



Pastor Sweeney



Karnik



Pastor and Mrs Perry



BUC administrative secretaries

Trustees united: a platform for 2017

by Pastor John Surridge, British Union Conference Executive Secretary

From Saturday evening to Monday afternoon, 26 to 28 November 2016, the executive committees of the North and South England Conferences, together with that of the British Union Conference, gathered at Staverton Park Conference Centre in Daventry for training in their roles as trustees. Principal lecturers were Edwina Turner and Cynyr Rhys from Anthony Collins Solicitors, the company which advises the Conferences on most of their legal matters – particularly when it comes to governance issues. Established with a Christian background and ethos, Anthony Collins provides excellent insight into the specific challenges faced by churches.

In addition to local legal expertise the attendees were informed about the wider church environment by Karnik Doukmetzian, General Counsel at the General Conference.

In planning this event the BUC officers realised that, on paper at least, this line-up of speakers could appear somewhat intimidating, so a friendly, wise and experienced counsellor was recruited to complete the quartet of speakers. That counsellor was former BUC president, Pastor Cecil Perry, unquestionably the most experienced administrator here in the British Union.

Over the three days Pastor Perry presented five devotional talks, each one carefully crafted to fit in with the general theme of good governance. Beginning with a word of warning he pointed out that some committees act like the kingdoms represented in the statue of Daniel chapter 2, with each new 'regime' trying to demolish the works of the one which went before. 'What actually happens,' said Pastor Perry, 'is that they end up reinventing the wheel, passing the same actions and ending up with the same results.' He went on to paint a more positive picture of a church in which the past is used as a platform on which to build, using new ideas and new technologies as it advances.

Sunday was an intensive, 14-hour day of lectures interspersed with brief breaks for meals and socialising. Far from the dry and boring presentations that some had expected from the solicitors, the trustees were entertained and informed in equal measure as the solicitors drew on their experience and presented case studies – some highly amusing and others deeply disturbing. A few were even drawn from our own recent church history, which made uncomfortable listening for some.

Time and time again the same messages came out: stick to your charitable purposes; operate strictly according to your constitution and policy documents; watch out for conflicts of interest; beware of opportunities which seem too good to be true, as they usually are; and keep an eye on the risks that your organisation faces. The trustees were also cautioned not to go beyond their remit as overseers. 'Administrators manage, and trustees govern,' was the mantra: 'Day-to-day matters versus big-picture strategies.'

Karnik Doukmetzian took his audience on a fascinating tour of Seventh-day Adventist Church organisation and structure. Although this should have been old hat to many of those present, there were few who could answer all the questions he posed. Perhaps his most important message was the incredible interconnectedness of the Adventist Church. 'There are separate entities,' he said, 'but all are interdependent.' The situation here in the UK, where we have three separate charities, is actually not unusual. In fact it is part of the organisational strategy of the church. This does not mean, however, that we are independent of each other.

In this way a presentation on the technical aspects of church governance and structure led back to the spiritual foundations of our church, echoing Paul's metaphor in 1 Corinthians 12 where the church is presented as a body – with separate parts, but unified in purpose.

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive and most feel that church governance is on a firmer platform now as we head into 2017.

We would like to give special thanks to all of those who helped to make the programme a success, especially the three administrative secretaries at the BUC: Jacquie Johnson, Sophia Prince and Lucinda Calvert. We would also like to thank Shelley Prince, a BUC trustee, for leading the song services at the 7am worship.



As supplied, errors and omissions excepted



Boxes for Ghana

This year's ADRA Gift Box Appeal for Ghana was well supported by Hackney's members. One of those who took part was Petra Prince. She said: 'While packing for the children in Ghana, my children and I were having conversations about the children we were packing for as if we knew them personally. We imagined great stories of these children's delight in opening their presents, just like my children do when opening theirs.'

Petra admitted that she is not a huge fan of shopping, but for her, on this occasion, the experience was rather different. 'I am not a shopper, but when it comes to the Gift Box Appeal my mentality changes. I love shopping and making up the boxes for the children. I get so excited, especially as the children we are sending gifts to are less fortunate than my own. Also, it's a good opportunity to fellowship with the church family as we laugh and have fun while packing the boxes together.'

DARELL J. PHILIP (PR AND COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT)



As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

editorial

With what instrument did you learn to write? Now that's a question with the potential to give your age away, isn't it?

Personally, I learnt to shape my first letters with a pencil, as do most children today. But whereas they graduate rapidly to the use of felt tip pens or ballpoints, I was given a nib pen once I had mastered the pencil. Such pens could produce beautiful script in a practised hand, but their ink could also make an awful mess of a young boy's fingertips: not to mention his cuffs and sleeves!

First there was sand

Children had an even tougher time when my grandfather was a boy, at the end of Queen Victoria's long reign. Paper was scarce and not to be wasted, with the result that many working-class children formed their first letters in sand trays. Listen to an account of this novel technique by Florence Cole, who used it herself more than a hundred years ago: 'One of my earliest memories of school in the early 1900s was being given a tray of sand to write out my letters with my finger. It had the advantage that there was no serious rubbing out to do. To start afresh, we children only had to shake the tray.'

Then came the slate

Older children of that era were supplied with a piece of slate and a slate pencil – the forerunner of writing chalk. You can just imagine how it must have sounded in one of those early classrooms, crowded with 60 children all making that 'horrible scratching noise' that only slate on slate can make!²

School was really a 'paperless' environment in those days. You went to school with nothing and came home with the same – nothing to show your parents, other than your dusty grey fingers. Every letter you had painstakingly shaped, every word you had spelt, and all the sums you had done were wiped away at the close of the school day – before you handed back your slate and pencil.

Just think about this for a moment

Surely, though, there is something to be said for a clean slate. Firstly, it bears no formal record of your failure. Not like those exercise books that curious parents would browse through . . . and then go ballistic about! Not like those threatening little notes from the teacher about you being 'too talkative' or 'disruptive' in class – the ones that required a parent's signature.

Secondly, because each day handed you a clean slate, you had a fresh opportunity to get it right: just like everybody else.

Those 'magic' slates

I am sure that many of you have either owned or seen a 'magic' slate at work. This clever invention allowed children to write on a sheet of grey acetate using a plastic stylus, and see their words and drawings appear in black.

We only have to 'shake the tray'!

Following which, as if by magic, they could lift the grey acetate off its darker rubbery backing and the slate was clear again: ready to use, over and over again.³

Have you ever wished for a magic slate? A device so effective that it could forever remove all trace of those embarrassing moments that we all experience. We may call them what we will – gaffes, *faux pas*, social blunders or 'fails' – but they are some of the hardest things to forget, especially when they were witnessed by those who know us well!

There may even have been a period in your life, a stage or a phase, when your conduct was undignified, rebellious or even antisocial. A time when you dropped out of uni, had a brush with the law, lost a good job through your stupidity, or tarnished your credit history. These painful events, shameful incidents and harsh experiences are often the things that we would most like to expunge from our memories, forever.

The things done to us

Often the things that are hardest to forget are those that are said and done to us by others. Those things we did not deserve – painful experiences that may have changed our lives in unimaginable ways!

But there are also those things of which we are guilty, and others may treat us badly for it.

Jesus met just such a person in the temple early one morning. He was teaching a crowd of worshippers when suddenly a group of angry men interrupted Him. They pushed an embarrassed woman to the floor in front of Him and loudly demanded, 'This woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?' (John 8:4, 5, NLT.)

According to John they were 'trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.' (Verses 6-8.)

There was Jesus, doing what those Victorian children once did, writing in the sand (dust). What was He writing? It seems from the reaction of the angry men that He was reminding them of their own imperfections – their own infidelities. But did they need to slip away in shame? Or was the dusty précis of their sinfulness not also an opportunity for confession and forgiveness – one that they completely missed?

Christ was not indelibly engraving their sins into the floor of the temple. The lines His finger traced in the sand were as much an offer of grace to them as were His words to the woman: 'Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?'

'No, Lord,' she said. 'And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."' (Verses 10-11.)

I like the way Florence Cole put it: 'To start afresh, we children only had to shake the tray.' We couldn't wish for a better way to begin 2017.

