



CHILDREN'S MISSION



2023 • QUARTER 3 • TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION



AdventistMission.org



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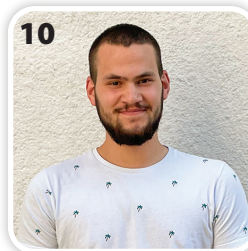
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Dear Sabbath School Leader,

Andrew McChesney
Editor



This quarter we feature the Trans-European Division, which oversees the Seventh-day Adventist Church's work in 22 countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

The region is home to 207 million people, including 88,273 Adventists. That's a ratio of one Adventist for 2,346 people.

This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will assist mission projects in Latvia and Montenegro. In Latvia, the funds will help expand Seventh-day Adventist outreach to children and families by constructing a center of influence in the capital, Riga. At the center, Pathfinders will meet; children will take part in a daycare center, languages courses, and day camps during summer vacations; families will participate in a health club and engage in sports; and the community will have access to services such as massage, dental care, hairdressing, and a laundry. In Montenegro,

the funds will help construct a youth camp in the Adriatic resort town of Zelenika. The camp, which will be located on the site of a dilapidated, nearly 90-year-old building that has long been used by Pathfinders, will serve as a center of education, spiritual development, and mission for children.

Special Features

If you want to make your Sabbath School class come alive, we offer photos and other materials to accompany each mission story. More information is provided in the sidebar with each story. For photos of tourist sites and other scenes from the featured countries, use a free photo bank such as pixabay.com or unsplash.com. You could show the photos to the children on your computer or mobile device while you read the mission story, or you could print the photos to decorate your Sabbath School room or church bulletin board.

In addition, you can download a PDF of facts and activities from the Trans-European Division at bit.ly/TED-2023. Follow us at facebook.com/missionquarterlies. You also can download the PDF version of the *Children's Mission* magazine at bit.ly/childrensmision, and Mission Spotlight videos at bit.ly/missionspotlight. A printable mission-bank image, which the children can color, can be downloaded at bit.ly/bank-coloring-page.

If you have found especially effective ways to share mission stories, please let me know at mcchesneya@gc.adventist.org.

Thank you for encouraging children to be mission-minded!

Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will support two projects in the Trans-European Division:

- Center of influence, Riga, Latvia
- Youth camp, Zelenika, Montenegro



MONTENEGRO | July 1

Luka

The Little Cook

When Luka was small, he loved to crawl around the house on his hands and knees in Montenegro. He especially loved to crawl into the kitchen and play with the pots and pans.

As he grew older, he learned how to walk, and he loved to walk around the house on his two feet. He especially loved to walk into the kitchen and help Mother cook.

When Luka started school, he had free time after doing his homework. So, he helped Mother cook meals for the family. Before long, he was cooking for the whole family all by himself. He was a great cook!

Then Father opened a café serving healthy vegetarian food, and he needed some extra help. Who did he turn to for help?

“Would you like to help us in the kitchen at the café?” Father asked Luka.

The boy nodded his head eagerly. He loved to cook!

So, Luka started getting up at 5 a.m. to read the Bible, pray, and do his morning exercises. Then, before school, he went to the café. First, he put on a gray uniform

and a white chef's hat. Then he washed his hands. After that, he got to work chopping vegetables to make a delicious dish called ratatouille. He chopped eggplant, squash, potatoes, onions, tomatoes, and sweet red peppers. He knew that he had to be careful with the sharp knife, so he didn't cut himself. After turning on a big oven, he mixed herbs with the chopped vegetables and spooned the colorful mixture into a huge baking dish. He set the timer for 45 minutes and placed the food into the oven. While the food was baking, he washed dirty dishes and prepared other food. When the ratatouille was ready, he put it in the café display case for sale. After school, Luka did his homework and returned to the café to prepare more food.

Luka loves his job. He loves to cook.

It is difficult to find healthy food for sale in Montenegro, and people who come to the café to find healthy food are surprised to see the boy in the gray uniform and white chef's hat.

“How old is he? Is he a chef?” they ask.

When they learn that he is 12, they are even more astonished. They want to know

more about him and his family. Father gives them books about the God who provides healthy food so people can live happier lives. Father invites them to Bible studies.

Not so long ago, Luka went to a gathering with Father and Mother in Serbia, and he helped cook for the people there. A doctor noticed Luka working in the kitchen, and she came to the boy.

“Who do you think is the chief doctor here?” she asked.

Luka was surprised by the question, but he knew that she was a doctor.

“Is it you?” he said.

The doctor shook her head.

“No,” she said.

Luka was confused and wondered who the chief doctor might be. Then he had an idea.

“Probably it’s God,” he said.

The doctor smiled.

“Yes,” she said. “But someone else also is an important doctor.”

Luka grew more confused, but then he had another idea.

“Is it the cook?” he said.

“Yes!” she exclaimed. “You are a doctor just like me because how you cook has a big impact on people’s health.”

Luka was happy to hear that he is both a cook and a doctor as he makes healthy meals.

“I like to help cook,” he says. “With God’s help, I like to help others.” 🌍

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a Pathfinder camp where children can

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Montenegro on the map. You can also show them the location of Zelenika, Montenegro, where this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a new Pathfinder camp. Luka lives about an hour’s drive away from the site.
- Download other photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Mission Objective No 1, “To revive the concept of worldwide mission and sacrifice for mission as a way of life involving not only pastors but every church member, young and old, in the joy of witnessing for Christ and making disciples,” and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, “To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview.” For more information: IWillGo2020.org.

learn about healthy food and God in Montenegro. Thank you for planning a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

By Andrew McChesney



The Seventh-day Adventist message was first preached in the Balkan Peninsula in 1880, when A. Seefried went to Skoplje, in Macedonia, as a representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society.



MONTENEGRO | July 8

Andrija

Baptized Like Jesus

Andrija was a boy with a dream. He dreamed about giving his heart to Jesus in baptism. But he didn't want to get baptized in a church. He had read in the Bible about how Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Andrija dreamed about being baptized outdoors just like Jesus. He wanted to be baptized in the Adriatic Sea.

But Andrija had never been to the sea. He lived in Serbia, which doesn't have a sea. The nearest sea was 300 miles (500 kilometers) away in the country of Montenegro. Andrija longed to go to the Adriatic Sea in Montenegro.

Andrija joined a group of children who were preparing for baptism. Andrija's younger brother, Luka, also was in the group, and Luka also liked the idea of being baptized in the sea. All the other children agreed that it would be wonderful to be baptized in the sea. They excitedly dreamed about being baptized together at a Pathfinder camp on the Adriatic Sea. But Andrija didn't know how he could afford the trip. Father was retired and didn't have money to help.

Then Andrija learned that he had to come up with two sums of money: a small sum to register for the Pathfinder camp now and a larger sum to pay for the camp later. He needed to pay the smaller sum quickly. He had nowhere to turn but to God. "God, if this is Your will, can You help?" he prayed.

The next day, two friends of Andrija's father stopped by the house. They said that they felt impressed to give some money to the family. It was enough to pay to register Andrija and Luka for the Pathfinder camp.

Andrija couldn't believe it! God had answered his prayer so quickly. From that day, he knew that God would help him to get baptized in the sea. He read again and again in the Bible, "For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you'" (Isaiah 41:13).

The months passed swiftly, and soon it was getting close to the time to pay the second sum for the Pathfinder camp. Andrija didn't know what to do. Then Father had an idea. Before retiring, he had sold Christian books as a literature evangelist. He offered



to help Andrija and Luka sell books at a Serbian resort town filled with tourists.

The first day in the town was disappointing. “Please, check out these books,” Andrija called to people as they passed the table where he was selling books in a park. But the people looked away. That night, Andrija felt sad. He prayed to God, “Help us sell at least two books tomorrow.”

