



AMERICAN UNION NEWSLETTER

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Amazing Missionary Stories

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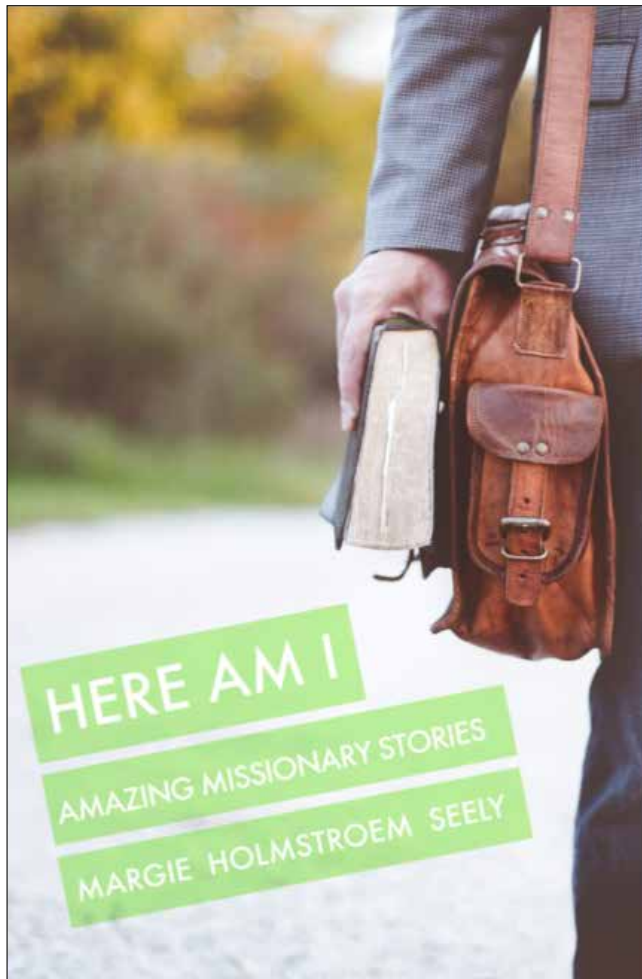
“The small house was abuzz with activity as preparations for the medical missionary conference were made. Tables and chairs were ar-

ranged. Pamphlets and magazines were placed on display. Charts and diagrams decorated the walls. When everything was in readiness, the group of workers prayed for God’s blessing on the event. Maintaining good health is an important part of Adventist teachings. When the mind is clear, the truth of the Bible is easily under-

stood and its principles more readily applied to our lives. When we are healthy, we are also happier, less stressed, and much more productive. For these simple reasons, health seminars are common in the IMS Reform Church. On the second day of the seminar, Miguel, his wife, and his mother-in-law strode up the walk towards the house. As they stepped onto the front porch, Miguel, a young Bible worker, suddenly began to feel very strange. Even though the weather was cold, he felt as if his body were on fire. His face flushed red, and sweat glistened on his brow. As he continued walking, it became more and more difficult for him to breathe. Clutching his chest, he struggled to inhale. The lack of oxygen made him feel light-headed, and the world seemed to spin around him.

“Ana, Miguel’s wife, immediately noticed that something was not right. He had been completely normal just a few moments before, but now he looked as if he might collapse at any moment. Grabbing his arm, she said, ‘Go back to the car and turn on the air conditioner.’ Perhaps if he could cool down a little, he would feel better. Miguel agreed. But, as Miguel returned to the car, he noticed something even more puzzling. The further he walked away from the house, the better he felt. By the time he reached his car, he felt fine again. Standing next to the car with key in hand, Miguel gazed back at the house and mentally retraced his steps. He had been completely healthy all day. As they had walked up to the house, he felt ill; but when he returned to the car, all symptoms vanished. Was something in the house making him sick? Curious, Miguel turned back towards the house. Sure enough, as soon as he reached the front porch he was once again sweating and struggling for breath. What was in the house that caused him to react this way? He couldn’t figure it out, so he decided to wait out the rest of the seminar in the car.

“After some time, Ana and her mother were ready to leave. As Miguel watched from the car, Ana stepped out onto the porch. But, before she could come to the car a tall, gypsy-looking woman with long black hair struck up a conversation with Ana. ‘You seem to know a lot about natural medicine,’ the woman said. ‘Yes,’ Ana replied. ‘It’s important for us to take good care of our bodies.’ The woman nodded. ‘Then you might be interested in these.’ The woman held out a small bag containing a collection of multi-colored seeds. Ana had never seen seeds quite like these before. She took the bag from the woman’s



outstretched hand to examine them more closely. 'For what are these used?' Ana asked curiously. The woman's eyes darkened as her gaze locked in on Ana. 'To destroy marriages,' the woman hissed.