¹<http://www.1900s.org.uk/1900s-writing.htm> & <http://www.victorianchildren.org/victorian-schools/>
²Ibid.
³<http://www.childofthe1980s.com/2008/05/22/magic-drawing-slates/>



Julian Hibbert
Editor



Enhancing Health

by Sharon Platt-McDonald, RGN, RM, RHV, MSc
Health Ministries Director, BUC

Health forecast

The Kings Fund publication, 'People in control of their own health and care', highlights that when individuals are supported with planning their health goals, they are more likely to achieve them and experience better outcomes.¹

Brian Tracey, a motivational speaker and self-development author, observes:

'People will often set goals for themselves in the areas of money, career, weight, personal development, houses, cars and clothes. But people very seldom set goals for exactly how long they want to live and what standard of health they want to enjoy. . . . When you think about it, it doesn't matter if you accomplish everything you could dream of in the material world and then die years younger than you really should.'²

BeWell Programme Manager, Jennifer Robinson (PhD), provides this advice on planning health goals:

'Healthy behaviours take about a month to become a new habit, but even longer if you want those improved behaviours to become a sustained part of your life. . . . Sometimes we get too wrapped up in setting "achievement" goals when a "maintenance" goal would better suit us.'³

This year, I hope to challenge us all to healthier living by setting some broad goals for us to work towards together. Each month will concentrate on specific aspects of health with an associated action point. This way we can all encourage and support each other to make 2017 our healthiest year yet.

So here is the health 'forecast' for 2017:

- Gusts of movement will sweep across the British Isles as Adventists go on the move, increasing their physical exercise both indoors and outdoors.
- Outdoor activity is predicted to banish clouds of discouragement by raising endorphins, which will result in brighter moods and improved emotional health.

- We are expecting sunny spells across the British Union Conference, with overcast areas being broken up as members engage in social, health-related community outreach activities.
- We are likely to see rising temperatures as the barometer of spiritual health goes up by using Jesus' method of evangelism.
- Look out for intermittent showers of health advice from our health professionals with the return of the 'In Consultation' series.

Here is your health forecast in more detail for the next three months:

January – juggle your 'J's

- Juicing
- Jumping
- Joy

February – feeling fantastic

- Fruit fasts
- Focus on fluids
- Fun activities
- Forget negative mindsets

March – manage your 'M's

- Get a health MOT
- Move more
- Measurements (blood pressure, cholesterol, waist, weight)

Are you ready for the journey? Then let's go!

Good health!

¹https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/files/kf/field/field_publication_file/people-in-control-of-their-own-health-and-care-the-state-of-involvement-november-2014.pdf
²<http://www.briantracy.com/blog/personal-success/personal-health-and-fitness-through-goal-setting-personal-goals-set-goals/>
³<https://bewell.stanford.edu/smart-goals>



new year messages

2017 – a year of restoration

by Dr Richard de Lisser (SEC President)



This year, 2017, has been designated the Year of Restoration throughout the South England Conference under our quadrennial theme, Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere. But what does restoration mean? In a general sense restoration means the action of returning something to a former owner, place, or condition. However, restoration in the biblical sense means more than just returning something to its former glory, its former place, or even its former glory. Restoration in the biblical sense is to receive back more than has been lost to the point where the final state is greater than the former: the main point being that someone or something has been improved over and beyond measure to the extent that all who witness it can only conclude that this is the handiwork of our Creator God, and it is marvellous in our eyes! Psalm 118:23.

The prophet Joel, speaking poetically and prophetically about God's promise to restore His people in these last days, says this in Joel 2:24-26 (NKJV):

'The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; And My people shall never be put to shame.'

In 2017 God wants to restore His church and restore His people. In the devotional book *Maranatha*, page 168, Ellen G. White says, 'Before the final visitation of God's judgements upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming.'

This year God not only wants to restore His Church and restore His people: He also wants to restore our faith in Him when things in our world seem to be in a state of flux. This is not a time for our faith in the Father to falter; it is time for our faith in God to flourish. When uncertainty abounds our 2017 resolution and resolve must be, 'In God we trust!' The wise man, Solomon, offers this advice in Proverbs 3:5, 6 (KJV). "Trust in the LORD with all

thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.'

God not only wants to restore His Church, to restore His people, to restore our faith in Him: God also wants to restore our family relationships. We live in a world of broken relationships where marriages and families are breaking up daily. The assault on the family is deliberate, relentless and foundational to the undermining of society and the break-up of civilisation, as we know it. If the family fails then all other institutions in society, including the church, will fail. The restoration of the family is pivotal to the work of the church. It has been said that a family that prays together stays together.

The restoration of family worship and the re-establishment of the family altar is fundamental to the strengthening of our family units. Ellen White says in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 42, 'If ever there was a

time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now.' Let us resolve in this new year, like Elijah did on Mount Carmel, to rebuild and restore our family altar, to guard against the assault of the enemy of our families. First Kings 18:30 (KJV) says, 'And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.'

God not only wants to restore His Church, to restore His people, to restore our faith in Him, to restore our family relationships – God wants to restore our health and make us whole again. As many of you may or may not know, for the past six years I have suffered from the ravages of Parkinson's disease, a debilitating neurological disease for which there is no known cure. The disease manifests itself differently on a daily basis, from restricted mobility to shaking uncontrollably. However, I believe in a God who can restore. If you are battling with various health issues right now then I challenge you to put God to the test and pray earnestly for our collective healing and the restoration He has promised: 'Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth.' (Jeremiah 33:6, NKJV.)

2017 and beyond

by Pastor Emmanuel Osei (SEC Acting President)



I recently read Dr Mike Mbui's book: *Why the Church Exists: Making Mission Simple*, and was challenged about our whole purpose as God's remnant church. It is apparent that we have focused our attention on baptisms and rejoice greatly when these take place in our local churches or during evangelistic campaigns. However, statistics indicate that out of every 100 members we baptise, we lose 40. This is a shocking statistic when we consider how hard we work to bring souls to Jesus and prepare them for baptism, which begs the question: What is the mission of the church? In order for us to be more efficient and effective as a church, we need to take a closer look at the Gospel mandate, which clearly instructs us to go and make 'disciples'. That is the mission of the church. As we make disciples, we will baptise, teach and continue making disciples. I believe we have failed by only acknowledging part of the 'Go ye therefore' mandate and not recognising the whole commission of our Lord.

Vision for 2017

In the parable of the talents one servant was

given five talents, another was given two, and the last was given only one. Therefore, every member has at least one talent which can be used in ministry. We are all ministers!

Evangelism is a cycle of preparing the ground, seed sowing, nurturing and harvesting. Evangelism does not stop at harvesting, however: the cycle must continue. The work of discipleship is not complete until the disciple has made another disciple. As a Conference, I would like to see every church member engaged in the ministry of discipleship.

Each local church must ask the question: If our church were closed down today, would we be missed in our community? In other words, is our church relevant and meaningful to our community?

As we move into 2017, we would like to unfold our mission in practical steps for each church during each quarter.

First quarter

Firstly, we are requesting for each church to

approach their local council and enquire about the challenges within the community. The church may then select two or three of these challenges and decide to make those their ministry. For example, if drug or alcohol abuse, or homelessness, is the challenge, the local church can consider developing a ministry around these needs. The church can find out if there are other groups/agencies who might be offering help in these areas and seek to explore the possibility of collaboration. In areas where we have more than one church, resources can be pooled together and we can work towards a common goal. The idea for

the first quarter is to accurately identify the needs of the community.

Second quarter

Secondly, we are asking the local church to begin praying and organising themselves to engage in two or three ministries based on the needs of their communities. As a Conference, we will contribute financial and/or material resources where possible, according to the needs.

Third quarter

Thirdly, by now these ministries should

Extending God's Kingdom

by Pastor Richard Jackson (NEC President)



The time to which we have come in earth's history demands that we must be ready for Christ's return, and that we should do everything in our power to help others get ready for it too. As a Christian community, we all need a closer walk with God. We need to experience genuine conversion and a greater level of spirituality in our personal lives, our homes, our churches and our communities.

Our theme for this quadrennium is *Extending God's Kingdom*. Our mantra or motto is *Nurturing Each Other and Winning Another*.