In the morning, as he was helping Father and Luka place books on the table, an old man started looking at a book. “What’s in this book?” the old man asked. “This book is about the last days,” Andrija said. The man bought the book. Andrija was so happy! God had helped him sell a book even before he started selling books for the day.

After that, he found it easy to sell books. In two weeks, he and his brother had earned enough money to go to the camp.

So, Andrija and Luka went to the Pathfinder camp on the Adriatic Sea in Montenegro. Both boys were baptized with their friends in the sea. As a special Bible verse to be read at his baptism, Andrija chose Isaiah 41:13, which says, “For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, ‘Fear not, I will help you.’”

Every time Andrija reads the verse today, he remembers that God fulfilled his dream of being baptized in the sea. “I’m very thankful,” he says. “I’m really blessed.” 🌐

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a new Pathfinder camp on the Adriatic Sea in Montenegro. The current building used by the Pathfinders

Story Tips

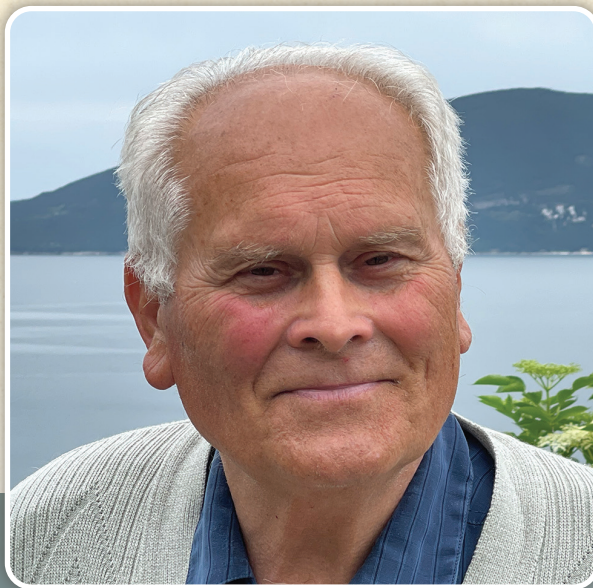
- Pronounce Andrija as: AN-drii-ya
- Show the children the location of Serbia and Montenegro on the map. You can also show them the location of Zelenika, Montenegro, where this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a new Pathfinder camp.
- Download photos on Facebook bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives”; Spiritual 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.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

is nearly 90 years old and needs to be replaced with a new and larger building for Pathfinders. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Andrew McChesney



Petar Todor was the first Seventh-day Adventist minister born in Yugoslavia to work in his own country. He and his wife were baptized in Arad, Romania, in 1900. Three years later, at a conference in Cluj, Romania, he was chosen to serve as a Bible worker and the following year was sent as a pastor to Serbia.



MONTENEGRO | July 15

Ilija

Taming Wild Waves

Spiro watched the huge waves crashing onto the beach in the early morning light. The boy looked over at the eight people waiting to get baptized by a Seventh-day Adventist pastor in the Adriatic Sea. They couldn't enter the water because the waves were too big. The waves would wash them away.

Spiro wondered if the Seventh-day Adventist Church was God's church.

"If this is God's church, He wouldn't allow such big waves at the baptism ceremony," he thought.

The year was 1941. The eight people on the beach were about to become the first Seventh-day Adventists baptized in what is today known as Montenegro.

Before this early morning gathering, young Spiro had joined the eight people in studying the Bible. The eight people included his mother and sister.

In studying the Bible, Spiro believed that God's Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, not Sunday as many other people believed. He believed that God asks people to return a tithe

of 10 percent of their income. But he wasn't sure that he wanted to become an Adventist.

Nevertheless, Spiro went to the beach with the others to watch the baptism. The ceremony was planned for 5 a.m. because it was a weekday and some of the people getting baptized needed to go to work soon.

Now, as Spiro stood on the darkened beach, he saw that nobody could get baptized because of the enormous waves.

As the small group stood helplessly on the beach, the Adventist pastor raised his hands toward the sky.

"Lord," he said, "please quiet down the sea just for a moment so these people can be baptized."

At that moment, the crashing waves ceased. While big waves continued to roll 40 to 50 yards (meters) away from the shore, the water near the beach became a great calm.

Spiro could scarcely believe his eyes as the pastor entered the still water. All eight people were baptized.

Then Spiro spoke up.

"Can I get baptized as well?" he said.



The pastor looked at the boy kindly. “If you believe, come,” he said.

Spiro believed. He had faith in the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was baptized right then and there.

Rather than eight people as planned, a total of nine people gave their hearts to Jesus in the Adriatic Sea.

A real miracle took place that morning. God calmed the sea and won the hearts of eight adults and a boy. It was a miracle that opened the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Montenegro.

Spiro was 16 when he was baptized. He lived a long and happy life with God and died at the age of 86.

Although he died more than 10 years ago, he is still known as a hero of faith in Montenegro today.

“Spiro was a man of great experiences with God,” says his 76-year-old son-in-law, Ilija. “He was a highly appreciated man. Even today, when I met someone on the street and say I am the son-in-law of Spiro, people stand up in respect.” 🌐

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a new Pathfinder camp at the site of the Seventh-day Adventist church where Spiro and other Adventists once worshiped. The site is near to the beach where Spiro and the eight others were baptized. Thank you for planning a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Pronounce Ilija as: il-i-YA.
- Show the children the location of Montenegro on the map. You can also show them the location of Zelenika, Montenegro, where Spiro was baptized and where this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a new Pathfinder camp.
- Know that Spiro had four daughters, including Ilija’s wife, Elza, and died in the faith at age 86 in 2012.
- The photo of Ilija on the opposite page shows him in front of the Adriatic Sea, where his father-in-law, Spiro, was baptized in 1941.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives,” and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 6, “To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.



Montenegro’s Ulcinjska Salinas salt pan, once the biggest salt producer on the Mediterranean, is now home to over 500 flamingos and up to 40,000 birds at a time.

BigStockPhoto.com





SERBIA | July 22

Voya

The Boy With a Balloon

Voya is a very special boy. Doctors didn't think that he would live. You see, the little boy was born with a big balloon on his back in Montenegro.

Voya had a birth defect called spina bifida. When he was a tiny baby, growing inside his mother, his spine didn't grow properly in the lower part of his back. There was a hole in his back and, through the hole, a balloon grew on his back.

Before Voya was born, the doctor told Mother that the baby might not make it. But Mother was sure that God had a plan for the boy. She prayed all the time, day and night, for him. Right before he was born, Mother prayed, "Dear God, In a few minutes, I will find out whether You have decided to give Voya life or death. Once more I ask You for his life. But not my will but Your will be done. I thank You in Jesus' name, Amen."

Moments later, the loud cry of little Voya filled the hospital room. His cry was like music to Mother's ears. It filled her with joy. Her boy was alive!

But then she saw the balloon on his

back. The balloon was so big that she could not see his legs. Then the balloon popped. Mother could see Voya's legs. But something was wrong. He couldn't move them.

The doctor immediately put Voya and Mother on an airplane and sent them to a special children's hospital in Serbia.

At the new hospital, the new doctor was shocked to see Voya. The doctor had helped babies with spina bifida for 22 years, but she had never seen anything like this. "This is one of the worst cases I've ever seen," she said. She said Voya needed an emergency operation.

Mother prayed as the doctor operated on the baby for four hours. God heard her prayers. The operation was a success. Voya could move his legs!

Voya had to see many doctors for the next few years. As Mother kept praying, Voya surprised them all. Doctors warned that he would have head problems in three months. But he didn't. Doctors said he would not be able to walk. But he did.

At first, Voya was weak. His legs didn't

hold him up well, and he fell a lot when he ran. But he didn't give up. He kept running.

Mother prayed for God to help her boy. Many times, she and Father prayed all night. Father worked hard as a high school math teacher to pay Voya's hospital bills. Mother took Voya to many doctor's appointments and physical therapy sessions. And Voya kept growing stronger and stronger.

