

## Seekers find Jesus at Chapelporth

by Pastor Colin Stewart



Newquay Zoo, and a 10-mile cycle ride. Along with all this there were midnight walks, a Friday night camp fire, two trips to the beach, a games night, a talent show, and many testimonies on Friday night. We had a wonderful time, attendance, 45 were nonmembers and the rest were the Adventists that invited them. A great spirit of togetherness and friendship developed. Of the visitors who were in attendance, a number were homeless, some were jobless, and others had addictions, but all were so grateful for a once-in-a-lifetime holiday in a great part of the country. We were privileged to have among us a professional counsellor from Lewisham Church, and she had eight sessions over



God really blessed our Community Camp (23-29 July), the first one in seven years. Each church member that came was encouraged to bring a non-member friend, and more than seventy campers attended the event at the beautiful Chapelporth campsite in Cornwall. One person even came from France to enjoy the camp.

The double-decker coach arrived at Chapelporth in warm sunshine, and for most of the week the sun stayed with us. The camp was designed to show our non-member friends that fun and spirituality can be a good mix! Morning and evening devotions were conducted by Pastor Alistair Agbaje (Teens and Community Director, TED); keynote speaker, Stephen Fuller; Pastor Greg Wilson (intern at Lewisham Church); Pastor Steven Hulbert (worship leader, church planter); and Arnold Best (a Milton Kevnes elder). Arnold and Christianne led a group of 11 from the Milton Keynes outreach project that they run. The Milton Keynes church sponsored ten of the 11 from their area. Pastor Colin Stewart and a team of nine organised this camp. On certain days the activities at

the camp included badminton, swimming, football, and basketball at the Carn Brea Leisure Centre, while on other days there was go-karting, horse riding, a trip to wonderful weather, wonderful messages, and wonderful food cooked on-site by the dynamic Caribbean Queen Company. We were blessed to have a doubledecker coach to use for the whole week, so getting around Cornwall was relaxed and comfortable, especially as one of our nonmember attendees was a professional coach driver.

Sponsorship for this outreach came from the TED's Alistair Agbaje; SEC President, Emmanuel Osei; the SEC Youth Department's Anthony Fuller; and Pastor Colin Stewart. Out of the 72 people in the course of the week.

The Sabbath sermon by Stephen Fuller was full of hope, and by its end two people had publicly declared their intention to be baptised soon. The whole group groaned as they realised that the camp would soon end, with many of the visitors making it clear that they wanted to attend the camp next year. The camp also provided a reunion opportunity for four ladies who used to attend school together in Tottenham, North London.

Ministry took place during the week, and many made new friends for life – and hopefully for eternity too! Jesus became relevant to a new group of believers in the camp's non-judgemental atmosphere, and Chapelporth once more became a safe environment for growth in Jesus. If you're interested in being involved next time just contact me at *colinhstewart@mac.com.* 

## Enhancing health

#### Sharon Platt-McDonald



### Mental wellness – Part 2b

#### Solutions for mental decline in teens

In the last issue we looked at mental health problems in teenagers and how to recognise some of the warning signs. Here we introduce some solutions that can assist teenagers and children with mental health challenges.

First, some facts from Mental Health First Aid England:<sup>1</sup> 'One in ten young people experience a mental health issue at any one time. For those aged 5-19 suicide is the second most common cause of death, and a record number of children contacted ChildLine with suicidal thoughts in 2016/17?

In an average group of 30 15-year-olds: • Seven are likely to have been bullied. • Six may be self-harming. • One could have experienced the death of a parent.

Listing the key pointers for supporting young people with mental health challenges, the Recovery Village lists the following advice:<sup>2</sup> • Know the warning signs. • Educate yourself about mental illnesses. • Talk openly about mental illness. • Have a conversation about drug abuse. • Be supportive, not enabling. • Don't use dismissive or judgemental language. • Consult your paediatrician or primary care doctor. • Get a referral for a mental health specialist.

The Mental Health Foundation estimates that an alarming '70% of children and young people who experience a mental health problem have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age.<sup>3</sup> The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health is a registered charity with over 60 years of experience in promoting the

advancement of child and adolescent mental health. They run an extensive service for young people with mental health challenges, which can be accessed at *www.acamh.org.* Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) comprise

doctors, nurses and other medical staff trained in working with and supporting young people and their families who are experiencing mental health difficulties. These professionals deal with a wide range of issues relating to emotional, behavioural and psychiatric problems. These include challenges such as eating disorders, autistic spectrum disorders, ADHD, depression and anxiety, post-traumatic stress and early developmental trauma, psychosis and those at risk of suicide. Among the organisations that can provide additional support are the

following: • ChildLine • Young Minds • Contact a Family • Family Lives Bernardo's 
Kidscape 
Penumbra (Scotland) 
CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) • PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide) • Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition (CYPMHC)

Young Minds, an organisation offering mental health support for teens, makes this statement:

'We're leading the fight for a future where all young minds are supported and empowered, whatever the challenges

#### Good health!

<sup>1</sup>https://mhfaengland.org/individuals/youth/<sup>2</sup>https://www.columbusrecoverycenter.com/ help-teen-with-mental-health-issues/<sup>3</sup>https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/c/childrer and-young-people 4 www.youngminds.org.uk





## Has sci-fi become 'sci-fact'?



I am sure that many of you are familiar with the **Doctor Who** science-fiction TV series? First produced by the BBC in 1963, it ran until December 1989, then staged a comeback in 2005. It appears that '840 Doctor Who instalments have been televised since 1963', not to mention a number of other related films and TV programmes.<sup>1</sup>

The series depicts the adventures of a 'Time Lord' called 'the Doctor' an extraterrestrial humanlike being from the planet Gallifrey who 'combats a variety of foes, while working to save civilisations and help people in need'.<sup>2</sup> Although not without controversy over its appropriateness for younger viewers, the series has become one of our national institutions.

