

April 2024

Dear AWR Friend,

As I write this letter, I'm looking out the window at our fifth wheel RV parked outside, and I'm reminded of something that happened a few years ago on Thanksgiving Day.

Our children were visiting, and we had parked the camper in our driveway, using it for extra sleeping space for my wife Kathy and myself. It was right after Thanksgiving dinner, and Kathy and I were taking some food out to the RV. I watched as she climbed the steps, doing a balancing act with her hands full. As she reached the top step, she lost her footing and fell backward.

I watched in horror as her body slammed into the concrete below. She had fallen hard, flat on her back, and my first thought was, *My wife is dead!* I couldn't imagine her surviving such a fall, and certainly not from that height. But before I could react, and to my utter relief, she calmly got up and said, "You know, I didn't feel a thing. It felt like I fell on a cushion."

I was amazed, and all I could think was, *Thank you, Jesus! My wife is alive and wasn't harmed!*

I just received a phone call that reminded me of this incident and of that well-known quote from Ellen White: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." (*Testimonies, Vol. 9, page 10*)

This is so true! If we look at our past and see the mercies of God and His intervention in our lives, we can face today's problems with confidence, knowing His plans are to give us hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

The phone call was from Pastor Robert Dulay. If you recall, he's our AWR Asia-Pacific Region Director in the Philippines and directly working with the former NPA rebels from the island of Mindoro. I've been sharing with you the rebels' amazing transformation from assassins to followers of Jesus, which all started when they began listening to Adventist World Radio from their hiding places deep in the jungle.

Raymundo was one such assassin. He gave his heart to Jesus and was baptized, but has been in hiding ever since. Despite receiving amnesty from the government, he knows there are people trying to kill him. As an NPA general, he was responsible for deciding who should live and who should die, and now there are those hunting him down, bent on retaliation.

Pastor Dulay shared that Raymundo has come out of hiding, but his life is in danger, and we are working with the military on a plan to save his life. What to do for him moving forward? Should he join the military? Flee to another country? We know God has a plan for him, and I ask that you remember him in prayer as decisions are made about his future.

OVER
50
YEARS
OF MINISTRY



Kathy at the top of the steps of their RV.

Robert also shared a very special update. It's the continuation of a story I shared last year that touched all our hearts at Adventist World Radio. We thought the story had ended, but it was only a chapter, because God's plans are more far-reaching than ours!

Here's what happened.

MINDORO UPDATE — "THEIR WORKS WILL FOLLOW THEM"

Last year I shared with you the story of Willie Hudierrez (March 2023 letter). He worked in military intelligence in Mindoro, and had been assigned to monitor AWR activity when the government first noticed we were working with the rebels in the mountains of Mindoro. His exposure to Adventists slowly led him to know the truth and accept Jesus.

Willie often accompanied us on expeditions into the mountains of Mindoro, and in June 2022, during his first visit to North America for the General Conference Session, I personally baptized him along with a few other military officials.

If you recall the story, a few months later, we learned he had aggressive stomach cancer and his health quickly deteriorated. His new Adventist family rallied around him with encouragement and prayer, including Elder Wilson, who had officiated at his baptism, and who called him to pray with him. A few days later, we learned that as our AWR staff held a special prayer session for Willie, he had quietly passed away. Clutched to his chest was the AWR Bible he had received at the time of his baptism. Even in our sorrow, we rejoiced that Willie had given his heart to Jesus in the nick of time.

Now let me tell you the rest of the story. When Willie was ill, he shared his faith with his parents, who were touched and thankful to AWR for helping him in his time of need. After he passed away, Pastor Dulay stayed with the family and spoke during the customary five-day wake that was held. Every night, he presented the Bible truths that Willie had embraced, and when the wake was over, Willie's parents asked Robert to return so they could continue studying the Bible.

This past March, we sent missionaries from our AWR Center for Digital Evangelism in the Philippines and they held a full evangelistic series in Willie's hometown. At the close, Willie's parents called Pastor Dulay and requested that he come to baptize them.

Pastor Dulay said, "That Friday when I arrived, we went to visit Willie's tomb and his parents said, 'We will join Willie embracing the Adventist faith, and be faithful unto death like our son was.'"

That night, when Pastor Dulay made a call for baptism, Willie's parents were the first to come forward. To better understand the significance of this step, I should explain that Willie's parents were the founders of a popular church in the area, but because of their son's testimony, they—and also Willie's sister—made the bold decision to be baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This shook the community, but in a positive way, because thanks to their witness, more than 60 members from their church who had attended the series also gave their hearts to Jesus and were baptized!