All the doctors who saw Voya were amazed. They couldn't believe their eyes. The doctor who performed the operation on his legs was especially surprised. She was an atheist. She didn't believe in God. But when she saw Voya running and jumping, and when she saw Mother praying, she changed her mind. "God really does exist," she said.

Mother has no doubt that God is alive. God answered her prayers to keep Voya alive, so she tells him, "Wherever you go, share your story with other people."

Today, Voya is a tall, strong teen. He likes to tell others about what God and his parents have done for him. "When I tell my story, I remember my parents and what they did for me," he says. "They sacrificed so much because they love me." 🌐

Today Voya is a student at the Seventh-day Adventist secondary school in Novi Sad, Serbia, which opened with the help of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering collected in third quarter 1997. A Thirteenth Sabbath Offering that children helped give more than 25 years ago is helping Voya get an Adventist education today.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Montenegro on the map. You can also show them the location of Belgrade, Serbia, where Voya was hospitalized as a baby, and Novi Sad, Serbia, where he currently goes to the school that received part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 1997.
- Draw a parallel between Voya's parents and Jesus. The parents sacrificed a lot to save Voya, and Jesus sacrificed even more to save all humans. Jesus gave up a perfect, wonderful life in heaven to come to this earth and die for people's sins. Jesus sacrificed so much because He loves people, just like Voya's parents sacrificed so much because they love him.
- Challenge the children to be like Voya and share with others what God has done for them. As practice, ask them to share examples of what God has done for them in Sabbath School.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7 of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.



With the formation of Yugoslavia at the end of World War I, the Yugoslavian Union Conference was founded in Novi Sad (Serbia) in 1925 and later transferred to Belgrade. Voya studies at an Adventist school in Novi Sad that was established with a 1997 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.



SERBIA | July 29

Sabbath Test

Marta

Marta loved music. She had played the violin since she was a small girl. And now she had a chance to study at the music school of her dreams in Serbia's capital, Belgrade.

But Marta had a big problem. She needed to pass a test to enter the school. The test was to play the violin for a group of teachers. The test would be on Sabbath.

Marta would not take the test on Sabbath. For her, Sabbath was a holy day to worship God in church and spend special time with Him all day — from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. She remembered the fourth commandment, which says, “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” (Exodus 20:8-10, NKJV).

Marta would be happy to take the test on Sunday or Monday or Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday or even Friday. She had those six days to labor and to do all her work. But the seventh day was the Sabbath.

In it she would do no work, including taking the test to enter the music school.

Marta felt that she had no hope. She thought, sadly, “Going to music school must not be God’s plan for me.”

Still, she prayed for God’s will to be done. Father and Mother prayed for God’s will to be done. Friends from church prayed for God’s will to be done.

Then the music school invited Marta’s parents to a special meeting.

Father and Mother listened patiently as a teacher listed all the rules that Marta would have to follow if she studied at the music school. When the teacher finished, Father asked to meet the principal.

In the principal’s office, Father said Marta would be happy to follow the school’s rules, but she also had another rule that she wanted to follow: God’s fourth commandment.

“Marta won’t be able to take the test on Saturday,” Father said. “Perhaps she could take the test on Friday or Sunday instead?”

The principal immediately shook her head. “That would not be possible,” she said.

The principal said the date could not be changed because it had never been changed before. She said Marta was the first person to ask for the test to be changed.



Father did not give up.
 “Would it be possible for Marta to take the test after sunset on Saturday?” he said.
 The principal was silent. She was confused. Then she asked, “When does the sun go down on Saturday?”

“I guess it will be around 8:10 p.m.,”
 Father said.

“Then it would be impossible,” the principal said. “Our school is open only until 8 p.m.”

But she felt compassion for Marta and promised to try to help.

Marta waited for a long time. She kept practicing the violin as if she would be able to take the test after sunset on Sabbath. She prayed. Her parents prayed. Church members prayed.

Several days before the test, a teacher from the music school called. She said the time for the test had been changed. Marta could take the test after sunset! It was a miracle! Never before had the school changed the time of the test.

The day of the test was a cold and rainy Sabbath. Marta was supposed to spend the day practicing the violin so she would be able to play her best at the music school in the evening. But instead of playing the violin, Marta set aside her work and went to church. She worshiped the God who ended His work which He had done on the seventh day and rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done (Genesis 2:2).

After sunset, Marta played well. The teachers were impressed. But, more importantly, Marta felt peace and contentment in her heart. By keeping the Sabbath, she had made God first in her life, and now she knew that He was with her.

When the test results were announced, 14-year-old Marta got a perfect score. She was able to go to the music school of her dreams! “That experience convinced me that I should never lose hope,” Marta says. “Though I sometimes may think that there is no way out of a situation, I now know that God always has a plan, that He has a way

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Serbia on the map. You can also show them the location of Serbia’s capital, Belgrade, where Marta goes to music school and where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering three years ago helped open a new church.
- Challenge the children to make God first in their lives by keeping all His commandments, including the Sabbath. Read Jesus’ words in John 15:14, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”
- Watch Marta play the violin on YouTube: bit.ly/Marta-Serbia.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives”; Spiritual 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.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

out, and that I only need to surrender and trust Him.” 🌍

God is doing great things in Belgrade, Serbia, where Marta goes to music school. Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering three years ago helped open a new church there.

By Andrew McChesney



POLAND | August 5

Julia

Praying for No Rain

The rain was falling heavily when 6-year-old Julia arrived at the Seventh-day Adventist church preschool in Poland. Children took off their wet coats as they walked into the room. It was time to begin the day with worship.

Julia sat at her desk and waited for Teacher to speak. She knew what Teacher was going to ask, and she was ready to answer.

When the 10 or so little children were seated and quiet, Teacher asked the question that Julia was waiting to hear.

“Good morning, children!” Teacher said. “Who has something to thank God for today? Who has something that they want to ask God for today?”

Julia’s arm shot up.

“Yes, Julia?” Teacher asked.

“I want to ask God to stop the rain,” Julia said. “I want to go outside.”

Teacher smiled. She knew that Julia wasn’t the only child who wanted to go outside.

All the children came to preschool looking a little sad about the rainy weather because

they all looked forward to going outside every day.

At Julia’s preschool, the children do not only go outside for recess. The children also go outside to learn about God. Every day, the teachers take the children outside to explore God’s nature in the fields and forest around the preschool. The children also play and eat outside. Sometimes, Julia climbs trees with her little brother. Other times, they put slices of bread on sticks and hold them over an outdoor fire. Julia likes eating yummy crunchy toast that she made herself!

Now Teacher looked at Julia and the other little children in the classroom. She looked out the window. The rain seemed to be falling even more heavily than before. It was supposed to rain all day.

But Teacher was pleased that Julia wanted to ask God for help. Julia’s father and mother did not pray at home. Julia had only learned to pray when she came to the Adventist preschool.

“Of course, we can pray for God to stop the rain,” Teacher said. “It would be nice to

go outside today.”

After all the little children had a chance to give their thanks and requests to God, Teacher prayed to God.

“Dear God,” Teacher prayed. “Please let us go outside today. Give us a few hours without rain so we can go outside.”

Nine o’clock arrived. It was the time that the children usually went outside. Julia looked out the window.

The rain had stopped!

With great joy, Julia and the other children put on their coats and ran outside. The grass was wet. The trees were wet. But there was no rain falling from the sky. They could learn about God in nature.

When lunchtime arrived, Teacher called the children to come inside to eat lunch. The children filed into the cafeteria, which they shared with bigger kids from the elementary school. As they began to eat, the rain started to fall heavily again.

Julia was filled with awe about the power of God. He had heard her prayer request, and He had answered it in a wonderful way!