Star Wars is another of the great sci-fi marvels of our time. The first movie appeared in 1977, and since then, with the help of its sequels, it has created 'a worldwide pop culture phenomenon', becoming the 'second highest-grossing film series' of all time!<sup>3</sup>

All of this has been highly entertaining for those who find sci-fi appealing ... and a little bewildering or inconsequential for those who don't. You alone will know where you belong on that spectrum.

#### Back to the present ...

Now, let's forget the 'future' for a moment and return to what we know. From a report in the 25 August issue of THE WEEK it is now clear that sci-fi has become sci-fact! Why do I say that? Simply because the US Vice-president, Mike Pence, said so on 9 August when he outlined plans to create a new branch of the US military called the space force. Here is part of what he said: 'The space environment has fundamentally changed in the last generation. What was once peaceful and uncontested is now crowded and adversarial.' Apparently this view was also held by former president, Barack Obama. His air force secretary, Deborah Lee James, is on record as saying (my emphasis): 'There is a real possibility that a conflict on earth could bleed into space.'

Little did I know, until reading the article, that weapons for such conflict have already been tested: 'What has changed is that China and Russia are competing for military advantage in orbit. Both have successfully tested space warfare technologies. In 2007, China used a missile to shoot down one of its own ageing weather satellites orbiting 537 miles above the planet. Russia conducted a successful test for an anti-satellite (ASAT) missile in 2015. The US has long possessed such capabilities. In 1985, a US fighter jet launched an ASAT at an obsolete satellite and scored a direct hit.'5

That direct hit happened 33-odd years ago, and it wasn't the result of CGI (computer-generated imagery). Doctor Who and Star Wars, step aside: this is the real deal!

#### Back to the dawn of time ...

The specific terminology used by Deborah Lee James - 'There is a real possibility that a conflict on earth could bleed into space' - should remind us of an ancient event. Haven't we heard something like this before ... but in reverse? I think we have (my emphasis): 'Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to

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#### the earth, and his angels with him.' Revelation 12:7-9. NIV.

In these verses we find John's description of a celestial conflict 'bleeding' into our unspoilt world. Nowadays, evil has such a grip on humanity that we seem ready and capable of exporting it back into space. Will God allow much more of this?

#### What should we do?

What should we do in the face of this new threat?

I am sure you are aware of the entrepreneur of SpaceX and Tesla fame, Elon Musk. In March this year he went on record as suggesting that we must 'prioritise the colonisation of Mars' to preserve the species should there be a third world war: 'It's important to get a self-sustaining base on Mars because it's far enough away from earth that [in the event of a war] it's more likely to survive than a moon base.'6 There's a fat chance of my being able to escape that way, and I quess that's true for you too!

There are, however, lots of people around who are making plans to 'tough it out', whatever the future may throw at them. They share the objective of gathering all the food and equipment needed to live independently, 'off the grid', unnoticed and in remote locations for as long as is necessary. This may sound feasible. but if nuclear weapons are involved let's not forget Chernobyl (my emphasis): 'Because of the long-lived radiation in the region surrounding the former Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, the area won't be safe for human habitation for at least 20,000 years."

What, then, should we do in the face of this new threat? The best advice I could find is still that of Psalm 91 (selected verses from 1-14, MSG), which was written for such a time as this (my emphasis):

'You who sit down in the High God's presence, spend the night in Shaddai's shadow,

Say this: "God, you're my refuge.

I trust in you and I'm safe!"

That's right - he rescues you from hidden traps, shields you from deadly hazards.

His huge outstretched arms protect you under them you're perfectly safe:

his arms fend off all harm...

"If you'll hold on to me for dear life," says God, "I'll get you out of any trouble. I'll give you the best of care

if you'll only get to know and trust me." '

<sup>1</sup>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor\_Who<sup>2</sup>lbid. <sup>3</sup>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star\_Wars <sup>4</sup>'The real Star Wars', THE WEEK, 25 August 2018, page 13 <sup>5</sup>Ibid. <sup>6</sup>(https://www.the guardian.com/technology/2018/mar/11/elon-musk-colonise mars-third-world-war)<sup>7</sup> https://www.livescience.com/39961 chernobyl.html

## Inspiration

Pastor Trevor Thomas

# 'Neither do I . . .'

t's a story known by most Christians: the woman caught in the very act of adultery and brought to the feet of Jesus.

But, if the truth be told, the story found in John 8:1-11 is not primarily about this woman; instead, it's about the way Jesus dealt with the Pharisees who brought her to Him.

The Pharisees were a group of very faithful and committed synagogue members in the days of Jesus. They believed that the reason Israel suffered so many problems was because of unfaithfulness to God's law. That's why they kept the Ten Commandments, returned a faithful tithe, prayed each day, kept the health laws

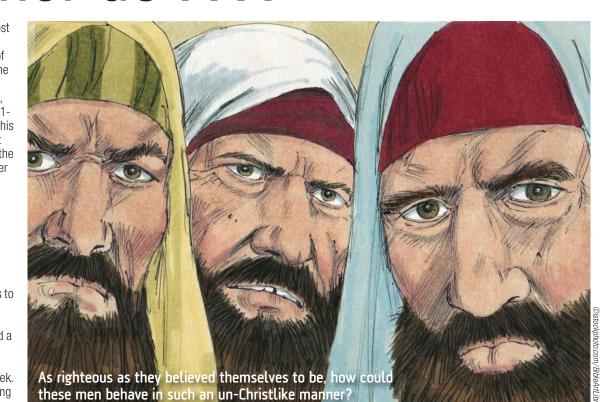
and fasted twice each week. And here is the troubling thought. How could these Pharisees, who were so faithful, so committed, and so sincere, arrive at the place where they would reject Jesus?

Jesus had been preaching and teaching the message of grace – of forgiveness from sin. 'For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.' (John 3:17, NKJV.)

