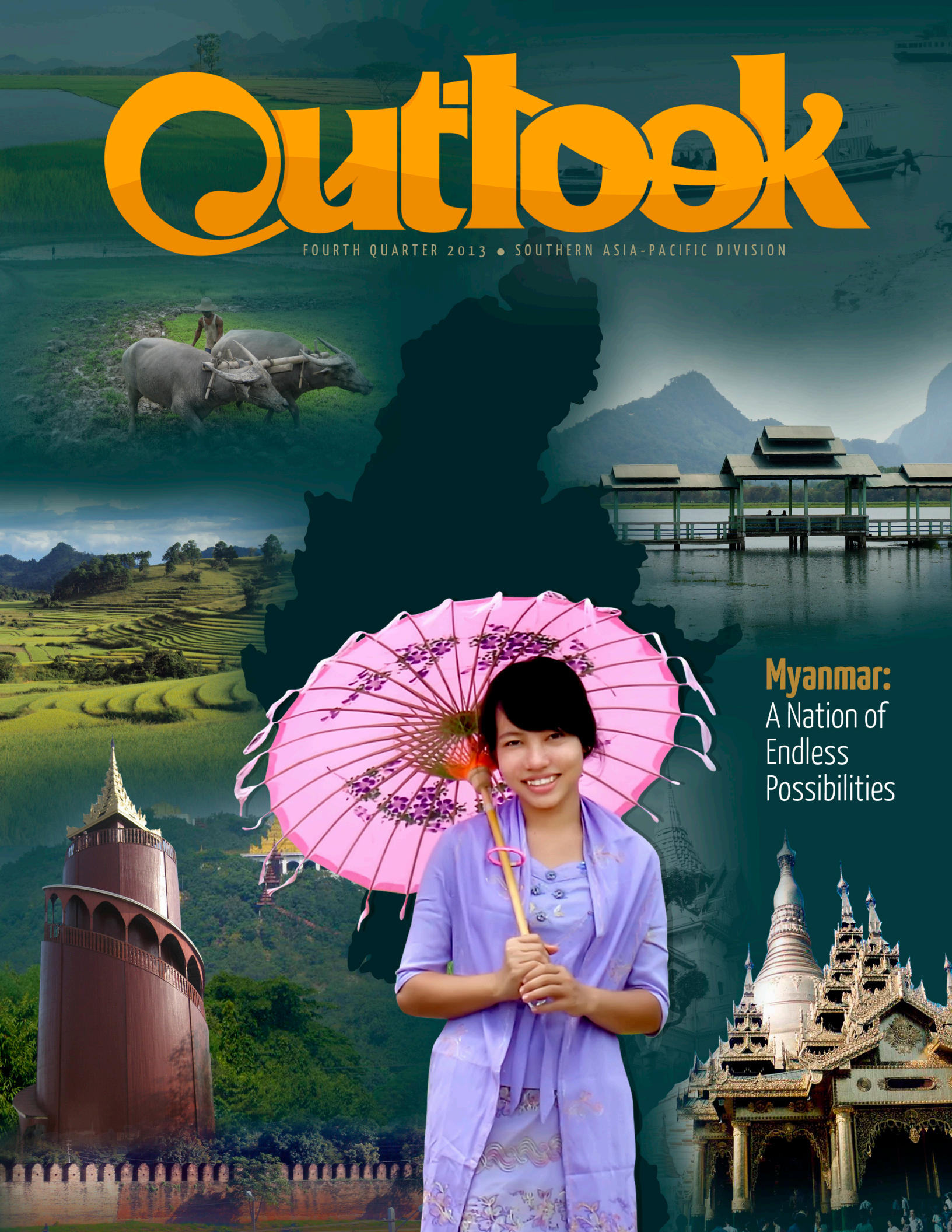


Outlook

FOURTH QUARTER 2013 • SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION



Myanmar:
A Nation of
Endless
Possibilities

Outlook

FOURTH QUARTER 2013

EDITORIAL

MANAGING EDITOR – Jonathan Catolico
EDITOR – Teresa Costello
ASSOCIATE EDITOR – Romhelyn Gay Deles
GRAPHIC DESIGNER – Gerson Lopez
LAYOUT – Print4Less Printshop
PRINTER – Philippine Publishing House

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Mickey Bankhead – I.T. Services



TO WRITERS AND CONTRIBUTORS: WE WELCOME UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. (PLEASE INQUIRE BEFORE SUBMITTING LONG ARTICLES.) INCLUDE ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER. ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

OUTLOOK, Southern Asia-Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventists
Bypass Road, Aguinaldo Highway, 4118 Silang, Cavite, PHILIPPINES
Phone +63 (46) 4144.4000 Fax +63 (46) 414.4001
Letters to the editors: jcatolico@ssd.org | tcostello@ssd.org
Submit articles: outlook@ssd.org

COVER AND FILE PHOTOS: MAUNG MAUNG MYO CHAN & JOHN DUROE

ERRATUM: In the 3rd Quarter issue, the OYIM-SSD Representative was incorrectly listed on page 14. The correct spelling of his name is Anthony Stanyer.

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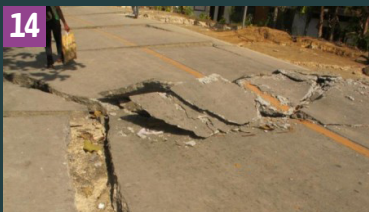
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Perseverance and Papaya Salad

EDITORIAL

When I think of our feature country of Myanmar, I think of May and her papaya salad*. With a smile that lights up her beautiful face, her kind and fun-loving ways endear her to many, myself included. As the first friend I've had from Myanmar, May has given me an appreciation for her home country. I have certainly gained an appreciation for her delicious salad. However, it wasn't until she began sharing her stories – sometimes sobering, sometimes inspiring – that I stepped beyond my first introduction to Myanmar.

I remember sitting around my table after a Sabbath lunch with friends, still nibbling on slivers from May's papaya salad and savoring its tanginess. As we chatted, May added a comment here and there related to her home country. First it was one question from the group, then another and another until we sat like fascinated children at story time as she shared memories of her childhood, her father's tireless and challenging work as a pastor and the limitations which guide the work there. Some of what she shared was hard to imagine and other parts made us want to jump up and do something to help.

Later I realized that May's papaya salad and the work in Myanmar have much in common. It's work - hard work - to make the salad. You need a special tool similar to a wavy or julienne peeler. After peeling the green papayas, you use the tool to scrape against the papaya and begin to shred and shred and shred the papaya.

It seems unending – all that work for just a few shreds at a time- but you keep going. You stop from time to time when your arms are tired and then it's best not to look at how little you've shredded. Too much bowl and too little shreds can make you want to give up. You begin again with the shredding, shredding, shredding.

When you finally finish all the shredding and you have a half-bowl of airy, delicate papaya shreds, you think, "I will only do this once in my life and I've done it so never again. Too much work!"

But then, after you've mixed the rest of the ingredients, you take that first bite and spicy, sweet, sour deliciousness explodes in

your mouth and you're tempted to gobble down the entire half-bowl before anyone else interrupts your feast! Well, perhaps that won't be or hasn't been your experience but I know some can relate. Since you're now not willing to give up despite the work involved, you make a different plan. Next time you invite your friends to a papaya salad making party and together you sit and visit and laugh and cry and shred, shred, shred. You have learned one of the secrets of papaya salad pros – Don't try to do it alone.