“Wow, Teacher!” she said. “God answered our prayer. It was not raining when we went outside. It started to rain when we came inside. God is incredible!” 🌍

Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offering that helps church schools around the world teach children like Julia about the wonderful love of God.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Warsaw, Poland’s capital, on the map. The Seventh-day Adventist preschool is about 25 miles (40 km) away in the town of Podkowa Leśna.
- Pronounce Julia as: YU-lee-uh.
- Know that Julia is a pseudonym. Adventist Mission met Julia and heard her story from her teacher. The photo with this story shows a teacher and other children outside the school.
- Share with the children that God is able to hear even the smallest prayer requests, including asking Him to stop the rain so little children can go outside.
- Know that Julia attends the first and only Seventh-day Adventist preschool and elementary school in Poland.
- Know that the school sheltered and fed a number of Ukrainian refugees and taught their children during armed conflict in Ukraine.
- Read more about the school on the Trans-European Division’s website: bit.ly/Poland-school.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.

In 1900, a German named H. Schmitz began preaching in Warsaw, the capital of Poland. Because he could not speak Polish, he began his work by going from house to house, reading the names on the doors. Whenever he found a German name, he knocked, and when he was invited in he spoke of the Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. As a result of this missionary endeavor, the first church was organized after a few months with German-speaking members.



POLAND | August 12

Roses and Angels

Melisa

Melisa is a little girl who lives in Poland. She has beautiful straight brown hair that hangs just above her shoulders. She has big brown eyes that sparkle behind green glasses when she smiles. When she goes to school, she likes wearing her pink hoodie, blue jeans, and pink socks with pictures of black-and-white dogs on them.

In every way, Melisa looks like a normal girl. But her teacher says she is not a normal girl. She is special. It is all because of a dream that she had when she was 8.

In the dream, Melisa lying in bed at home. All around her were roses. Fresh white roses lay around her head. Fresh white roses lay on her tummy. But then the roses changed. Below her tummy, the roses were black and dead. Black dead roses lay on her legs. Black dead roses lay on her feet.

Standing in the black dead roses at her feet was a bad angel. He was arguing with a good angel who was standing in fresh white roses above her head.

“She’s mine,” the bad angel said.

“No, she’s mine,” the good angel replied.

The good angel and the bad angel were arguing over who was going to win Melisa’s heart.

Then Melisa woke up.

Such a dream might seem strange and scary to some children. But Melisa wasn’t worried. At school, she was learning about the great controversy between Jesus and Satan. She knew that Satan used to be a good angel who lived in heaven. But Satan became a bad angel. He wanted to become God, and he convinced many angels to join him. That started a war between Jesus and His good angels on the one side and Satan and his bad angels on the other side. The Bible tells us about this invisible battle in Ephesians 6:12, which says, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (NKJV). Bad angels are fighting with good angels for the lives of girls and boys in Poland and all over the world. The battle will end when Jesus comes to earth and takes the redeemed to His home in heaven.

The dream didn’t scare Melisa because she knew that Jesus and His good angels were not

only fighting for her but also protecting her.

Melisa has never forgotten the dream, and she thinks about it often. She wants to have good values and to make good decisions. She wants Jesus and His good angels to always win in her life. She wants Jesus and His good angels to win everywhere.

Once some children were arguing at school. Teacher was exasperated and didn't know what to do. "What can we do?" Teacher asked the quarreling children.

Melisa remembered her dream. Good angels and bad angels were fighting an invisible battle at her school. The bad angels were causing the other children to argue.

Melisa raised her hand.

"Teacher, you told us that when we have problems, we can pray," she said.

Teacher nodded her head. She had forgotten her own advice. It was a good idea to pray. Teacher called the children together, and they prayed for Jesus and His good angels to win this battle. As they prayed, Satan and his bad angels were defeated, Jesus and His good angels won, and peace returned to the little school in Poland.

Melisa's dream has changed not only her life. It also is changing her school. 🌍

Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offering that helps church schools around the world teach children like Melisa about the wonderful love of Jesus.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Warsaw, Poland's capital, on the map. The Seventh-day Adventist preschool is about 25 miles (40 km) away in the town of Podkowa Leśna.
- Know that Melisa attends the first and only Seventh-day Adventist preschool and elementary school in Poland. It is located on the grounds of the Polish Senior College of Theology and Humanities, which includes the Adventist Church's seminary in Poland.
- Know that the school sheltered and fed a number of Ukrainian refugees and taught their children during the armed conflict in Ukraine.
- Read more about the school on the Trans-European Division's website: bit.ly/Poland-school.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objectives No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives," and No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." Go online: IWillGo2020.org.

POLAND



AMAZING
COUNTRY

Pączki is a Polish pastry shaped in balls and filled with sweet fillings, similar to a jelly doughnut. Traditionally reserved for Fat Tuesday/Mardi Gras, some Christians indulge in this treat in order to use up their eggs, milk, and butter before Lent. Polish people eat millions of pączkis on this day alone.

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POLAND | August 19

Ryszard

Oranges and Lemons

Do you like sweets? What kind of sweets do you like? Cake? Chocolate? Chewing gum?

If you asked children in Poland about their favorite sweets, there was a time when every child would probably say, “Oranges!”

Maybe you can find oranges at the store or, if you are lucky, growing in your yard. But it was nearly impossible to find oranges in Communist Poland. The only time of the year that oranges and other citrus fruit were available was at Christmas.

So, enjoying oranges on Christmas was a very big deal for Polish children. Oranges were such a big deal that, as the Christmas holiday neared, national television gave regular reports about the progress of ships sailing to Poland with their precious cargoes of oranges, lemons, and other citrus fruit: A ship was carrying navel oranges from Egypt; a ship was carrying mandarins from Turkey; a ship was carrying more oranges from Cuba; and a ship was carrying a bunch of different kinds of tropical citrus fruit from South America.

Polish children and adults drooled as they

watched television images of the delicious fruit being unloaded from ships at Polish ports. It wasn’t cheap to buy the fruit. But they couldn’t wait for Christmas to arrive so they could peel an orange or a lemon and enjoy the tangy goodness inside.

Perhaps no one loved oranges and lemons more than Maria. She wasn’t a little girl anymore, but she had loved oranges and lemons for as long as she could remember. Maria was a young wife, and she was sick. She didn’t feel well at all, and she longed to eat an orange or a lemon.

“Ryszard,” she said, looking hopefully at her husband, “I really want an orange or a lemon.”

Ryszard’s brow creased with worry. He would give anything in the world for an orange or a lemon for his dear wife. An orange or a lemon might be just the thing to make her feel better.

But oranges and lemons were only available for sale at Christmas time. It wasn’t even close to Christmas. Even if it were Christmas time, it would cost too much money to buy an orange or a lemon. Ryszard

ADVENTIST MISSION Trans-European Division



was a pastor, and he and Maria didn't have much money at all — certainly not enough to buy an orange or a lemon.

Still, Maria wanted an orange or a lemon. It was a simple dream, and Ryszard felt sad because he couldn't fulfill it.

With a prayer to God for help, he left the house to visit some church members. He wanted to encourage them and to remind them of God's love.

Ryszard stopped at one home to visit an old woman. The old woman was lonely because her daughter lived far away in the United States.

When he knocked on the door, the old woman opened it with a big smile.

"Pastor, it is good that you are here!" she exclaimed. "I just received a package from my daughter in the United States, and I have some oranges and lemons for you!"

Ryszard couldn't believe his ears.

Moments later, he couldn't believe his eyes. The old woman presented him a box filled with gleaming, joyful oranges and bright, happy lemons. The plain box with the precious fruit looked like a jewel box filled to the brim with sparkling gems.

Ryszard couldn't wait to return home.

A short time later, he was back at home.

"Honey, I have something for you," he said.

He showed Maria the oranges and lemons.

Her eyes grew wide with astonishment.

