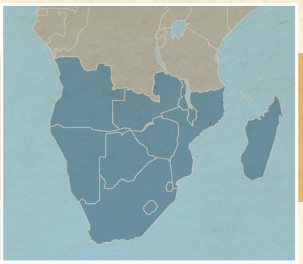
YOUTH & ADULT MISSION



2022 • **QUARTER 2** • SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION

AdventistMission.org

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Your Offerings at Work

Three years ago, part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering went to build a food and nutrition department at Mozambique Adventist University in Beira, Mozambique. Despite COVID-19, construction work was well under way by July 2021, when the photos were taken.

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Dear Sabbath School Leader,

Andrew McChesney
Editor

This quarter we feature the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, which oversees the Seventh-day Adventist Church's work in Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and seven Indian Ocean island-nations, including Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mayotte, Reunion, Rodrigues, and Seychelles.

The region is home to 215 million people, including 4.2 million Adventists. That's a ratio of one Adventist for 51 people.

This quarter's six Thirteenth Sabbath projects are in three countries: Angola, Malawi, and the Indian Ocean island-nation of Mayotte. See the sidebar for more information.

If you want to make your Sabbath School class come alive this quarter, 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 or unsplash.com.

In addition, you can download a PDF of facts and activities from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division at bit.ly/sid-2022. Follow us at facebook.com/missionquarterlies.

You can download the PDF version of the youth and adult *Mission* magazine at bit.ly/adultmission and the *Children's Mission* magazine at bit.ly/childrensmission. Mission Spotlight videos are available at bit.ly/missionspotlight. A printable mission bank image, which the children can color, can be downloaded at bit.ly/bank-coloring-page.

If I can be of assistance, contact me at mcchesneya@gc.adventist.org.

Thank you for encouraging others to be mission-minded!

Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division to establish:

- Church and elementary school, Belize, Angola
- Men's dormitory, Adventist University of Angola, Huambo, Angola
- Domestic violence and counseling center, Lombe, Angola
- Sequele elementary school, Luanda, Angola
- Community outreach and leadership development center at Mzuzu campus of Malawi Adventist University, Malawi
- Better Living Center and FM radio station, Mayotte

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Missionary Changed My Life

ZIMBABWE | April 2

Eugene Fransch

Going to Solusi College was a big cultural shock. I was the first biracial student on campus in the late 1970s. I also had a huge afro, rock and roll music in my tape player, and an attitude to match.

But the Seventh-day Adventist Church saw something in me and offered me a scholarship at Solusi, located deep in the bush in present-day Zimbabwe. My plan was to stay for a year and then transfer to Helderberg College in South Africa. But after the first year, I decided to stay.

I was an average student in my theology classes. My hardest subject was Greek, and I must admit that the highest grade that I ever got was a "C." Many semesters I received a "C minus" or a "D." I just couldn't grasp the subject. Up until my last semester, I battled with the Greek professor, Leo Raunio, a kind missionary who also was stern about grades.

Mr. Raunio befriended me when I first arrived in 1978. He taught me how to play chess, and we spent hours playing the game in his home. Born in Finland, he had served as a missionary to the Native Americans in the United States and taught university students in South Africa before moving to Solusi at an age when others would retire. He shared many mission experiences with me, and I was impressed that he chose to finish his career at Solusi.

When I wrote my final Greek exam, I knew that I had failed. As I handed it to Mr. Raunio, I looked him in the eye and said, "Doc, I failed again."

He smiled and said, "It's OK."

For the next week, I was stressed and disappointed because I knew that I wouldn't graduate without passing Greek. I was looking forward to graduation because, among other things, I planned to get married. The idea of spending six months repeating Greek was unthinkable.

A week after the exam, Mr. Raunio called me into his office. "I've been watching you for four years," he said. "I've seen you change from a radical fellow to a hardworking young man who loves the Lord. I noticed that even the music on your tape recorder has changed from rock and roll music to Christian music. I've seen a change in your life, one that has

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drawn you closer to Christ."

I was surprised. No one else seemed to have noticed those changes.

"You have done well in your other subjects and passed," Mr. Raunio said. "I know how much graduation means to you. I know you have done all you could to pass your Greek exam but failed.

"Still, I want to give you grace," he said. "I know the Lord has a plan for you in the work that you are going to do. By grace, I'm going to give you a passing grade so you can graduate." Then he prayed that God's hand would guide my future.

When I returned to the dormitory, I fell down on my knees and thanked the Lord. I found my fiancée and told her, "By the grace of God, I'm graduating!"

I am deeply indebted to Mr. Raunio. He looked beyond the present and saw my possible future. He saw my potential.

The Lord helped me to work for 18 years as youth ministries director for the Adventist Church in Zimbabwe. After that, I served as youth director at the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division and have held other leadership positions. I also received a doctorate in leadership.

I thank the Lord for helping me understand what grace is and what it means to someone who needs it but doesn't deserve it. Mr. Raunio's example has taught me to exercise grace to others even when they don't deserve it.

Even in our lowest state of sin, God sees our potential. He isn't going to fail us because of our present condition. He sees what we can accomplish. We also need to look beyond the present with God-like eyes and see the potential in others.

Part of a 2015 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering went to Solusi University to double the size of its crowded cafeteria from 500 seats to 1,000. Thank you for your mission offerings that allow Adventist schools like Solusi to prepare people to proclaim Jesus' soon return around the world.

By Eugene Fransch

Story Tips

- Ask a man to share this first-person account.
- Eugene Fransch died in 2021 after contracting COVID-19.
- Leo Raunio died about two years after Eugene's graduation, in 1984, at the age of 72.
- Watch Eugene on YouTube: bit.ly/Eugene-Fransch.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- This mission story illustrates Leadership Objective No. 8 of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan, "To strengthen the discipleship role of pastors, teachers, and other frontline workers and provide them with regular growth opportunities." The Thirteenth Sabbath project at Solusi University illustrates 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." Read more: IWillGo2020.org.

Mission Post

- Christianity is the main religion in Zimbabwe, with Protestant Christians making up about 85 percent of the population.

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ZIMBABWE | April 9

I'm a Dead Man, Part 1

Alfred C. Machona

I shouldn't be alive after a road tragedy just two days before Christmas in Zimbabwe.

On December 23, my wife, Fortunate, and I left the capital, Harare, to spend Christmas with our children at their grandparents' house in another town. As we drove, we saw many people standing along the road, arms raised in hope of flagging down a ride. With the pre-Christmas rush, the buses were full, and people were anxious to find a way home for the holidays.

We recognized a woman beside the road and stopped to give her a lift. As she got into the car, a man and a woman begged us to take them, too. We didn't know them, but we saw their worried faces and agreed. The three passengers got into the back of the car, and the five of us hit the road.

Suddenly everything went black.

The next thing I knew, my seatbelt seemed very, very tight. I couldn't move. Everything was dark. I heard some sounds, faint voices from a distance. I realized that something terrible had happened. I felt the car being shaken. The next thing I heard was the wail of the siren of an ambulance or a police car. Moments later, I felt myself being lifted out of the car and carried to an ambulance. A nurse asked me whom she should call.

"What happened?" I asked.

"An accident," she said.

I gave her the names of two people to call — a pastor and a church elder.

At the hospital, the pastor wasted no words. "We're going to take you to the hospital back in Harare," he said.

He asked the nurse about Fortunate, and we learned that a pickup truck driving behind us had taken her and two of our passengers to another hospital. She was suffering serious internal bleeding. The pastor asked that she be brought to my hospital.

Two ambulances were summoned, and Fortunate and I were whisked off to Harare. The last thing I remembered was being carried out of the hospital.