Extending God's Kingdom calls on every member of the church to become involved in utilising their talents and gifts in ministry and mission to others. Every member of the church is asked to connect with at least one member for mutual support and encouragement and at least one non-member with the aim of helping that person to accept Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord. When God brings us into the church, our mission is to expand His Kingdom.

We urge you to step into action as a co-labourer with Jesus. We should connect our children to God while nurturing, motivating and encouraging them to stand for righteousness. We call for the church to rise morally, socially, intellectually and spiritually. People on a mission must never settle for mediocrity as our God of Missions will continue to open doors for us. We should adopt a business-like attitude as missionaries and avoid distraction.

God is interested in mission, and His children should be too. Like Father, like son. The God of Mission is our Sustainer and Provider, who left the splendour of heaven to come to earth with one mission: to seek and save that which was lost. He sent His one and only son, Jesus Christ, who was the greatest missionary of all.

We challenge each member to identify at least one person for whom they have a burden and to start praying for that individual.

Only empowered people can reach their potential. When a member can't or won't empower others, they create barriers within the church that people cannot overcome. If the barriers remain long enough, the people give up, or they move to another church where they can maximise their potential.

If we want to be successful members, we have to become empowerers. Theodore Roosevelt realised that the best executive is one who has the sense to choose good men to do what he wants done, and the self-restraint not to meddle with them while they do it.

The truth is that the only way to make yourself indispensable is to make yourself dispensable. In other words, if you are able to continually empower others and help them develop so that they become capable of taking over, you will become so valuable to the church that you become indispensable.

This past year has had its challenges and problems, but we are able to look back and praise our Father in heaven for His mercies. Despite the hardships, the challenges and the failures, we saw tangible evidence that 'the LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge' (Psalm 46:7, KJV); and so we look forward with confidence that the same God who was with us in our trials is able to pilot us through the challenges that we know the new year will bring.

We have come one year closer to the soon return of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Our Christian duty demands that we redouble our effort to prepare humanity for His return even as we do our best to make this world a tolerable place in which to live.

The fervent wish of this administration is that *Extending God's Kingdom* will become a constant refrain on the lips of every member, empowering us in our mission to help each citizen of this territory come to know Christ as Saviour and Lord.

My hope and prayer is that we will become a kinder, gentler, more considerate people, extending the love of Christ to one another. I wish for all of us many rich blessings from God and the prosperity that may have eluded us thus far. May the love of Jesus Christ permeate our every thought and action. May God be with you.

have been kick-started in the local churches. The church should be engaging with the community, making its presence felt and being relevant. With God's help, relationships should be formed and nurtured. These relationships may even lead to Bible studies. The emphasis in this quarter ought to be on developing relationships and ministry.

Fourth quarter

Fourthly, as these relationships blossom and develop, the local church should invite the community into the sanctuary for special days, such as Sabbath School Visitors' Day, Community Services Day, Youth Day, etc.

It should be noted that for 2017 there is no encouragement to hold any major outreach-reaping programmes. The emphasis is on engaging with the community and embarking on ministry. One may think that spending a whole year on preparatory work is too long. It should be borne in mind, however, that we are interested in disciple-making. Once we are engaged with people from our communities and spending quality time together, the Holy Spirit will bring conviction and they themselves will join in ministering within the same community.

It is hoped that many members in our community, having been impacted by our friendship and ministry, will join our movement and become disciples. They will work alongside us, as we continue engaging with our community and ministering to their needs. This is crucial. The work is not complete at baptism. Discipleship is about making new disciples; the cycle doesn't stop. Once we can cultivate this mindset, we will discover that after we baptise local people they will not want to leave, because they themselves will be engaged in the ministry of making other new disciples.

Reaping or harvesting?

Although we do not want to discourage those who are ready for baptism during this year, we are primarily encouraging seed sowing and discipleship. In the spring of 2018, we are encouraging local churches to hold 'reaping campaigns' or some other form of outreach according to the culture of the church. There must come a time during the discipleship stage when people are challenged to accept Jesus as their personal Saviour. During this time, we are asking that local pastors take the lead in these reaping or harvesting programmes. In the past, we have relied heavily on guest speakers coming from overseas to conduct our reaping outreaches; however, a void is created when the evangelist leaves. It is better for our local pastors to take the lead in this exercise. With the assistance of Pastor Mark Finley, we will be holding training and a field school during 2017 to help pastors to take the lead.

Conclusion

Finally, these thoughts have been shared with the SEC Executive Committee and it is our hope to have a special meeting soon with this vision as our only agenda item as we plan strategically for 2017 and beyond.

There's life before death: The mission of a caring church

by Pastor Dan Serb (Irish Mission President)



'Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.' 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

'The church seems to be now more countercultural than ever' – these are the words of former archbishop of Canterbury, Revd Dr Rowan Williams, who is currently chair of the trustees of Christian Aid. He used them at the beginning of his plenary address on 18 November in Hoddesdon, England, at a meeting of the sponsoring churches of the said organisation where I had the privilege of representing the British Union Conference. Dr Williams continued his address by lamenting two of the most recent political events, which seem to permeate all spheres of life around the world: namely, Brexit and the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States of America. What was of consequence to him was that even though both votes were exceptionally marginal, the expression often used in relation to the results was that 'the people had spoken!' 'So, who are "the people"? Are we also counted amongst "the people"?' he asked.

As I was listening to his words, I began to wonder to what extent the movement I am part of 'speaks' to the world around it. What voice does the church have in a society mostly opposed to anything remotely religious? Is our message heard? One thing is for sure – our world is changing. That being the case, to what effect does my church contribute to the dialogue on *how* – and, maybe even more pertinently, *why* – the changes occur?

After more than 20 years in the ministry, I believe more than ever that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a mission and a message worth sharing with the world. Contrary to the many voices labelling religion and faith irrelevant and even dangerous, I see the fulfilment of Christ's commission to be the one normalising factor in a society crippled by fear, suspicion, and confusion. But for this to be felt and efficiently transmitted, the Church needs to become more *visible* and more *involved* in the communities where believers live and worship.

Another notable thing that stood out for me at Christian Aid's meetings was their motto: 'We believe in life before death.' I found that statement to be revolutionary in its applicability. Dietrich Bonhoeffer believed that the church is Christ existing as community; I also believe that our response to the pains of the world now, as a present and caring community, makes our message of a hereafter without pain more credible.

For the past few years the church in the Irish Mission ministered to its community under the banner of 'Making God Known'. Several of our congregations held outreach activities in conjunction with the City of Hope

project, which led to many being reached with the Everlasting Gospel of a God who cares and who saves. We wish to continue to fly this banner high, to *make the love of God known* by better *making our presence known*.

I have learned that our church's name and our presence is not always known. It has been found that 'where there is ignorance there is suspicion', and a message cannot reach people who have misgivings about the messenger. As a church, we have much good to offer; we are blessed with a message that responds to felt needs in the 'now', and that offers true hope and certainty for a future in Christ. Our commission to 'reach the world' binds us together. We wish to be

Our 'identity gift'

by Pastor Emanuel Bran (Welsh Mission President)

In an age when many people have multiple devices with which to communicate globally, online security and the prevention of identity theft are top priorities for governments and corporations. Statistics indicate that the 21-to-30 age group is being increasingly targeted, with identity theft crime on the rise by more than 30% in the last year.

Just in case you're unaware, identity theft occurs when someone steals your name and other personal information for fraudulent use. Most of us are dismayed by this new cyber-age crime, and we wouldn't assume that the theft of another person's identity is acceptable behaviour.

The surprising reality, however, is that Christians are, by definition, people who have someone else's identity. We are called 'Christians' because we have taken the identity of someone else: Jesus Christ. Not only have you been given an identity that you weren't born with or that you didn't earn the right to use, but you are invited to use all the benefits this identity brings! This is so much better than identity theft – it's an identity gift!

As I focus on my spiritual life for 2017 I want to share with you two reasons why I dedicate my life to 'steal' His identity:

His sacrifice and self-giving work on the cross is the final answer to the problem of all our moral failure and guilt. Paul concluded his greeting to the Galatians by describing Christ as 'One who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father' (Galatians 1:4, NKJV).

known as a people, a movement, with a well-defined purpose, a clear vision, and a Bible-based ideology. Herein lies our identity.