"Where did you get those from?" she asked.

"God gave them to me," Ryszard said.

"He supplied."

It was true. It was a miracle gift — and it wasn't even Christmas. The Bible says, "And

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Warsaw, Poland's capital, on the map.
- Know that Ryszard Jankowski is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Polish Union Conference.
- Foodpolka.com provided helpful background on the history of oranges in Poland for this story.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- Ryszard Jankowski's work in formerly Communist Poland illustrates Mission Objective No. 2 of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: "To strengthen and diversify Adventist outreach in large cities [and] ... among ... under-reached people groups." Go online: IWillGo2020.org.

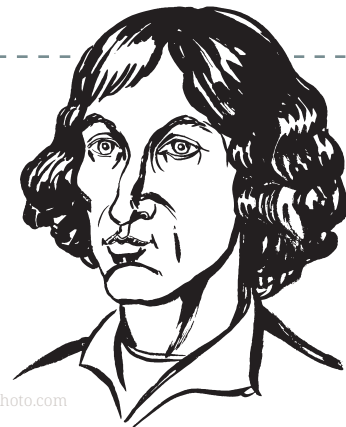
my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19, NKJV). 🌐

Thank you for your Sabbath School mission offering that helps teach people around the world about our loving God who supplies all our needs.

By Andrew McChesney



Mikołaj Kopernik, or Nicolaus Copernicus, was a Polish astronomer and a mathematician. His Heliocentric Theory was the first to propose that the planets revolve around the sun and not the other way around.



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LATVIA | August 26

Anna

Salads and Sausages

Four-year-old Anna loved to play with her 4-year-old friend, Aleksa, at the kindergarten in a small village in central Latvia.

The two girls especially loved to play a game in which they pretended to be grown-up adults. Anna pretended to be a math teacher, and Aleksa pretended to be a bad student. Aleksa would be late for class. She wouldn't do her homework. She wouldn't listen. Anna pretended to be a very strict teacher. She faked being angry, and she tried to punish Aleksa.

"Go stand in the corner for the rest of the day!" Anna told Aleksa.

But Aleksa was very good at pretending to be a bad student. She refused to stand in the corner.

"No, I won't!" she said.

On some days when the little girls pretended to be grown-up adults, Anna was an artist, and Aleksa was a doctor.

Aleksa knew something about doctors. She had many health problems and was sick a lot. She had many colds and fevers. She coughed

and had trouble breathing.

Anna and Aleksa also liked to pretend to cook. They mixed dirt and water into a thick brown stew and seasoned it with a generous sprinkling of flowers. Bright purple, pink, blue, and yellow flowers went into the brown soup.

At first, Anna and Aleksa only played and ate their fake food at the kindergarten. Then, as the two girls grew older, they started going to school together, and Aleksa began coming over to Anna's house after school got out. They played in the afternoon and ate real food that Anna's mother put on the table for supper.

Aleksa was surprised when she first saw Anna's mother place a salad of cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, dill weed, spinach leaves and lettuce on the table. She rarely ate salad at home, and she liked the sweet, juicy, and crunchy flavors and textures.

Aleksa was even more surprised when she saw vegan sausages for the first time. She ate meat sausages at home, and she had never seen sausages made from plants. But she liked the vegan sausages, and she enjoyed

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eating them with fried potatoes and tomato sauce at Anna's house.

Aleksa's mother also liked the food at Anna's house. Sometimes, she came over and talked with Anna's mother as Aleksa and Anna played. She was surprised that Anna and her family didn't eat meat. But, like Aleksa, she liked the food. More important, she saw that Aleksa was less sickly after eating the healthy food.

Aleksa's mother wanted her girl to be even healthier, and she asked Anna's mother for tips on how to prepare healthy food. She began to cook healthy food at home. As the meals changed at Aleksa's home, Aleksa grew more and more healthy. She had fewer and fewer colds and fevers. She stopped coughing. She no longer had trouble breathing. Aleksa's mother was so glad that her girl wasn't sick anymore.

One Sabbath, Anna invited Aleksa and her mother and her big brother, Markuss, to church. Aleksa and Markuss enjoyed the Sabbath School and soon were attending church every Sabbath.

Then Aleksa's mother gave her heart to Jesus and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. After that, her brother, Markuss, her grandmother, and her uncle gave their hearts to Jesus. Now her other grandmother also is preparing to give her heart to Jesus.

Today, Anna and Aleksa still love playing games. They no longer pretend to be grown-up adults, but they play more grown-up games as Pathfinders. They also want to give their hearts to Jesus and be baptized together.

"Aleksa is my best friend," Anna says. 🌐

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help support Pathfinders like Anna and Aleksa in Latvia. The offering will help construct a building in Latvia's capital, Riga, where Pathfinders and other children can learn more about healthy food and our loving God. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Latvia on the map. You can also show them the location of Trikātā, where Anna and Aleksa lived, and Latvia's capital, Riga, where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will open a center of influence for Pathfinder programs and other outreach initiatives.
- Ask the children how Anna was a good witness to Aleksa. Possible answers: Anna showed how to have a healthy lifestyle through the healthy food that she ate; and Anna invited Aleksa and her family to church on Sabbath. Remind the children that Anna, through her witness, led at least six people to Jesus: Aleksa, her mother, her brother, her uncle, and her two grandmothers. Challenge the children to also be good witnesses for Christ through their lifestyles and actions, including by inviting friends to church.
- Read more about Anna next week.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives"; Spiritual 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." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.



LATVIA | September 2

A Small Missionary

Anna

Anna loves Jesus very much, and she loves to talk about Him with her friends in Latvia. She loves to talk about Jesus so much that her mother calls her “a small missionary.”

Anna can’t remember when she first started talking about Jesus with her friends.

But perhaps it was on a day when she was 5 years old.

That day, Anna was riding in the car with her best friend, 5-year-old Aleksa.

Mother was driving the car in the front seat.

As they traveled, Aleksa was behaving badly. She kept moving around in her seat. She fidgeted. She wiggled. She wasn’t sitting nice and still like a well-mannered little girl should sit.

Anna watched quietly from her side of the seat and then spoke up.

“Aleksa,” Anna said quite firmly, “Jesus Christ will soon come. Are you behaving correctly?”

In the front seat, Mother overheard Anna and was surprised. She wondered what Aleksa would say. Aleksa did not go to church, but she knew a little about Jesus from her grandmother.

On hearing Anna’s question about her

behavior, Aleksa turned her head curiously toward Anna.

“How will Jesus come?” she asked.

“When will Jesus come?” she added. “Why will Jesus come?”

The questions were important. The questions were big for a little girl like Anna to answer.

But Anna answered as best as she could. She said Jesus promised in the Bible that He would come to earth on a big white cloud in the sky.

No one knows exactly when Jesus will come, but He also promised in the Bible that He would come soon.

Why will Jesus come? To take His children home! Jesus loves children very much, and He has prepared a home for them where they can play with lions and lambs and live with Him forever.

Aleksa stopped moving in her seat. She stopped fidgeting. She stopped wiggling. She sat nice and still like a well-mannered girl should sit as she thought about what Anna had said.

It was the first time that she had heard about Jesus’ coming. She liked the sound of it very, very much. She wanted to be ready to meet Jesus.

The Bible describes Jesus’ coming like this,



“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him” (Revelation 1:7, NKJV).

But no one knows exactly when it will be. Jesus Himself said, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Mark 13:32).

But Jesus also said, “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work” (Revelation 22:12).

In describing the home that Jesus has prepared for His children, the Bible says, “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them (Isaiah 11:6).

After the conversation about Jesus’ coming, Anna and Aleksa spoke many more times about Jesus.