So too we can learn the secrets of those persevering leaders and laity in Myanmar. Through the years, it would have been easier to give up and shrink back into the shadows, focusing just on their own experiences as individuals. They didn't. They continued their work – hard work – day after day, month after month, year after year. They clung to Jesus and encouraged one another, even when the

numbers were small and the results discouraging. Together, they endured the sour times, the saltiness of their tears, and the challenge of a young-like-a-green-papaya church to taste the sweetness of seeing others know and grow in God. From that recipe God is creating exciting times in Myanmar now, times of action with many projects and events that meet the needs of those around them.

So, take some time and read through the features, take a good look at the faces, and ask God to help you see the lessons He has for you in the stories from Myanmar. Oh, and won't you join with our brothers and sisters in Myanmar by praying for some of the projects featured and challenges shared in this issue? Because, after all, papaya salad is not meant to be made or eaten alone. The same is true for the work of God – in Myanmar, around the world and in your neighborhood.

RECIPE

May's Papaya Salad (Som Tom)

The key to this salad is to use the freshest ingredients possible and eat right away. For the shredding, it's best to use a special peeler/shredder that creates very fine shreds. They are available in Thailand but you can also find them in some Asian stores.

1 green papaya, peeled ● 1 handful string (green) beans – maybe less than 1/8 k ● 1 kangkong or spinach ● 3 or so kalamansi (tiny limes) – enough to have 1 tsp juice total

■ CONTINUE ON PAGE 17

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's a privilege to express the vision set for the work in Myanmar and the implementation that is to be realized. As Buddhism is the most dominant religion in all of this country, there are four target ethnic groups (Myanmar, Mon, Yakhine, Shan) for the gospel to be reached. Though the population of ethnic groups is lessening for various reasons, we have the vision of introducing each of them to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs with the goal of them accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

One of the best ways for this vision to be a reality is through education. We now have schools providing good education union-wide and more schools will be added to the present number once circumstances permit. Our schools provide young people with education that may strengthen them to achieve their goals in life. They are the ones being encouraged to one day carry the unique Adventist message to the people. It is because of this vision we are interested in encouraging holistic education in all five missions.

Our vision has been implemented in some unentered areas but places that have religious misunderstandings about our beliefs have been most difficult to enter. However, we

have faith that many good goals will be accomplished in Myanmar if all of us put our hearts together and seek our Father who always cares and loves us.

■ PR. MEMORY TUN

The beginning of Adventism in Myanmar

FEATURED COUNTRY

In order to better understand the beginning of Adventism in Myanmar, we must go further back to the beginning of Christianity in Myanmar. For as Adventists, our connection goes back to one, and perhaps the most famous, of the American missionaries to Myanmar: Adoniram Judson. He and a group of spiritually-minded classmates from Andover Theological Seminary in Boston, Massachusetts felt God's guiding to go overseas as missionaries. They approached the leaders of their Congregationalist church and displayed such earnestness that the leaders formed the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions so they could send devoted young people like them as missionaries.

Thus, on February 19, Adoniram, his new wife Ann and three other missionaries sailed to India and spent a year there trying to spread the gospel. However, local and foreign leaders did not want Christianity in the area so eventually the group was forced to leave India. The Judsons then continued onto Myanmar (Burma). The Judsons started their mission work in Burma on July 14, 1813 as part of a Baptist mission group.

After more than three years studying the challenging Burmese language, Adoniram built a small hut near the crowded street and shared the love of Christ with passersby. He also learned the Burmese Sanskrit and books of Buddhism, the key religious books there. He began translating the Bible from Hebrew to the Burmese language. He also changed his name to "Yu-Dah-Thau, a Burmese version of Judson.

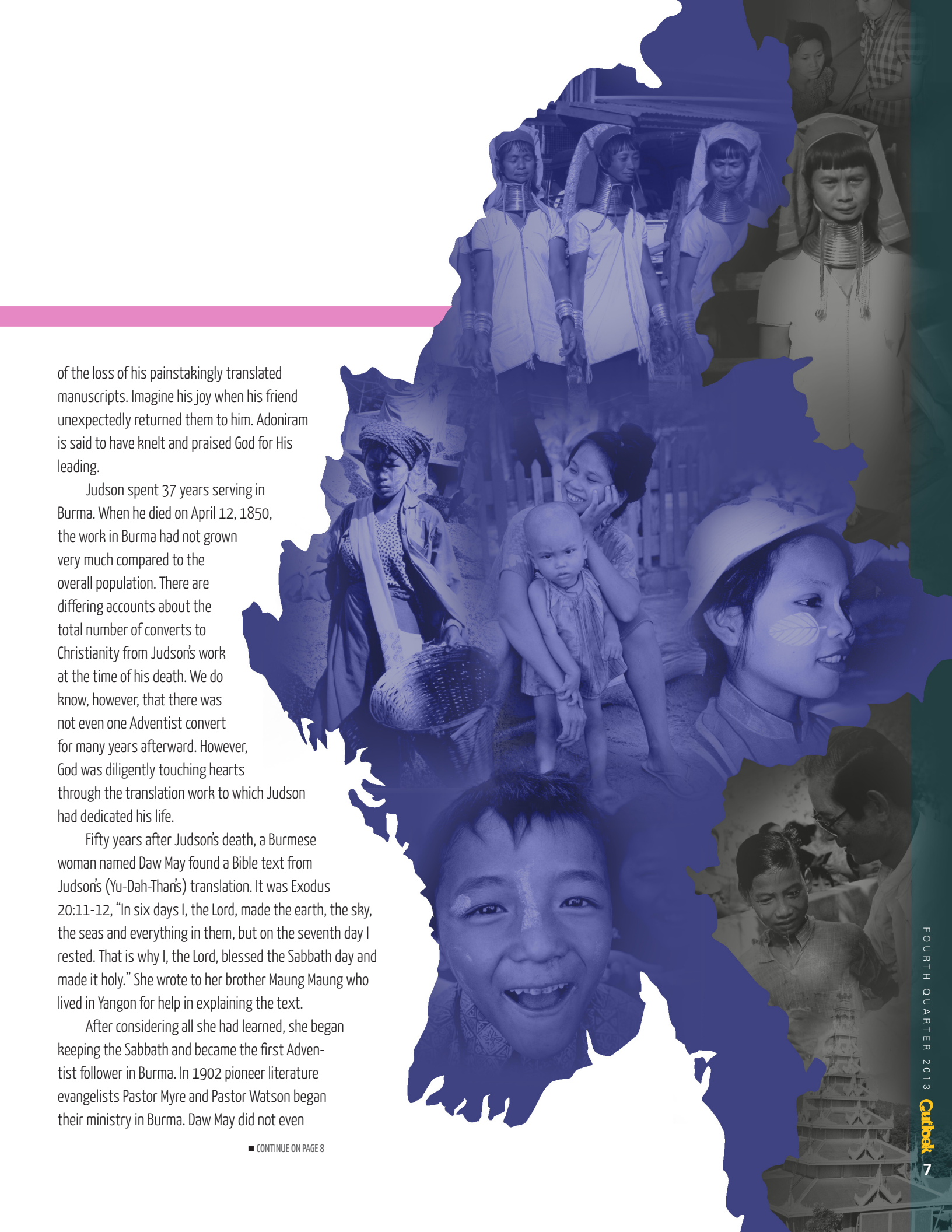
He and his wife experienced many troubles, terrible events and difficulties in

their missionary work such as the persecution in India, the miscarriage of their first child while traveling to Burma and the death of their second child at eight months while in Burma. It seemed that there couldn't be more heartache, but one of their greatest challenges was when Judson was imprisoned during the war between Great Britain and Burma. On June 8, 1824, soldiers entered the mission compound, manhandled Judson and dragged him away to prison. He was so afraid of losing his precious Bible translations but thankfully the soldiers didn't take them. Ann hid the transcripts in a pillow she made and then later she took it to Adoniram in prison. Being the brave missionary she was, she moved herself and their newborn third child to a small hut next to the prison so she could continue to petition for her husband's release.