In order for us to communicate this, we need to build bridges that connect us as a community of believers to *the other*, who may or may not be a person of faith. To this end, each congregation within the Irish Mission has been encouraged to initiate a community outreach project, or else to adopt or partner with an existing project in its local community. The simple fact is that when we show that we care we are able to open dialogue, to build relationships characterised by trust, and so create opportunities to *make God known* effectively.

We are a global movement and thus need to think globally, but then act locally. That is where we can truly leverage lasting change. It is much easier to make a difference in the life of one person than to solve all the world's ills. I therefore invite you to join the Irish Mission in reaching our world, one person and one project at a time. 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few' (Matthew 9:37, NIV); 'You also go and work in my vineyard' (Matthew 20:4, NIV); 'Amen. Come, Lord Jesus' (Revelation 22:20, NIV).



In His redemptive work Christ accomplished the will of God, and this true Gospel brings about a lifestyle delivered from the powers of this present evil age. Adopting Christ's identity is very much intertwined with His obedience and submissiveness to the will of God. Jesus dwelt on earth for 33 years not only to die for us on the cross and bring salvation, but to reveal a life in total surrender to the perfect will of God. Christ gave Himself unreservedly, motivated by a selfless love full of compassion, and manifested in perfect obedience to God.

In Luke 24 Jesus appears before the disciples as they are in hiding in the upper room for fear of the Jews. Uncertain of the future and shaken by the news that Christ has risen, the followers of Christ find themselves troubled to the core: Then, suddenly, He appeared to them: 'And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you' (vs. 36, KJV). You would have expected them to immediately start praising, shouting Hosanna and cheering for joy, but the eyewitness account shows that they were still full of fear, in spite of all that Jesus had revealed to them about what was to happen.

As a good Shepherd, Jesus sought to calm them by giving them His blessing: 'Peace be unto you!' Then Jesus revealed His wounded hands and feet, just so they could believe that He was not a ghost. Finally, Jesus sat down

with them and ate honey and fish. Christ's revelation to all their senses – sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste – brought comfort and purpose to their existence, reaffirming their faith and focusing their minds on the task at hand.

My friend, God has very much disappeared from our society simply because people think He belongs to, and is visible only in, church buildings. But Christ wants to walk the streets of our towns and cities, He wants to share His selfless love to a world that is consumed by

abuse and discrimination. He wants to bring hope and peace to a generation that is driven by violence and despair: all this induced by sacrifice and self-giving.

As I update my online status; as I search my wallet and consider what I am going to purchase next; as I get ready to go to my next appointment or meet with my friends; as I commute to work and talk with strangers . . . I pray I've managed to steal His identity. This is my hope and prayer for you too!

We have this hope

by Pastor Paul Tompkins (Scottish Mission President)



Many years ago when I was a student at Newbold College a visiting speaker came to take the annual week of prayer. He began each meeting with the same sentence and this has stayed with me ever since. I shared this again with the young people at a recent Scottish Mission youth retreat, and repeat it once more at the start of the new year, as I am convinced that the words are even more applicable today than ever before.

'We are living in a time when centuries are compressed into a few short years. Names of great men appear on the horizon, flicker for a moment, and then are lost in a sea of forgetfulness. But there is one name that grows brighter with every passing day, and that is the name of Jesus.' (Morris Venden.)

Undoubtedly, in the twenty-first century, we live in an uncertain and fast-changing world and we all need an anchor for our faith. The good news is that this anchor remains the name of Jesus, and His name gives us hope for today, tomorrow and every passing day.

Hope and change seem to be the watchwords of the age. The world has

changed dramatically over the last twelve months and we all wonder what lies ahead in the year to come. Hope does seem to be a rare commodity these days, but here is where we, as Seventh-day Adventist Christians, have something very important to share with our friends and neighbours. We sing 'We Have This Hope' and watch Hope TV, but now is the time to make this come alive in both word and deed. We need this hope to 'burn within our hearts'.

A book I was recently reading (*The Reason For My Hope* by Billy Graham) asked two very searching and important questions: 'Are we ready for hope and change?' and 'Where do we place our hope?' These are short, personal and very pertinent questions that need asking again, not least as we stand on the threshold of a new year.

As I ponder them, the words of an old hymn come to mind: 'My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly

lean on Jesus' name.' (Edward Mote.) The word *my* gives this an individual context, and, together with the use of the personal pronoun, *I*, is so powerful here. It is an individual and personal testimony of hope that always has, and always will, persuade people. Personally we continue to lean on His name through all the ups and downs of life.

Now add to this the expanded lyrics of that much-loved General Conference theme song, 'We have this hope that burns within our hearts, hope in the coming of the Lord.' (Wayne Hooper.) It is the last part that gives us the context of our hope as Seventh-day Adventists. We hope in the coming of the Lord.

Jesus Christ is the only Man of true hope. This is 'the Power of One' and is the hope that has sustained our pioneers and also which still rings true today. Jesus is coming soon.

Ellen White once said, 'Talk hope and faith and thanksgiving to God. Be cheerful, hopeful in Christ.' (*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 492.) I believe that as Adventist believers we need to do just this and share together the stories of our faith and hope. Early Adventists used to have afternoon social meetings where they would share testimonies of what God had done in their life that week and share prayer and praise together. These buoyed the spirits up and kept the faith alive.

Times have changed but the principles remain, and we too can share the reason for our hope. In fact, it is very important for our children to hear our stories of faith and hope from our own mouths. To understand from our lips what has happened in our lives, and what has brought us this far, is a most powerful testimony. As the Sabbath School quarterly reminded us last quarter, we have so much to hope *for*, and hope *in*, as Christians.

So most definitely, at the start of 2017, the message that we can share is that hope and change still lie with the one name that grows brighter with every passing day, *and that is the name of Jesus*.



Youth gain admission to uni

On Sabbath 15 October, the head pastor of the London Ghana church, Fergus Owusu-Boateng, stressed the need for Adventist youth to take keen interest in their education in order to improve their lives, their churches and the larger society around them.

they must uplift the name of Jesus and lead others to Christ wherever possible.

The students expressed joy at their achievements, were grateful for the church's concern and support, and pledged to live out their faith at university.

NANA SIFA TWUM

He was speaking at a short but very impressive farewell to ten of the church's youth who have gained admission to various universities around the globe following their impressive exam results.

The local universities include Cambridge, Middlesex and Portsmouth, among others. He noted that the educated youth have the potential to help transform their world.

He was of the view that their education would provide them with opportunities to climb higher on the socio-economic ladder, but urged them to recognise God as the One who has helped them achieve, and to continue to rely on and serve Him.

The outgoing associate pastor, Joojo Bonnie, reminded them that university campuses are places of good and evil, and as Adventist students



Balham's novel music ministry

Were you one of those children who were pressured to learn an instrument when you were

growing up? Or did you want to play an instrument but have no one to teach you, or were you the one who actually wanted to learn and got the opportunity to do so?

If you were to come to Balham Church on Sabbath afternoons and go upstairs to Room 1 you would see a group of children who are not only keen to learn to play instruments, but also given the opportunity to do so. The music director, Euthan Newman, has spearheaded a drive to involve children in playing an instrument and using it for ministry.

It all started in December 2012, when Euthan started giving violin lessons to a few children. A music group was subsequently set up, along with a library and music room, and a group of violin players was then established. They were originally called 'Little Strings', but this was later changed to 'Balham Strings' as we hoped the children would continue to play as they grew up, and of course would no longer be seen as little.

The group has since played during our worship services and at a number of other churches during their services and at concerts. They also performed at the Conference-run Kidz Praise programme and at the Balham health expo earlier this year. The group has also played during our monthly street-witnessing activities in the Balham area, as others sang and gave out literature.

The music lessons have now been extended to other days in the week, and involve children from other churches, whose parents have heard what is happening in Balham and sent them along. One of the parents, who used to attend Balham but left many years ago, has visited the church on a

few occasions since her child has been attending the sessions! If you cater for the children you often end up reaching the parents.