Anna truly was “a small missionary.” Because of her influence, Aleksa’s mother, brother, uncle, and two grandmothers have given their hearts to Jesus and are waiting for His soon coming. Today, Anna and Aleksa are 14 years old and Pathfinders. They also are waiting for Jesus’ soon coming with happy hearts. 🌍

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help children in Latvia learn more about Jesus and His soon coming. The offering will help construct a building in Latvia’s capital, Riga, where Pathfinders and other children can get to know Jesus. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Latvia on the map. You can also show them the location of Trikātā, where Anna and Aleksa lived, and Latvia’s capital, Riga, where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will open a center of influence for Pathfinder programs and other outreach initiatives.
- Ask the children how Anna was a small missionary. Possible answer: She talks to her friends about Jesus. Challenge the children to also tell their friends about Jesus.
- Read more about Anna next week.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives”; Spiritual 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.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.



A subminiature camera, the Minox, was created by the Latvian inventor Walter Zapp in 1936 and became famous as a spy camera.



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LATVIA | September 9

Anna

Piano, Pathfinders, and Jesus

Have you ever met someone and really hit it off? The two of you had so many things in common that you immediately felt comfortable with each other?

That's what happened to Anna. She immediately hit it off with Emilia when they met at a music school in Latvia. The two girls were almost the same age. Anna was 10 years old, and Emilia was 11. Anna liked music, and Emilia liked music. That was why they were going to music school. Both girls were learning to play the piano.

But it turned out that they both liked more than just playing the piano. Anna liked dogs, and Emilia liked dogs. Anna liked gymnastics, and Emilia liked gymnastics. The two girls had many common interests, and they quickly became good friends.

Now it so happened that Anna also liked Pathfinders. Emilia, however, didn't know anything about Pathfinders. Anna had recently joined Pathfinders, when she had turned 10. She enjoyed singing, studying the Bible, and earning honor badges with other Pathfinders. She especially liked Pathfinder

campouts. So, when all the Pathfinders and Adventurers in Latvia prepared for a camporee, Anna invited Emilia to go, too.

Emilia liked the camporee very much! She liked sleeping in a tent for a whole week. She liked singing and talking and participating in Bible skits every evening with 300 other children from the 23 Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs in Latvia. She especially liked sitting in front of the campfire. After evening worship, all the children split into their clubs and built campfires. Then the children sat around the flames and listened to mission stories. Emilia loved the mission stories.

After the camporee, Emilia liked Pathfinders just like Anna liked Pathfinders. Anna and Emilia became even closer friends.

Then Anna invited Emilia to come to her house. The two girls began to get together there to study the Bible every Sunday with Anna's friend Aleksa and other children. In a year, the children managed to read through the entire book of Ruth and 1 Kings.

Anna also invited Emilia to go to church

with her on Sabbath. In church, the two girls played the piano together for special music. Anna especially liked playing a duet about Jesus being the Sunbeam of the World.

Anna and Emilia are looking forward to the next Pathfinder camporee. The Pathfinders are preparing a skit about Tabitha, the 12-year-old girl whom Jesus raised from the dead. Emilia will narrate the skit. She has a 10-year-old brother who also will go to the camporee. This will be his first.

Yes, Anna and Emilia have a lot in common. They like the piano, dogs, gymnastics, Pathfinders, camporees, the Bible, and playing special music. But now they have something even more important in common. They both love Jesus.

“I love Jesus, and I love reading the Bible,” Anna says. “I am trying to share this truth with others.” 🌍

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help support Pathfinders like Anna and Emilia in Latvia. The offering will help construct a building in Latvia’s capital, Riga, where Pathfinders and other children can learn more about Jesus. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Latvia on the map. You can also show them the location of Latvia’s capital, Riga, where Anna now lives and where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will open a center of influence for Pathfinder programs and other outreach initiatives.
- Ask the children to count how many things Anna and Emilia have in common. They like playing the piano, dogs, gymnastics, Pathfinders, camporees, studying the Bible, doing special music in church together, and Jesus. Ask the children what they think might be the most important common interest in Anna and Emilia’s friendship — perhaps, piano, dogs, or Pathfinders? Suggest that the most important common interest in the girls’ friendship — and in all children’s friendships — is Jesus. Jesus is our Best Friend, and He can make all our other friendships wonderful.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.

MISSION RECORD

Lay evangelists in Latvia, including many young people, were trained with the help of two manuals, titled *How Shall I Give Bible Studies?* and *Gospel Sales Manual*, published around that time.

In the 1930s, an evangelist organized special youth Bible classes, a choral society, and an orchestra in Latvia. After four years of training, the young people participated in a countrywide evangelistic campaign. They toured the country, providing music for evangelistic services and, at the same time, giving public concerts that provided more than enough funds for the expenses of the trip.

happy and grateful to God.

Mother went to Maris. He was turning back and forth in his bed. She thought, “Oh no! Maybe the mosquito already bit him. But I don’t want to wake him up to find out.”

Then, just to find out, Mother asked in a very quiet voice, “Are you awake, Maris?”

“Yes,” he said.

Mother’s next question was: “Did the mosquito wake you up?”

“Yes.”

“What did you do?”

“I prayed to God to help me with the mosquito.”

Then Mother understood how prayer works.

First, the mosquito woke up Maris.

Then, Maris prayed to God for help.

After that, God woke up Mother. But Mother didn’t know what to do. She asked God, “What do You want me to do?” Without having an answer, she started praying for the whole world. When she asked God a second time what He wanted her to do, He pointed her to the mosquito.

So, Mother got out of bed and tried to catch the mosquito, but she couldn’t without prayer. When she prayed for help, God gave her the strength to catch the mosquito. 🌍

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help children know about the power of prayer in Latvia. The offering will help construct a building in Riga where kids can learn about the God who hears prayers.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Latvia on the map. You can also show them the location of Latvia’s capital, Riga, where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will open a center of influence for Pathfinder programs and other outreach initiatives.
- Know that Mother’s name is Vineta, and she is now 67. She likes to tell this story about prayer during the children’s story time at church.
- Challenge the children to pray with faith, just like little Maris prayed for God to save him from the mosquito and just like his mother prayed when she tried to catch the mosquito.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives” and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, “To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

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Latvia’s birds include nightingales, orioles, blackbirds, woodpeckers, owls, grouse, partridges, finches, tomtits, quails (pictured), and larks. Storks and herons can be found in the marshes and meadows.



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LATVIA | September 23

God of Red Beets

Vineta

A little boy named Kreves was learning a lot of new things in first grade in Latvia. He dutifully taught Mother what he was learning when he came home.

One day, he told Mother about Mikelis.

“Teacher told us today that when you plant vegetables in the field, you need to plant red beets at the end of the field for the god Mikelis,” he said.

Mother’s favorite vegetable was red beets. She liked sweet, juicy beets shredded in salad. She liked sweet, juicy beets chopped up in soup. But she didn’t like her son saying that sweet, juicy beets were the favorite vegetable of Mikelis. Mikelis was a mythological Latvian god that Kreves had heard about while taking lessons about folk traditions and pagan gods at public school in Latvia.

Mother’s temperature rose. Her face turned as red as a beet. She marched to Kreves’ school like a soldier ready for war.

“My son will never again attend these lessons about pagan gods,” she told Kreves’ first-grade teacher, Teacher Lolita. “I don’t agree with this foolishness. What kind of god

do we have to leave red beets for?”

Teacher Lolita was a young mother, and she looked at Mother nicely. “Why don’t you tell the teacher yourself?” she said.

Teacher Lolita didn’t teach the lessons on pagan gods. Those lessons were taught by a third-grade teacher. Teacher Lolita invited the third-grade teacher to speak with Mother.

Mother became more polite when she saw the third-grade teacher. But she held fast to her demand. “These lessons are not suitable for my son, and I don’t want him to participate in them,” she said.

The third-grade teacher peacefully accepted Mother’s decision. “Fine,” she said.

Teacher Lolita was listening to the conversation, and she had an idea.