The Pharisees, however, believed that Jesus' message of grace and forgiveness undermined the authority of the law. What's the point of having the law if people who broke it could ask for forgiveness?

This story begins with a group of Pharisees who, while seething with anger, were plotting to discredit the teachings of Jesus and embarrass Him publicly. As faithful, committed, and sincere as these synagogue members clearly were, they allowed themselves to harbour feelings of anger and nurture a critical spirit.

To put Jesus to the test they presented Him with an indisputable case of sin that warranted the death penalty. After all, don't the Ten Commandments clearly say: 'You shall not commit adultery'? Moses made the consequences of this clear in



Leviticus 20:10: 'If a man commits adultery with another man's wife – with the wife of his neighbour – both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death.' (NIV-UK.)

How the Pharisees happened to know that this woman was committing adultery the Bible does not say. However, it would seem that while Jesus was in the temple, teaching, they had forced their way into her house, then dragged her half-naked through Jerusalem to humiliate her in front of Jesus. As righteous as they believed themselves to be, how could these men behave in such an un-Christlike manner?

With flushed faces, raised voices, and venomous words, the Pharisees leaned forward, shook their fists, and demanded that Jesus tell them what to do with this woman. It's at this point that one realises just how worthless this woman was to the Pharisees. She was just a case-study to test Jesus, and they were prepared to stone her to death just to prove Jesus wrong.

Seemingly untouched by their fury, Jesus writes in the dust with His finger. We don't know what He wrote, but the taunting Pharisees must have thought they had Him, that He had no answer for them.

Then Jesus straightens and says: 'He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.' (John 8:7, NKJV.)

You can almost see their stunned looks. They had become so used to judging themselves by other people's behaviour (Luke 18:9-14), but Jesus' question forced them to judge themselves by the law of God.

Isaiah had said: *'But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags'* (Isaiah 64:6, NKJV). As righteous as these particular synagogue members thought themselves to be, they were not so righteous as to declare themselves sinless in front of .lesus

It seems that the Pharisees were made aware of their own sinfulness. I do not know what personal sins the Holy Spirit impressed upon them: only that, beginning with the oldest, they turned and walked away.

Jesus did not treat these particular synagogue members in the same way that they had treated the woman, bringing public shame to her. Instead, Jesus convicted them in the privacy of their own consciences. Why? Because even Pharisees need grace; even these self-righteous synagogue members needed to be treated with respect and dignity.

Just Jesus and the almost-forgotten woman are left.

God indeed works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. If it had not been for the Pharisees forcing their way into her house, dragging her through the streets and bringing her to church, into the presence of Jesus, she would not be there. Whatever we may say about the Pharisees, they brought her to the place she needed to be.

In the presence of Jesus, I imagine she asked herself, 'How did I get to this place?'

Surely as a teenager she had hopes and ambitions for the future. I'm sure she hoped to meet her true love, her Prince Charming, to fall in love, marry, settle down, raise children and watch them grow.

Where did it all go wrong? As a child she went to the synagogue, heard the Scriptures read, held high moral standards – so where did all her childhood ideals go?

The truth is that life comes along and wakes us up to the real world we live in. She thought she had found her true love; he was so handsome, but he broke her heart. Another relationship followed, with someone she thought would mend her broken heart and be faithful and true, but he wasn't. One relationship after another, one moral sacrifice after another, until she would look in the mirror and hardly recognise the person looking back at her.

Now there was another man in her life. He paid her compliments, and she was happy for the attention. His voice was gentle and his words made her feel special, but he was a married man. He had made plans for them to spend the evening together. She accepted the invitation.

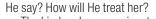
As she stood alone in the presence of Jesus she wondered how she had become everything she never wanted to be. Instead of being a wife, she had become a mistress; instead of being a home-maker, she had become a home-breaker.

Perhaps it's only when we are alone in the presence of Jesus that we able to look at our lives and clearly see the journey we have taken to arrive at the place we now stand.

Jesus says: 'Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?'

The woman replies: *'No one, Lord.*' (John 8:10, 11, NKJV.)

There's just something in the way this woman calls Jesus 'Lord'. She doesn't need anyone to tell her that she's done wrong: she already knows; but, standing there alone with Jesus, unable to look up at His face, her heart sinks – hope all but disappears. Somehow she understands that not only her mortal life but also her eternal life lie in the hands of Jesus. What will



The kind and compassionate voice of Jesus breaks through the silence: *'Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.'* (John 8:11, NKJV.)

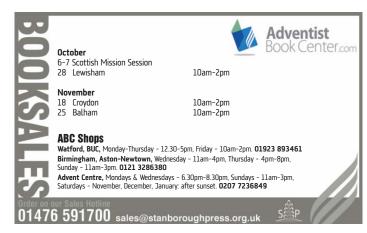
For the first time in her life she experiences the grace of God. At the words of Jesus she feels the guilt of sin falling away from her heart.

'Her heart was melted, and she cast herself at the feet of Jesus, sobbing out her grateful love, and with bitter tears confessing her sins.'Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 462, first paragraph.

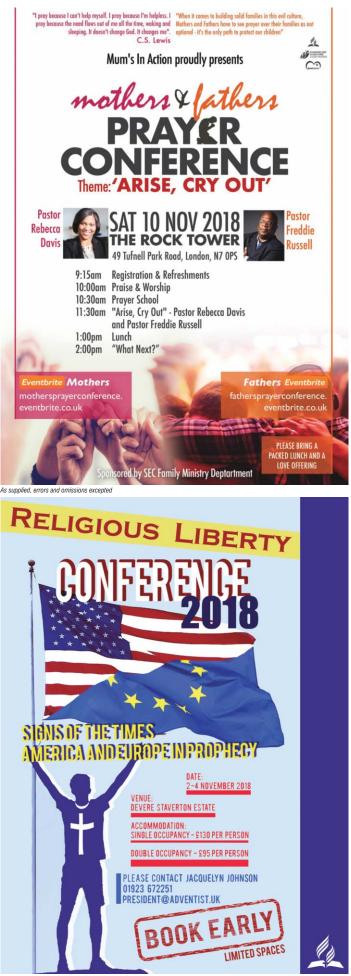
'Go and sin no more.' Jesus had brought her to a crossroad in her life; she must make a choice either to go back to her old lifestyle or to follow Jesus. Going back requires no effort, no thought, nor consideration; but to follow Jesus means that she has to learn from her life experiences, grow up, and choose to do better.