As Willie's parents entered the baptistry pool, they both began to cry, and as they hugged Pastor Dulay, they said, "We can't wait to see Willie on resurrection morning!"



Duane baptizing Willie Hudierrez during the General Conference Session in June of 2022.



Robert Dulay congratulates Willie's parents after their baptism last month.

Yes! What a day that will be! We can't wait either! Willie may be gone, but his light continues to shine. Like Jesus said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord . . . they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them." (Revelation 14:13)

WISAM UPDATE - WEST BANK

If you follow our newsletters, you've also read about the work of Pastor Wisam Ali in Nazareth, Israel, and in the West Bank. This week we received another thrilling update. Let me share it with you.

As you know, Wisam is in charge of our AWR radio station and center of influence in Nazareth, which reaches the Arab world with the gospel message. Being an Arab himself with a Muslim background, Wisam understands the culture and the necessity of having a direct approach when dealing with others. That's why last year he began airing a segment that consists entirely of the narration of books from the Spirit of Prophecy.

A few months ago, he began with *Steps to Christ*. I don't know if you've read this amazing book, but if you haven't, you should take the time to do so. It presents a God of infinite love, and Jesus as our Friend and Savior.

Now imagine the impact of a book like this in a culture that teaches "an eye for an eye," and believes in a harsh and exacting God ready to punish without mercy. What a contrast!

Shortly after the airing began, two young Muslims called the station and said they'd been listening to *Steps to Christ* and wanted to see if there were other books available by the same author. Wisam told me, "I first gave them *The Desire of Ages*, and when they finished reading that book, they called and requested Bible studies and asked for more books. So I gave them *The Great Controversy*."

These young men received 39 Bible studies in all. And then Wisam shared something that thrilled me: "They gave their lives to Jesus, and yesterday (Sabbath) I baptized them both! It was a very emotional and moving baptism."

What an amazing testimony of the transforming power of God's love! Now these young men have moved from Nablus (also known as Shechem) in the West Bank to live in Bethlehem, where they can worship more freely and where we are planning to begin a new evangelistic project and a center of influence. We have a group of 40 converts in that city and they're growing fast in comparison to other areas of the West Bank.

Please keep them in your prayers, and pray for this new evangelistic project that will be a shining light in the city where Jesus was born.

THE MIRACLE OF THE RADIO TOWERS

We receive and share many stories from parts of the world where opposition is fiercest, and where God's power is felt in a special way. But we don't want to forget to share what God is doing in the "easy" places of the world too, where God's work is moving at lightning speed. Those reports need to be shared as well, because even there, we face challenges that often seem insurmountable, but God opens the door wide every time! Here are just a few.



Wisam has been broadcasting direct narration from Spirit of Prophecy books like this Arabic-language version of *Steps to Christ*.

GUATEMALA: Six years ago, we only had one radio station in the entire country. Now we have 16, and they're broadcasting not only in Spanish, but in several local dialects as well.

COLOMBIA: In less than two years, we've gone from three stations to nine. In 2022, thanks to your prayers and support, we helped the South Colombia Union purchase an FM station in the capital city of Bogotá for \$4 million. After the purchase, we applied for a permit to raise the antenna from 30 meters to 75. A few months ago, the application was approved, and a previous restriction limiting the radio signal to only the outskirts of the capital city was lifted. Now the signal reaches more than 12 million people, and the station is worth \$10 million!

PERU: This past February, we dedicated a radio station in the city of Espinar. This new acquisition brings the total AWR radio stations in Peru to 47, now covering more than 90% of the country. The goal is to have 50 radio stations by the end of 2025.



AWR's new FM radio station in Bogotá is reaching more than 12 million people in Colombia's capital city!

This past year alone, AWR set up 46 new radio stations and studios in Asia, Europe, Africa and Central and South America. Some of the countries included Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Latvia, Tanzania and Sudan, to name a few. The work is so extensive that sometimes it seems daunting, but God keeps pushing us forward and opening doors for His work to be finished! We can only stand back and say, "I praise Him for what He has done; may all who are oppressed listen and be glad!" (Psalm 34:1)

We know that it is only through God's power that this work can be accomplished, and that without your prayers and generous support, we couldn't continue. Every gift we receive is precious, and God multiplies it just like Willie's testimony, so that its ripple effects stretch to cover every need. This is as much a miracle as the stories we share every month!

Thank you for your faith, your prayers and your support, which reach into the farthest corners of the world. Working together, we are making a difference for eternity.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,



Duane McKey
President

