

GIVE ME ICELAND!

BY JONATHAN WALTER

What if we went to a country and claimed the entire place for Jesus?”

This was the question we asked ourselves as a GYC* leadership team. “Jesus gave us the mandate to go reach the whole world. No mission endeavor is too big for Him. So, why not attempt it?” We agreed to organize some sort of mission project. But first, we had to determine our destination. We knew we wanted a country that presented a huge challenge to mission—somewhere that was highly secular and that had little Adventist presence and no significant church growth. Before long, we’d settled on Iceland, an island nation between the United States and Europe.

We spent months praying and talking about what this project should look like. This preparation included conversations with Gavin Anthony, the Iceland Conference president. He helped us understand that the most urgent need of Iceland’s postmodern society was an awareness that a God who answers prayer exists. Doctrinal presentations and evangelistic meetings have a role to play, but they’re not always the best starting point in today’s European context. With this in mind, we decided to make intercessory prayer our focus.

As we talked, our vision began to take shape. We would prayer walk Iceland’s capital region of Reykjavik and surrounding cities where 65 percent of the country’s



Fifty missionaries from six continents spent 10 days in Iceland, one of the most secular countries in the world. Their goal: to reach the entire nation through the power of prayer.

population lives. Prayer walking means walking the streets in a prayerful mindset, asking God to guide your thoughts and make you aware of people and institutions that might need prayer. It involves knocking on doors and asking people whether you can pray with them about their needs and concerns. It also includes interceding for the city itself, claiming it for God and asking Him to work in it in a powerful way.

Fifty of us arrived in Iceland to begin our ministry in August 2019. Every morning and evening we spent significant time together in united prayer, asking God to revive, forgive, and unify us

through the outpouring of His Holy Spirit. During the day, we spent the majority of our time knocking on doors and praying with people. We prayed for every home, business, and institution that we saw, leaving the outcome and any success with God.

Having grown up in Europe, I was quite nervous about how the Icelandic people were going to react to the offer of prayer. But to my astonishment, many accepted. Our group experienced hundreds of incredible divine appointments. I personally had a few powerful encounters as well. One woman told me, “God must have sent you to me.” Many were clearly touched by the Holy Spirit, and

some were moved to tears by their prayer experience. I learned that many had never prayed before. I will always remember what Daniel, a 13-year old boy, asked me after I had offered to pray for the depression he was battling: “What is prayer?”

Formerly Christian countries, such as Iceland, are full of people who are completely oblivious to the idea that there is a God and that you can communicate with Him. There is an entire generation that doesn't have even a basic understanding of who Jesus is and what He's done. And it's not because they're rage-filled atheists, as is often presumed. It's because God isn't a part of life in any way in these

secular societies. Yet, many of these people's hearts are open to the gospel.

As we ended our prayer mission, we had innumerable reasons to praise God. We had been able to pray with leaders of the country. We were blessed to share 150,000 GLOW tracts that pointed people to a website where they could request prayer and Bible studies and connect with a local church. This website has had thousands of visits. Some people have started attending our church and even enrolled their children in the local church school.

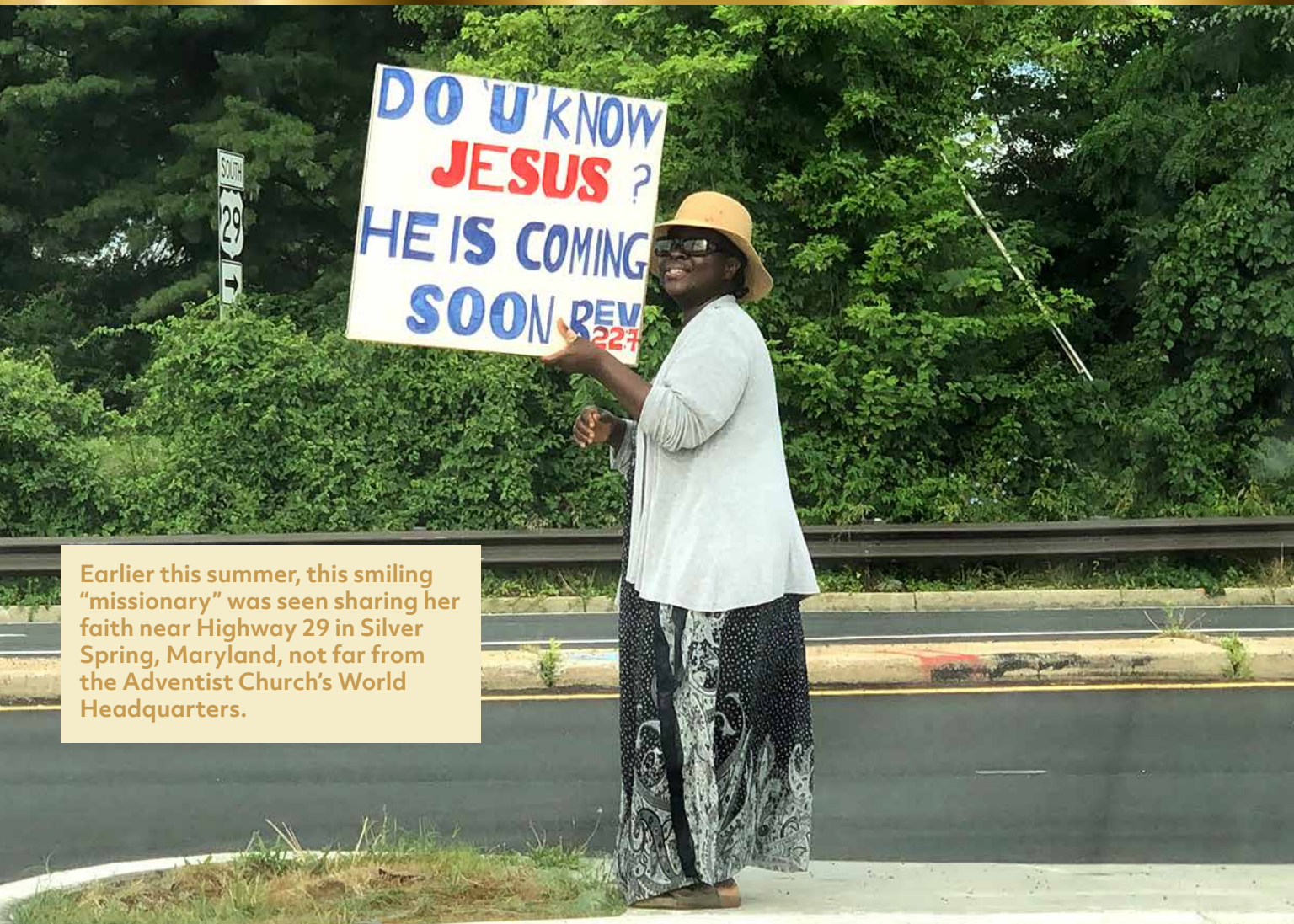
Intercessory prayer works! Combined with total surrender of our plans to God, prayer becomes the most potent weapon against Satan and the

most essential tool in mission. Prayer is not just an obligatory ritual for evangelism. Prayer *is* evangelism!

*GYC stands for Generation. Youth. Christ. It's a youth-led supportive ministry that seeks to inspire and challenge young people to take sacrificial initiative for Christ.

Watch a short documentary on this mission [here](#).

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Earlier this summer, this smiling “missionary” was seen sharing her faith near Highway 29 in Silver Spring, Maryland, not far from the Adventist Church's World Headquarters.