“Kreves’ Mother, why don’t you come and teach the children about the Bible?” she said. “You like the Bible.”

Mother was shocked! She thought, “Can anyone just walk off the street and teach at the school?”

Moments later, Mother was in the principal’s office. “Yes, you can come to our school and teach the Bible,” the principal said. “That would be very good. But the pottery teacher is leaving, and the children like her

class very much. So, you also would need to teach pottery.”

“But I don’t know how to teach pottery!” Mother exclaimed.

The principal was firm. “I was told that you are very clever and smart, and we don’t have anyone else who can teach it,” she said. “Let’s make a deal. If you teach pottery, you can teach the Bible. If you don’t teach pottery, you can’t teach the Bible.”

Mother thought, “Am I crazy, or are they crazy?” But she understood that if she wanted Kreves to learn the Bible in school, she would also have to teach pottery.

“Don’t worry,” the principal added. “The children can make pottery without help.”

So, Mother started teaching the Bible and pottery at the school. Then the teachers asked her to teach the Bible to them, too. So, Mother taught Teacher Lolita and other teachers once a week.

At the end of the school year, Teacher Lolita thanked Mother. “I want to be saved, and I want my children to be saved,” she said. “What should I do next?” “Believe in Christ and get baptized,” Mother said.

Teacher Lolita was baptized and became a very valuable member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Latvia. She helped lead the Pathfinders for many years. 🌐

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help support Pathfinders and other children in Latvia. The offering will help construct a building in Latvia’s capital, Riga, where children can learn more about the Bible and the real God of heaven who

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Latvia on the map. You can also show them the location of Latvia’s capital, Riga, where Mother, whose name is Vineta, lives and where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will open a center of influence for Pathfinder programs and other outreach activities.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Mission Objective No. 1, “To revive the concept of worldwide mission and sacrifice for mission as a way of life involving not only pastors but every church member, young and old, in the joy of witnessing for Christ and making disciples”; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives”; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, “To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

created red beets and every other vegetable in the world. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Andrew McChesney



The Seventh-day Adventist work in Latvia began in the mid-1890s when Gerhard Perk and several colporteurs began work in Baltic cities. In 1895, Perk began evangelistic work in Riga, the capital of Latvia, and on May 14, 1896, L. R. Conradi organized a church of 12 members there.



13th SABBATH | September 30

Vineta

A Totally New Girl

Agnese was a very unhappy girl. Some days, she was sad and crying. Other days, she was upset, shouting and refusing to eat.

Agnese was a very unhappy girl because she was paralyzed and lived in a hospital in Latvia.

Agnese had been a normal little girl who could walk and skip and run with her feet. She once was able to write and draw and wave with her hands. But she had a tragic accident when she was 7 years old.

Now, she could no longer walk and skip and run with her feet. She could no longer write and draw and wave with her hands. She couldn't do anything by herself. Nurses fed and cared for her. Teachers came to the hospital to teach her math, language, and other subjects.

Agnese didn't like living in the hospital. She didn't like not being able to do anything by herself. So, she often was sad or upset.

One day, a new teacher showed up at Agnese's bed. Agnese quickly saw that Teacher Vineta was different from her other teachers. This teacher liked to talk about heaven.

Agnese listened with great interest as Teacher Vineta described heaven as a place where she would have many friends and play with many animals. She didn't have any friends or pets.

"My dream is to swim with crocodiles," Teacher Vineta said.

Agnese smiled with delight at the thought of Teacher Vineta doing the backstroke beside a green, wrinkly crocodile.

But then Agnese heard the sound of children running and laughing outside her open window. Her smile dissolved into a sad frown.

"They're running, but I'll never be able to run," she said.

Teacher Vineta shook her head firmly.

"You're wrong," she said. "These children are running now, but who knows what will happen to them later. If they do not accept God, maybe some of them will not be in heaven. But you — if you believe in God — will have eternal life. You will never die, and you will never have pain and illness again. You will be able to run — and to run for all eternity with God."



Agnese cheered up. She liked the thought of running with God forever.

Teacher Vineta visited Agnese more and more often in the hospital. She also taught children at a school, and she tried to visit Agnese during her lunchbreak. Nearly every time she visited, she brought drawings that the children had made for Agnese. Agnese liked the pictures. She liked listening to Teacher Vineta talk about heaven. Every time Teacher Vineta visited, she prayed.

On Agnese's birthday, Teacher Vineta surprised her with a party. Cheerful flowers filled the hospital room. A big cake stood on a table. Children from Teacher Vineta's school crowded into the room, and each presented Agnese with a bright birthday card. The children were all dressed up, and they performed a special birthday skit. Agnese's doctors and nurses and other teachers also came to the party. Even the hospital director stopped by to wish Agnese a happy day. Agnese was as pleased as could be. She couldn't stop smiling. It was the best birthday ever!

That night, Latvian television broadcast a report about the birthday, and Agnese saw herself on television. Agnese's picture also appeared on the front page of the newspaper.

Agnese was overwhelmed by all of the attention. When she was alone with Teacher Vineta, tears began running down her cheeks.

"It was worth living just to have this birthday party," she said.

But Agnese still struggled with her negative emotions. Some days were good, and others were bad. Sometimes when Teacher Vineta arrived at the hospital, the nurses warned her that Agnese was in a bad mood, shouting and refusing to eat.

When summer came, Teacher Vineta left for vacation and could not visit Agnese for many weeks. But when the school year started again in the fall, she returned to the hospital. As she walked in, a nurse stopped her near the door. Teacher Vineta wondered if Agnese was in a bad mood. But the nurse said everything was fine. In fact, she said,

Story Tips

- Show the children the location of Latvia on the map. You can also show them the location of Latvia's capital, Riga, where Teacher Vineta lives and where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will open a center of influence for Pathfinder programs and other outreach initiatives.
- Know that Teacher Vineta met Agnese in 1996. The girl died several years later at the age of 19. Teacher Vineta is looking forward to seeing Agnese jump, skip, and run for all eternity with God in heaven one day soon.
- Challenge the children to be like Teacher Vineta and her schoolchildren and encourage someone who is sad or upset by talking about Jesus and heaven, praying, drawing an inspiring picture, or making a greeting card.
- Download photos on Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Download Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Trans-European Division: bit.ly/TED-2023.
- This mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into spirit-filled lives," and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Agnese was not the same girl as before.

"What happened to Agnese?" the nurse asked. "She is a totally new girl. This is not the old Agnese. Now, she is always happy. She is never rude to us. She is always grateful. She allows us to wash her hair and

feed her. She is always polite. She is not like before. What happened?”

Teacher Vineta didn't know. When she entered Agnese's room, she was amazed to see the girl smiling all over. She was beaming as brightly as the noonday sun.

“Agnese, what happened to you?” Teacher Vineta asked.

Agnese waited until the nurse had left to speak. She said that after Teacher Vineta had left for summer vacation, she had started to pray to Jesus.

“Because you were not here, I decided to start praying by myself,” she said. “Jesus is so good. He always answers my prayers. He is always here for me. Now I am so happy in Jesus!”

After that, Agnese was a very happy girl. She always smiled, she was always polite, and she was always grateful. Why? Because she knew Jesus. 🌍

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help other children in Latvia know Jesus. The offering will help construct a building in Latvia's capital, Riga, where children can learn about Jesus and His heaven filled with friends and animals and no pain or illnesses. Thank you for planning a generous offering for this project and

Before 13th Sabbath

- Send home a note to remind parents of the program and to encourage the children to bring their Thirteenth Sabbath Offering on September 30. Remind everyone that their mission offerings are gifts to spread God's Word around the world and that one-fourth of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help two projects in two countries of the Trans-European Division. The projects are listed on page 3 and on the back cover.
- The narrator doesn't need to memorize the story, but he or she should be familiar enough with the material so as not to have to read it. Alternatively, the children can act out the story.
- Before or after the story, use a map to show the two countries in the Trans-European Division — Latvia and Montenegro — that will receive the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. You can download a mission map with the projects on Facebook at bit.ly/fb-mq.

another children's project, a new Pathfinder camp, in Montenegro.