I do not know who this woman was: the Bible does not say. There are some who believe this woman was Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus cast seven spirits, who was the sister of Martha and Lazarus, who washed Jesus' feet with her tears at the house of Simon (Luke 7:47). There are some who believe that this Mary became one of the most faithful and committed followers of Jesus, present at His crucifixion and at the tomb on Sunday morning. I do not know for sure.

Personally, I like to think that this was Mary Magdalene, because if she could love Jesus so completely, so passionately, that she would turn away from a life of sin and be faithful and committed to Jesus, then there is hope for me. Like Mary, I cannot claim to have lived a sinless life – far from it – but, if Jesus was able to forgive her, then there is hope for me.



## Inspiration



Dr Alex Collins Arthur

# **'Truth' or 'alternative facts'?**

uring a 'meet the press' interview on 19 August 2018. President Trump's personal attorney, Rudolph Giuliani, asserted that 'truth is not truth' when he was questioned about the possibility of his client testifying in the investigations into Russia's meddling in the 2016 United States of America presidential elections. This reminds me of another 'meet the press' interview session on 22 January 2017, when Kellyanne Conway, a senior advisor to President Trump, attempted to defend the then White House Press Secretary, Sean Spicer's unverified statement of massive attendance at the president's inauguration ceremony, by suggesting Sean's declaration was the 'alternative fact'. What then is the difference between 'truth' and 'alternative facts'?

The pre-Columbus Native Americans believed that tobacco smoking offered sacred and medicinal benefits. They believed that tobacco was a divine gift and that the smoke was the medium through which believers' minds and prayers ascended to the heavens. Most of the early European physicians also believed that tobacco was an effective painkiller for treating headache, toothache and colds. This belief continued for more than a hundred years until 1602, when an anonymous English writer published an article arguing the logical link between the health effects of chimney soot and tobacco smoking. This inspired further scientific research and publications which cumulatively confirmed a causal link between tobacco smoking and cancer.

The

truth was then revealed, but unfortunately it was too late for the tobacco-related dead and terminally sick who hitherto had relied on the erroneous 'alternative facts'. Their lack of prior knowledge about the effects of tobacco smoking had influenced lifestyle choices which, in the face of the current health evidence, appeared unwise. This affirms the words of the prophet Hosea: 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge' (Hosea 4:6, NKJV). The Cambridge opling

The Cambridge online dictionary explains wisdom as the ability to apply knowledge and experience in good decision making. Being wise therefore depends on both the quality of your knowledge base and how you utilise it. It is the desire of God that His children become wise, as evident in such biblical admonitions as:

'Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise' (Proverbs 6:6, NKJV).

'Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock' (Matthew 7:24, NKJV).

'If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God' (James 1:5, NKJV).

The major obstacle to wisdom is the pursuit of knowledge from wrong sources. Philosophers define knowledge as 'justified true belief',<sup>1</sup> implying that, before a new 'belief' is accepted as knowledge, it must first be accepted as being 'truth'. There is also the need to carefully consider the standards applied when validating a new belief, since a flawed

system

claim. Both the Bible and science accept the limitations in human reasoning, as seen in the subjectivities of personal perceptions. The Bible, however, confirms that God, whose throne is seated above the earth, has the entire universe under His constant gaze, making Him omniscient. The biblical record of Joseph relying on divine wisdom to reveal the content and meaning of Pharaoh's dream after the secular philosophers and thinkers had failed to do so is a clear testimony of the superiority of God's knowledge. The narrative also affirms the supremacy of God's power, and that those who rely on His insightful direction receive the ability to deliver divine wisdom. It therefore makes sense to trust God's holistic standards rather than relying on the imperfections of human perceptions; and, in that

regard, secular viewpoints that conflict with the word of God should be wisely discarded. 'Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall

*direct your paths*' (Proverbs 3:5, 6, NKJV). Sadly, as humans continue to advance in science and

technology in this postmodern world, divine principles have progressively been discarded in favour of invalidated human beliefs and values. The ensuing philosophies, when evaluated against sound biblical knowledge, often appear unwise. There is much contradictory human thinking on the origin and

purpose of life, which unfortunately has been adopted by some people as the standard upon which to base their life choices. Even within Christendom there are those who believe that, in order to make the Church relevant to modern society, contemporary secular traditions and beliefs should triumph over sound biblical knowledge. There are even instances during church business meetings when members try to advance their cultural values and traditions in the face of biblical truth. Some of these theories even defy human logic! Charles Darwin's twenty-year hesitation before publishing his theory on natural selection, coupled with his later writings about his fears and worries of the impact of his theory on society, probably explains the confused premises of these contradictory human ideologies.<sup>2</sup> The futility of these secular viewpoints could be likened to the famous quotation from Lewis Carroll: 'If you don't know where you are going then any road will get you there.'

Friend, do you desire truth? Then seek knowledge. Do you desire sound knowledge? Then why don't you go to the authentic source? The 'fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge...' (Proverbs 1:7, NKJV).

<sup>1</sup>Baggini, J. and Fosl, P. S. (2010). *The Philosopher's Toolkit: A Compendium of Philosophical Concepts and Methods.* Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester. <sup>2</sup>*Times* magazine (1999). 'Charles Darwin, 1809-1882'. Vol. 154, No. 27, 31 December, 1999.

practice

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#### Stoke-on-Trent's new preaching talent!

