Empowered by the Holy Spirit

by Lynette Allcock

‘Would you like to experience unprecedented intimacy with God?’

Mark Finley posed this question to the congregation at Stanborough Park Church on the first night of his series, ‘Empowered by the Holy Spirit’, which ran from January 10-14. As he explained, ‘the key to a fulfilled Christian life is grasping who the Holy Spirit is and receiving Him into your life.’

Pastor Finley spoke to a packed church, with eager listeners coming from other congregations in the area – and one coming from as far away as Holland.

On Wednesday, Pastor Finley discussed the fundamentals about the Holy Spirit, explaining how He is a Personality and not a mere force, and His role as our personal helper.

On Friday, he shared the lessons for the church to be found in the parable of the ten virgins, pointing out that the difference between the wise and foolish virgins is not in their theology, but their experience. Each person needs to really know God for themselves.

On Sabbath, he preached about the promised revival and the extra power from the Holy Spirit to take the Gospel to the whole world. Commenting on God’s promise to pour out His Spirit on all people in the end times (see Acts 2:17-18), he said, ‘God is no respecter of gender, age, or social status. God pours out His Spirit upon everyone – men and women, young and old.’ He stressed our need to ask for the Holy Spirit personally, as ‘the reason we ask is not because God is unprepared to give, but because we are unprepared to receive’.

The longing in God’s heart for a deep, intimate relationship with each of us, as well as our great need of that connection, was the clear centre in each of Pastor Finley’s messages.

‘Friday night’s presentation about the ten virgins definitely impacted me the most,’ said one attendee. ‘It’s one of those stories I’ve heard so many times before, but I learnt a lot of new things that night. Our relationship with God can’t just be a one-time experience; we need to go “buy” oil – spend time with God – to keep our lamps burning. We can’t borrow that oil from anyone else, but need to go and invest in it ourselves with our time.’

Another attendee said, ‘An old group of us young people used to come together to pray for the Holy Spirit. Thanks to this weekend, I’m inspired to start that habit again!’

At the end of the series, there was one request for baptism and eleven requests for Bible studies. Pastor Finley left his listeners with a renewed desire to experience God more deeply, and to pray for the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit in their personal lives, church, and mission.

You can watch the messages on Stanborough Park Church’s Youtube channel.
How healthy are you? Part 2 – the HEALTHY format

Health Checks

During my health promotional workshops I have developed the HEALTHY format as a tool to assess health lifestyle behaviour. It examines seven segments of our health in an effort to raise awareness and encourage positive health practices in those areas. We examine the first of these in this issue – health checks.

The NHS Health Check is a national risk assessment and management programme offered free for individuals aged 40 to 74 living in England. This provides an opportunity to get an overall check-up which yields information on your general wellbeing; to assess your risk of developing certain diseases; and to receive advice on how to prevent them.

Dr Mike Knaptom, Associate Medical Director of the British Heart Foundation states: “We need to do more to improve the numbers of patients attending these health checks. We also need to ensure that all patients are given the best advice and treatment in the management of conditions such as high blood pressure and cholesterol. If we are to significantly reduce the burden of preventable diseases.”

NHS Choices gives an overview of what an NHS health check entails:

- You can book to have an NHS health check at your GP or local pharmacy. It can also happen in your local area’s shopping centre, library or leisure centre. Some areas offer them from mobile units to passers-by or in work places.
- An NHS health check takes about 20-30 minutes.

- A health professional (nurse or healthcare assistant) asks some basic questions about lifestyle and family history.
- A physical assessment is undertaken by measuring height, weight, blood pressure and a simple blood test (finger prick blood test) to check blood sugar and cholesterol levels.
- Based on the above assessment, you are then advised on your chances of getting heart disease, stroke, diabetes or kidney disease.
- Personalised advice is then given on how to lower your risk of these diseases. This will entail information on how to improve your diet and the amount of physical activity you undertake. If your blood pressure or cholesterol is found to be high, a discussion will be held on whether medication is required to lower their levels. Advice is also given on weight management and how to stop smoking.
- Individuals over 60 are given the signs and symptoms of dementia to look out for.
- An NHS health check is offered every five years to individuals aged 40-70 if they haven't had a stroke, do not have heart disease, diabetes or kidney disease.