Over the next two days, on December 24 and 25, Fortunate and I each underwent three operations. My wife had a life-threatening injury caused by her seatbelt rupturing her small intestine. Doctors removed 16 inches (40 centimeters) of her small intestine. Her left palm and left foot also were badly injured, and doctors inserted metal pins.

With me, doctors inserted metal plates in my left forearm and metal pins in my

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right leg. The most serious surgery was my dislocated spine. The doctor had to operate through the front of my neck to insert an implant on my fourth and fifth cervical vertebra. He later showed me an X-ray of my vertebra. "You could take this to any doctor in the world and he will tell you what I am telling you right now: You are a dead man," he said. "This X-ray tells us that you are dead or paralyzed from the shoulders down."

About two weeks later, Fortunate and I were released to go home for intensive physical therapy. We spent the next six weeks relearning how to walk.

For the first time we heard that five people had died in the accident. It was a head-on collision. The other car was driven by a young man who was drunk and speeding. Later we saw the two badly mangled vehicles. The cars were identical: both red Honda Fits. My speedometer was stopped at 55 miles per hour (90 kilometers per hour), while his was stopped at 105 miles per hour (170 kilometers per hour).

Our female friend in the backseat died on the spot, while the two strangers whom we had offered a ride died of their injuries the next day. The vehicle that hit us had three occupants. Two of them, the drunk driver and an elderly woman seated beside him in the front, had died instantly. The man in the back was taken to the hospital, and we don't know to this day whether he survived.

The news left Fortunate and me shocked. God had spared our lives in an incredible way.

The miracles didn't stop there.

Four months later, in April, I was able to start pastoral classes at Solusi University as I had previously planned.

Part of a 2015 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering went to Solusi University to double the size of its crowded cafeteria from 500 seats to 1,000. Thank you for your mission offerings that allow Adventist schools like Solusi to prepare pastors to proclaim Jesus' power and soon return.

Read more about Alfred next week.

By Alfred C. Machona

Story Tips

- Ask a man to share this first-person account.
- Watch Alfred on YouTube: bit.ly/Alfred-Machona.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- This mission story illustrates Leadership Objective No. 8 of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan, "To strengthen the discipleship role of pastors, teachers, and other frontline workers and provide them with regular growth opportunities." The Thirteenth Sabbath project at Solusi University illustrates 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." Read more: IWillGo2020.org.

Fast Facts

- Known locally as "The Smoke That Thunders," Victoria Falls is located on the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia and is the world's largest waterfall.

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ZIMBABWE | April 16

I'm a Dead Man, Part 2

Alfred C. Machona

After serving for 11 years as a literature evangelist, I received a scholarship to study to become a pastor at Solusi University in Zimbabwe.

However, four months before classes began, my wife, Fortunate, and I were injured badly in a car accident. Many miracles happened that I don't understand to this day.

I don't understand how my wife and I survived a head-on collision while seated in the front seat but our three passengers in the back didn't make it.

I don't understand why I am not paralyzed. When I started physical therapy exercises, the therapist asked, "Are you a praying man?"

"Yes, why?" I asked.

"The X-ray that I'm holding here shows you are supposed to be paralyzed from the neck down," he said. "Normally, a person with an X-ray like this would be dead. I'm going to be very careful with you. I'm afraid."

I don't understand the quick arrival of the ambulance at the accident scene. The manager of a local gold mine was driving in a pickup truck directly behind our car, and he saw the accident. He immediately called a nurse who worked at the gold mine and asked her to come quickly with the mine's ambulance.

I don't understand how I received a church scholarship to study at Solusi just three months before the accident. Without the scholarship, my wife and I would not have received medical assistance, and we might have died. Our hospital bills amounted to U.S.$36,000, an enormous sum for Zimbabwe.

I don't understand why the only orthopedic surgeon qualified to operate on my neck in Zimbabwe was available on the day of my emergency surgery. He had booked an airplane flight to France on the same day as the operation. He operated on me in the morning and caught his flight that afternoon.

I ask God, "Why did You spare us? We should have perished right on the spot."

I have two possible answers. Perhaps my wife and I were not prepared spiritually to die, and God gave us another chance to be ready for Resurrection Morning. Or maybe God spared us because we still have work to do in His vineyard.

My prayer life has changed since the accident. I pray more often, and I ask God to give me strength to do good deeds all the time. I ask God to work on whatever weaknesses that I have so

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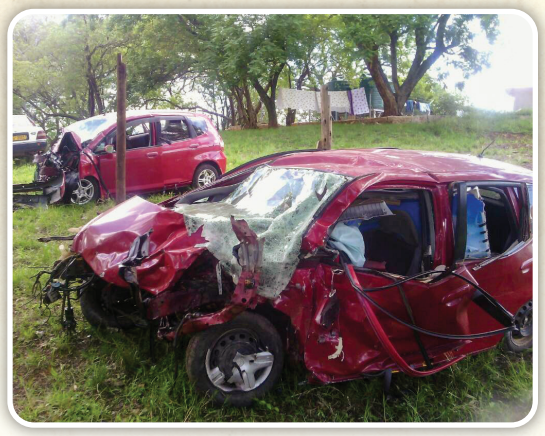

The two vehicles after the crash. Alfred's car is in the background.

I am right with Him should I die at any moment.

I also ask God to help me not to lose the fire to do His bidding. I pray, "Whatever You want me to do in Your work, give me the strength and the zeal to do it."

Sometimes I make mistakes, but I always go to God and say, "I'm sorry that I've done this. I cannot manage on my own. Give me strength."

I pray that my relationship with God is good all the time. I pray, "Let me do what You want me to do. Help me not to lose fire."

I don't know what God did at the time of the accident on December 23, 2015. But I know hat I am still here — and I will serve God all my days.

Part of a 2015 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering went to Solusi University to double the size of its crowded cafeteria from 500 seats to 1,000. Thank you for your mission offerings that allow Adventist schools like Solusi to prepare pastors to proclaim Jesus' power and soon return.

By Alfred C. Machona

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Fast Facts

- Zimbabwe has 16 official languages, more than another country: Chewa, Chibarwe, English, Kalanga, Koisan, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Shona, sign language, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda, and Xhosa. Shona and Ndebele are the most widely spoken.
- The ruined city of Great Zimbabwe, an ancient Shona city in the late Iron Age, is now an UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important archaeological sites in sub-Saharan Africa. It is made up of three connected (now ruined) complexes engineered and constructed from stone.
- Zimbabwe is believed by some to be the location of Ophir, the ancient country from which King Solomon got ivory, gold, and other precious items.

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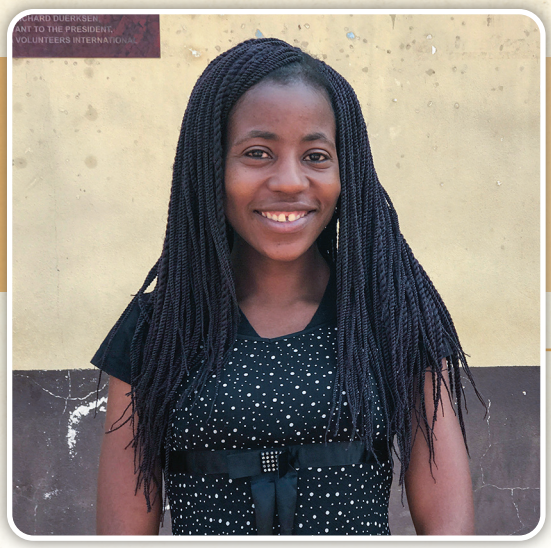

ZAMBIA | April 23

Blessing Others

Blessing Chatambudza, 31

My name is Blessing, and my life is evidence of God's bountiful blessings.