The ministry now includes an annual children's summer music school, where children come along for a week of music, craft and fun and are challenged to express their creativity. The music room that was set up is now too small, and as they practise playing their instruments the children sometimes spill out into other rooms and even the passageway.

By observing and speaking to the children it soon becomes clear that they haven't just been 'sent' to learn an instrument, but actually enjoy both the learning and participation in music ministry among our churches. Sometimes they can be seen in the music room even when they have no lessons. I spoke to two of the children who were among the first to join, and they told me that they enjoyed playing at other churches and concerts, and at the street-witnessing ventures. They also enjoy learning new songs, playing in a group, fellowshiping with other

children and even helping the younger children to hone their skills.

I also spoke to some of the parents, and they expressed their delight at watching their children develop as they learn. One parent expressed appreciation that their children were given the opportunity not only to learn to play, but to get more involved in church life. They felt that as they got more involved they would be more likely to stay in church. Another parent from Brixton Church, who now brings his children, heard about the sessions from another member and said what was happening at Balham was 'brilliant'.

I also spoke to Euthan and other helpers to find out how they saw this ministry. They talked about the benefits of adults engaging with the children and how the activities kept them occupied instead of being restless or bored on Sabbath afternoons. The sessions gave the children a chance to learn new skills and use them to participate in the church services, and would help them associate church with something positive and a place where people cared enough to cater for them.

The group attending our weekly sessions is growing in leaps and bounds. I recently visited the music room one Sabbath afternoon and counted 18 children. They were all keen and listening intently, something that is not always easy to get a children's group to do!

We are building musicians at Balham Church and helping to shape these young lives for the future. However, I did not write this article just to make Balham Church look good, but because I feel that other churches could use it as an inspiration to develop something similar. Your children will be given the opportunity not only to learn a new skill, but also to become more useful members of your church and the larger community in the years to come.

ERROL ANDERSON



North Manchester remembers 22 October 1844

From 15 to 22 October the North Manchester church explored the history and significance within the Seventh-day Adventist denomination of the Great Disappointment (22 October 1844). They were led each night by Andre Crawford of Crisis Talk Ministries.

The attendance varied between 30 and 40 people, who were joined by an average of 100 people online each night. The session finished on 22 October, with a Sabbath spent in Bible study and prayer that culminated with the screening of *Tell the World*, which recounts the events and subsequent impact of the Great Disappointment.

MANCHESTER NORTH COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



The November Diversity Lecture 'Christianity and Politics: A Challenging Conversation'

In the wake of Brexit and a week before the American election, the November Diversity lecturer focused on the challenge to Christians to think about the political implications of their faith. The whole career of Nick Spencer, now Acting Director of the Christian think tank, Theos, has been devoted to exploring and communicating the connection between various Christian values and politics.

He began his lecture by showing how difficult it is to identify specifically 'Christian' voting patterns in Britain over the last 50 years. Research does show that people who call themselves Anglicans have been more likely to vote Conservative and self-described Catholics have been more likely to vote Labour. Of course, whether Christian values drove that electoral behaviour is a significant question. But research on the 2010 election showed that Christian and secular groups were barely differentiated. Both groups were most concerned about the economy, immigration and the budget deficit. On the spectrums between left and right, libertarian and authoritarian, individualist and welfarist, there were some minor differences between self-declared Christians and others, but they weren't significant.

But significant differences between Christians and the rest were discernible on two specific issues. Regular Christian churchgoers were consistently likely both to oppose the death penalty and to support censorship to uphold moral standards. Christian values, it seems, did make a clear and noticeable difference to political attitudes in 'certain localised areas'.

So if people want Christians all to vote the same way and therefore make a political impact, they are going to be disappointed. It's not that simple! For Nick Spencer, it is not an option for Christians to give up political action just because they don't agree with each other or secular people. 'To throw our hands in the air and say simply that the Gospel tells us where we are heading but has nothing to say about how we should get there is . . . a betrayal of the Gospel itself,' he said.

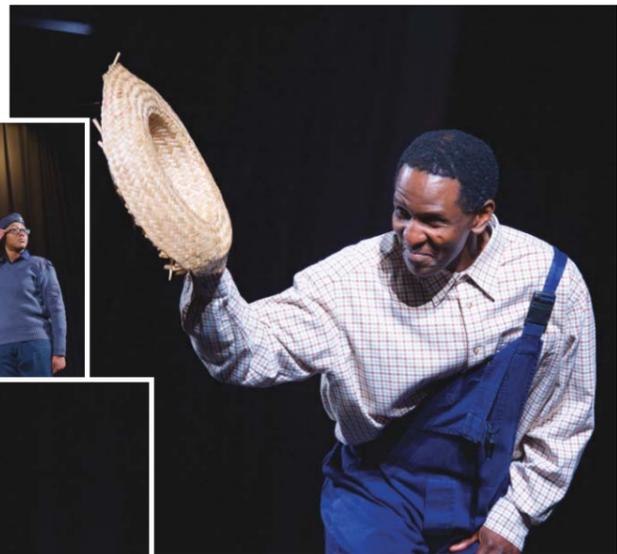
First of all we need to think critically about political categories. 'Asking where on the political spectrum Christians should fall is to treat modern political categories as if they were the pre-existing ones into which the Gospel should fit. . . . It's as if left-right, libertarian-authoritarian, welfarist-individualist categories represent the basic parameters of public reality.' Of course they do not!

What will happen if Christians begin not with politics, but theology? Putting theology first and imagining a Christian society may lead us to fantasise about a Christian utopia where everyone is celibate or faithful, looks after their health, honours their parents, tends to those in need and lives at peace together! Unlikely! Even if human nature were not fallen, there would still be a need for government. Economies would still run in cycles, family networks would be unable to cope with heavy personal burdens and crime would still be committed for deep psychological reasons.

So, if we believe that the action of God in Christ is the centre of our political gravity, how will it affect our political choices? Nick's answer to that question was that a Christian consensus might be formed around 'what is needed to enable God's word and people to work for our salvation in the full sense of the word'. Protection of life, security, equal rule of law for all, basic property rights, and religious freedom would all be important. Healthcare provision, work and income issues, education, and migration policy will all be significant, but Christians will differ in how they believe those services should be provided. Encountering differences between us should not stifle debate between Christians or lead to fake consensus. The Christian response to the sobering realisation of diversity of opinion is not cynicism, but faith – continuing to see and respond to the world from a new vantage point. The challenging conversation must continue!

HELEN PEARSON

news



Some scenes from . . .

Curative Music Foundation have once again put on a wonderful evening of theatrical performances and singing. Among those featured were Bobby Carr, Allafia Maxwell and the Edmonton SDA Drama Group.

Fifi and Terence McKenzie-Cook are the founders of the charity, commonly known as CMFL. They are also responsible for the drama group which puts on plays during Black History Month each year. Here are some scenes from their most recent performance, entitled *Pure Resilience*.

ROSETTA ALLEN



SEC workers' meeting 2016 'Come and just rest awhile'

by Natasha Mirilov

Over 160 South England Conference (SEC) employees gathered to network, build relationships and be rejuvenated in Bečići, Montenegro, from 6 to 13 November last year.

Under the theme, 'Preparation for the Harvest' they used the week to reconnect with Christ, refocus on the mission of the church and find ways to more effectively achieve it. Pastor Emmanuel Osei, SEC Acting President, explained how important the meetings were and expressed his confidence in the SEC ministry: 'There is a willingness to give oneself to the work of ministry and I see this with all our ministers.'

Attendees had a number of seminars and workshops to attend, one of which was on conflict resolution. This topic is important because conflicts exist in all our churches, and our pastors can never have enough training to manage and resolve them.

Another seminar focused on natural church development (NCD), which was run by the NCD President, Revd Lynn Chetcuti. She was able to help pastors gain a snapshot of their churches' spirituality and gave an eight-step assessment, designed to help them grow.

The SEC's Health Director, Dr Chidi Ngwaba, also offered some tips on managing stress and lifestyle. 'It is imperative that as we take care of other people, we also take care of ourselves,' said Elsie Staple, health team assistant.