Stoke-on-Trent Seventh-day Adventist Church has been blessed with a new development in the area of children's ministries: two young people have developed preaching talents that have amazed the church. Daniel Edward and Gillian Muswizu started preaching in 2017 under the supervision of Gibbon Muswizu, Gillian's father.

Our church has witnessed this ministry grow successfully of late, and as a result the children have confidently preached both in our Stoke Central church and in our sister churches of Alsager and Lighthouse. We are grateful to both Gibbon and our pastor, lan Philpott, who have jointly promoted and supported this unique project.

Gillian and Daniel are now confident enough to share their talents in other churches beyond the Stoke-on-Trent district.

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6 | Messenger 19-2018

## Inspiration

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ADRA.

## Zealous for good works

What made the 2018 European Pastors' Council in Belgrade, Serbia, such a special event? John Surridge, British Union Conference Executive Secretary, took to the corridors of the Sava Centar to find out.

'This is the fourth EPC that I've been to, and it has definitely been the best,' said Rosemary ethbridge, a pastor from England. A random selection of vox pops, compiled before the closing ceremony, confirmed that this particular EPC has made an extraordinary impression on the ministers and their families who attended, as well as on the other workers, volunteers and guests.

'I've loved the talks and seminars,' said Alexandru Gutu. 'Many times I've had tears in my eyes from the beautiful things that have been said.

'I've loved meeting fellow workers from different parts of the Division,' said Jeremy Johnson. We're all in this together and we have so much in common.'

The young volunteers seem to have enjoyed playing their part in a much wider programme.



Aleksandra Bozhinova, a volunteer from Macedonia, said, 'I've been working on the health expos, and it's great to see people being helped, and being part of a team.' Marko Markovic, a volunteer from Serbia, said, 'I've really enjoyed just helping people find their way around.

For some of the older ministers, fellowship was key. 'I've enjoyed reconnecting with old friends and colleagues,' said Henrick Jorgensen from the Danish Union. Geza Hegyes-Horvath from Hungary spoke warmly of the joy he had in meeting people after not seeing them for 20 years, 'hugging them and renewing friendships'. Geza also mentioned 'the very high spiritual atmosphere', which was a recurring theme.

Given the high standards that had been set during the week.

and the top-quality Sabbath programme that had been enjoyed by over 3,000 people, it was hard to imagine how the closing ceremony could be any better. Could the songs be any more upbeat? The speaker any more charismatic? The prayers any more fervent? The video clips any more entertaining?

In the event the music was good, and the Serbian youth choir's version of 'O Slavi Boga' was really upbeat, but the most impressive aspect of the closing ceremony was the way that things just 'came together'.

In his closing devotional, TED President Pastor Raafat Kamal talked about the planning process he and his team had been through for the EPC. 'We thought about the themes -Connect, Inspire and Change but it is the centrality of the cross that ties them together. There is no question that the cross has to be central. Without the cross there can be no connection, inspiration or change.

Regarding connections, Pastor Kamal spoke of the connections which had been made during the EPC, but also of the connections that exist among the 87,000 Seventh-day Adventist members in the 22 countries that make up the Trans-European Division.

More of a challenge is making connections with the 206 million neighbours we have in our communities.

Regarding inspiration, Pastor Kamal described how he had visited the women pastors' meeting, intending to give them his encouragement and support. To his surprise, he was the one who came away inspired and humbled, marvelling at their humility in the face of adversity, and their Christlike qualities.

Regarding change, Pastor Kamal noted how one of the polystyrene letters making up the word 'change' in the artistic platform backdrop had kept dropping off. Maybe it was the glue, but it was certainly a good illustration: change happens, and sometimes it happens in unexpected wavs.

Mike Baker is a case in point. In an interview with Pastor Kamal, who had been at Newbold with him many years before, he told his story. Mike left ministry 23 years ago to adopt a lower profile in God's work. He had done this through teaching at an Adventist school and serving in various capacities in his local church. At the back of his mind he had kept open the possibility of returning to ministerial service, just waiting for a positive call, but as time went on he didn't really expect a major change. However, a call had come very recently, and his life had changed dramatically. To a round of applause Mike confessed that this day, 1 September 2018, was his first official day of employment in the ministry after a gap of over two decades



Pastor Raafat Kamal, TED President

Speaking with TED Ministerial Association Director, Pastor Patrick Johnson, who had been heavily involved in the organisation of the EPC, Pastor Kamal gave thanks to an extensive list of people and groups: the leadership and volunteers of the South-East European Union for hosting the event and making everyone feel welcome; the plenary speakers who were such a blessing; the workshop presenters; the music and worship teams; the production, technical and media teams; the promotional team; the exhibitors and sponsors; the logistics team; and the TED administrative team. But his main thanks was to the pastors, the 'frontline strikers' as he called them. Without their dedication, commitment and personal sacrifice, nothing would be achieved.

Such men and women help to make up God's 'special people, zealous for good works', as it says in Titus 2:14 (NKJV), the key text for the evening. The motivation for this, though, should not be a 'culture of more'. As a denomination we can be tempted to focus on numbers and statistics, where bigger is better, but our incentive should be what Paul refers to in the previous verses, the 'grace of God that brings salvation', and the 'blessed hope' of Christ's return.

'We are at a critical moment of

our history,' said Pastor Kamal. Local Adventist communities are in danger of becoming irrelevant. How can a Christlike discipleship become an active witness? How can we respond to the millennial generation? Should our local Adventist communities continue in their present mode - audience centred, and programme driven?

These challenging questions will not be answered by human movers and shakers, with better organisation and higher performance. Solutions will only be found by heeding Christ's words in the Great Commission: 'I will be with you.'

And it's here that it all came together. A massed choir of some 100 people, a full orchestra, and a chorale group took to the stage and sang the message: 'Holy, Holy, Holy', 'In Christ Alone', 'Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God', 'Holy Spirit Rain Down', and, in conclusion, 'It Is Well With My Soul'.