Keep up with regular health checks.

Good health!


‘You have cancer...’

by Lurline Thomas

Lurline Thomas’s unexpected journey from care provider to care receiver mirrors the devastating experience that cancer – in all its many forms – imposes on thousands upon thousands of fellow citizens. Although paper and ink cannot really do justice to the trauma into which Lurline’s illness plunged her and her family, here is a sample of what she has gone through. It is also an story of how she let her ministry become a mission. Hopefully, it will provide us with deeper insight into what happens after someone tells you ‘You have cancer’.

F or me, this journey full of challenges, treatments and side effects commenced in February 2016. It couldn’t have begun at a worse time. A little over two months before my diagnosis I had buried my father, and my husband (Steve Thomas) had taken up a new and challenging assignment as pastor of the Peckham Church in London. But then, cancer doesn’t make appointments, does it? I started when I received an invitation from the NHS Breast Screening Service to have a mammogram. There was nothing sinister about this, for it was merely part of a follow-up on my first mammogram three years earlier, which had been part of the randomised screening of women under the age of 50.

At that point, I had no concerns about my health, for as a healthcare professional I had tried to cultivate a healthy lifestyle and implement good health choices. I went to my breast screening appointment as scheduled. The mobile unit was conveniently located in my local supermarket car park. I was happy, as it was one of those bright but cold winter days that I enjoy – made more special because it was the day in the week that my husband and I regularly spent together. So, I had my mammogram and enjoyed the rest of the day with him.

Two weeks later I received a letter inviting me to attend for a further mammogram. This did not worry me at the time, as the letter was written in a way as not to be alarming. I thought I might be in another randomised group. However, this third mammogram proved to be a turning point – an abnormality was detected in my left breast.

As well as the mammogram, I also had to have a biopsy. A week later, the results came back as ‘infiltrating ductal carcinoma Grade 1’. The treatment plan was to have a lumpectomy and then radiotherapy. During the surgery another routine biopsy was taken.

The results revealed ‘a more invasive Ductal Carcinoma Grade 2’ that was ‘HER2 positive’. What did all this medical-speak mean? Simply put, that the treatment plan had to change to include the addition of cyclophosphamide and therapy target drug. In just a few weeks my life had changed drastically! I had breast cancer – I was no longer the care provider, I was now the patient. And in the weeks and months that followed I began to learn how to live with cancer – and praise God – how to recover from it.

I have learnt a lot

During that painful process, certain things have stuck with me, like this comment from Lynda Thomas, chief executive of Macmillan Cancer Support: ‘Life doesn’t stop just because you have cancer. Seeing friends, supporting the family, and finding the strength to keep going is still important to people, even if you’re living with a terminal diagnosis.’

I have had to constantly remind myself of this observation by James McNaught, 46, from London, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2014: ‘When I was diagnosed, I wasn’t thinking about life after cancer – I was focused on my treatment, on survival. I got through it by keeping things as normal as possible. Meeting friends who were also going through the same thing helped.’

I have also discovered something else about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. (2 Corinthians 12:9, NIV-UK.)

I have had a lot of support from family, friends and colleagues in what was a trying time for me. I am very grateful for their support and advice. But most of all, my gratitude goes to God for my new lease on life!

Even though Lurline is now cancer free, she still lives with the challenges she has already overcome. What has impressed me most, however, is that she is deeply thankful, remembering that to wake up and enjoy the day is not a right but a privilege granted by God. I have heard her recount her cancer journey on numerous occasions, but never with a word of complaint or a question about why this has happened to her. Instead, she has allowed God to make her a witness to many people who are not readily accessible to our church community.