Judson was sent to another prison in 1825 but the pillow containing his translation work was accidentally left in the first. Years later a friend visited the prison and found the pillow. Recognizing it as Judson's, the friend took it for safekeeping. After 17 months, Judson was released from prison and he returned to his evangelistic ways. His joy for his freedom and work was turned to sorrow, however, when his beloved Ann died from smallpox in October 1826 and their little daughter died six months later.

After a year of mourning, he regained his enthusiasm for missions. He thought then





of the loss of his painstakingly translated manuscripts. Imagine his joy when his friend unexpectedly returned them to him. Adoniram is said to have knelt and praised God for His leading.

Judson spent 37 years serving in Burma. When he died on April 12, 1850, the work in Burma had not grown very much compared to the overall population. There are differing accounts about the total number of converts to Christianity from Judson's work at the time of his death. We do know, however, that there was not even one Adventist convert for many years afterward. However, God was diligently touching hearts through the translation work to which Judson had dedicated his life.

Fifty years after Judson's death, a Burmese woman named Daw May found a Bible text from Judson's (Yu-Dah-Tha's) translation. It was Exodus 20:11-12, "In six days I, the Lord, made the earth, the sky, the seas and everything in them, but on the seventh day I rested. That is why I, the Lord, blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." She wrote to her brother Maung Maung who lived in Yangon for help in explaining the text.

After considering all she had learned, she began keeping the Sabbath and became the first Adventist follower in Burma. In 1902 pioneer literature evangelists Pastor Myre and Pastor Watson began their ministry in Burma. Daw May did not even

■ CONTINUE ON PAGE 8

The beginning of Adventism in Myanmar

know there were Adventists in other parts of the world until 1903 when the two pastors reached her area of Mawlamyain. She was so happy to learn she was not alone in her faith and enjoyed the opportunity to discuss Adventist beliefs with them. As for Myre and Watson, the time spent with Daw May must have motivated them to visit Daw May's brother, Maung Maung, in Yangon. As a result, they began Bible studies with him and he accepted the truth about the Sabbath and other beliefs. He then left his government service job so he could follow his new beliefs.

In effect, he chose the truth over the job benefits and prestige. Even though he left government work and was faithfully keeping the Sabbath, he had not yet been baptized. Pastor Myre helped him to attend the first Adventist campmeeting in Calutta, India in 1904. Due to the greater number of missionaries available at that event, he was convinced to be baptized there. In addition, he entreated them to send a missionary to Burma to help the fledgling work to grow. His enthusiasm and whole-hearted pleas touched the leaders' hearts and they agreed to send missionaries.

According to the Historical Dictionary of Seventh-day Adventists, the first school was established in 1909 and mission work began among the Karen in 1915 and the Taungthu in 1924. Legendary Adventist missionary Eric B. Hare thrilled children of all ages with his mission stories gleaned from his almost 20 years of service in Burma from 1915 to 1934. The church slowly grew so that a look at the work in 1922 revealed 182 members scattered among six churches. Material was also being published in the Burmese and Karen languages. Fast forward to World War II and we'll see that while the missionaries were expelled from the country, they returned to set up a hospital and publishing center in Rangoon. They also reopened a number of schools that had been closed during the war. In 1962 when a national revolution closed the country to foreign missionaries, there were hopes that missionaries could eventually return as they did after WW II. However, 50 years have passed and this has not yet happened. In spite of this, the work in Myanmar flourishes thanks to the faithful members and local leaders who have sacrificed much to keep an Adventist presence alive there. As of 2013, Myanmar had 227 churches and 30,848 members.

Daw May and others who were among the first to worship as Adventists in Myanmar rejoiced over the news of Maung Maung's successful trip to India. Later Maung Maung continued to serve as a foundational member of the Adventist work in Burma and was the first ordained local pastor.

Today as Myanmar experiences significant change, may the Adventist church do its part to meet the needs of the people through its community service work, health education and whatever other avenues the Lord may open there.

References: MUAM reports, oral history and The Historical Dictionary of Seventh-day Adventists by Gary Land. ■ COMPILED BY MAUNG MAUNG MYO CHAN



ADRA Myanmar improves village quality of life

STORIES OF INSPIRATION

May Phyu village is situated in the Nyaung Shwe township in the southern Shan state. It has 80 households with a population of 450. Illiteracy, poor sanitation and limited personal hygiene were the biggest challenges in this village. Due to the lack of pure water, villagers had to depend on rain water collected during rainy season thus creating the sanitation and hygiene problems.

Deforestation, erosion and cultivation have caused the once adequate water spring sources to dry up or become blocked. As a result, villagers had to walk three hours just to get one bucket of water from a far pond or even down to a stream. The water from the pond was very dirty from all the waste collected on the surface but there was no better option and during the warm summer months, that pond would always dry up.

However, ADRA Myanmar has provided a solution with their construction of one large rain water collection tank (about 6000g) and 60 small water collection tanks (130g). During rainy season, the villagers can collect water from the roof as there are now rain gutters that connect to these small household water tanks. Thus, the villagers do not need to go and fetch water any more like before. This has really saved them time which they can apply to their farm work. In addition, the ADRA Myanmar staff also taught them how to do masonry work, and how to maintain and construct more rain



ADRA Myanmar assisted May Phyu villagers in establishing and maintaining seed and fertilizer banks for the benefit of the entire community. [Photo courtesy of ADRA Myanmar]



(people on sloping field): May Phyu villagers develop their challenging landscape for cultivation maize and ground nuts using the Sloping Land Agriculture Technology Training and Model Plot Installation (SALT/MPI) programs.

systems.

In terms of health, ADRA taught hygiene classes and installed a Fly Proof Latrine (FPL) to reduce the spread of disease. Training was also conducted for various programs such as Seed Bank, Tool Bank, SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology), Farmer Field School, Cash Crop distribution, nursery greenhouse, waste

management, environmental protection and soil conservation.

The villagers are now running successful programs in low-cost, organic fertilizer production and seed cultivation. Future plans include training the women to generate income through knitting and food preservation activities. ■ ADRA MYANMAR

Finding Hope After Tragedy

STORIES OF INSPIRATION

My name is U Zaw Min Htwe. My family and I led a simple life and things seemed like they would always stay the way they were. Back then, our village had 115 households with a population of 598. Our main livelihood was harvesting the marine produce from the nearby ocean. In those days we had a decent economy.

And then came Cyclone Nargis in 2008. It was the worst natural disaster in my country's history. It destroyed our properties and natural resources and left us with a population of 210 people. I lost my wife and a son during Nargis, and we are still struggling to recover.

I became involved in local and international NGOs when they came to our village. So when ADRA Myanmar distributed food and other necessities, I began working with them. Helping others was one way I gained some peace of mind in the midst of my grief.

After the distribution process, ADRA returned with rebuilding projects. I wanted to continue my participation because of the good I saw being done. I participated in several projects include the SCALE UP (Sustainable Community Alternative Livelihood Enhancement to Undermine Poverty) one in which I worked as a casual laborer in mangrove rehabilitation and protection.