My family went to church every Sunday in Zimbabwe, but we were not devout. As a teen, I wanted to serve God, and I told a church leader that I wanted to be celibate for Christ.

"Do you have a boyfriend?" he asked.

"No," I replied.

"You should taste love first," he said. "Then come back."

I went away and tasted love — and stopped attending church for good.

In college, I made the wrong friends. We drank and went to parties.

When I was 18, I fell in love with a 21-year-old man. We tasted love like the church leader had suggested, and I got pregnant. In my culture, if you get pregnant, you have to stay with the man, so I moved in with him and his mother.

Then I realized that things were not what I expected. Neither my husband or I worked, and we always were fighting.

We had two children, and we kept fighting. I didn't know the meaning of marriage. We both had our own dreams and hopes, and his mother seemed to be unkind all the time.

I began attending my husband's church on Sundays.

Then I fell ill and went to my mother's house for an extended period.

At Mother's house, I had two unusual but identical dreams, three days apart. In both dreams, I heard sirens wailing and saw people running in all directions. I also saw a large stone coming down from heaven and an arrow pointing to a cross, where several people were standing. I heard a voice say, "Repent, for the world is coming to an end!"

I was confused. My husband's church never spoke about the world coming to an end. I had no idea what the dreams meant.

My husband also didn't understand the dreams. But I told him, "I am going to search for Jesus and, when I find Him, I am going to preach about Him."

But where would I find Jesus?

Jobs were scare in Zimbabwe, and my husband and I moved to Botswana

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to look for work. While there, we met a Seventh-day Adventist elder who offered us Bible studies. At the first Bible study, the elder told us that the world is coming to an end and that Jesus is coming soon. He showed us texts from the Bible. Finally, I understood my dreams. I was so happy!

Through additional Bible studies, I found the Jesus of the Bible, and I got baptized and joined the Adventist Church.

I was determined to follow my conviction to preach about Jesus. I had found Him, and now I wanted to share my love for Him with others. I decided to study at Rusangu University, an Adventist school in Zambia.

Unfortunately, my husband left me and our two children to marry another woman.

I worked hard, cleaning many, many yards, to raise enough money to pay for the first few months of studies. My mother helped me out, and the university allowed me to join its work program to help pay for subsequent months.

I decided to study theology to learn more about God and to prepare to teach other young people that they can have the same hope that I have. No matter the poor decisions that we make in life, God always is ready to give a second chance. He is eager to reveal Himself to us. He wants people to find Him, and to preach about Him to others. Just like the voice in my dreams, He is calling on us to change course, to turn our lives around, and follow Him. He is saying, "Repent, for the world is coming to an end!" Jesus is coming soon! I cannot wait for that day.

By Blessing Chatambudza

Story Tips

- Ask a woman to share this first-person account.
- Know that Blessing is a second-year theology student studying for a BA at Rusangu University in southern Zambia.
- Watch Blessing on YouTube: bit.ly/Blessing-Chatambudza.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- 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." Blessing's studies at Rusangu University illustrate 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." IWillGo2020.org.

Mission Post

- In 1903, W. H. Anderson, Jacob Detcha, and several African workers set out from Solusi Station in what was then Southern Rhodesia to Northern Rhodesia to look for a suitable mission site. After traveling by foot for much of the journey, and Anderson nearly dying of dysentery, they arrived at Chief Monze's territory, 100 miles (160 kilometers) to the northeast of Kalomo, then the capital. Chief Monze granted them a 5,436-acre (2,200-hectare) plot of ground that became Rusangu Station.
- Zambia is predominantly a Christian country, although many still adhere to aspects of traditional belief systems. More than three-quarters of Zambians identify as Protestant, while Roman Catholics make up one-fifth of the population.

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Meet You on the Other Side

NAMIBIA | April 30

Ocrhain Matengu, 31

My stepfather roared as he returned home from work.

"Mary!" he shouted.

I knew what would happen next. He always came home angry and beat Mother.

I was 5, and my four siblings and I were visiting our parents in a small town in Namibia. We lived with Grandmother in a village about 20 miles (35 kilometers) away, but we were on vacation.

Mother was busy in the kitchen. On her back, she was carrying my 2-year-old brother, Tommy, wrapped in a cloth.

My stepfather loomed at the kitchen door.

"Why isn't supper ready?" he shouted as he slapped Mother's face.

Mother, screaming, ran to the back door and fled outside. My stepfather followed with a large stick in his hand. Abruptly, he flung the stick at her. Mother dodged, and the stick struck little Tommy.

As Tommy's wail pierced the air, Mother stopped. "You killed my son!" she cried.

Sympathetic neighbors surrounded her, and someone called the police. Police officers called for an ambulance. They also handcuffed my stepfather and jailed him.

At the hospital, Tommy underwent an emergency surgery for a fractured skull. Afterward, the physician, weeping, said the boy had suffered brain damage and would be paralyzed on his right side. My mother and family friends wept as they heard the news in the hospital room. A man spoke up from the corner.

"Can we pray?" he said.

Throwing his hands into the air, he prayed, "My Father in heaven, I am not Elijah. Neither do I claim to be holier than the people in this room. But I stand here sheltered under the grace of Christ. Remember these people. Hear the intensity of their pain. Let Your will be done. In Christ Jesus' name I pray, Amen."

The room was quiet after the prayer. I sensed peace. I understood that there is a God in heaven. This man knew God.

Two weeks later, little Tommy was discharged from the hospital. Just as the doctor had said, he was paralyzed on his right side. He also had difficulty talking.

For months, I thought about the hospital prayer. I longed to talk to God in a similar way. A year later, when I was 6, I began to go to a Seventh-day Adventist church with a cousin every Sabbath. During the

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year that I attended, I noticed that church members prayed like the man at the hospital. They seemed to know God.

Meanwhile, Tommy's life was filled with suffering. One day, when he was 12 and I was 15, we sat under a tree waiting for Grandmother to serve lunch. Suddenly, Tommy fainted and fell to the ground. Reviving, he screamed, "I'm dying!" Then he became silent and stopped breathing.

Grandmother frantically called for help. I cried uncontrollably. I felt so helpless. Then I remembered the man who had prayed at the hospital. I wanted peace. My prayer was short and to the point. "I am young," I said. "I don't have the strength to bear this pain. Give me one more chance to get ready for Tommy's death." The moment I said, "Amen," Tommy sneezed. He sneezed three times, and Grandma shouted, "He's alive!" I thanked God.

Ten years passed, and I moved to Windhoek, Namibia's capital, and joined the Adventist Church, the praying church whose members knew God.

One day, my sister called to say that Tommy was ill. Immediately, I remembered my desperate prayer and thought, "It's time. My borrowed time has elapsed."

I boarded a bus and made the 745-mile (1,200-kilometer) trip to my brother's hospital bed. He was fighting for his life, but something was different. He had peace.

"My time is now," he told me. "I have prayed to God. I'll meet you on the other side. Keep believing in God."

Three days later, Tommy died. But his words still ring in my ears, "I'll meet you on the other side. Keep believing in God."

I graduated with a university degree in radio production and today work as station manager at Adventist World Radio Namibia. I look forward to meeting Tommy on the other side. You also can look forward to meeting your loved ones. Until that day, keep believing in God!

Thank you for your mission offerings that help spread the good news in Namibia and throughout the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division that Jesus is coming soon.

By Ocrhain Matengu

Story Tips

- Ask a young man to share this first-person account.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- In sharing his story, Ocrhain Matengu hopes to fulfill 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." Through his work at Adventist World Radio, he seeks to fulfill 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." Read more about the strategic plan at: IWillGo2020.org.