Her husband, Pastor Steve Thomas, has this to say...

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by Pastor Jeff Couzins

There is a growing online community that seems committed to undermining the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (GC) and certain of our Church’s teachings. Such activity is nothing new, but what concerns me is the growing number of people who are coming under its influence.

In their attempts to discredit one of our teachings, these online critics are using – or misusing – the writings of Ellen White. For instance, they claim she wrote in reference to the gift of the Holy Spirit that, ‘in all humility they [Christians] submitted to the molding hand of the Teacher... and to the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in Christ bodily’. (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, page 22. In fact, the whole first section of this book is denouncing the Seventh-day Adventist Church as Babylon. It is hard to maintain this argument because, in an article published in the Review and Herald, 17 October 1883, Ellen White wrote, ‘It is the whole nature of these pamphlets denouncing the Seventh-day Adventist Church as Babylon which is the point of the whole question. And I want to know whether there is not something directly or by association; and 579 instances where the Holy Spirit is identified with divine attributes and actions.

I have also discovered that these online writers never refer to the biblical references, whether from the Bible or from the writings of Ellen White. They have not been exposed to the writings of Ellen White or the teachings of the GC. It was at this time that I began to learn how to live with cancer – and praise God – how to recover from it.

In terms of their misuse of the writings of Ellen White, these critics of the GC state that Ellen White associated it with Babylon. It is hard to maintain this argument because, in an article published in the Review and Herald, 17 October 1883, Ellen White wrote, ‘It is the whole nature of these pamphlets denouncing the Seventh-day Adventist Church as Babylon which is the point of the whole question. And I want to know whether there is not something directly or by association; and 579 instances where the Holy Spirit is identified with divine attributes and actions.

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I have had a lot of support from family, friends and colleagues in what was a trying time for me. I am very grateful for their support and advice. But most of all, my gratitude goes to God for my new lease on life!
As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

April 26, 1886, Ellen G. White

Missionary Book of the Year 2018

Today, things like Brexit anxiety, loneliness, youth depression and a variety of mental health problems seriously challenge our emotional happiness. There is a desperate need for us to regain our sense of hope, which is why our General Conference has chosen The Power of Hope by Julian Melgosa and Michelle Borges as Missionary Book of the Year 2018.

Every member will benefit from this book and—at only 45p per copy—we can afford copies for our neighbours, friends and work colleagues too. Available now at all ABC outlets (London, Watford and Aston Newton), and possibly at some satellite church branches.

You can also obtain copies through your PM secretary; or call us on 01476 591700, or email us at sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk. Postage and packaging charges apply.

I think it is clear that Ellen White believed in the Trinity, albeit by a different name, and never associated either the General Conference nor the Seventh-day Adventist Church with Babylon.

There was astonishment and surprise and shock and horror. The Bible records that ‘he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions’.

Can you imagine the look on the face of the rich young ruler when Jesus invited him to ‘sell all that you have, and give to the poor’? (Mark 10:21, ESV.) There was astonishment and surprise and shock and horror. The Bible records that ‘he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions’.

A report in The Guardian in August 2007 suggested that the ‘average house price in England will rise by 40% in five years, breaking the £300,000 barrier. The price of the average three bedroom semi-detached house in London, a year ago, was £583,500, and, in Birmingham, around £278,600. Although the price actually fell in the last quarter of 2007, Scotland and Wales are significantly lower than in English cities, they are also on the rise.

One of the most expensive properties to lose in the UK is Grimsby, where you can purchase a basic three bedroom house for around £50,000 (www.yellowbrick.com).

What if God invited you to partner with him and sell even your £50,000 house and give the money to the poor? What would you do? And do you think he would ignore it? Or simply walk away?