"Ana let out a scream and dropped the bag to the ground as if it had bitten her. Fear crept into her heart as her eyes met the coal-black eyes of the gypsy woman. 'But it's not you I want to talk to,' the woman continued. 'I want him!' She flung out her arm in the direction of Miguel and beckoned him towards her.

"In response to her summons, Miguel returned to the house. Strangely, no physical ailments now tormented him as he stepped onto the porch. His breathing was normal. His temperature was normal. He felt completely healthy.

"Standing between his wife and mother-in-law, Miguel felt the gypsy woman's eyes bore into his. Immediately, she began speaking in an agitated tone. 'You were born in November 1974,' she began. 'When you were age fifteen, you....' Miguel froze. He had never met this woman before, and yet she knew details about him that were personal and private. Dragging out his innermost secrets known only to God and himself, she paraded them out for all to hear. One negative memory tumbled after another as the woman continued her tirade. 'Isn't this all true?' she accused. Miguel could only nod in quiet confusion. 'My spirits are telling me,' she concluded triumphantly, 'that tomorrow at this time, you will die in a car crash!' Ana gasped.

"Silently, Miguel began to pray...."



The above excerpt is taken from the first chapter of my recently published book, *Here Am I—Amazing Missionary Stories*. It is a collection of inspiring narratives that have been shared with me by IMS ministers and missionaries from around the world. Through these encouraging testimonies, we can see the powerful hand of God at work. These experiences will strengthen your faith and help you realize what an amazing God we serve.

However, these stories were not written to entertain, but to edify. Woven into each account are Biblical truths that will, with God's help, arouse a desire within the heart of each reader to learn more about Him. These books are a gentle tool to help open the doors for missionary work. When people are wary of learning about a church or new doctrine, we can soften their hearts by inviting them to read a selection of missionary stories.

Health Habit Update

Thank you all so much for your ongoing prayers! This letter of updates began on July 22 and was finished on September 16, 2019. Our grand reopening was a wonderful success! The store was beautiful! And, according to the local newspaper, around 150 people joined us. The samples of plant-based nacho sauce were a definite hit, with many people asking for the recipe. Naturally-colored candy instead of chemically-colored candy was introduced; plant-based "jerky" and carob chips were also enjoyed.

Since the reopening of Health Habit, life at the store has been a blur. Anne Petrovich (our manager) attended the memorial service for one of the former owners of Health Habit and later was able to meet the man who started the store over thirty years ago. More and more customers have been delighted to visit the store under new management. The shelves are much better stocked, and one whole row is dedicated to gifts. There is godly music playing, and Bible verse décor, as well as kitchen and home items for sale.

Sadly, we lost one of our two original workers, who left to further her career in massage therapy. We wish her well but do miss her. We hired one of our neighbors, but that was not a good fit. During the same time period, Nikki Seely joined us as one of our first interns. She learned a lot in the way of customer relations, was exposed



to different methods of holistic healing (essential oils, herbs, vitamins, etc.), practiced the basics of stocking shelves, and more.

Also, in these first ten months, we have had wave after wave of trials, fully expected, but tough nonetheless. The refrigerator quit cooling a couple of times, and the freezer gave up another time. Anne lost the transmission on her car the same day as the last day of our previous employee. (It is a good thing that Anne's husband is a mechanic.)

Sandy and her boys were in an automobile accident in June. It was not serious, but their car was totaled. They are very grateful that the accident was not worse. Our lat-



est trial is that our frozen yogurt machine is having trouble. With each trial, however, God has given us strength and help.

It seems as if every day someone asks when we will be serving freshly-prepared food! Thoughts about this include our desire to open a deli. Menu plans have been taken into consideration already. However, due to the lack of help to run the deli, we have had to start the venture very slowly. So far, we serve plant-based nachos, hot dogs, and green salads. Next to come will be olive dip.

Opportunities abound for sharing our faith. For example, one lady insisted that we really need to be open on Saturdays! Others have asked us to be open longer on Fridays; and just today, Stephen was put to the test on what he believes about the Sabbath, ever-burning hell, and why he is a vegetarian. What a privilege we have to share truth!

To fill the shelves of Health Habit, we have invested much more than we ever thought we would need to. We have had to do it quickly to fill the requests of our customers. While we are thrilled to have so many customers, we solicit your prayers for God's continued providence. We also appreciate donations and/or no-interest loans, big or small. Please pray for all of us as we continue the work God has laid on our hearts. Christ is coming soon! Sowing time is now! "True faith is not presumption, but it ventures much." —*Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 227.

Venturing on with God,

*Christian and Sandy Nelson
(Anne, Megan, and Stephen)*

Educating for Eternity

Athai Ramirez
American Union Newsletter Editor
Valencia, CA

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
–Nelson Mandela.