Mission Post

- The first Adventist work in Namibia started in 1937 and 1938 when J. van der Merwe conducted evangelistic meetings in Windhoek and five people were baptized. No further work was done until 1954 when the South West Africa Field was organized and J. J. Becker, the only pastor living in South-West Africa, was appointed president.

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Dying to Live

David Diogo de Victoria, 29

photo: BigStock.com

As a young man, I joined a gang that sold marijuana and other drugs in Angola.

There were 13 of us in the gang, and I bought drugs for the others to sell. I did not use drugs, and my fellow gang members began to think that I considered myself better than them. So, the gang leader confronted me.

"If you don't smoke some weed with us, we're going to beat you up," he said.

What could I do? I smoked.

My introduction to marijuana started a deep descent into a life of crime. I no longer simply bought drugs and delivered them to the gang. I joined the gang in carjacking, robbing stores, and burglarizing homes.

We terrorized neighborhoods outside Angola's capital, Luanda, and the police decided to act. In a short period of time, they managed to kill all 12 of my fellow gangsters. Somehow, I survived. Unfazed, a friend and I formed a new gang. Now I was a gang leader and very much addicted to drugs and crime.

I am not proud of the life that I led. I saw 180 friends killed by the police. I was arrested more than 40 times, and courts convicted me three times.

During the third stint in prison, I heard about the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the first time. A church member visited regularly and gave me Bible studies.

But after my release, I moved into an aunt's house and promptly formed a new gang. During the robbery of a gas station, something went wrong, and a security guard was killed. When the police learned that I was at my aunt's house, they arrived to kill me.

Somehow, I survived the raid. I was sleeping when the police arrived, and somehow, they did not find me even though they searched high and low. My aunt was scared, and she told me to leave. So, I moved into the basement of my mother's house. My mother did not want me to lead the gang out of her basement, so she took me to a witch doctor who promised to help.

For a while, the witch doctor's spells seemed to work. For four months, I did not use drugs or commit any crimes. My mother and the rest of my family were very happy. But in the fifth month, I returned to my old life with even more enthusiasm than before. My life seemed hopeless.

Then I met a man whom everyone called Pimp. He had tattoos all over his

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body. With his name and appearance, he could have been a gangster like me. But he did not talk or act like a gangster. He was a Seventh-day Adventist. One day, Pimp showed me Romans 8:14, which says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (NKJV).

When I heard those words, a deep desire sprouted in me to be a son of God. I wondered to myself, "Does God have a plan for even me?"

I started to read the Bible with Pimp. As we studied, I learned about God and realized that He does love even me. I saw that Jesus died for me. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

My life began to change. I decided that I wanted to die — I wanted to die to my old life and to be born again in Jesus. I gave my heart to Jesus and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2013.

Today, praise God, I am studying to become a pastor at Mozambique Adventist University.

My family, neighbors, and friends have sharply criticized my decision to follow Jesus, but I do not mind. All I want is to serve Jesus for the rest of my life. My heart is His, and I pray that He can use me to lead many other hearts to Him, including those in my family.

Part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering three years ago helped Mozambique Adventist University, where David studies, expand with new classrooms and equipment. Thank you for your offering. This quarter, the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help establish four projects in David's home country of Angola, including a Seventh-day Adventist school in Luanda, near where he used to live. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By David Diogo de Victoria

Story Tips

- Ask a man to share this first-person account.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- 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." The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for Mozambique Adventist University and the mission project in Angola illustrates 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Mission Post

- The Adventist message entered Mozambique in 1931 when two students from the Malamulo Mission School in Malawi returned to their homes in Portuguese East Africa. Both carried out evangelism and soon were teaching 555 people in Bible classes. O. U. Giddings and Max Webster made a visit to Mozambique to investigate the interest and, in 1933, Webster was sent to the Zambesi district in Mozambique to establish a mission. In 1935, with permission from the governor-general, he established a mission, naming it Munguluni, meaning "light."

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BOTSWANA | May 14

Parties or God

Bessie Lechina, 35

Bessie couldn't understand why the Seventh-day Adventist church always seemed closed when she walked past on Sunday, looking for a new place to worship.

Frustrated, she finally stopped and spoke to teenage girl standing in the yard of a house beside the church in central Botswana.

"When does this church open?" she asked. "Is it always locked?"

"It's an Adventist church," the girl said. "But I don't know if you could worship there. Being Adventist is difficult."

"What do you mean?" Bessie said.

The girl explained that the worshipers didn't go to parties or wear jewelry.

"And they like going to church on Saturday," she added.

In Botswana, Saturday is the day when young people go to parties.

Bessie couldn't imagine quitting parties and throwing away her earrings. "I couldn't worship in this church!" she said.

Bessie had grown up in a non-Christian family and knew little about God. She decided, however, during an extended break between high school graduation and the start of university classes that she wanted to become a Christian. She visited a number of churches, and that was when she noticed that the Adventist church was always closed on Sundays.

That fall, Bessie moved to Botswana's capital, Gaborone, to study at the university. Soon she noticed that her roommate, Solofelang, went to church every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, but she didn't pay much attention. Instead, she went to parties on Saturdays and looked for a church to join on Sundays. But the churches didn't seem to use the Bible, and she felt that she hadn't learned anything.

After several months, Bessie asked her roommate, "What is this church that you go to three times a week?"

"It's a Seventh-day Adventist church," Solofelang said. "It worships on Saturday."

Bessie looked at her roommate closely and realized that she didn't wear jewelry. Then she remembered the conversation with the girl in her hometown and thought, "I couldn't worship there!"

After a while, though, she grew weary of visiting churches on Sunday and wondered whether the Adventist Church might be different. She decided to visit one time — only not on a Saturday.

On Wednesday, Bessie went with Solofelang to a university classroom where Adventist students gathered for their

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worship services. She was impressed with the pastor's presentation about marriage. Bessie was eager to get married one day.

Learning that marriage would be discussed again, Bessie returned with her roommate on Friday evening. On Sabbath morning, she went with Solofelang to church and, after lunch, attended a Bible study. Since that day, she never stopped going to church on Sabbath.

Bessie's life began to change. She found it easy to give up jewelry and Saturday parties. She learned that she could talk to God through prayer. People were shocked to see Bessie was a new person, and they asked many questions. She gladly told them about her faith.

Bessie was baptized before the end of the school year. Her roommate wept with joy as she emerged from the water.

Today, Bessie is the 35-year-old mother of three and a teacher at Eastern Gate Academy, an Adventist boarding high school in northern Botswana. Her husband is the school's business manager.

She has seen changes in the lives of her students — just like the transformation that she witnessed in her own life.

"Sometimes parents bring us rebellious children," she said. "But when the students leave, they are different altogether. Parents tell us, 'Thank you very much! Our child has changed.'"

Eastern Gate Academy shares a campus with Eastern Gate Primary School, a Thirteenth Sabbath-funded project that opened in January 2017. Bessie, whose 6-year-old daughter, Joanna, studies at the school, said, "I pray that the school will bring more children to God."

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Pronounce Gaborone as: gaa-br-OW-nay.
- Pronounce Solofelang as: SOLO-fe-lang.
- Watch Bessie on YouTube: bit.ly/Bessie-Lechina.
- Know that the principles of amusement, entertainment, simplicity, and modesty illustrated in this mission story reflect the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Fundamental Belief No. 22 on "Christian Behavior," which reads in part, "We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. While recognizing cultural differences, our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit." Read more: bit.ly/SDA-FB22.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- 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." Eastern Gate Academy and Eastern Gate Primary School illustrate 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

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Hope in the Pandemic

photo: BigStock.com

ANGOLA | May 21

Antónia Miguel, 40

COVID-19 changed my life.