Sacrificial giving seems to be a product of a bygone age of Adventist history. The Annual Week of Sacrifice offering came into being in 1922, after the Autumn Council of the General Conference, when a quarter of a million dollar budget deficit was made up by generous giving. Despite the challenging conditions in the aftermath of World War I, our members gave more than $350,000 over the following year to what became known as the Annual Week of Sacrifice offering. The amount, that our membership of 208,071 gave nearly a hundred years ago, equates to roughly $40,910,220 (nearly 3,000,000) today.

Let’s take time to pray reflectively, asking God how we can assist the world’s poor and needy through ADRA-UK in 2018.

All this can happen because of you. Let’s reflect on the way that we give to the poor and the needy and consider sacrificial giving, both during the 2018 Appeal and to local charities. How can you be involved in raising funds for the poor and needy, not only overseas, but in your local communities in many different ways.

Why not ‘sell your possessions . . . and give to the poor?’ You can do this by selling unwanted items on eBay and then donating the proceeds to ADRA-UK. Alternatively, you can ‘sell’ a day’s work by donating that amount. Some, instead of ‘selling’, may want to donate the equivalent of a week’s lunch for the poor, or even donate their time by organising an event to be an ADRA ‘coffee’ morning, a bake sale or car wash.

This year, ADRA-UK plans to raise over £300,000 during the 2018 Appeal through door-to-door collections, fundraising activities, and a variety of business donations. We would invite you to give sacrificially, not only out of your money but of your time too. The money raised this year will go to the world’s most needy, and, for the first time in the history of ADRA-UK, 10% of the amount raised will be returned to local churches to assist with community development projects right here in the UK.

All this can happen because of you. Let’s reflect on the way that we give to the poor and the needy and consider sacrificial giving, both during the 2018 ADRA Appeal and the rest of the year. Statistics reveal that 2.7 billion people live in extreme poverty, with half the world’s population existing on $2.45 ($3.50) per day—that’s less than £75.00 a month—to feed and clothe their families.

Let’s take time to pray reflectively, asking God how we can assist the world’s poor and needy through ADRA-UK in 2018.

www.toughnickel.com).

The Power of Hope

ADRA

Sell all and give to the poor

An exploration of sacrificial giving

catherine Anthony Boldeau, ADRA-UK Development Education Officer

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2018 SEC BOOKING FORM

Please complete this Booking Form and send it directly to:
Pontins Ainsdale House, Shore Road, Ainsdale, Southport. PR8 2PZ
Tel: 0871 222 02 01

ACCOMMODATION

Booking Ref: [ ]
Holiday Location: PRESTATYN SANDS

Arrival Date: 18th June 2018
Departure Date: 24th June 2018

No. of apartments

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ADDRESS OF FIRST- NAMED ON BOOKING FORM

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Business Tel: [ ]
Town: [ ]
Email: [ ]
Country: [ ]
Postcode: [ ]

PARTY DETAILS

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* Please note - first named person must be over 18. Special requests are not guaranteed. Maximum persons in 2 bed/m Apartment is 6.

Special Needs/Requirements Section:
Wheelchair Accessible apartment
Ground Floor apartment
Please note all requests will be dealt with on a first come first served basis.

**OFFER CODE: SDA 18**

Nb. 1.5% admin charge applies to all card transactions.

Declaration:
I agree on behalf of all persons named above to abide by Pontins’ conditions. I accept the charges for accommodation and agree to pay the balance 56 days before the holiday date. By entering into a contract with you I understand that the details I provide will be used in booking and providing my chosen holiday.