I continued to attend trainings conducted by ADRA. In the year 2012, I joined ADRA Myanmar as a community volunteer. The good practice of attending trainings, learning from the projects and working with the project staff had built up my skills, strengthened my confidence and improved my happiness. In this way, I came to know the art of communicating with community members and dealing with all types of people. My constant interaction with the community paved the way to a changed life.

In 2013, there was an election held in my village for the position of administrator as a part of national political transformation and transition. Imagine my surprise when I was elected as the administrator! After the election, I began working to help improve my village. In July 2013, I coordinated and participated in 50 acres of windbreak plantation and 40 acres of weeding at the previous year's plantation site. Together with villagers from 40 households,

U Zaw Min Htwe's life changed when he met ADRA Myanmar volunteers after cyclone Nargis.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ADRA MYANMAR



we established the mangrove nursery in the village as part of the project activities. As a result, my villagers now receive good income for their families while we are also improving the environmental assets in our village.

Because I gained much benefit from my involvement with ADRA, I encouraged my fellow villagers to attend the trainings. In July 2013 ADRA Myanmar honored me with an award for outstanding performance in project and development activities. As a result, I was selected to attend the nursery garden establishment and management training held in Labutta. This new knowledge will help my village to improve even more.

Thanks to ADRA, I have now devoted the rest of my life to the service of my community by working as a community volunteer on projects and as an administrator for my village.

■ AS TOLD TO WIN KO KO AYE/BAWN ZUNG/SEIN MYINT, ADRA MYANMAR



SAN HTAY PREPARES PRODUCTS AT HOME FOR HER SMALL BUSINESS IN CHAUNG NAR TAIK VILLAGE.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ADRA MYANMAR

New Life in the Dry Zone

San Htay lives in Chaung Nar Taik village in the dry zone land of central Myanmar. Poverty levels are high in this challenging area. However, ADRA Myanmar is working to meet some of those challenges.

A few years ago San Htay attended a basic food livelihood training provided by ADRA Myanmar and learned how to make and sell food in her village. She began doing this and now earns 60,000 MMK as profit per month. To maintain her skills, she has attended a refresher course and Small Enterprise Management (SEM) training. A year or so ago, her efforts earned her a startup financial award so she could invest more and further her business. She has done so well that she is now a successful small business owner

and her husband helps her in her business. They are currently expanding their food production and look forward to the future with hope.

Before attending the ADRA training, her family was solely dependent upon her husband's farm worker earnings. Thanks to ADRA and San's efforts, her two older children are now able to attend school. The changes brought by the ADRA programs are giving this family and others in Myanmar opportunities to create new lives for themselves and their children. ■ ADRA MYANMAR

Inspiring Institution

STORIES OF INSPIRATION

Pearl Health Center Offers Positive Life Changes

My country of Burma has over 56.6 million people that include 135 national groups, speaking over 100 languages and dialects. About 89.4% of the population is Buddhist, 3% are Christian, and only .03% know the Three Angels messages and other important Biblical truth for the last days.

His love for my people, prompted us to use health ministry as a main approach in reaching the people here.

Thanks to the Adventist church's regional headquarters in Southern Asia-Pacific (SSD) and its Health Ministries department, the Myanmar Union Mission (MYUM) administration, the Adventist Southeast Asia Projects (ASAP Ministries) donors and Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries (ASI), we were able to establish the Pearl Health Center in the Yangon



as a result of attending the newstart program at the pearl health center, this man learned about christ and now comes to church quite often.

(photos courtesy of htway lay)



Before beginning our unique ministry, we prayerfully considered the big challenge before us, especially how to reach the Burmese in the big cities. We know God is intensely interested in our total well-being. His detailed health instructions in the Bible and Ellen White's writings, along with

district. By God's grace, we have conducted health training fourteen times since November 2010. One hundred and eighteen workers have been trained and gone into the many regions of the country. In fact, we just finished our 14th medical missionary training. We have also given treatments to over 60 health guests at our facility. The goals of our team are to increase the physical, mental and spiritual health of our patients and to encourage them to adopt health habits that will stay with them for a lifetime.

We credit the success stories of each patient that has attended our health care sessions to Jesus and His healing power. For instance, one Adventist couple came because the husband had hypertension, heart problems, and gout. His ankles and toes were so swollen, he could hardly walk. His wife was diabetic. Our group prayerfully managed their health prob-



"i used to be a drunkard," says u san te. "my sister who is an adventist sent me to phc to learn more about the bible. i came three times and now i am free from alcohol, and i'm still learning more about bible truth."



these ladies say, "we love the food here. it is simple, healthy and tasty." the one on the left attended the newstart training and has since been asked by catholic nuns in her area to give a presentation about newstart.

lems through natural ways of healing alone. Although they brought their conventional medication with them, they chose not to take it during their stay. Their health improved greatly. During the meeting on the last night the wife tearfully said, "We will never forget this experience and all we have learned about the Lord through the humble service of the young, dedicated medical missionaries. Thank you!" This couple have stopped attending church and had become very negative towards church leadership. After coming to the Pearl Health Center, God took away their bitterness and anger. Now they both attend church regularly and are praising God for His healing ways!

Pearl Health Center is becoming a center of influence in Yangon City. We believe it is because God cares not only about our spiritual

health and salvation but also about our physical health and well-being. We can see that He is using these avenues to reach those who need both physical and spiritual healing. We believe His words in 3 John 2,

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

For we know that He does not just wish for the people of Myanmar to live without hope but that Jesus has "come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) ■ ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY HTWAY LAY

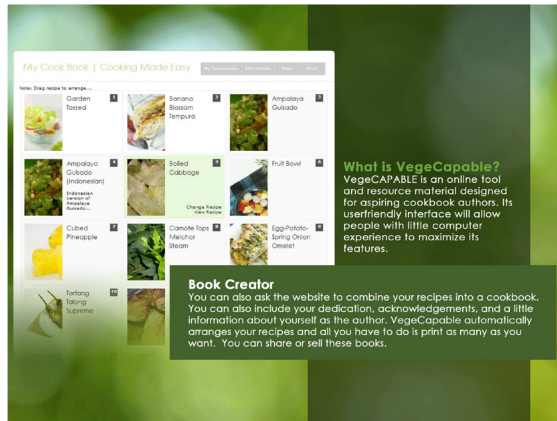
WEBSITE LAUNCHED FOR ASPIRING COOKS AND COOKBOOK AUTHORS

To address the growing interest in vegetarian cooking, the health ministries department of the Adventist church's Southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD) launched a website as an online tool and resource material for aspiring cookbook authors. www.vegecapable.com has a user-friendly interface that allows people with little computer experience to cook and make cook books.

Its features include the Vegetarian Food Analysis which provides a plant food's nutritional value. The user can encode the amount of food in grams, indicate its size and can even localize the name of the food. A Recipe Maker allows the user to combine food items into a recipe. The nutritional value of the ingredients in the recipe will appear with the instructions.

The user can then organize his recipes and make a cookbook with the Book Creator feature. The author can include a dedication, acknowledgements, and personal information. The website automatically arrange recipes, making it print ready. Thus, an author can easily share his cookbook with family and friends or use it for fundraising projects.

■ GAY DELES



To complement and promote the new website, enhanced training was recently offered in Indonesia and the southern Philippines. During the Vegecapable training, organizers offered health-related morning devotionals to emphasize the value of the health message. Seminar topics included vegetarianism issues, nutrient conservation, food and nutrition principles, diet and disease, recipe modification, menu multiplication, food and table beautification and cookbook writing as well as a VegeCapable hands-on tutorial. Abraham Carpena, SSD Health Ministries director notes that, "Participants



were taught food photography techniques for display or for publication even when using cell phone cameras. Lectures were offered on basic and advanced nutrition to enhance the understanding of how food is assimilated by the body.