The health team made health screening available to all the SEC employees, and even the hotel staff. Millie Williams, leader of the health team, said that she and her health team were there to encourage the ministers to make positive lifestyle changes where necessary.

Hotel Splendid's service and facilities were described as 'simply splendid'. Guests could walk along the beaches of the Adriatic Sea, and use the spa and pool, along with all the other fitness facilities that were available. The hotel manager expressed his appreciation of the visit by presenting the SEC employees with a cake iced with the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) logo. So, all in all, with the superb hotel service and the beautiful surroundings, the week was an opportunity for the workers to rest and strengthen relationships.

'As Jesus said to His disciples, come and just rest awhile,' said Pastor Osei. 'Pastors coming together, fellowshiping together,

communing and conversing together . . . that creates a positive feeling.'

Some pastors described the atmosphere as a 'feeling of real camaraderie'. Sophia Peart, pastor at Willesden Church, believes that the time away in Montenegro has given her the opportunity to develop healthy relationships. According to her, networking is important to get the work done, because it will only get done through healthy relationships.

'Sometimes we can experience that [competition], because we want our church to be the best. But what I've sensed among us all is that we want the SEC to be the best . . . the best it can be,' she went on to say.

Through a lot of discussion that focused on the future of the church, and a process of seeing how to make the changes that will have the best impact on our people, a lot of excellent advice was shared. Church plant pastor, Luke White, thought that the social aspect, and the fact that a mixture of age and experience was represented, was very important. He made this point: 'Some of the things that are really obvious to us don't seem to be so obvious to others, and it's only when you are in this type of setting that you really get to see exactly that, and work a way forward that makes sense for everyone.'

Pastor Osei was very happy about the direction the ministers were going as a team, and expressed it this way: 'I applaud all my ministers and I see that there is a burning desire for them to really see the Gospel preached throughout the whole South England Conference.'

Aberdaron
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Metamorphosis

On Sabbath 29 October in the Manchester North church the congregation was able to witness a miraculous transformation – seven precious souls gave their lives to Christ in baptism. Four of the candidates were from the

Manchester North East church plant and three were from Manchester North. All the candidates were prepared for baptism by Vincent Sibanda (elder) and Pastor Zephaniah.

Pastor Daniel baptised them all except Sis Mutanga, who was received into membership on profession of her faith.

LESMOND TAYLOR



Left to right: Sis Mutanga, Pastor Daniel, Romey Fernandez, Irene Mjobi, Romualdo Mandinga, Charity Mutandwa, Vincent Sibanda, Osvaldo Jose, Manatza Gutu, Michael Danzie, Pastor Zephaniah, David Chitocmere and Dr Pedrin.

A memorable October for Xavier

October 2016 was a memorable month for Xavier Marchena-Stanciu, for on 1 October he and his wife, Alice, brought their son, Enzo, to the Exeter church to be dedicated by Pastor Ian Lorek. The baby wore the pastor's own dedication gown, which made it an extra special occasion for all concerned. Then, on 22 October, Pastor Lorek had the privilege of baptising Xavier, who had been brought up as a Roman Catholic in Spain. When he met Alice he found out about Seventh-day Adventists for the first time, and when they moved to England they started to attend the Exeter church and requested Bible studies. Pastor Lorek and his wife, Romola, were only too happy to oblige. It was a joy for the Exeter church to witness Xavier's baptism, and a celebratory cake was shared during refreshment time after the service.

STELLA JEFFERY



Photo quality as supplied

Baptisms at Winson Green

Winson Green Church has grown since its humble beginnings. Not only does it now have a beautiful church building, but it has had a number of baptisms over the last few years, the latest being on 13 August 2016.

Pastor E. Lawrence baptised the four new members – Trevor Kettle, Beverley Shaw, Leroy Watts and Tashi Simms – while family and friends looked on with great joy.

WILFRED MASIH

The editor regrets that a photo of the baptismal candidates has not been supplied.

Aberdeen's new ABC outlet

On the weekend of 13-14 August the Aberdeen members enjoyed a visit from The Stanborough Press, which included the promotion of their products and some information on the purpose of the Press and how it meets the needs of our church members and their missionary



contacts. The visit was handled by Pastor Samuel Ouadjo from the Adventist Book Centre sales team.* He was our Sabbath speaker for both the morning and afternoon programmes, and was accompanied by his wife, Joyce, who offered additional support over the weekend.

Apart from explaining the purpose of the Stanborough Press products and their availability to the church members, one of the main reasons for the visit was to set up an outlet at the Aberdeen church. Initially this outlet will serve the members of the Aberdeen church, but it is hoped to extend its influence to the Scottish Mission at large once it is well established. As well as Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books, and other reading materials, the outlet will also stock a supply of food items.

One of the reasons for opening an outlet in Aberdeen was the distance of the church from the Stanborough Press. Being the most northerly church in the Scottish Mission it is not cost-effective for the Press to hold sales here on a regular basis. After talks with Pastor Ouadjo an outlet was considered the better option.

With God's help it is hoped that the Aberdeen bookshop will become a valued resource in this part of the Scottish Mission and beyond.

JANICE SAVIZON, ABERDEEN BOOKSHOP OUTLET

*Pastor Ouadjo has since accepted a call to the South England Conference.

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ADRA UK

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Pathfinders at Parliament

The London Ghana Church Pathfinder group toured the UK Parliament on Monday 24 October.

The four-hour tour by the 85-member group was aimed at helping them appreciate how the legislative institution of the United Kingdom operates. They also leaned about the role of MPs and how to gain their help within one's constituency.

It also gave them an insight into the long-lasting relationship between the UK and Ghana, as well as whipping up their enthusiasm to become Members of Parliament themselves!

The group were told about parliamentary ethics and procedures, the history of the UK Parliament, and its contribution towards the socio-economic development of the country.

They visited both Houses of Parliament, Lords and Commons; the Queen's robing room; and a number of other venues, to learn about their functions.



The group were excited to learn that four of the sitting members of the UK Parliament – Kwasi Kwarteng, Adam Afriyie and Sam Gyimah of the Conservative Party, and Diane Abbott of the Labour Party – are of Ghanaian origin, as is one member of the Lords, Lord Paul Boateng.

The group later toured Westminster Abbey, and walked down to Number 10 Downing Street.

NANA SIFA TWUM

Adventist Church represented at Lambeth Palace

On Monday evening, 31 October, BUC Executive Secretary Pastor John Surrridge represented our Church at a special dinner hosted by the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury. Pastor Surrridge was standing in for BUC President Pastor Ian Sweeney, who has attended a number of such events in the past. Of the fifty or so people present, most were the presidents, general secretaries or moderators of other sizeable Christian denominations in England.

Following a liturgical worship service in the chapel, which has been in use for nearly 800 years, the Archbishop led his guests through to the dining hall, where they spent some time renewing acquaintances. At the meal itself Pastor Surrridge sat with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, whose archdiocese actually extends as far as Watford, where the Adventist Church has its British headquarters. As well as being the head of the Roman Catholic Church in England, Cardinal Nichols is also one of the presidents of Churches Together in England (CTE), and is very interested in developing relationships with other churches. 'We had a very pleasant conversation,' said Pastor Surrridge. 'He knew quite a lot about our church, both due to our prevalence in London and from his numerous trips overseas. He also spent some time explaining about a new Catholic web-based resource entitled 'The Art of Dying Well', which has just been launched. Although we differ fundamentally on our theological views regarding death, there are a number of things that we as Adventists can learn from the work they have done in this area.'

The purpose of the event, which was organised by CTE, was twofold: to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and to encourage young people to engage in ecumenical dialogue. Four young people attended and spoke of the enriching experiences they had had while travelling and working cross-denominationally.

In keeping with our worldwide stance on ecumenism, Seventh-day Adventists attend such events as observers, with voice but no vote. Despite this, we are invariably welcomed with warmth and a genuine interest in the work that we are doing.

PASTOR JOHN SURRIDGE, BUC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



Hackney Pathfinders march!

Hackney's Pathfinders took to the streets as part of the Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere initiative on Sabbath 29 October.