I've always believed in God, and I started praying from a young age for God to help me find a good husband. I longed for a husband who loved God and would go to church with me. But the big question was: Which church would we attend?

As a child, I attended the church of my parents in Angola, and I faithfully followed all its rituals. But something seemed to be lacking. After I got married to a wonderful husband, I moved to another church. Four years later, I switched to a third church. But I felt empty inside. Something was missing. What I heard in church didn't seem to connect to my personal life. I wasn't sure that God had forgiven my sins. I wasn't sure that He was transforming my character into His likeness. Also, my husband didn't go to church with me.

In 2020, the whole country went into lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Churches were closed, and I could no longer attend worship services. I looked for sermons on YouTube and found two programs conducted by Seventh-day Adventist pastors on Hope Channel television. As I watched, I carefully compared their Bible verses with my own Bible. I realized that I didn't really know the Bible. What especially caught my attention was the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath in the Bible.

As I watched, it seemed like one of the pastors spoke directly to me. "Who do you want to follow: the dictates of men or the word of God as expressed in the Bible?" he said.

The question bothered me greatly. From the depths of my heart, I responded, "I want to follow what my God has said in His Word."

I remembered a young woman whom I had hired to help me around the house. When she first started to work, she cleaned and cooked every day through Friday and

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took off Saturdays. She explained that she went to a Seventh-day Adventist church on Saturdays. But after a while, she stopped going to church and worked for me on Saturdays as well.

When I became aware of the importance of the Sabbath, I spoke to the young woman.

"You are not going to church anymore, but you are willing to work at my house on Saturdays," I said. "If you stopped going to church because of your work for me, think again. From now on, you will only work for me from Monday through Friday. Saturday is holy."

By that point, pandemic restrictions had eased, and the young woman was able to return to church. Today, she is taking classes in preparation for baptism.

Meanwhile, I wanted to know more about the Sabbath, and I called an Adventist pastor whose phone number I found online. He was friendly and offered several books to read. I began worshiping on Sabbath and was baptized in 2021.

Today, I am a new person, and the transformation is continuing to take place daily. I know God forgives my sins. I know He is transforming my character into His likeness. Join me in praying for my husband to know God and to go to church with me every Sabbath.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help establish four projects in Antónia's home country of Angola, including a Seventh-day Adventist school in Luanda, an Adventist church and elementary school in the city of Belize, a domestic violence and counseling center in the city of Lombe, and a men's dormitory at the Adventist University of Angola in the city of Huambo. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Antónia da Conceição Miguel Yele

Story Tips

- Ask a woman to share this first-person account.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- 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." The four mission projects in Angola illustrate 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Mission Post

- The first Seventh-day Adventist to go to Angola was in 1922 when W. H. Anderson visited from elsewhere in Africa to explore the possibilities for establishing mission work in the country. The next year he, T. M. French, and J. D. Baker, after traveling around the country for a month, selected a site in the Lepi district, on the central plateau. In 1924 the headquarters of the South Atlantic United Missions was established. In 1928 the Angola Union Mission was organized, and Anderson was president from 1924 to 1933.
- The first Adventist radio programs in Angola were broadcast in 1953, and by 1963 the Voice of Prophecy programs were broadcast weekly from six sites.

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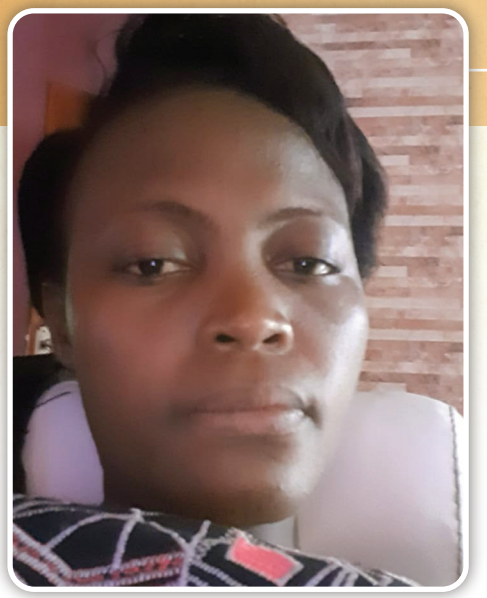
The Lord's True Day



ANGOLA | May 28

Cristina Vita Cavimbi Ferraz, 21

I grew up in a pastor's home where I learned about God but not about His seventh-day Sabbath.

My father, an evangelical pastor, taught me to respect all religions, but he would not set foot into the Seventh-day Adventist church in our city near Luanda, Angola. He had heard negative rumors about the church that frightened him, and he forbade me and the other members of our family from entering the church.

As a young adult, I moved to another city to work, and I lived with an uncle and his family. I began to study the Bible every day with several coworkers at lunch. An Adventist led the Bible study. Other than him, everyone thought that Sunday was the Lord's Day. His assertion that Saturday was the biblical Sabbath confused me. I wanted to know more, so he gave me an Adventist book and a set of recorded sermons by an Adventist evangelist. I read the book and watched the sermons, and a great conflict broke out inside me over whether to keep Saturday or Sunday.

One day I came home and found my relatives watching the sermons.

"Who is this pastor?" my uncle asked. "He is so intelligent, speaking only what is written in the Bible!"

I thought to myself, "I also want to believe only what is written in the Bible."

I began to study the Bible on my own. As I read, I resolved not to follow human traditions but only to seek the will of God.

Returning to my hometown, I asked for a meeting with my father and the other leaders of his church, and I presented to them the new truths that I had found in the Bible. I spoke about the seventh-day Sabbath, sanctified at the end of the creation week in Genesis 2:2–3 and memorialized by God's finger on the stone of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:8–11. I reminded them that Jesus faithfully kept the seventh-day Sabbath on earth, and His disciples followed His example after He returned to heaven.

"Why don't you teach these truths in our church?" I asked.

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As my father listened, the other church leaders acknowledged that they knew the seventh day is the Sabbath. They could not explain why they preferred to keep Sunday. But they warned me against joining the Adventist Church.

"You will lose your ministry position in our church if you do," one said.

"If I remain in the ministry position, I only will teach the truth as found in the Bible," I said. "I will preach the Adventist message."

Dismayed, the church leaders sent a letter to the local Adventist church, saying that I was their member and would not become an Adventist. Nevertheless, I continued to study the Bible and was baptized by an Adventist pastor.

Today, I am married to the man who taught me about the Sabbath during the Bible studies at work. My heart is filled with joy that three of my brothers have been baptized. My father and mother are taking Bible studies, and I have faith that they soon will be baptized. Please pray for them and my other family members to seek only the will of God as found in the Bible.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help establish four projects in Cristina's home country of Angola, including a Seventh-day Adventist school in Luanda, near where she lives, and an Adventist church and elementary school in the city of Belize, a domestic violence and counseling center in the city of Lombe, and a men's dormitory at the Adventist University of Angola in the city of Huambo. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Cristina Vita Cavimbi Ferraz

Story Tips

- Ask a young woman to share this first-person account.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- This mission story illustrates the following components 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"; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives." The four mission projects in Angola illustrate 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Fast Facts

- Angola was the last country in Africa to gain independence from Portugal, on November 11, 1975. After independence there was a civil war that lasted from 1975 to 2002 and caused the deaths of millions of Angolans.
- Angola may be the birthplace of the dreadlock hair style. The women of the Mwila tribe cover their hair with a mixture of crushed tree bark, oil, butter, dried cow dung, and herbs, and then form it into a number of dreadlocks, depending on their age. The dreadlocks are then often dyed red with powdered rock dust.