Table setting and food presentations were also taught to make food more appetizing to the young eyes." Parts of the presentations in the southern Philippines were filmed by the local Hope channel crew to introduce the concept to church and community members in the area.

With the motto Making You Capable, Vegecapable is an innovative way to promote healthy lifestyles among foodies and community groups. For more information, go to www.vegecapable.com

7.2 QUAKE HITS CENTRAL PHILIPPINES

■ MOISES MUSICO/GAY DELES/TERESA COSTELLO

While the Philippine nation observed the Feast of Sacrifice holiday with its Islam brethren on October 15, a 7.2 earthquake struck the islands of Bohol at twelve past eight in the morning sending aftershocks to surrounding island provinces like Cebu, Misamis



SHIFTED PAVEMENT ON A HIGHWAY AFTER A 7.2 MAGNITUDE QUAKE HIT THE CENTRAL PHILIPPINE ISLAND OF BOHOL ON OCTOBER 15 WITH A DEATH TOLL OF 222. [PHOTO BY MOISES MUSICO, ADRA-PHILIPPINES]

Oriental and Negros Oriental, injuring 976 and killing approximately 222.

The intensity of the quake caused window breakage and cracked concrete at the Adventist Hospital-Cebu, according to Elmer Manatad, treasurer of the church union headquarters in the central Philippines (CPUC). Patients from the 3rd and 4th floors were moved to the ground floor to ensure safety. Some were kept in shelters and in a church across from the hospital building.

The local Adventist high school, East Visayan Academy (EVA), in the nearby town of Talisay suffered cracked walls and detached ceilings. EVA registrar, Michelle Nogra notes that due to the holiday, classes were not in session and thus students were not in danger at the site during the quake. Students were advised to remain at home until further notice while structural engineers were contacted to inspect the damages as ordered by the provincial leaders.

The Capitol Seventh-day Adventist Church in Cebu was the only Adventist church to report damage but a number of Adventist families in the affected area were displaced and needed assistance to rebuild their lives.

Although airports and seaports in Bohol and Cebu City were operational, on-the-ground communication, transportation and responses were greatly affected. In spite of these obstacles, Pastors Eliezer Barlizo and Lelord Arranguez, president and communication director of the Adventist church headquarters in central Visayas (CVC), flew to Bohol with other CVC personnel to distribute 1800 packs of food, drinking water and medicine to aid 1800 families in the municipalities of Maribojoc, San Isidro, Antiguera, Inabanga, Tubigon and Carmen. The relief operation was a combination of the CVC donation and the work of local Adventist church brethren in coordinating the purchase of goods, providing information

and supplying four-wheel-drive vehicles to surmount challenging roads. With more than 670,000 people affected and 75,140 people displaced, survivors' immediate needs were also the priority of ADRA Philippines. ADRA worked closely with the church leaders in central Visayas (CVC) and the local Adventist church in Tagbilaran, the capital of Bohol. Motorbikes and trucks were mobilized to transport volunteers and relief goods to villages.

528 families in Bohol received ADRA food aid valued at 626,564 Php and the ADRA Network sent additional support and funding to provide food packs for another 380 families in two of hardest-hit barangays there. Families living in evacuation centers were very happy for the food packs they received.

In the weeks that followed the quake, the toll was still visible. During the annual meetings at the headquarters of the Adventist church

in the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD) in Silang, Cavite, Philippines, CPUC treasurer Elmer Manatad related that three weeks after the trauma, many people in Bohol and Cebu still didn't know how to start life again. Manatad further told about farmers who struggled with their businesses and how an Adventist worker who lost his home still slept in the car with his family for fear of aftershocks.

Teresita Zabata, a dietary department worker at the Cebu Adventist Hospital, can relate. She noted that "at the time of the earthquake, I was at work and I thought it was the last days of our lives. It sounded like a bomb and everything was shaking. We tried to get outside but it was hard with everything shaking. We made it. But now, weeks later, sometimes the aftershocks are so strong, I cannot concentrate because I keep thinking back to the big one. (If I'm inside) It makes me want to run outside to get away because the trauma is still there."

There are many other untold stories like this. Thankfully, the combined efforts of local churches and Adventist groups continue to bring hope to those who have been most affected.

CPUC oversees more than 1,200 churches in central Philippines with a membership of over 166,000 members.



ADRA PHILIPPINES RESPONDED QUICKLY TO EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS BY PROVIDING FOOD PACKS IN BOHOL. [PHOTO COURTESY OF ADRA PHILIPPINES]



Thailand Mission hosts orientation visit for Catholic churches

■ PASTOR CHANCHAI KIATYANYONG, TAM PRESIDENT

At the beginning of October, the Adventist headquarters in Thailand (TAM) received a unique request from ten Catholic churches in Bangkok to visit TAM on October 19. In

response, the officers and department leaders gathered together, prayed and organized the presentation for the visit. The original plan was for the group to visit on Sabbath morning and attend the worship service but there was a scheduling conflict and so they requested a Saturday afternoon visit.

During the meeting at the Ekamai Adventist School auditorium, TAM Health Ministries director Pastor Surachet Insom presented a brief history of the Adventist church including the beginning of Adventist work in Thailand,

the health message, our education system, our current community service and how we reach out to the Buddhists throughout Thailand.

After the presentation, the leader of the group told us that they had never heard anything like this about Seventh-day Adventists. They learned that the Adventist church is giving and living a wonderful Bible-based message. We pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to work with these interested representatives and they will continue to think about what they learned during their visit.



“Hope” brings Adventists together despite storm

■ CLC COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

Elder Ted Wilson as speaker for the two-week evangelism series to be held on May. Also present were the officers and delegates from the Adventist world church's General Conference, Southern Asia-Pacific Division, North Philippine Union Conference, South Central Luzon Conference, and Central Luzon Conference.

The host conference highlighted the preparation and activities of each department and sector that will contribute to next year's big event. Included were the Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle, Care groups, medical outposts, fellowships, and community services. Elder Wilson commended and appreciated the efforts done for the preparation during the Hour of Worship. **“I was thrilled to see such initiatives from our brethren. It is not by our own might or action but by the power of the Holy Spirit. All praises and glory to Him only!”**

The service ended with the glorious congregational singing of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.” Everyone was blessed, empowered, and committed to the Great Commission of proclaiming the Gospel, and to give hope in the major cities.



WORLD PRESIDENT TED WILSON CHALLENGES ATTENDEES AT THE METRO MANILA PRAISE PROGRAM AT CUNETA ARENA ON NOVEMBER 9 TO REACH OUT TO THEIR COMMUNITIES. [PHOTO COURTESY OF CLC COMMUNICATION]

“At the midnight cry, we'll be going home!” Those where the words of the musical offering “Midnight Cry” sang by the Central Luzon Conference Mass Choir and Adventist University of the Philippines/Philippine International Church that shook Cuneta Astrodome last November 9 during the Metro Manila Praise Program Sabbath

Fellowship.