It was good. Very good. And with some 2,000 people singing together with the choir it was impossible not to be moved.

But it wasn't really about the performance: it was moving worship.

It was fascinating to watch husband-and-wife team Tihomir and Kärt Lazić leading that worship. Tihomir had his back to the congregation and was leading the choir and orchestra. Kärt was on the stage about six metres from Tihomir, facing him and leading the congregation. The connection between them was



tor Ted N. C. Wilson, General Con

## European Pastors' Council

unmistakable. It was inspiring. And it changed the whole atmosphere in the auditorium. As Joann Kristensen wrote on returning home to Denmark, 'I just want to say a thousand times thank you for an amazing time at EPC! I was so blessed by the

Her words fully represent the pastors, spouses, other workers and volunteers, who have now left EPC to travel home, armed with new connections and renewed inspiration. With Christ confirmed at the centre, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, change is inevitable. ITEDNEWS



youthministries.org.uk



#### IMASA is born

The Irish Mission has inaugurated a new students' association that will cater for the spiritual needs of students in its territory. The event took place at a special students' day of fellowship on Sabbath, 30 June, in Dublin.

The new association, known as the Irish Mission Adventist Students' Association (IMASA), is the brainchild of Chaplain Greg Davis, and has received much support from the Mission's president, Pastor Dan Serb. Introducing the event, Greg Davis said, 'The aims of the association are to mobilise and empower Adventist students to be ambassadors of Christ, and to share the Gospel and the three angels' messages within their campuses, and to help them uphold their faith?

The event was opened and interspersed with prayers, and there was praise and worship throughout. In his speech, Greg Davis outlined the need of such an association at such a crucial transitional period in a student's life: 'There is a growing concern for students who lose their faith in Christ during this period of their academic life.' According to him, this can be attributed to the influence of sceptical friends, lack of support or contact with their spiritual communities, or the feeling that the church is out of touch with their culture and needs. We need an association like IMASA that will allow young men and women to develop, strengthen and exercise their faith.

Pastor Dan Serb delivered a unique and interactive '6-Word Story' sermon which was meant to challenge and inspire the participants to be proud of and celebrate their unique identity as Seventh-day Adventists. He added that being different raises curiosity in today's world. He charged the participants not to fear, but to trust in the Lord, because the pressure to compromise in order to belong and be accepted is overwhelming.

An important event on the day was the election and induction of the first IMASA officers and the introduction of Chaplain Greg Davis as the Mission's chaplain in charge of Public Campus Ministries and IMASA. The eagerness and enthusiasm of those chosen to serve as leaders of the new association was remarkable.

The following participants shared their experiences:

'My experience at the Irish Mission Students' Day of Fellowship was exhilarating.... The inauguration of IMASA gave me a sense of worth. At least the church recognises that we as young people could also be co-labourers with God in His vineyards. In this case the vineyards are the colleges and universities that we as young people attend." Thamsanga Mabaso, a student.

'IMASA is a great initiative that will help us share our faith with students who do not know Jesus Christ. Working together as students in this initiative is the driving force in achieving this objective, as many heads put together bring out good ideas.' Tash Bandora, a student.

'Saturday 30 June, 2018 will be a day I will cherish, as a parent first, but also as a youth leader. This was the first Irish Mission Adventist Student Day of Fellowship and its theme was "Follow Jesus, Embrace His Mission, Change the World". The highlight for me was the afternoon programme and the election of officers. It was so



encouraging to see the passion, the hunger, the love and willingness of our youth to go out and embrace His mission and change the world.' Lilian Cooper, a parent.

The day's success could be seen in the attendance.

Even though 50 participants were expected, more than 70 arrived from across the Mission. There was a lot of networking among the students as new friendships were made and ideas were shared. From every indication the birth of IMASA is very timely. There is hope, excitement and great expectation that God will empower this association to greatness. GREG DAVIS (CHAPLAIN, IRISH MISSION PUBLIC CAMPUS MINISTRIES & IMASA)/SHENEECE MUPANDANYAMA (SECRETARY, IMASA)





#### MTTC Birmingham – health expo

Mission to the Cities: Birmingham has been underway for over 18 months under the theme: 'Bringing Love to the Second City'. Among its projects is a focus on health which is underpinned by an effective committee, the sponsorship of Pastor Obi Iheoma, the wonderful support of Grace Walsh and the dedication of Pastor Paul Haworth. This focus has been achieved through a range of activities including numerous local health expos. Jennifer Distin has demonstrated exemplary team leadership skills and endurance, while several other teams around the city have tirelessly delivered health expos and follow-up support. There has also been a centralised series of health meetings focusing on diabetes conducted by Dr Ing from the USA, a seven-week diabetes reversal course, a festive season cooking school and a six-week Lifestyle Matters course that aimed to support people with addictions and emotional issues.

The Journey to Joy Bible Conference included a series of short health presentations on subjects which included using nutrition to reduce cancer, the importance of exercise and coping with the menopause. After several weeks of beautiful hot, dry weather, the 'Harvesting

#### Worthing supports Food Bank

Worthing Church has actively and generously supported the Food Bank over the past two years, for which the project's organisers have expressed their heartfelt gratitude. The need was greater while the children were home from school, during which time the centre tried to provide a cooked meal from Monday to Friday for kids who came from the community. We are thankful to God that we as a church can reach out to those in need. These are just some of the food items we contribute monthly. ELLIE ADAMS (COMMUNITY LEADER)



## News

bigger portion of the community. Thanks are due to all the volunteers and the cooks who sustained them during their service for God.

**CONNECTIONS** 

DR JACQUIE HALLIDAY-BELL

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## News



#### West of Ireland Family Camp

The large roadside banner erected at the entrance to the Newmarket-on-Fergus Church camping grounds said it all: 'Bring the Family Back'. This was the theme for the 2018 Family Camp, causing one local gentleman to ask what it was all about. When told of the challenges facing families today and the need to hear what the Bible says about the value of family, he then asked, 'Will there be any drink involved?' He was most impressed with the core values of the church, and remarked, 'We need more of this in our communities.