(PLEASE SIGN HERE)

Local Minister’s Signature: ____________________________
Print Minister’s Name: ____________________________
Church Name: ____________________________
Sign: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________

Print Forms
There was an air of excitement as our youth from the Sheffield and Chesterfield churches gathered together in anticipation of something special. They were there to discuss dating and what it means to date in God’s way. This Smart Love seminar was hosted by the Manor Newstart church and conducted by Pastors Calvin and Patricia Douglas and Dr Irwin Somasundram towards the end of November last year. The event brought the youth into contact with dynamic preachers such as Joseph Phliplop, Takudzwa Chigotore and Clinton Waite. The youth were intensely interested in the lessons to be learned from the lives of Joseph (who refused to give in to pressure from Potiphar’s wife), Samson (the man who simply could not resist beautiful women), and the exemplary story of Ruth and Boaz. The seminar culminated in a graduation ceremony and banquet, which was held at a local hotel on 3 December. It was a grand event, with young men transformed into dazzling princes in their smart suits, and young ladies who looked more radiant than ever in their ball gowns. It was a red carpet affair, a fitting environment for celebrating their Smart Love graduation. Masters of ceremony, Shaun Clarke and Chris Philip, led the room with laughter and appreciation for the effort that went into organising both the seminar and the banquet.

The Youth Perspective . . .

These were among the comments received from the youth who attended:

‘I think the Smart Love seminar was very informative and enjoyable for all my friends from church. Then, to finish off the seminar we had a wonderful graduation banquet. With girls dressed elegantly in their ball gowns and boys dressed smartly in suits and ties, we all proudly received our certificates and our copy of the Smart Love book.’

‘At first I was a bit resistant to going, probably due mainly to the fact that I didn’t know what was going to happen. I think that the sessions were fulfilling because they consisted of a starting question, where we shared our own ideas in a group, and then with the rest of the people in the seminar. Afterwards, we were guided through the lesson which had a little bit of humour added to it, making it more interesting. It was overall a wonderful and eye-opening experience.’

‘I liked the seminar because it was brilliant!’

The Parent Perspective . . .

The parents also had their perspective on the seminar. Here are a few representative comments:

‘Thank you very much. My daughter thoroughly enjoyed and valued the experience!’

‘I think it’s important for our children to learn about these issues and to see that there is nothing to be ashamed about. These issues are so relevant right now!’

As a church we love our children and our youth, we take their discipleship very seriously, and this has provided the rationale for preparing and presenting the Smart Love seminar. They must be equipped for a fulfilling life, be mindful of possible pitfalls, and believe that God loves them and wants them to know they can trust Him to guide them aright.

Smart Love in Sheffield . . .

Pastor Patricia Douglas, NEC Children’s Ministries Director.

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These were among the comments received from the youth who attended:

‘I think the Smart Love seminar was very informative and enjoyable for all my friends from church. Then, to finish off the seminar we had a wonderful graduation banquet. With girls dressed elegantly in their ball gowns and boys dressed smartly in suits and ties, we all proudly received our certificates and our copy of the Smart Love book.’

‘At first I was a bit resistant to going, probably due mainly to the fact that I didn’t know what was going to happen. I think that the sessions were fulfilling because they consisted of a starting question, where we shared our own ideas in a group, and then with the rest of the people in the seminar. Afterwards, we were guided through the lesson which had a little bit of humour added to it, making it more interesting. It was overall a wonderful and eye-opening experience.’

‘I liked the seminar because it was brilliant!’

The Parent Perspective . . .

The parents also had their perspective on the seminar. Here are a few representative comments:

‘Thank you very much. My daughter thoroughly enjoyed and valued the experience!’

‘I think it’s important for our children to learn about these issues and to see that there is nothing to be ashamed about. These issues are so relevant right now!’

As a church we love our children and our youth, we take their discipleship very seriously, and this has provided the rationale for preparing and presenting the Smart Love seminar. They must be equipped for a fulfilling life, be mindful of possible pitfalls, and believe that God loves them and wants them to know they can trust Him to guide them aright.
Let your light shine

On Sabbath 21 October last year, with glorious sunshine streaming through the windows of the Welling church, members and friends gathered for a Community Services day. The sunshine was a reflection of the theme for the day, ‘Let your light shine,’ while the sanctuary looked splendid as autumn flowers along the pews and lanterns with glowing candles. The special guests were the Mayor of Bexley, Peter Reader, and the Mayoress, Irene Reader, who were welcomed by Pastor Bernard Akakpo.

