members, in a population of 12,250,000, that’s one member for every 14 people in the country.

# School Built on Prayer

RWANDA | March 18

Cesiah Y. Pimentel de Penniecook



This is the story of how a dream came true with the help of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

In 2016, a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering was collected to help build a school of medicine at the Adventist University of Central Africa on the outskirts of Rwanda's capital, Kigali.

For years, church members across the East-Central African Division had dreamed of having a medical school. There was a strong need for healthcare in the region.

The division president appointed a team to explore the possibility of opening a school of medicine. When the General Conference president visited the country, he met with Rwanda's president and was invited to open the school.

The project, however, encountered numerous hurdles. Some people questioned whether it would ever happen. The list of challenges was topped by the need for money and a candidate to serve as the school's first dean.

God provided funds from church members

around the division. Then church members from around the world joined in by contributing to a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 2016. Dr. Eustace A. Penniecook from Costa Rica, who was teaching at Montemorelos University in Mexico, was invited to lead the project as the first dean, and he relocated with his family to Rwanda.

But that was just the beginning. The remaining challenges were many: fulfilling regulations, developing the curriculum, coordinating construction, and finding furniture, equipment, and faculty and staff.

Prayer became a key part of the project. Church members prayed across the division. Church members prayed around the world. A prayer group formed online for church members to pray in Costa Rica and Mexico, where Dr. Penniecook and his family were from.

"What should we pray about specifically?" the leader of the online prayer group asked day after day as church members gathered at 3 a.m. Rwanda time to pray.

Even non-Adventists prayed. One



day, a non-Adventist couple visited the construction site.

“We are waiting for this school to open so we can send our daughter here,” the father said. “We know that you are facing many challenges. But we have a prayer group for this school, and we know that God will allow this institution to develop young minds.”

Finally, the curriculum was approved, and the school of medicine was finished and inaugurated on September 2, 2019. All that was left was a final state inspection of the premises.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic struck. Much-needed equipment was delayed at closed borders. But when all hope seemed lost, God intervened, and special permission was given for the equipment to be shipped to the school.

After two total lockdowns in Rwanda, the state inspection team finally was able to visit the premises and approve the school. The school prepared to accept its first cohort of students in January 2021.

Young people were identified as potential medical missionaries in every union of the East-Central Africa Division. Students were sought with the academic level and knowledge of English needed to meet the divine calling to serve as leaders in medical missionary work.

Another COVID-19 lockdown delayed the start of classes. International students were asked to stay at home until the lockdown was lifted. But four students were already en route to Rwanda and could not cancel their trips. So, they spent the lockdown in Rwanda, far away from the homes in South Sudan, Ethiopia, Cameroon, and Liberia.

Slowly the weeks passed. Finally, the school opened on March 8, 2021.

Today, the school of medicine is in full operation. Challenges remain, but school leaders have no doubt that God is in control. 🌍

Thank you for your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering that helped build the Adventist School of Medicine of East-Central Africa.

## Story Tips

- Remind everyone that the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will be collected on March 25. Remind them that their mission offerings are gifts to spread God’s Word around the world and that one-fourth of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go directly to help six projects in five countries of the East-Central Africa Division. The projects are listed on page 3 and on the back cover.
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## Fast Facts

- Subsistence agriculture is the main source of income for Rwandans and their cuisine reflects the use of local staple foods like bananas, plantains (*ibitoke*), sweet potatoes, beans, and cassava (manioc). Many Rwandans do not eat meat more than a few times a month.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will build homes for new faculty members at the school. Thank you for your prayers and for planning a generous offering next Sabbath.

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By Cesiah Y. Pimentel de Penniecook, a missionary from Mexico who teaches at the school of medicine and is the wife of Eustace A. Penniecook

# No Debt

13<sup>th</sup> SABBATH | March 25

Lydie



Lydie grew up in a poor home in Rwanda. Her biggest desire was to graduate from a university so she could get a good job and support her parents.

But how?

Lydie got good grades in high school and was accepted into the University of Rwanda, the biggest institution of higher education in the country.

However, she didn't win one of the few government scholarships, and she couldn't afford to pay the full tuition on her own. In addition, her parents didn't have the money to help.

However, Lydie's parents also wanted her to study. They helped her gain admission into the school of nursing at the Adventist University of Central Africa, where the tuition was more affordable.

Lydie was elated!

For many years she had wished to become a nurse and to help sick people. Now was her chance to obtain the education that she

needed in order to fulfill her dream.

She joined a class of 35 nursing students at the start of the school year. Unlike the University of Rwanda, where she would have been lost in the crowd on a sprawling campus, the Adventist University of Central Africa had only 70 students on a small campus.