Despite threats of the super typhoon “Yolanda” since Thursday, November 7, over 8,000 Seventh-day Adventists filled the Big Dome lifting praises to God. Its focus launched last March was the upcoming Hope Manila 2014:iCare with General Conference president

FOR SAUCE:

2 Tbsps soy sauce ● Sprinkle of white sesame seeds ● 1-2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced (*less if you want a milder taste, more if you like garlic*) ● 1-2 fresh red chilis... crushed (*less if you don't like spicy*) ● Sprinkle of salt ● Sprinkle of mushroom powder (*or brown sugar*) ● ginger or basil if preferred (*ginger – grated or finely chopped/ basil – cut in thin ribbons*)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Use a tool to finely shred the papaya (Stop if you get close to the inside. You will see the white, small seeds). Soak the shreds in ice water. Drain just before mixing with other ingredients.
2. Cut the string beans in bite-size pieces. If preferred, you can quickly blanch the green beans in boiling water for just about two minutes, drain and then put in ice cold water to cool.
3. Soak clean kangkong in salted water. Rinse well. Cut into 5 inch long segments.
4. Cut each kalamansi in half and squeeze enough juice for 1 tsp total.
5. For sauce, mix all ingredients together and taste. Adjust ingredients to taste. It should be a delicious combination of sour, spicy, salty and a little salty. Very refreshing and habit-forming!
6. Mix all fresh ingredients with sauce until coated. Serve immediately.

SERVES 4 PEOPLE OR 2 VERY HUNGRY ONES.

FIELD NEWS



World president encourages leaders during SSD annual meetings

■ TERESA COSTELLO

During the annual meetings at the headquarters of the Adventist church in the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD) in Silang, Cavite, Philippines, administrative leaders representing the Adventist church in the 14 countries of SSD's territory met for a week of reports, planning sessions and spiritual enrichment. An additional highlight for the November 4-9 meetings was the presence of world church president Elder Ted Wilson.

Each morning began with a devotional and sharing time. Leaders then separated to meet with others in their specific ministries to share reports of the previous year and plans for the next year. Leaders also gathered together for group seminars on topics such as family health, using media in ministry and the Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle program.

Wilson was the week's main speaker and

in his devotional messages, he encouraged and inspired the attendees with his practical messages and emphasis on servant leadership. He reminded them that *"...as we live, there is no limit to what God can do through you, with Christ as the source of all power. We can only be filled with the power of heaven if we humble ourselves."*

The main meetings ended with the Metro Manila Praise program at the Cuneta astrodome on November 9. Annual Council attendees joined 10,000 local leaders and laity for a Sabbath of inspiring testimonies, music and exhortation to share Jesus with their communities in preparation for Hope Manila 2014.



Southern Asia-Pacific division leads world in membership growth rate

■ EDWIN MANUEL GARCIA/ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

During the October 15, 2013 Annual Council, a yearly gathering of world-wide Seventh-day Adventist church leaders, church growth and the evangelistic efforts within the Southern Asia-Pacific Division were highlighted.

One of the brightest spots in rising membership in 2012 occurred in the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, which reported the fastest

growth rate, at 7 percent.

Southern Asia-Pacific President Alberto C. Gulfan Jr. told ANN that most of the growth is occurring in the Philippines, which is undergoing a neighborhood-based evangelism campaign that is being credited for some of the 80,000 baptisms since 2011.

The care-group ministry program, called

Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle, consists of an Adventist family praying for a family in their neighborhood, and inviting the family to a weekly study of health principles, family life matters and, later, Bible study.

"It's catching fire," Gulfan said. *"We are seeing that in South Philippines, where the growth is fastest and largest. It's because they have strongly implemented the program of the Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle."*

TYPHOON HAIYAN: Dedication and Resiliency amidst Destruction

Adventists bring hope and help to typhoon Haiyan survivors

■ GAY DELES/TERESA COSTELLO/ADRA PHILIPPINES

Super-typhoon Haiyan, locally known as Yolanda, swept through the Visayas region in the central portion of the Philippines on November 8. With 9.8 million residents affected, over 6,000 dead and 4.1 million displaced, Haiyan devastated the area with its deluge of rain, high winds and massive waves that swept inland. In addition, a moderate 4.8 earthquake occurred some 40 miles south of the typhoon-hit area on November 12 thus adding to the trauma of survivors.

In the aftermath of super-typhoon Haiyan, most of the media attention centered on Tacloban, the worst-hit city on the island of Leyte. The damage and destruction in this city was indescribable. With no food or water, desperate survivors broke into shopping malls and stores. Looting became rampant. In response, Benigno Aquino III, president of the Philippines, deployed national military personnel to the area to re-establish a sense of order. After appealing for international assistance, the country also utilized United States military personnel who were deployed to the area.

While international attention remained on Tacloban, local Adventist groups and individuals began assisting not only in Tacloban, but also in other stricken areas. According to Agapito Catane Jr, president of the Adventist church in central Philippines (CPUC), “the CPUC Administrative Committee formed a Disaster and Relief Operation Structure and the three Adventist hospital presidents in Cebu, Calbayog and Bacolod were chosen to serve as coordinators for medical aid in affected areas. In the evening of November 16 we sent a vehicle with five containers of diesel, tools and other supplies. We assigned an L300 van to the East Visayan Conference (EVC) in Tacloban so that they can more easily mobilize their teams and reach the most needy families. On November 19, the Adventist Emergency Rescue Unit and medical team from Bacolod went to Tacloban. Trans-Asia Indonesia, a shipping company, left for Tacloban on November 20 and we loaded two to three vehicles with rice and canned goods for the trip.”

Catane was grateful for the urgent desire to help that he saw in international and local volunteers. “Workers from the Adventist Devel-





For inquiries or for those who desire to help, please contact ADRA Philippines office at +63 46 4142464 or +63 46 4140146. For the most current updates regarding Adventist relief work, go to www.facebook.com/adraph

FOR BANK DONATIONS:

BANCO DE ORO (BDO):
 Name: Central Philippine Union Conference
 Dollar Account: 6090062234
 SWIFTCODE: BNRPHMM
 ATTN: Mr. Elmer Manatad, CPUC Treasurer

opment and Relief Agency (ADRA) International-Germany and volunteers traveled to northern Cebu to distribute relief goods. From there they met ADRA Philippines personnel in Ilo-ilo to continue the relief operation there,” noted Catane with appreciation.

Cindy Bankhead, ADRA Philippines interim director, identified water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) kits as a priority need for those affected in the entire region. Moises Musico, ADRA Philippines emergency coordinator, reported that northern Cebu survivors lacked shelter. “The number one priority is emergency shelter, like tarpaulins and tents,” explained Musico. “The next priority is food, because most of their livelihood and source of income are totally damaged. Lighting like solar lamps, flash lights, candles, or emergency lights with batteries are also badly needed at night because most of the electric posts collapsed.”

In the area surrounding Tacloban, Adventist individuals gave assistance to the survivors in more isolated islands such as Panay, Samar and north Palawan that also sustained extensive damage. Wendy Harris of Philippine Adventist

Medical Aviation Services (PAMAS) and Gospel Ministries International (GMI) reported that PAMAS and GMI helped government officials from the local social welfare department bring relief goods to this unreachable area via PAMAS aircraft over the weekend. Harris was part of an Adventist team that surveyed the damaged islands in north Panay that had not yet been served at that point due to the needs on Tacloban.

In terms of Adventist institutions, the Adventist hospital in Calbayog, Samar Province sustained some typhoon damage but remained open to serve the medical needs of the community. As families continue to bring deceased relatives there, it also functioned as a temporary morgue. Dodong Tornado, president of the Calbayog Adventist Sanitarium, was in Tacloban to verify specific on-site medical needs. There was an urgent need for embalmers to help prevent further spread of typhoon-related diseases such as leptospirosis. Leptospirosis is an infection transmitted from animals to people via water contaminated by animal fluids. Supplies such as tetanus toxoid shots to control prevailing cases of infection, and antibiotics to treat the

leptospirosis problem were also needed.