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ANGOLA | June 4

Unexpected Proposal

Esmeralda João Melo, 27

My father belongs to one Christian denomination, and my mother belongs to another in Angola's capital, Luanda. As a child, I went to church with Father on one Sunday and with Mother on the next Sunday. But at the age of 18, I stopped going to church altogether. I stopped singing in the choir at Mother's church, and I stopped participating in youth activities at Father's church.

"Why don't you come to church with me anymore?" Mother asked.

"I don't feel comfortable," I replied.

"Then find a church where you feel comfortable," Mother said. "Give God a chance."

But I was more interested in giving the world a chance.

When my older sister got engaged, she and her fiancé somehow ended up receiving premarital counseling from a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. They decided to attend the Adventist church after they got married, and my sister began to send me a steady stream of Bible verses and sermons.

Then an unusual series of events took place. A friend urged me to give my heart to God. I knew that she was praying for me, and her words softened my heart. That same week, another friend pleaded with me to live for God. "The world is not good," she said. "Surrender to God." She prayed with me and asked God to give me a good, God-fearing husband. Her words touched my heart. A few days later, my older sister told me that she felt reprimanded by God. "The Lord says that if I do not warn you, your blood will be required of me," she said.

My sister had read Ezekiel 3:18-19, where the Lord says, "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul" (NKJV).

My heart skipped a beat as my sister spoke. I tried to defend myself. "I go to our mother's church," I said.

"But you don't feel comfortable there," my sister said. "Go to a Seventh-day Adventist church. Go to any of their churches in town. Give them a chance."

I promised to go to an Adventist church the next Sabbath. But I didn't go because I was called to work. I worked the next three

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Sabbaths. When my sister called to ask about church, I explained that I had too much work. "Some jobs aren't a blessing from God," my sister replied. "You work hard for nothing. You need to lay work aside and put God first."

I wasn't sure what to do, but I stopped working — and not by choice. I fell ill. At the clinic, the physician knew me well because he had been my doctor for four years. We had a good doctor-patient relationship. But this time he surprised me. During the examination, he suddenly asked for my hand in marriage. He had never shown any personal interest in me before, and I had never thought about him as a husband. But as he proposed, I liked the idea of being his wife.

"I would like to marry you," I said.

He smiled. "I am a Seventh-day Adventist," he said. "I would like for my wife also to be an Adventist."

I smiled back. "No problem," I said.

And I meant it. Many unusual things had happened over the past few weeks. Two dear friends and my sister had urged me to give my heart to God. One had prayed for me to find a God-fearing husband, and my sister had pleaded with me to go to the Adventist church. Now an Adventist physician had asked me to marry him and to become an Adventist. I could not resist God's call anymore. I entered a baptismal class.

Today I am an Adventist. I am not an Adventist because the physician proposed to me. I am not an Adventist because my sister urged me. I am not even an Adventist because I feel comfortable in the church. I am an Adventist because God called me to unite with His people who keep His commandments and have the faith of Jesus. My heart is His.

Story Tips

- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- This mission story illustrates the following components 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 [and] … among unreached and under-reached people groups"; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives"; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 6, "To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults"; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." The project to open a school in Luanda illustrates 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Fast Facts

- Animals of the savannah include buffaloes, elephants, giraffes, hippopotamuses, hyenas, leopards, lions, monkeys, wildebeests (gnu) and other antelopes, and zebras. Insects include mosquitoes and tsetse flies, both of which carry serious diseases.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help open a Seventh-day Adventist school in Esmeralda's hometown of Luanda, Angola. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Esmeralda João Melo

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A Reason to Live

ANGOLA | June 11

Graça Muene, 25

Although I was born and raised in a Christian family, I never liked going to church in Luanda, Angola. As a small boy, I did everything possible to avoid attending religious classes meant to prepare me for baptism in my church. As a preteen, I fell in love with rock music, and I copied the clothing and lifestyles of rock musicians. At the same time, I became fascinated with satanic symbols. I associated the symbols with superiority and rebellion and drew them all over my body.

In high school, my best friend was a Goth, and I adopted a Gothic lifestyle, wearing black clothes and painting my fingernails black. My friend also loved rock music, and he decorated his bedroom with rock music posters and satanic symbols. Soon I got into alcohol and marijuana. I advocated atheism and openly declared that Jesus was a myth. As a teen, I started playing rock music, and I met a fellow musician who claimed to have made a pact with the devil. I liked the idea, and one night I told Satan that he could have my soul in exchange for musical success.

But then my life fell apart. My mother abruptly died, and my father, an alcoholic, drank even more. As the oldest of four brothers, responsibility fell on me to care for the family. I felt like I was suffocating under a load of impossible problems.

Amid this crisis, I made a promise to myself to never drink or smoke again. I began to pray to God, and I left the music scene. I began to date a woman who introduced me to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and we attended Sabbath worship services.

After we broke up, I reconnected with old friends and quickly returned to my old habits. However, I wasn't happy. Many nights I fell asleep drunk or high on marijuana. Thoughts of suicide filled my head. My life seemed so aimless and meaningless. In anguish, I wept. I remembered God and prayed for help. I felt like I was dying and had only a few days left to live. I told my new girlfriend about my distress, and she mentioned my name to a cousin. The cousin had returned recently to Angola after receiving a

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degree in psychology. The cousin also had become an Adventist while studying abroad. Meeting with me for counseling, the cousin told me to build my life on God alone and explained how to do it.

I resolved to put God first in my life, and I started to develop healthy practices. I made it a habit to pray before making any decision and to seek only the will of God. As prayer became a regular part of my life, I gained the courage to dream again. I found a reason to live.

Remembering my former Adventist girlfriend, I decided to return to her church. I wondered how I would feel at Sabbath worship services. The feeling surprised me. The moment I stepped into the church, I longed to get baptized. When the service ended, I immediately enrolled in the baptismal class. Unlike when I was a small boy, I now wanted to learn the meaning of baptism and to prepare for it. In the class, I learned for the first time about Jesus and the plan of salvation. The reality of Jesus' love for me only increased by desire to give my heart to Him through baptism.

Today, I can say that I finally am free. I live one day after another, savoring true peace and incredible joy. I finally have a purpose and responsibility in life: to bring souls to our Savior and Creator. I once used my influence to lead souls to hell, but today I use it, with Christ's help, to lead souls to heaven.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help open a Seventh-day Adventist school in Graça's hometown of Luanda, Angola. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Graça Muene

Story Tips

- Ask a man to share this first-person account.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
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Fast Facts

- Much of Angola was once covered with dense rainforest, but it was greatly diminished by agriculture and logging. Most of Angola's surface is now covered with savannah, various kinds of grasslands with scattered trees. Fires, natural or man-made, often occur on the savannahs, so tree species are usually resistant to fire. The Namib in the far southwest is Angola's desert and contains the tumboa (*Weltwitschia mirabilis*), which has a deep taproot and two broad, flat leaves about 10 feet (3 meters) long that lie along the desert floor.
- Angola's national tree is the *imbondeiro* (giant tree), also known as the baobab.