People travelled from the north, south, east and west of Ireland and even from other parts of the BUC to attend – and not just to savour the best camp food ever, but also to hear the spiritual messages given over the four-day event. Pastor Leslie Ackie. British Union Conference Director of Family Life and Children's Ministries, gave very realistic talks on marriage, healthy relationships and parenting: so much so that the youth were first to arrive at each presentation. Young people today live in a society fragmented by family and relationship challenges and values not in keeping with a Christian lifestyle. As Benjamin, a young college student, remarked, 'I knew the minute I arrived on the campsite that this event was going to be different from other years, and we youth appreciated joining the adults for all of the talks.'

This year's camp was also different in that not only one but two energetic speakers gave presentations. Sharon Platt-McDonald, BUC Director for Health, Women's Ministries and Community Services, gave dynamic talks on health, forgiveness, emotional health, lifestyle interventions and healing. She also gave powerful personal testimonies on the crises that can arise in life and our attitude to them. Sharon enjoyed the open green fields and said. There is wonderful healing in walking through the trees and grass away from the busyness of city life?

Campers were not just sitting down listening to talks, but in the early morning hours there were 'Keep Fit' and 'Trigger Point' sessions; an interesting hike and a bonfire; then indoor games for those who still had some energy left.



#### Sydenham Family Life Day

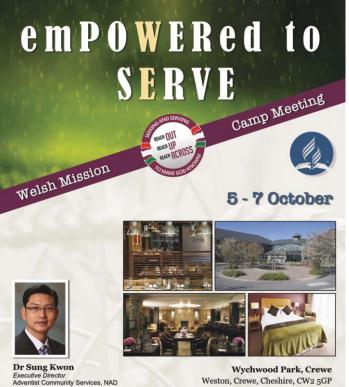
This year Family Life Fellowship Day at Sydenham Church was held on 14 July. The event was hosted by Pastor Otis Lewis, while Pastor Bayo Elusode spoke enthusiastically on the topic of 'Mr & Mrs Lot'. The worship was enjoyed by all and followed by a generous lunch and a celebratory cake. It was a day to be remembered by all. JANET BUCHANAN (COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARY)

A wonderful addition to this year's camp was the presence of the ABC bookshop, which sold out most of its colourful display of books and gave advice on how to obtain additional resources. This writer was blessed to obtain two beautifully illustrated children's Bibles for our grandchildren.

Another first was the setting up of The West of Ireland Camp Committee led by Pastors Lorance Johnson and Tony O'Rourke. The committee worked hard in ensuring that a warm welcome was extended to each camper, that the camp ran smoothly and that the safety and other needs of each person were met.

Memories to take away were the powerful spiritual messages, wonderful food, happy young people, beautiful weather, smiling couples, and the aroma of those tasty scones wafting daily from the kitchen.

2019 Camp is promising to be bigger and better, and the big question is: 'Will you be there?' Bennacht agus Slan go foil (Gaelic language) -Blessings and goodbye until we meet again. BETTY O'ROURKE



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#### Women's Ministries at Stoke-on-Trent

On 23 June the Stoke-on-Trent church held its Women's Ministries day under the theme, 'Nurturing Each Other'. The day's sermon was preached by Agnes Kandaya, who based it on Ruth 1:16: 'But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and



where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God" '(NIV)

Ruth took the opportunity to serve God through her support of Naomi,

#### Telford football witness

On Sunday 24 June, the Telford church football team hosted and played against its neighbours from the North England Conference, the Wolverhampton Central church team. A match between the teams from these two churches is now to be an annual event called the Community Shield and will promote unity between the communities represented.



This year the weather was at its best, and so was the support from the churches, from both the church members and the local community. A characteristic of both teams is that most of their players are recruited from the communities they serve (hence the title, Community Shield). Another highlight of the day was witnessing players from age 14 upwards playing together for their local Adventist church.

Telford took a commanding lead in the first half, but Wolverhampton came back in the second half to win the game 6-5. Medals were presented to both teams, and the trophy to the winning team. There was also a golden boot award.

Telford did not win the game, but the Community Shield banner was flying high due to the friendship and sportsmanship that were displayed on the day among both church and community members.

The Wolverhampton church football team will be hosting next year's event HEZRON OTTEY

### Eighty years young!

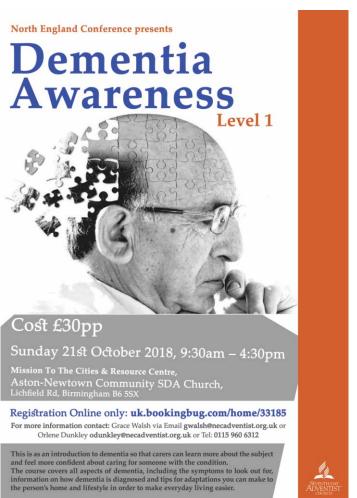
Bervl Elliott, who attends Exeter Church, celebrated her eightieth birthday on 26 July. She became a Seventh-day Adventist in London following the George Vandeman evangelistic series. She later married David Elliott, who

was well known for his musical ability and for some time was the organist at the New Gallery. Beryl is a very friendly person, who relates well to people of all ages and demonstrates a good sense of humour. She was a very efficient Conference treasurer and deaconess at Exeter Church, and the members are grateful for all she has done to support the congregation. In recognition of her special milestone birthday, Beryl was presented with a plant, flowers and a cake on Sabbath 28 July during the refreshment time, after the morning service. STELLA JEFFER



## News

and like her our Adventist women are to live to bless others too. We are to use whatever talents we have to the glory of God and to the happiness of others. HASTINGS KANDAYA (FLDFR)



## News



#### Carnival evangelism

The drums of the procession beat a steady rhythm as the crowd entered the local park, set up with various stalls, where, on Sabbath 9 June, West Bletchley Community Church members were ready to receive the

day's visitors for this annual event.