The above quotation is not referring just to an education awarding the title of Bachelor’s, Master’s or Doctor. I do not want to down these titles, as they are essential and useful; however, an education linked to the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is powerful to change the world. The best part about this is that you, a college graduate or not, can make a difference in this world as well.

God’s holy word says, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6. With this verse in mind, the greatest meaning behind it is obvious. If parents, siblings, and educators teach a child in the ways of the Lord, in God’s loving commandments, when this child is of age to make his or her own decisions, he or she will not depart from these statutes. The divine word of God has promised this. You have the opportunity to take part in such a wonderful journey.

The International Missionary Society, Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement, General Conference, has always had an Education Department, and within the last year it has grown very much. It is active not just in missionary schools for adults but, more importantly, also in educating children. In 2018, a dear friend of mine, Manuela Di Franca, visited a school for children and helped out in Honduras, Columbia, and Peru with the Education Department team. They provided teacher training, a conference for parents, and special activities for the students. This type of work is a great blessing to anyone who is willing to take a step forward and experience spiritual growth.

Please watch these short videos. They are very inspirational in the field of education: “Children Dream” (

seducation.org/projects) and “Building the Future” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndWwE58exQ&feature=youtu.be>). These three-minute videos create a vibe for anyone who wishes to help in the Education Department.

Furthermore, the website www.imseducation.org features a newsletter for the General Conference Education Department called *The Navigator*. Articles about educating children, health benefits in education, and news about what the Education Department Team has been working on can all be read about in this newsletter. The Education Department team consists of Sister Margie Seely, Brother Danilo Monteroso, and Sister Manuela Di Franca.

I recently learned of an opportunity that piqued my interest, and I hope to pique someone else’s interest as well, especially the young people. No degree in education is needed, and the countries to which one can go and help are Colombia, Honduras, Ecuador, and the USA. This internship supplies free room and board, while the intern pays his or her travel expenses and any personal costs that he or she may have outside of lodging and food. The internship can last 2-6 weeks.

I want to encourage everyone, and especially the young people, to consider taking advantage of such an amazing opportunity. For more information, go to <https://imseducation.org/internship/>.

Finally, on page 4 of this *Newsletter* is an invitation to an Education Symposium that carries the theme, “Educating for Eternity.” The dates are December 3-8, 2019, in Guatemala. This will be the first IMS Education Symposium in Latin America. You are certainly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about education. After all, our children and youth are the future of God’s work on earth, and they will be at the forefront of the events that will precede Jesus’ second coming. Let us all find our place and be active as supporters of the work of education!

Teachers, Students, and the Power of God

“The work of teachers in our schools is not to be of the same order as the work done in the colleges and seminaries of the world.... Students must be trained to place their will on the side of God’s will, in order that they may be able to sing the new song and blend with the harmonies of heaven. They are to be, as were Joseph and Daniel, moral heroes, living noble, devoted lives of self-denial and self-sacrifice. They are not to seek worldly recognition and worldly fame as the end of their efforts. Their plans, their ideas, must be in harmony with the law of God; the object for which they must strive is the blessing of humanity and the salvation of the lost....

“The world is full of men, women, and youth who are eager for distinction. Their highest aim is to obtain a knowledge of science; but they feel no sense of obligation to God for their intrusted talents.... Some of these will be suddenly arrested by the chastisements of God, and they will be led through a series of affliction until they shall inquire for the old paths, zealously repent, and return to their first love.... They will value the working of the Spirit of God upon the heart more highly than they value gold and the praise of mortals. Their minds will become free from the influence of selfishness and skepticism, for there will be an amazing change in heart and character, in thought and feeling. The aspirations will be stirred toward that which is divine, and the effort of the life be to practice that which is holy.

“True religion has power to enable man to overcome stubbornness, pride, selfishness, worldly ambition, questioning, and unbelief. There is grace and strength in Christ to enable us to rise superior to the alluring, infatuating temptations of Satan, and to lead us to the cross of Calvary, to become active, devoted, loyal workers for the cause of truth.”
–*The Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1895.



1st Symposium of Education in Latin America

Speakers

Educating for Eternity



Margie Seely
Education Department
Leader of the General Conference



Pastor Danilo Monterroso
President of the
Latin American Division,
Education Department
of the General Conference



Manuela Di Franca
Assistant to the
Education Department
of the General Conference

and others...

Target group:

Teachers, Principals,
Educators, Education
Leaders, Sabbath School
Teachers, Ministers,
Bible Workers

Activities:

Workshops
Presentations
Discussions
Fellowship
Excursion

December 3 - 8

2019

Free admission
(donations accepted)

Registration:

www.imseducation.org/events/



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