Sister institutions such as the Bacolod Adventist Medical Center (BAMC) responded to the immediate needs of church members as well. BAMC raised funds for rice and canned goods for EVC. Staff member Jo Ann Amparo traveled with the BAMC disaster response team as part of The Pool of Bethesda Foundation Inc. to Cadiz, north of Negros Occidental. She noted in her Facebook post that they were blessed to give relief goods and words of encouragement to those in the typhoon-affected area nearest Bacolod.

Reports of property damage included 11 Adventist churches in Central Visayan Conference which were either badly damaged or destroyed, along with three additional churches on Vanityas Island that were completely destroyed. In spite of significant damage, the headquarters of the East Visayan Conference (EVC) remains standing; however, the adjacent elementary school and guest houses were washed away in the tidal surge. In a Facebook post, church member Douren Espina described the situation at the EVC headquarters during the typhoon. “When a big wave hit the island, it flooded the conference office to the ceiling of the 2nd floor, submerged the church and the school and flattened the compound,” she wrote. “Some who sought ...shelter at the office building were (among those) spared.”

The EVC office grounds were being cleared in order to provide a center for relief operations and medical assistance. The process was slow



■ CONTINUE ON PAGE 20

... Adventists bring hope and help to typhoon Haiyan survivors

because Adventist members were also trying to save the remains of what were once their homes near EVC.

In Ormoc City, the province's second largest city located approximately 105 km from Tacloban, "two thousand Adventist families were homeless and twenty-four churches in the district were damaged by the storm," according to church member Trexi Ann Bayeta. Although road debris was cleared, downed power lines made travel difficult. Lack of food, water and medical aid, especially in remote areas, remained

pressing needs.

The horrific devastation and overwhelming needs captured the hearts of Adventists worldwide. While attending the year-end meetings at the Adventist regional headquarters in the southern Asia-pacific (SSD) in the Philippines the week of the typhoon, world church president Ted Wilson shared that he was sobered by the news from the central Philippines "where the tragic typhoon has hit islands like Leyte. Let the Lord use the Adventist people, ADRA and other agencies to help those who are affected.

We would like to appeal to the people in central Philippines to hope and look forward to the Promised Land (heaven)."

Pastor Wilson was joined by millions of Adventists worldwide praying for the safety and recovery of the people in central Philippines. Meanwhile, Adventist volunteers and agencies continue to deliver goods and offer medical assistance in an attempt to restore stability and give hope to those in the affected areas.

Sabbath amid debris and damage from Typhoon Haiyan

■ GAY DELES



JOWARD BLAZA, FAR LEFT IN GREY, HELPED IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF SOME RELIEF GOODS TO ADVENTIST MEMBERS IN SUA CHURCH IN THE TOWN OF SAN DIONISIO, NORTHERN ILO-ILO. SAN DIONISIO REMAINS TO BE ONE OF THE LESSER REACHED TOWNS WITH PEOPLE NEEDING RELIEF ASSISTANCE AFTER TYPHOON HAIYAN RUINED THEIR HOUSES AND LIVELIHOOD. (PHOTO COURTESY OF JOWARD BLAZA)

As they regularly do every Saturday, church members in the typhoon-affected areas of Leyte province gathered together on Sabbath a little more than a week after the devastating November 8 typhoon Haiyan. They gathered to praise the Lord for protection while reminding one another that their friends and relatives who didn't survive the storm will be given life again by the Creator. Some, like Gail Hoylar's relatives on Bantayan island, gathered amid the debris of their churches. In a moving Facebook post,

she wrote, "Inside a barely covered church, surrounded by trees thrown to the ground; remnants of their homes scattered all over; a calm blue sea behind, the same waters that surged and covered almost half of the entire island few days before; amidst makeshift huts for shelter; my grandparents, close relatives, friends and brothers and sisters in Christ gather to worship God on this day of rest."

Others combined worship and service. Joward Blaza, an Adventist district pastor car-

ing for 20 churches in northern Ilo-ilo, shared from Sua Adventist church via text on Saturday morning that "We [they] are alright by God's grace. We set up a big canvass to provide us a roof since our church is damaged by the storm. We are now about to listen to a message before we distribute some relief goods to the brethren." The church, totally damaged by Yolanda, is located beside the sea in the town of San Dionisio, northern Ilo-ilo.

Regardless of the conditions of their homes and churches, Adventists were driven by a deeply rooted need to gather together for worship and thanksgiving. It's unimaginable what these Adventist members went through while braving one of the strongest typhoons to hit the Philippines. For them, in every moment they dig through the pile of debris to salvage what they can and in every effort they put in rebuilding their houses, they carry the sure knowledge of a God who promised to never leave them through the storms in life. In spite of the devastation, in spite of the harrowing memories, in spite of all the sorrow and death, this truth encourages them to look forward to the day in heaven when catastrophes here on earth will only be in their faintest memories and one day long forgotten.

A Little Act of Faithfulness

Di Dim is a busy mother in Myanmar who was taking classes in the capitol city of Yangon to become a teacher. She often brought her seven-year-old daughter Cing Cing along with her from Chin Hill. However, one day Cing Cing was not allowed to accompany her mother to the classes but had to stay at her uncle's house in the city and wait. Cing Cing did not like this at all. She missed her mother and wanted to be where she was. So she left her uncle's house without telling anyone and by herself headed to the Adventist office headquarters where her mother was taking classes...or so she thought.

This was her first time traveling in the great city of Yangon all by herself and it was a very big city for such a little girl. Because she was a smart little girl, she remembered the bus route taken with her mother to the headquarters from her uncle's place before. But she got confused when she came to the round-about-circle where the road diverged into six different directions.

She paused for a few moments, studying all the directions and then turned straight left. After some time, she came to a beautiful lake, surrounded by some tall trees, green bushy shrubs and flowers colorful even in the midst of a hot dry summer. She didn't remember having seen this scene on her bus ride with her mother. Not knowing what else to do, she entered the lush beautiful garden beside the lake. The farther she walked, the more she felt lost.

Finally, sitting beside the lake, she broke down into loud sobs. A tall, older man from India approached her. A little girl sitting and crying all alone with no other human being around presented just one possibility.

"Are you lost, little girl?" he asked gently.

Cing Cing looked up with her tear-filled eyes. Startled to find a big dark man, she cried more. "Nu aw, Nu aw (Mommy, Mommy!)," she wailed.

"Where do you live? Can I take you to your home?"

"Do you speak Burmese?" he kept asking.

And "Tedim, Tedim," was all poor, frightened Cing Cing could say. Born and brought up in the town of Tedim in Chin Hill, Cing Cing could speak and understand very little Burmese - a big problem in this very big city where most people spoke Burmese. So she kept saying 'Tedim' which was her mother's tongue. Somehow the man instantly understood that she belonged to a Chin tribe and took her to a Chin family in his neighborhood.

Wishing to be friendly and make the forlorn little stranger feel at home, the Chi family offered her some tea and bread.

"I don't take tea. At home we never take tea, coffee or alcohol," said Cing Cing gently but firmly as she declined their hospitality.

"Ah ha, you must be a Seventh-day Adventist. Aren't you?" asked the family. Cing Cing was surprised that they could know that so she just nodded.

Immediately, the father of the family looked up the Adventist headquarters' phone number in the yellow-page directory and gave the lost-and-found news about the little girl to the astonished workers who in turn told Cing Cing's mother.