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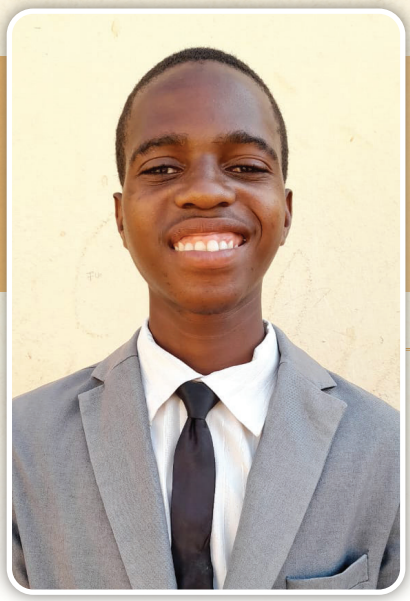

Kicked Out

Manuel Salvador Tunda, 19

My family raised me in an evangelical church in Angola, and I was baptized by being sprinkled with water at the age of 14.

But I was not satisfied with my knowledge of God. Something didn't seem right. I was particularly confused by the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I wondered about the true Sabbath and repeatedly asked myself, "Why do Seventh-day Adventists keep the seventh day as the Sabbath and other Protestant churches keep the first day as the Sabbath?"

The question would not go away, and finally I asked several leaders of my church for answers.

"Why do Adventists go to church on Saturday, but we go on Sunday?" I asked.

The church leaders spoke about celebrating Jesus' resurrection from the dead on Sunday. But none of them could show me a verse in the Bible that showed Jesus had changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. The explanations of the church leaders did not satisfy me.

I began to watch Hope Channel television. Presenters on the channel spoke about the seventh-day Sabbath being enshrined in the Ten Commandments. I saw that God set aside the seventh-day Sabbath as holy at the Creation of the world, and that Jesus observed the seventh-day Sabbath when He lived on earth. My question about the Sabbath was satisfied. I understood why Seventh-day Adventists worshiped on the seventh day, and I resolved to keep the correct day.

Two years after my baptism by sprinkling, I decided that I wanted to be baptized by immersion, the same way as Jesus. I wanted to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

My father was furious when I told him. He kicked me out of the house, and I had to move in with his sister, my aunt. Even though I no longer lived with my parents, tensions continued to grow. Relatives threatened to beat me up, and I wasn't sure where to live. Yet I kept going to church

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on Sabbath and refused to give up my desire to be baptized.

The pastor of my former church contacted my father, and they convinced me to move into the pastor's house. The pastor was determined to persuade me to return to his church. He spoke and pleaded with me for three weeks. But he could not show me any verse in the Bible that showed God had changed the Sabbath to the first day of the week. Finally, he asked me to leave his house.

It seemed like things couldn't get worse. In fact, things began to improve. As I read the Bible every day, I came to know more about God and His love. I learned about Ellen White and began to read her books. Praise God, I was baptized by immersion at New Jerusalem Seventh-day Adventist Church in Luanda, Angola, in 2021.

I thank God for the afflictions that I suffered. Those struggles have made me a fiercer warrior for the Savior and strengthened my confidence in the wonderful power of Jesus Christ. My wounds have healed, and only scars remain. I am happy in the Lord.

Please join me in praying for God to be able to reach the hearts of my loved ones so we can once again worship together as a united family.

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help open a Seventh-day Adventist school in Manuel's hometown of Luanda, Angola, so many children can hear answers to their burning questions about Jesus. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Manuel Salvador Tunda, as told to Paulo Marcial Pinto, pastor of New Jerusalem Seventh-day Adventist Church

Story Tips

- Ask a young man to share this first-person account.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- This mission story illustrates the following components 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 Growth Objective No. 6, "To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults"; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." The project to open a school in Luanda illustrates 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Fast Facts

- The Angolan flag is red, black and gold. The meanings are encoded in the constitution of Angola: red represents the blood of Angolans killed in conflicts, black represents the Angolan people, and gold represents wealth. A cogwheel on the flag represents industry, a machete represents peasantry, and a gold star is modeled after the star on the flag of the former Soviet Union.
- Angola is very rich in natural resources and is the second-largest oil and diamond producer in sub-Saharan Africa.

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A Miracle Story

13th SABBATH: ANGOLA | June 25

Milagre Braga Caminhao, 22

My name means "miracle." My story is a miracle — but perhaps not the kind that you might expect.

Growing up in a Christian home in Angola, I was faithful to my church's teachings and worked as a missionary in my home province.

But when I moved at the age of 14 to work in Angola's capital, Luanda, I couldn't find a congregation that belonged to my denomination.

I refused to worship in another church because I strongly believed that only my denomination correctly understood the Bible.

So, I worshiped at home every Sunday for a year.

Going back to my hometown for a visit, I learned that the Bible teacher from my church and several of my friends had joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The news upset me, and I harshly criticized my friends to their faces.

"How could you accept the teachings of another denomination?" I scolded them.

My friends didn't argue with me.

One day, I went to the home of my former Bible teacher to ask why she had become an Adventist.

She welcomed me with a smile. Upon hearing my question, she explained that she had learned from the Bible that God had blessed the seventh day, not the first day.

She showed me from the Bible that God sanctified the seventh day at the end of Creation week in Genesis 2:1–3, reading,

> "Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God

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blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" (NKJV).

Then she showed me that God memorialized the seventh day as the Sabbath in the fourth commandment in Exodus 20:8–10, reading,

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates."

Looking at me with a kind smile, she said, "I decided to follow Jesus with my whole heart."

Her story sounded strange to me, and I could not agree with her reasoning.

She offered me a Bible study on the Sabbath, but I refused to listen to her any further.

Back in Luanda, I tried to return to my normal work routine, but I could not forget the Bible teacher.

I had trouble working.

I had trouble sleeping.

My former Bible teacher's decision to keep the seventh-day Sabbath bothered me day and night.

Finally, I resolved to go to a Seventh-day Adventist church and find out why its members keep the seventh-day Sabbath. I needed to find peace.

The next Sabbath, I entered an Adventist church. I had never set foot inside the church of another denomination, but I was determined to find peace.

Story Tips

- As a young man to share this first-person account.
- Pronounce Milagre as: MEE-lo-ree.
- Milagre is praying for another miracle. He asks people around the world to join him in praying for the salvation of his family.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division: bit.ly/sid-2022.
- This mission story illustrates the following components 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 Growth Objective No. 6, "To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults"; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." The four mission projects in Angola illustrate 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Fast Facts

- Life expectancy for both men and women in Angola is 54.5 years.
- Angola's traditional music is semba. The name may come from the singular *Massemba*, meaning "a touch of the bellies"—a distinctive movement in semba dancing. Brazilian samba, which is very similar, is believed to have originated in Angola. Angolan semba is danced to celebrate special occasions.

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I needed a miracle.

Someone told a church leader about my question about the Sabbath, and the leader showed me the same verses that the Bible teacher had read to me.

I stayed for the Sabbath worship service. The sermon did not impress me. It was so different from the sermons that I had heard in my church, and I did not like it.

But the next Sabbath, I returned to the church. The following Sabbath, I returned again.

For the next five years, I went to the Adventist church every Sabbath, not because I liked it but because I had not been able to find my church in the city.

During that time, I began to attend a Bible study group in a church member's home and baptismal class at the church on weekends. I grew to understand that God really did set aside the seventh day as holy, and a new love for Him grew in my heart.

I decided to keep only the seventh-day Sabbath.

At the age of 19, I was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Today, I am filled with peace and joy. Jesus said, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

I have found the truth, and I have been set free by the grace of God. It truly is a miracle.