In response, the mayor thanked Community Services Leader, Patricia Samuel, for inviting him and the mayoress to be a part of the service. He said he had visited a number of communities and faith groups – Hindus, Muslims, Seventh-day Adventists and others – and he was amazed at the amount of community work that was being done. He encouraged the Community Services ministry to continue working in communities where there clearly is a need.

To mark the event the mayor was presented with a BUC Community Services plaque inscribed with his name, title and date. His wife was presented with a beautiful bouquet of flowers. Other dignitaries present were Pastor Kevin Johns and his family; Liz and Karl Simpson (Liz is the President of Community Service Federation of Area 6); and Karen Juli and Linda Wade from the Welling play group.

The Community Services report was presented by Anne-Marie Gereny and Allan Samuel, who mentioned some of the projects undertaken during the year: contributions to a local play group; Grenfell Tower Fire Disaster – donations and support to those affected by the Grenfell Tower disaster; contributions to various bereaved families; food baskets for a number of needy church members; and the sponsorship of needy children.

The service was enriched by musical items from a variety of talented singers, and the sermon of Pastor Kevin Johns, who spoke on Let Your Light So Shine, drawing his inspiration from Matthew 5:14-16.

The service concluded with the lighting of candles signifying the purpose of Christians to be a light to the world. The praise team then led out in the singing of ‘Go light your world’.

On Sabbath 21 October last year, two Breath of Life events took place.

The first was an annual meeting at Matalan in Smethwick, where the church choir ministered to hundreds of shoppers on this busy Saturday afternoon prior to the holiday season, with a combination of Christian music and Adventist books and tracts.

Song leaders, Monica Smith and Kerisia Powell-Amadi, introduced a light and atmosphere, is looking to employ volunteers for one year. All positions begin in August 2018. Positions available:

Volunteer Assistant Dean Boarding School (3)
Volunteer ICT Assistant (1)
Volunteer Marketing Assistant (1)

A vacancy at the South England Conference (SEC) Communication and Media Personal Assistant

The successful candidate will be based at the SEC Watford head office, and will report to the Communications and Media Director and be required to provide comprehensive support to the department.

Applicants must have the necessary skills and ability to carry out the following tasks with a high level of proficiency:

- Website development – being responsible for both written content and visual imagery
- Being proactive in gathering and writing news stories for print and online media, including regular weekly on-location reporting
- Undertaking research for productions and script writing

Essential criteria:

- Fluency in English and the ability to speak at least one other language
- Proven journalism skills
- Proficiency in WordPress
- Proven photography skills
- Proven ability in website management
- Proven track record in social media and marketing

Qualification requirements:

- An NCTJ diploma in Journalism or a BA in Journalism/Media Studies would be desirable.
- The post requires 37.5 hours of work per week, and, depending on the applicant’s level of experience and qualifications, the annual salary will range from £22,900 to £24,655, which includes London weighting.

Applicants are required to have the right to work within the UK and will be required to undergo all necessary checks.

For an Application Form, Job Description and Person Specification, please telephone Mrs Jacqui Crawford on 01923 232728 or email jcrawford@secadventist.org.uk. The closing date is 28 February 2018.

The special guests were the Breath of Life’s pastor, Eric Lawrence, said: ‘These events out in the community are what church is all about: the chance to share Christ’s love and tell the local folk that we are there for them and that we just simply like singing to and with them.’
**Newbold to offer Andrews University Doctor of Ministry degree**

Newbold College of Higher Education and Andrews University (United States) have partnered to offer a Doctor of Ministry degree (DMin) in Newbold in 2018. The DMin, specialising in Multi-ethnic, Cultural Mission and Ministry will have a one-off intake commencing in 2018, with intensive classes from mid-May to early June 2018, followed by further intensive classes in 2019, 2020, and 2021, and the doctoral research project.