Among the other things on offer was an oasis – both literally and symbolically – from which we supplied free bottles of water to refresh the body, along with a free book entitled The Power of Hope and some supporting leaflets designed to refresh both mind and spirit. With the theme of mental health quite topical in the media, visitors to the stall were open to discussing this subject and appreciative of the resources received.

SYLVONIE NOEL (COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT) PHOTOS: HERBERT PEENDE



#### Hackney's children carry the day

Visitors and members at the Hackney church, on Sabbath 28 July, were told, 'God is here' by a group of young people leading out in a memorable Children's Day programme. The day was packed with something for everyone to enjoy and learn - from poetry and inspirational scripture readings to musical performances. Under the guidance of Junior Sabbath School leaders, Sonia Ama and Jenny Constantine, Hackney's children took over both the Adult Sabbath School and worship services. demonstrating that the future of Hackney Church is in more-than-capable hands

During a dedicatory prayer for all the children the head elder, Wentworth Williams, expressed his thanks to God for the way in which these young people were taking a lead in the church.

Guest speaker Jesse Samuel encouraged the children not to follow the crowd, but instead to look up to Jesus for the power needed to make the right choices in life. The event concluded with a soul-stirring mime performance by the children.

DARELL J. PHILIP (PR & COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT)





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Memorial Church 36 Handsw

#### 'Women, wait: God's time is not your time.

This was the theme that arrested the attention of the women and all others present for the Palmers Green Women's Ministries Day on Sabbath 21 July.

In a beautiful worship environment of themed banners and various purple and yellow floral arrangements in the colours of the Women of Virtue and the Esther Institute of Excellence programmes, it was a privilege to welcome the vivacious BUC Director for Women's Ministries.



Sharon Platt-McDonald, and her husband, Denzle.

Sharon's powerful morning sermon was entitled 'Casting your weight as you wait on God', and for the afternoon her message was based on Esther: 'For such a time as this'. These messages not only encouraged patience, but also personal development, so that we will be ready and willing to execute God's plan for our lives when the time is right.

The Women's Ministries team, led by Elvina Noel, welcomed all the women present with the gift of a handcrafted fan (much needed in the 27-degrees heat) and girls were given a scented decorative pen. Furthermore, the team were able to report on the missionary endeavours their department had embarked on in order to reach out to the community as well as build fellowship within the church: for example, free care packages for disadvantaged women, and the miraculous way God

#### **Ringway at Scarecrow** Festival

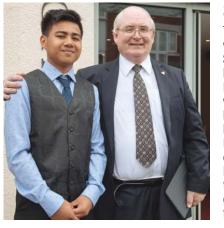
The town of Wilmslow in Cheshire runs a scarecrow festival every year and Ringway Life Building always do their part in livening up the area. The theme this year was children's books, films or stories.

Why, oh why, did we decide on 101 Dalmatians? Why not Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves, or Snow White and the 7 Dwarves, or just Bambi? But 'we that have to obey' did just that.

So a team of dedicated designing, sewing and stuffing church members sat about producing a display of 101 Dalmatians of all shapes and sizes.

Of course we had to give it a spiritual connection, so banners saying, 'Jesus came to seek and save the lost' and 'God's family has room for everyone' were made to give it that link.

As expected, some of the young children at the festival couldn't just look at the puppies: they wanted to pick them up and hug them! Isn't that a spiritual lesson for us all? PHILIP FMM





#### Summer baptism in Exeter

There was sunshine inside and outside Exeter Church on 21 July when Stephan Belarmino was baptised by Pastor Ian Lorek. Stephan lives in Okehampton and is still at school. His younger brother, Allen, had also joined in the Bible studies with Pastor Lorek and he was presented with a special certificate. The sermon was based on 1 John 2:28-3:10. Pastor Lorek said that Stephan had chosen to accept what Jesus had to offer and encouraged him and all the congregation to grow in Christ and live our lives for Him. Stephan's mother led him to the baptismal pool and you could see the joy on her face as she witnessed this special event. Pastor Lorek and Stella Jeffery welcomed Stephan into the fellowship of Exeter Church and presented him with cards and gifts. After the service, the family joined the members for a fellowship lunch to celebrate this happy occasion. STELLA JEFFERY

## News

has opened the avenues to make ongoing contact with various organisations.

They also mentioned that all the women members have Road Prayer partners. In a designated month, each prayer partnership focuses on walking the roads surrounding the church while praying for the women who live there. Recently a woman never seen in our church before, who

lives in a nearby street, walked into church with a powerful testimony and asked to have Bible studies.

May God bless all who attended and in addition all women who wait on God's timing for their life. MS L. IMBRAH (ASSISTANT LEADER)

### Messenger

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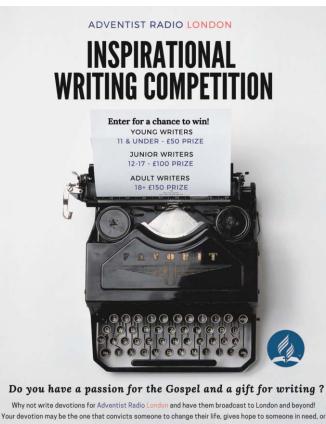
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Oct	5	6.30	6.42	6.32	6.38	6.50
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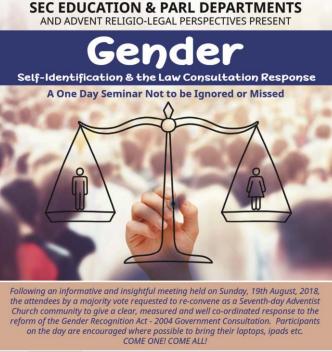


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