Today's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help establish four projects in Milagre's home country of Angola, including a Seventh-day Adventist school in Luanda, where he lives, and an Adventist church and elementary school in the city of Belize, a domestic violence and counseling center in the city of Lombe, and a men's dormitory at the Adventist University of Angola in the city of Huambo. The offering will also help projects in Malawi and on the Indian Ocean island-nation of Mayotte. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Milagre Braga Caminhao

Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering next quarter will help the South American Division to establish churches in:

- Cochabamba, Bolivia
- El Alto, Bolivia
- La Paz, Bolivia
- Trinidad, Bolivia
- Brodowski, Brazil
- Maua, Brazil
- Ribeirão Preto, Brazil
- Santos, Brazil

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Leader's Resources

Be sure to download your free Mission Spotlight video, featuring video reports from around the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division and beyond. Download or stream from the Adventist Mission website at 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

Angola: government website	bit.ly/AngolaGovt
Nations Online	bit.ly/NationsOnlineAngola
Wikitravel	bit.ly/WikitravelAngola
Namibia: government website	bit.ly/NamibiaGovt
United Nations	bit.ly/UnitedNationsNamibia
Explore Namibia	bit.ly/Explore_Namibia
South Africa: government website	bit.ly/SAGov
Lonely Planet	bit.ly/LP-SAfrica
Wikitravel	bit.ly/WT-SAfrica
Zambia: government website	bit.ly/ZambiaGovt
Britannica	bit.ly/BritannicaNamibia
Zambia Tourism	bit.ly/ZambiaTourism
Zimbabwe: government website	bit.ly/ZimbabweGovt
World Factbook	bit.ly/WFBZimbabwe
Wikitravel	bit.ly/WikitravelZimbabwe

Seventh-day Adventist

Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division	bit.ly/SDA-SID
North-Eastern Angola Union Mission	bit.ly/NEAUnionMiss
South-Western Angola Union Mission	bit.ly/SWAUnionMiss
Southern Africa Union Conference	bit.ly/SAUnionConf
Northern Zambia Union Conference	bit.ly/NZambiaUC
Southern Zambia Union Conference	bit.ly/SZambiaUC
Zimbabwe Central Union Conference	bit.ly/ZCUnionConf
Zimbabwe East Union Conference	bit.ly/ZEUnionConf
Zimbabwe West Union Conference	bit.ly/ZWUnionConf

An offering goal device will help focus attention on world missions and increase weekly mission giving. Determine a goal for your class's weekly mission offering. Multiply it by 14, allowing a double goal for the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. Remind your Sabbath School members that their regular weekly mission offerings will help the missionary work of the world church and that one-quarter of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go directly to the projects in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean 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 and record the offering's amount at the end of Sabbath School.

YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

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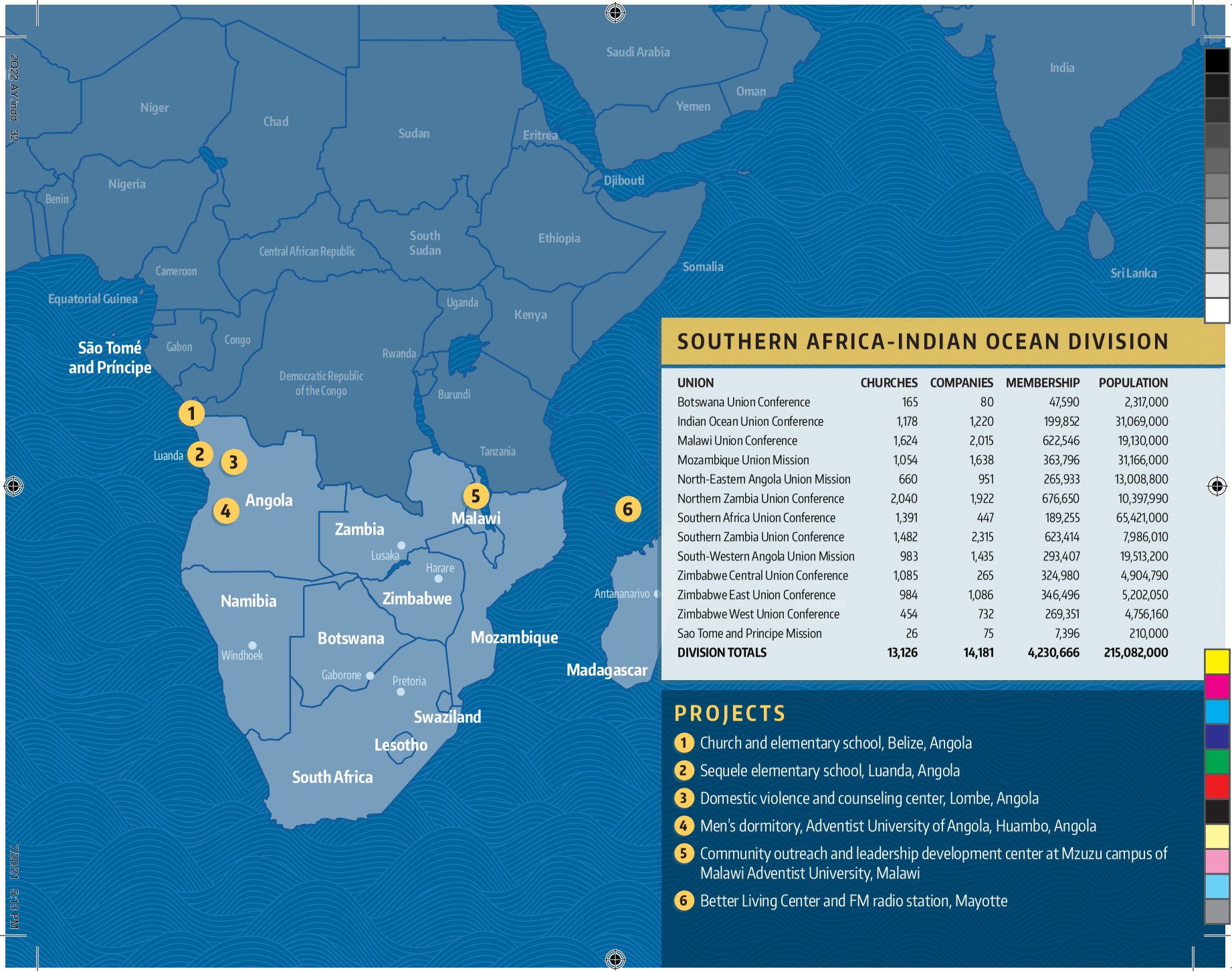

SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION

UNION	CHURCHES	COMPANIES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Botswana Union Conference	165	80	47,590	2,317,000
Indian Ocean Union Conference	1,178	1,220	199,852	31,069,000
Malawi Union Conference	1,624	2,015	622,546	19,130,000
Mozambique Union Mission	1,054	1,638	363,796	31,166,000
North-Eastern Angola Union Mission	660	951	265,933	13,008,800
Northern Zambia Union Conference	2,040	1,922	676,650	10,397,990
Southern Africa Union Conference	1,391	447	189,255	65,421,000
Southern Zambia Union Conference	1,482	2,315	623,414	7,986,010
South-Western Angola Union Mission	983	1,435	293,407	19,513,200
Zimbabwe Central Union Conference	1,085	265	324,980	4,904,790
Zimbabwe East Union Conference	984	1,086	346,496	5,202,050
Zimbabwe West Union Conference	454	732	269,351	4,756,160
Sao Tome and Principe Mission	26	75	7,396	210,000
DIVISION TOTALS	**13,126**	**14,181**	**4,230,666**	**215,082,000**

PROJECTS

1. Church and elementary school, Belize, Angola
2. Sequele elementary school, Luanda, Angola
3. Domestic violence and counseling center, Lombe, Angola
4. Men's dormitory, Adventist University of Angola, Huambo, Angola
5. Community outreach and leadership development center at Mzuzu campus of Malawi Adventist University, Malawi
6. Better Living Center and FM radio station, Mayotte

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