What throbbing joy was in Cing Cing's heart as she raced into her mother's open arms an hour later. Her mother thanked the kind Chin family and Indian man profusely. Then, turning to her girl, she said, "Thank you, my darling, for being so faithful in little things. Because you refused to take the tea or coffee, they realized you were Adventist and God used this to help them quickly locate me and reunite us. In this very big city, we might never have been able to find you otherwise."

Sometimes even the smallest ways in which we are faithful can have the biggest impact in our lives. What are some ways, boys and girls, in which you can be faithful today? ■ MAHIMI SAILO

RECIPE



MYANMAR LAT THOTE SONE

This is a well-known salad sold along the roadside as a snack. It is eaten throughout Myanmar but the vegetable vary depending upon what is grown in the region. At home, it can be made in large amounts with the addition of some rice and seaweed but it is not pre-mixed. Instead each ingredient is kept separate and then mixed together depending upon the taste of the individual just before eating. Everyone seems to want a bit of the salad belonging to the person who is known as a good mixer (someone who knows how to add the perfect amount of spices and ingredients to make the most delicious salad). Lat Thote literally means a salad mixed by hand (although fans of this salad suggest using gloves for the mixing).

¼ cabbage	¼ green papaya
5 boiled potatoes (peeled if desired)	2 onions, peeled
5 lemon leaves, chopped	2 tsp lemon juice
2 cups boiled vermicelli noodles	½ cup bean sprouts
2 TBSP ground peanut or cashew powder	2 TBSP tamarind juice
Salt	1 tsp raw garlic, crushed
1 tsp olive oil	1 tsp turmeric powder
2 tomatoes	1 tbsp chopped cilantro
1 block of tofu	

DIRECTIONS:

1. Shred the cabbage and green papaya (they can be different sizes of shreds - maybe small shreds for the cabbage and large shreds for the green papaya).
2. Cut the onions into thin slices vertically (top to bottom).
3. Cut the boiled potatoes into cubes.
4. Quickly steam the bean sprouts.
5. Slice the tomatoes.
6. Slice and cook/fry tofu.
7. Mix all ingredients together by hand. Serves 4.

From the Valley of Death

YOUTHLINK

I am Ms. Khin Khin Myint, a first year student from Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary (MUAS). I am 19 and the third child out of 7 children. My family lives in the Ayeyarwaddy area of Myanmar. My mother came from a Baptist family but did not have a deep interest in God, the Creator. She followed my father's way which was animism. When my father worshipped the spirits, we all worshipped the spirits.

Our village is located beside the river so we often swim and take baths in the river. One day when I was three years old, I wanted to practice swimming. Without telling my mother, I went to the river alone and stepped into the water and tried to swim. After some time my parents noticed my absence and began searching for me. Thankfully, my uncle found me in the valley of death as I was drowning and saved my life.

I didn't have any other big experiences for the next year but then suddenly I became seriously ill. My parents took me to the astrologist and also called a witch doctor, but they couldn't help. Once again, I was in the valley of death as it seemed there was no hope for me to live. So they kept me at home without any treatment. Meanwhile, a Baptist (Christian) woman came to our house, read the promises of God and His healing power and then prayed for me. Eventually, I recovered from my sickness through the power of prayer.

When I was in grade 3 in the year 2003, Mr. Sah Kapaw came from the nearby village and gave my mother a Bible in the Karen language. I'm not sure when or how it happened but my mother began praying to God whom she did not know and started reading the Bible. It was the Holy Spirit who spoke to her and interested her, so she wanted to know more about the Bible. She had questions to which she needed answers. Mr. Sah Kapaw heard that we were interested in the Scripture so he and his wife

informed Pastor Say Lwin and Pastor Khin Maung Yin from Pathein where the Ayeyarwaddy Adventist Mission is and requested Bible studies for us.

In the month of October, 2003, my mother and all of us were baptized in the name of the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit. Our friends and relatives criticized us and gave us new names. But my mother said, "I am not discouraged by their words. God gives me strength to bear it." My dear father did not forbid us but he disagreed and was not happy with our conversion because we were different.

We (mother and children) started to pray for our father to accept Jesus Christ. It took nine years for my father to change. The happiest day in my life is December 24, 2011 for my father got baptized. After I was converted to Adventist, I was told that I could go to study in the Ayeyarwaddy Adventist Seminary (AYAS). I was very glad and I could not sleep. I passed 4th standard in the year 2005 and I was promoted in 5th standard in AYAS. Although my parents could not afford to send us to school, God has opened the way for me and I got special privilege through scholarship funds such as "Worthy", "Happy Kids", etc.

In order to help myself, I always stayed and worked in school during summer vacation because I did not have money to go home. Last summer I participated in Summer Evangelism in the nearby village called "Pwe Nyet San" where we conducted the 3 R's program. God is so good to me!!!

My favorite text in the Bible: Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Thank God for delivering me from the valley of death. He has chosen me to study, to prepare myself in MUAS and to serve Him in the near future.



“Kyaik-Pe-Long” (God-given)

“God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.” 1 John 5:11-12

I grew up in the capital town of Kayin, ethnic belonging to the group called Hpa-an in the Kayin state in Myanmar. It was a very small town with a beautiful countryside, no pollution, humble people and a population of about 30,000.

I still remember our Christian principal in the government school. He told us his given name was “Kyaik-Pe-Long”, meaning “God-given”. We asked him how he got this name and he explained that he was the only son among 7 children. He was also the last born child. His mother prayed for a son and finally God had given her a son. So she gave him this name.

In 1998, while I was doing my study in India, one of the students working in the farm with us also had this name. When I asked him about his name, he also told me that in their family he was the only son and his parent gave him this name.

Then I met an Adventist pastor in our church whose youngest baby daughter had a similar name with a meaning of God-given daughter or “Ywa-Hay-Moo”. They named her

this because her birth was so difficult for his wife and at times during the delivery the baby’s life was in danger. They knew that God gave that child to them and so they named her to honor Him.

In 2012, I visited Thailand and met with my old school mate. He has two daughters and a son, whose name is “Ywa-Hay-Tha” or God-given son. My friend told me about how his family struggled for even their basic living needs at the time and after this boy was born, it was as if blessings flowed to the family. So they gave him the name so they would always remember the blessings that came from God.

For my family, an unforgettable date was November 21, 2000 when it was discovered in her 9th week of pregnancy, that my wife had a life-threatening tubal pregnancy. Though a high percentage of women who face this problem die, the doctor operated on her and God saved her from death. She has life that can only be given by God so I call her “Kyaik-Pe-Long” (God-given) at home to remember that God gave her life back to me.

When we had a baby boy, I wanted to name him “Kyaik-Pe-Long” (God-given) and my 78 years old mother was the one who said I should. She chose the name “Ler-Pwe” meaning

“perfect or ideal” in English. When I asked her why she wanted to give this name, her answer was “God has given ideal things to our lives.” To her, God had given us a son and it is ideal for my family which God wants to be like a small heaven here on Earth.

I think of all the God-given things in our lives. God has given to all of us His perfect love and things which testify of His presence. He wants to give us a life full of happy families, encouraging friends and a good Christian environment with plenty of opportunities to witness to our neighbors, coworkers, bosses and to those in our schools and colleges. On top of that, He has given the life of Jesus Christ so that all who accept Him can enjoy perfect lives for all of eternity. What could be more perfect than that?

How can this happen? It can happen when we put Him first in all parts of our lives. It can happen when we realize that God has given us all that we ever need, and we are ideal before Him as His creatures.

[MYO CHAN IS COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR FOR THE ADVENTIST CHURCH HEADQUARTERS IN MYANMAR, ALSO KNOWN AS THE MYANMAR UNION MISSION]