According to Pathfinder director, Andrea Simpson, 'We did a march within the local community to let people know about the Pathfinder club as well as to introduce them to the Church and share with them the message of hope that Jesus loves them and is coming again.' As well as marching and drumming through the streets, the 15 Pathfinders also found time to distribute literature to those they came in contact with. 'Some 300 tracts and books were distributed,' says Andrea, who added: 'We are hoping to do another march on a bigger scale throughout East London in the near future.'

Assistant director, Margaret Brooks, said: 'The smiles on the faces of both young and old were very encouraging, as was seeing people taking out their smartphones to take photos and film our talented drummers, who made us very proud.'

Also in attendance to offer his support was Hackney's new pastor, Joojo Bonnie, who was impressed with what he saw.

Among those in the community who took part were sisters Huda and Hania Sealy, both 12 years old. 'It was fun and brought joy to the streets, with a crowd of people watching,' said Huda, with her sister Hania adding: 'Days like these are good because it encourages young people to know God and to join the church.' Sherece Sealy, who now attends the Hackney Seventh-day Adventist church along with her two daughters, said: 'It's always a joy to see youth involvement in the community and individuals being attracted to good rather than bad. Those who marched and drummed did themselves proud and overall it was a good day to be out in the community.'

DARELL J. PHILIP (PR AND COMMUNICATION ASSISTANT)



Luton Central Women's Prayer Breakfast

Around two dozen women and their teenage daughters gathered around beautifully set tables laden with bowls of delicious savoury dishes and fruit at Luton Central's Women's Prayer Breakfast, on Sunday 18 September 2016.

The Prayer Breakfast, 'Menarche to Menopause: Things Your Mother Never Told You', followed a series of programmes arranged by the Men's, Women's and Family Ministries Departments at Luton Central in which the church was challenged to open up a dialogue with its past so that the source of destructive habits and unhealthy relationships could be identified and acknowledged. In particular it was emphasised that we can choose to re-write family scripts and break cycles of poor behaviour and inherited practices, handed down from parent to child.

During the breakfast, one woman of 62 shared her experience of growing up without a mother and the terror she felt at the onset of puberty without anyone to explain to her the changes that were taking place in her body. Others were told, 'Don't let a boy kiss you or you will become pregnant.' Some admitted there were things they felt unable to talk to their mothers about, or found difficult to say to their children.

One attendee highlighted the fact that topics such as menstruation, sex and relationship health, once considered taboo, are now openly and sensibly discussed by both boys and girls in classrooms across the country. Another wondered why, in some of our cultures, there is still a reluctance to address these matters in a healthy and appropriate manner.

The women then took some time to write down two things they would like to share with their daughter or mother. Notes were passed around the room, while some were slipped into pockets to be dealt with later, more privately.

When it was time for one mother to leave, her teenage daughter called to her, 'Mum, please can I stay? I really need to hear all this!'

As the breakfast progressed, the question was asked, 'What is the menopause? When will I get it?' Immediately a cacophony of raised voices attempted to give the answer. Some commonly held myths were dispelled, and when they finally ran out of time a promise of future sessions to address pertinent issues was made.

AVERY DAVIS
(PHOTOGRAPH: EMMA FETALINO)



Middlesbrough Men's Ministry retreat 2016

The second Middlesbrough Men's Ministry retreat took place over the weekend of 4-6 November at the Langdon Beck Youth Hostel in the northern Pennines.

This year the theme was 'Men Making a Difference', and we were also blessed with men from the Bradford and Darlington churches joining us.

On Friday evening, after a hot meal, we enjoyed a short devotional that looked at men who made a difference in the Bible. This was followed by a time of prayer. Typical for Middlesbrough men, there is always lots of singing and this weekend was no different.

The Sabbath started with an early-morning devotional that took a look at the opening chapters of Ruth. After breakfast we all put on our wet-weather gear for a walk to the High Force waterfall, the final part of which was spectacular, with nature showing off all her autumn colours. On the rocks below the falls Brother Ben shared some thoughts with us on how we as men can make a difference.

The whole focus of the weekend was how we as men could make a difference: after the Sabbath School lesson we had a discussion on the various ways men can make a difference in our neighbourhoods, at work and in the family.

Saturday evening was devoted to various team-building activities and this resulted in lots of laughter and much fun.

Sunday's early-morning devotional was led by Brother Joseph, who spoke on the difference Nehemiah made, and how we can do the same. The view from the hostel was beautiful that morning, with a coating of snow covering the surrounding hills.

During the morning Brother Oswell gave us all a glimpse of his childhood and what it took to be called a man, and then showed how Jesus is the only true Man we should model ourselves on. This was followed by a special time of prayer, and shortly after lunch we all went our separate ways, already longing to have a similar weekend next year.

COLIN WOODFORD (MEN'S MINISTRY LEADER)



Leeds Central investiture 2016

Leeds Central Adventurer and Pathfinder Club held its annual investiture service on 8 October last year. The theme for the year had been 'Be Ready: Jesus Is Coming', and 29 Adventurers and 18 Pathfinders were ready indeed. The awards ranged from Eager Beaver to Voyager, and many club members also received honour tokens as well. The speaker for the day was the NEC Pathfinder Director, Ikwise Mwasumbi.

VANESSA MAYNARD

BOOKSALES

January
15 Plumstead Community 10am-2pm
29 Nottingham Central (TBC) 10am-2pm

ABC Shops
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obituaries

After a long and happy retirement he then took care of his wife, Ivy, who suffered failing health in her latter years, until, sadly, she passed away five years ago, aged 92. Finally he fell ill himself and was admitted to hospital at the end of June this year, and subsequently to a nursing home in Nottingham. At age 93 years he fell asleep in Jesus on Friday 4 November and now awaits our Lord's return.

His daughter Krysa and her husband Melvyn emigrated to Australia in the 1970s with their

three young daughters, where Cyril and Ivy visited them twice. Krysa also came to England to visit them on several occasions.

Cyril leaves behind six grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. He will be missed.

The family would like to express their sincere thanks to Pastors Peter Jeynes, John Ferguson and Melvyn Ellis for conducting the funeral service, and to everyone who showed their support in various ways.

IAN THOMPSON



Messenger

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Sunset

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	London	Card	Nottingham	Edin	Belf
Jan 13	4.18	4.30	4.15	4.08	4.26
20	4.29	4.42	4.27	4.21	4.39
27	4.41	4.54	4.40	4.36	4.53
Feb 3	4.54	5.06	4.53	4.51	5.07

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ISABEL WAKE



Left to right: Dr Päivikki Kuoppakangas, Dr Tom de Bruin and Bisser Stoykov.

New perspectives at Newbold

The new academic year brought new perspectives to Newbold with the arrival of new staff, new students, new topics of study, and plans to enhance the 'student experience' by bringing to life old favourites with fresh ideas.

Newbold's Department of Theological Studies (DTS) was joined by Dr Tom de Bruin in early August. Himself a Newbold graduate, Tom is the former executive secretary for the Netherlands Union Conference, and teaches Greek and other New Testament modules. He has spearheaded the introduction of a new postgraduate module, New Testament Exegesis, which focuses on the real-world skill of understanding difficult Bible passages.

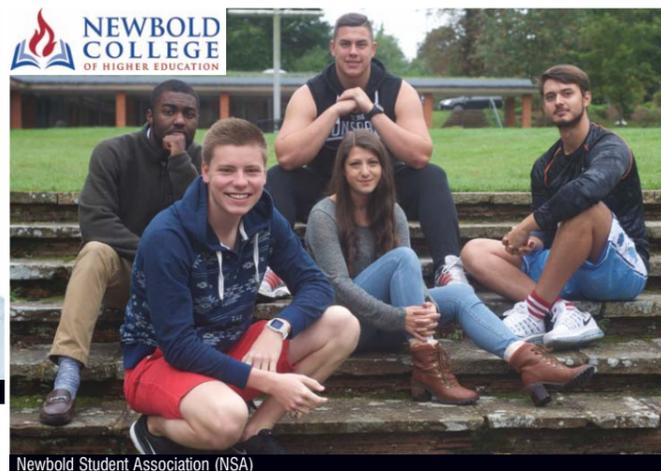
Together with Tihomir (Tihi) Lazić, who recently defended his Doctor of Philosophy thesis at the University of Oxford, and who is teaching a newly-developed postgraduate module on the theology of church (ecclesiology), Tom represents what Dr Bjørn Ottesen, Head of DTS, describes as 'a younger generation of theologians' at Newbold.