By Andrew McChesney

Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering next quarter will support two projects in the West-Central Africa Division:

- Seventh-day Adventist Nursing and Midwifery Training College, Asamang, Abrepo Tikese, Ghana
- Bilingual English/French elementary school, Bandjoun, Cameroon



BigStockPhoto.com



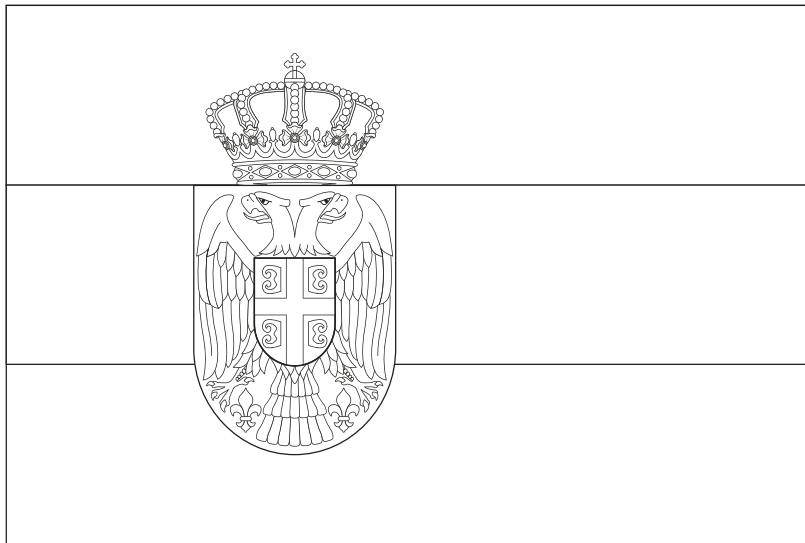
Color The Flag



POLAND

DIRECTIONS:

Color the bottom half red. Leave the top half white.



SERBIA

DIRECTIONS:

Color the top third red, the middle third blue, and leave the bottom third white.

Color the crown yellow and leave the spaces between the arms red. Color the pearls along the arms and between the crosses white. Color the five gems along the bottom of the crown blue, red, blue, red, and

blue. Color the gems in the crosses green. Color the round parts of the ball at the top of the crown blue.

Leave the main parts of the two-headed eagle white. Color the beaks, feet and fleur de lys yellow. Leave the cross in the middle of the shield white. Color the background of the quarters red, leaving the figures in the middle of each quarter white.



Let's Cook!

POTICA

(SERBIA / MONTENEGRO)

Potica is a sweet, rolled pastry, or strudel, stuffed with nuts or poppy seeds.

INGREDIENTS:

1–2 tbsp (15–30 ml) water
1 tsp (5 ml) active dry yeast
2 tbsp (30 ml) sugar
2 ¼ cups (500 mg) all-purpose flour,
plus a more for dusting
Pinch of salt
1 ½ tsp (7.5 ml) baking powder
½ cup (188 ml) oil
1 cup (250 ml) lukewarm water
2 tbsp (30 ml) water to grease dough

1 tbsp (15 ml) melted butter to grease dough
4–6 tbsp (60–90 ml) confectioner's
sugar after baking

Filling:

1 ¾ cups plus 1-2 tbsp (444 ml) milk
1 cup (240 g) poppy seeds finely ground
1 cup (128 g) sugar
¼ cup (57 g) semolina
2 tsp (10 ml) vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS:

Dough:

In a small bowl combine 1–2 tablespoons water, yeast, and sugar. Mix and leave to bubble up for 10–15 minutes. In a medium bowl, mix together flour, salt, and baking powder. Make an indentation in the flour and add the yeast mixture, oil, and water. Mix and then knead ingredients several minutes until you get a soft ball of dough. Leave to rise for an hour. Make the filling while the dough is rising.

Filling:

In a medium pot, bring milk to a boil on medium heat, and then bring the temperature down to low. Add sugar, vanilla extract, and ground poppy seeds. Mix well. Stirring continuously, add semolina. Continue stirring and cooking another 1–2 minutes. Turn the stove off and let the filling rest. When the filling cools down, divide it into two equal parts.

Assembly:

Heat oven to 355°F (180°C) and dust working area with flour if needed. The dough should be doubled now, so cut it into two equal parts. Take one dough half and roll it out into about an 8x16 inch (20x40 cm) rectangle. Then take half of the filling and spread evenly over the dough rectangle leaving about 1/2 inch (1 cm) of dough at the sides. Roll up the long side and place on a pan about 12 by 17 inches (30 by 43 cm), lined with parchment paper. Repeat with the other half. Mix water and butter and brush rolls with it.

Bake for 10–15 minutes, then turn the pan around and cover the rolls with parchment paper. Bake an additional 25 minutes. (Total baking time is 40 minutes.)

Take the pan out of the oven, and let it cool down. You can cover it with a clean, dry kitchen towel. Dust with confectioner's sugar before serving. To serve, cut into slices.

The roll keeps up to three days. Keep wrapped in kitchen wrap. You can eat leftovers hot or cold.



Leader's Resources

Be sure to download your free Mission Spotlight video, featuring video reports from around the Trans-European 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

Latvia: government website	bit.ly/LatviaGov
Country Report	bit.ly/LatviaCR
Latvia Travel: Latvian Tourism Portal	bit.ly/LatviaTrav
Montenegro: government website	bit.ly/MontenegroGov
WikiTravel	bit.ly/MontenegroWT
Montenegro Travel Portal	bit.ly/MontenegroTP
Poland: government website	bit.ly/PolandGov
Poland.pl	bit.ly/Poland_pl
InfoPlease	bit.ly/PolandIP
Serbia: government website	bit.ly/SerbiaGov
Serbia Travel	bit.ly/SerbiaTrav
Britannica	bit.ly/SerbiaBrit

Seventh-day Adventist

Trans-European Division	bit.ly/SDA_TED
Baltic Union Conference	bit.ly/SDA-BUC
Polish Union Conference	bit.ly/SDA_PolandUC
South-East European Union Conference	bit.ly/SDA_SEEUC
Latvian Conference	bit.ly/SDA_LatviaConf

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 15, allowing a double goal for the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, which will be collected on September 30. Remind the children and their parents that their regular weekly mission offerings help the missionary work of the world church, and that one-quarter of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go directly to the projects in the Trans-European Division. On September 23, report on mission giving during the quarter. Encourage the children and their parents to double or triple their normal mission giving on the upcoming Thirteenth Sabbath. Count the offering and record the amount given at the end of Sabbath School.

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Greenland

Iceland

TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION

CONFERENCE	CHURCHES	COMPANIES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Adriatic	88	4	3,559	8,956,000
Baltic	85	8	5,674	6,004,000
British	298	111	40,108	72,854,000
Danish	37	1	2,394	5,953,000
Finland	59	9	4,436	5,538,000
Hungarian	110	26	5,123	9,690,000
Netherlands	60	16	5,945	17,502,000
Norwegian	59	2	4,485	5,402,000
Polish	115	28	5,800	38,154,000
South-East European	210	6	6,783	14,755,000
Swedish	32	5	2,905	10,398,000
ATTACHED FIELDS				
Cyprus Section	2	1	114	873,000
Greek Mission	9	5	482	10,697,000
Iceland Conference	6	1	465	371,000
Totals	1,170	223	88,273	207,147,000

PROJECTS

- 1 Center of influence, Riga, Latvia
- 2 Youth camp, Zelenika, Montenegro

Western Sahara
(Occupied by Morocco)