She found that everyone was kind and welcoming and lived together like a family.

The teachers were friendly and, in addition to teaching, spent extra time with students during morning worship, midweek prayer meeting, and Sabbath worship services.

Lydie came from a non-Adventist family, but she knew something about the Sabbath. As a little girl, she had made friends with several Adventist children and heard about the Sabbath from them.

Now she found herself keeping the Sabbath because as a student she was required to attend church worship services every Sabbath.



She didn't mind the requirement at all. She loved the Sabbath!

Wanting to learn more about the Sabbath, she signed up for Bible lessons.

As she studied, she became convinced that the seventh-day Sabbath was God's holy day. But she put off a decision on giving her heart to Jesus in baptism.

"If I pass all my first-year courses, then I'll get baptized," she told herself.

She passed all her first-year courses. But again, she put off a decision on getting baptized.

In her second year, she began to struggle to pay for the tuition. Money got so tight that it looked like she wouldn't be able to finish the year.

She made a deal with God.

"If God allows me to complete my second year of classes, then I'll get baptized," she said.

She finished the second year. This time she kept her word. God had blessed her in an amazing way, and the least that she could do was give Him her heart.

Lydie got baptized.

But the debt problem remained.

Her parents didn't have the funds to help, and Lydie struggled to earn money as she studied. Life became extremely difficult for her, and she missed several of her final examinations.

A bright spot during those dark days was her Adventist classmates. They prayed with her and encouraged her not to give up.

She finished her third year.

At the start of what would have been her fourth and final year of studies, it became clear that she would have to drop out of the university. She owned more than 1 million Rwandan francs (U.S.\$1,500) to the university. With the debt, she was not allowed to register for classes.

Lydie started to work full-time to pay off the debt. She found a construction job on the campus, helping to raise a new school of medicine at the university.

It pained her heart to see her friends attending classes and enjoying other

## Story Tips

- Use a map to show the five countries in the East-Central Africa Division — Rwanda, Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania — that will receive the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for educational purposes.
- Download photos on Facebook: [bit.ly/fb-mq](http://bit.ly/fb-mq).
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the East-Central Africa Division: [bit.ly/ecd-2023](http://bit.ly/ecd-2023).
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: Mission Objective No. 2, "To strengthen and diversify Adventist outreach in large cities, across the 10/40 Window, among unreached and under-reached people groups, and to non-Christian religions"; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives"; Spiritual Objective No. 6, "To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults"; and Spiritual Objective No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." For more information, go to the website: [IWillGo2020.org](http://IWillGo2020.org).

## Fast Facts

- At 10,169<sup>2</sup> miles (26,338<sup>2</sup> km), Rwanda is fourth-smallest country on the African mainland after Gambia, Eswatini, and Djibouti.
- Rwanda has one of the youngest populations in the world; the average age is 19 years old.
- The most popular sports in Rwanda are athletics, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. Cycling, originally thought of as just a means of transport, is now growing in popularity as a sport.

campus activities while she worked. She wished that she had never come to the university. She longed to quit her job and go back to her village.

One day, she tearfully shared her story with one of the university teachers.

“The Lord understands what you are going through,” the teacher said, kindly. “He will not let you down at the point when you are in need.”

He encouraged her not to leave the university and instead to petition God for a week.

Lydie prayed every day for a week. At the end, there still seemed to be no answer from God.

The teacher encouraged her not to give up.

“Keep praying and keep waiting for God’s answer,” he said.

Lydie pleaded with God every day for another week.

At the end of the second week, she received an unexpected phone call. A family friend called to offer her the exact amount of money that she needed to pay off the debt.

Lydie was overjoyed! Her prayers had

been answered. She paid off the debt and, by studying hard, managed to catch up with her classmates quickly.

Lydie graduated with a bachelor’s degree in nursing from the Adventist University of Central Africa in November 2021.

“The Lord not only answered my prayer, but He also planted a seed of resilience and patience in me to serve Him wherever He sends me,” she said. 🌍

Thank you for your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 2016 that helped build the school of medicine at the Adventist University of Central Africa. The school opened in 2021. Part of today’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build homes for new faculty at the school of medicine. Thank you for planning a generous offering to help this important project and five other projects across the East-Central Africa Division.

