

WEEK 37 • SEPTEMBER 16, 2023

Ethiopia: Worship in a Shipping Container

3 John 1:4—“ I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

Twelve-year-old Bamlak [BOM-LOCK] lives in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She loves to tell Bible stories using her colorful felt pictures. She teaches the children’s Sabbath School class, which meets in a shipping container that stands beside the church.

On any given day of the week, children invite their friends to gather in the classroom to sing and play games like Bible trivia. They organize their own programs for the week’s meetings.

Teodrow’s [TEE-OH-DROH] family lives near this church, and he could hear the singing from his house. When he was still quite young, he wandered down the street to check out the music. He loved it! Soon Teodrow and his siblings were at the church every Sabbath.

Their parents noticed that the children had changed, and they were curious about where they spent so much time. The children begged their parents to come to church with them. When they finally did, they were impressed by what they saw; this was the right church for their family. Fifteen years later, they are still grateful to their children for introducing them to the Adventist Church.

Bamlak and the other children are praying for more space in their Sabbath School container so they can invite more friends to come and worship.

When church leaders understand the importance of ministering to children, they strive to provide a simple room—or even a shipping container—outside the church building that will serve as the children’s division. These “Lamb Shelters” protect the children from the hot sun, rainstorms, and distractions. Children often lead their parents to Jesus and thus build the church from the children up.

We know that the tithe and regular offerings are God’s part, expected to be returned to Him from our earnings. Even though the tithe represents a proportion of our income that is determined by God, offerings, are ours to decide what percentage to give to Him. Rather than dropping a coin or paper bill into the offering basket to support the church, prayerfully ask God what percentage of your income He would have you give regularly, every week or month, when you receive your paycheck. Ask Him to bless you in return and see how He will “supply all your need according to His riches” in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19 NKJV).