This programme aims to aid with the normalisation and celebration of racial diversity in the postmodern world. Through the programme, doctoral students will learn to apply principles of racial reconciliation in church and community, transition a church for inclusion and ministry; process and manage change; implement spiritual health into twenty-first century life; utilise principles of reflective practice; implement best practices; and establish clear assessment indicators.

Newbold College of Higher Education is responding to the clear demands of pastors across the Trans-European Division for a professional doctorate in the area of pastoral ministry,’ said Dr John Baildam, Principal of Newbold College.

In collaboration with Andrews University and the Trans-European Division, the College has selected a concentration in Multi-ethnic/Multicultural Mission and Ministry which we believe is the one best suited to our geographical area. We believe that this Andrews University doctorate, offered on the Newbold campus, will give our pastors the opportunity to grow spiritually and professionally, enabling them to approach their ministry with ever greater cultural sensitivity. Church members will be assured that their pastors have undergone this advanced study with the aim of serving their congregations in an even better way.

This programme is a further example of Newbold reaching out across the Division in response to expressed needs, and it will be wonderful to host what we anticipate will be a highly multicultural group of participants,’ concluded Dr Baildam.

For more information, please contact

Alberta Billings
abc sales line: (01 476) 591 700.
Fax No: (01 476) 5771 44.
info@stanboroughpress.org.uk
British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

**Do you work with animals?**

I’m a first year Veterinary Science student at Bristol University and would like to contact other Adventist veterinarians, veterinary nurses and veterinary students, as I have yet to come across any other Adventists in this profession in the UK. I would also like to meet other individuals who work with animals, for example, farmers or breeders. If you are someone who works in this field or you know someone in your church who works with animals such as a farmer or breeder, please contact me by email at celestebertolini@virginmedia.com or by phone at 07847204754. This would be very much appreciated.

CELESTE BERTOLINI

**A carolling eightieth birthday**

On 23 December Exeter Church held their annual carol service, organised by Stella Jeffery in addition to singing a variety of carols, there were readings and other items from a number of church members. Stella spoke about Jesus as the King with no crook, as he chose to identify with humanity by becoming one of us and living among ordinary people. However, she reminded the congregation that, one day, Jesus will return as King of Kings, when every eye shall see Him. The church was packed and it was wonderful to hear the heart-felt singing of familiar carols powerfully led by Cor van der Wijngaard on the organ. Church members were especially pleased to welcome several visitors and contacts for this seasonal service. It was also a special occasion for Angela Waldron who was celebrating her eightieth birthday. During the refreshment time after the service, Angela blew out the candles on her birthday cake and Stella presented her with a basket of plants and a card on behalf of the church. Angela has been a deaconess at the church and is always a good friend with a sympathetic ear. For many years she has baked the communion bread and has been one of the star collectors for ADRA. She and her husband, Ron, often led church walk, and Angela would love to look for birds’ nests in the hedgerows. Her love of nature has always been apparent. We wish Angola well in the future and pray that God will continue to bless her and her much-loved, devoted husband in every way.

STELLA JEFFERY

**Ringway’s Christingle service**

Every year, the members of the Ringway Life Building, young and old, present their Christingle programme. Last year they held it on the Sabbath morning of 3 December.

To start with, the service included three violin solos by children aged 7, 9 and 12, followed by a well-dramatised report of the work done by ADRA in Laos, as well as that following the various devastating hurricanes the world experienced in 2017.

What followed this was a performance of Little Donkey, done using ringing bells. It was so well done that the performers were asked to do it again.

The children also did the prayer, took up the offering, and explained the imagery of the Christingle. (See box right.)

Thanks to the patient efforts of Chris, Beryl, Wendy and Ann, the children performed their roles to perfection. As someone put it so aptly, “The children played, sang and prayed their hearts out!”

PHIL DAVIES
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