Dr Päivikki Kuoppakangas joined the college's teaching staff just prior to the start of the academic year as Interim Head of the School of Business. Having spent seven years as a lecturer, researcher and administrator at the University of Turku, in Finland, and with two decades' experience in people and project management, Päivikki is well placed to lead the school into a new era.

'I would like to see the school offering a postgraduate qualification in Business some time in the near future, and for us to be able to tailor our programmes to what our future students want and need in today's changing business environment,' said Päivikki.

Bisser Stoykov, a graduate of Newbold's School of Business and former student member of the Recruitment, Marketing and Sales (RMS) team at Newbold, rejoined the college community over the summer when he took up leadership of the RMS team where he now oversees the college's student recruitment initiatives.

'One of the things that had the biggest impact on my Newbold experience as a student was the close sense of community, and the



Newbold Student Association (NSA)

diversity of opportunity that this allows. The Newbold experience provides much more than just a degree or qualification, but the chance for personal and spiritual transformation.'

Bisser plans to focus on establishing and enhancing relationships between Newbold, the college's students, and its stakeholders across the TED.

Bisser's team is working closely with the Newbold Student Association (NSA) to enhance the student experience. Robert Keszeg is a second-year Business student and current president of the NSA.

'Newbold has already given so much to me, first as a church member and then as a student, and I thought that joining the NSA would be one way to give back. What I really want to do is to enhance student life on campus, and to help students really make the most of their time here,' said Robert.

'We are focusing on involving the whole student body in events and encouraging other students to be involved in event organisation, so that the events are more personalised and so that, through this involvement, students are encouraged to take more ownership of their experience at Newbold,' said Robert. 'Our main goal is to enhance the sense of community and family among our students.'

The NSA plans to offer a range of activities that will encourage students to leave the 'Newbold bubble', to interact with the community and other Adventist universities and organisations, and to become more in touch with the local community.

Newbold is the TED's flagship higher education institution and offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and programmes, including Theology and Religious Studies, Business Studies, Liberal Arts, Health and Wellness, Leadership, and English for Speakers of Other Languages. The college's campus is based in Binfield, Berkshire, and its diverse community includes representation from around 50 nationalities.

KIRSTY WATKINS (PUBLICATIONS CO-ORDINATOR)

Flowers raise £1,500 for local hospice

Stanborough Park member, Audrey Balderstone, is well known for her love of flowers, but less well known for using her love of flowers to raise funds for good causes.

This year she opened her beautifully laid out garden to raise money for a cause close to her heart – sponsoring a room at the local hospice in Watford, called 'The Stanborough Room'. Each year she raises enough money to continue its sponsorship, and with the hospice celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary felt compelled to go the extra mile this year.

So on Sunday, 11 September, she hosted a large number of people at her home in Bedmond, a village near Watford, to view her garden, browse the stalls set up on the lawn and enjoy the cream teas on offer.

'The afternoon went fantastically well – better than I ever envisaged!' said Audrey. 'We had 119 visitors and we raised £1,064.95. That has been augmented with donations from people who could not attend and the total is now £1,080.00. All of the food was donated so every penny raised will go to Peace Hospice Care. The result made the days of preparation and hard work on the day very worthwhile.'

In addition to the money raised on the day there was a £500 donation as a result of Audrey organising the flowers for an event earlier in the year. This brings the total to £1,580 to continue sponsoring the room at the Peace Hospice in Central Watford.

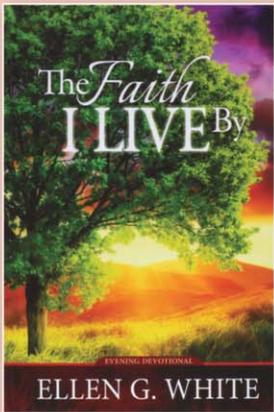
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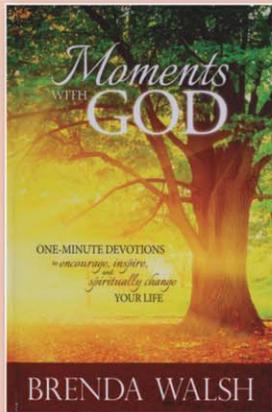


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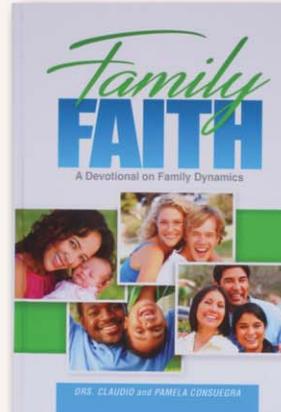
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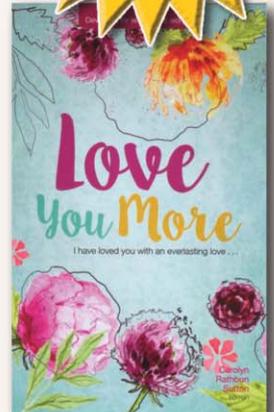
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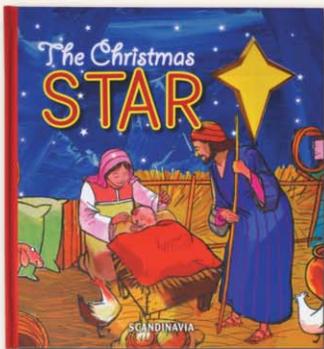
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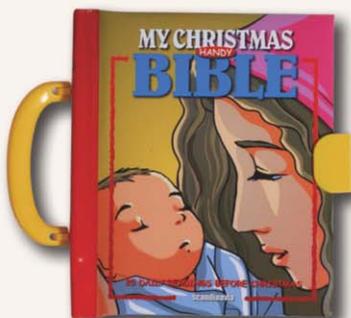
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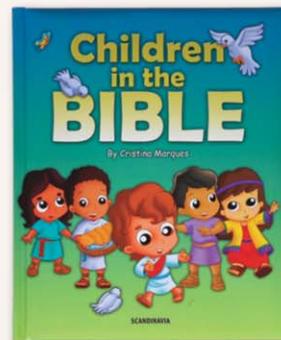
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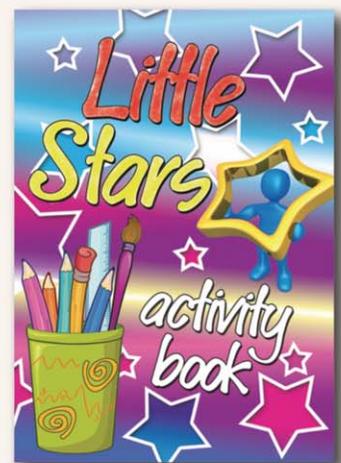
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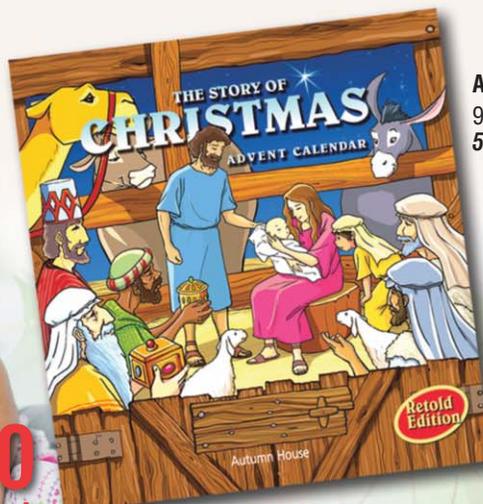
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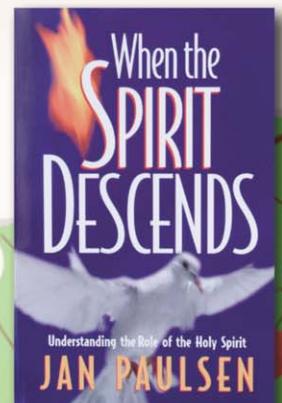


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