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By Andrew McChesney

*Offering*

## Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering next quarter will support five projects in the Inter-European Division:

- Hope Life Center, Lyon, France
- Elementary school, Setubal, Portugal
- Elementary school, Moisei, Romania
- After-school center, Galați, Romania
- Youth camp and training center, Gland, Switzerland



# 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).

## 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:

## Websites

Democratic Republic of Congo:

Embassy in United States  
Smartraveller  
Trip Advisor

[bit.ly/DRCEmbassyUSA](http://bit.ly/DRCEmbassyUSA)  
[bit.ly/SmartTraveller-DRC](http://bit.ly/SmartTraveller-DRC)  
[bit.ly/TripAdvisor-DRC](http://bit.ly/TripAdvisor-DRC)

Rwanda: government website

US State Department  
Visit Rwanda

[bit.ly/RwandaGovt](http://bit.ly/RwandaGovt)  
[bit.ly/USStateDept-Rwanda](http://bit.ly/USStateDept-Rwanda)  
[bit.ly/Visit\\_Rwanda](http://bit.ly/Visit_Rwanda)

Tanzania: government website

US Embassy in Tanzania  
Tanzania Travel Guide

[bit.ly/TanzGovt](http://bit.ly/TanzGovt)  
[bit.ly/USEmbTanz](http://bit.ly/USEmbTanz)  
[bit.ly/TanzTravGuide](http://bit.ly/TanzTravGuide)

Uganda: government website

US State Department  
Wikitravel

[bit.ly/UgandaGovt](http://bit.ly/UgandaGovt)  
[bit.ly/USStateDept-Uganda](http://bit.ly/USStateDept-Uganda)  
[bit.ly/WikiTrav-Uganda](http://bit.ly/WikiTrav-Uganda)

## Seventh-day Adventist

East-Central Africa Division

[bit.ly/SDA-ECD](http://bit.ly/SDA-ECD)

Northern Tanzania Union Conference

[bit.ly/SDA-NorTanUC](http://bit.ly/SDA-NorTanUC)

Uganda Union Mission

[bit.ly/SDA-UUM](http://bit.ly/SDA-UUM)

Bugema University, Uganda

[bit.ly/SDA-Bugema](http://bit.ly/SDA-Bugema)

Adventist University of Central Africa, Rwanda

[bit.ly/SDA-AUCA](http://bit.ly/SDA-AUCA)

Adventist University of Lukanga, DRC

[bit.ly/SDA-AUL](http://bit.ly/SDA-AUL)

An offering goal device will help focus attention on world missions and increase weekly mission giving. Determine a goal for your class' weekly mission offering. Multiply it by 15, allowing a double goal for the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, which will be collected on March 25. Remind the children and their parents that their regular weekly mission offerings 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 East-Central Africa Division. On March 18, report on mission giving during the quarter. Encourage the children and their parents to double or triple their normal mission giving on the upcoming 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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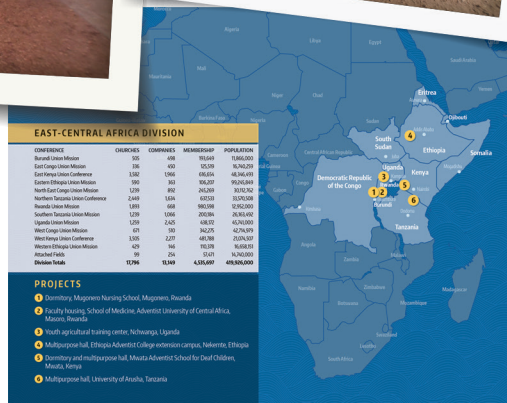
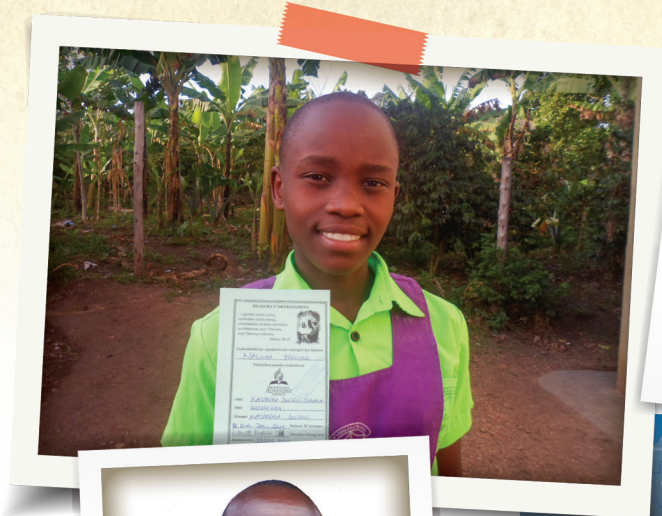
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**[Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org)**.



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# MORE MISSION!



You could read the mission story about 13-year-old Precious, whose heart was transformed by the sound of children singing at a Seventh-day Adventist boarding school in Uganda.

Or you could meet her and her friends through a collection of photos!

Visit the Facebook page of Mission Quarterlies to download extra materials that make the mission stories for children and adults come alive every week.



@missionquarterlies



