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Messenger

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Leadership in the crucible of crisis

by Raafat Kamal (President, Trans-European Division)

For the last five months we have witnessed, on an unprecedented, global scale, what is described by the apostle Paul as the groaning of the whole creation (Romans 8:22). In response, guided by the Holy Spirit, members of the body of Christ have showed unprecedented adaptability, innovation, resilience and a recommitment to the mission of making disciples for Him.

Ellen White shared timely words about end-time events: 'Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. . . . God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands' (*Testimonies for Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 299).

In participating with Christ and cooperating with Him in His mission, our movement of believers has been granted timely opportunities to challenge assumptions, routines and practices of 'doing church'. To list a few:

- Church happens in church buildings during three hours on Sabbath morning.
- Preaching is the most effective way of disciple-making.
- Pastors lead, while lay volunteers follow.
- The main mission of the church is to serve its members.

Is it possible that the recent events have shown us that to thrive in achieving our mission through turbulent times – anointed and led by the Holy Spirit – we, as disciples of Christ, pastors and leaders, must challenge our routines and practices and become a bit more disorganised and unmanaged – less structured, less hierarchical and less subject to routine?

Church buildings might be locked, but I am encouraged to report that members of the Adventist movement within the Trans-European Division are active and committed in connecting, inspiring and bringing

hope in the name of Jesus Christ – basically, living salt and light. I pray that we will emerge stronger, more relevant and refocused on the purpose of preparing disciples for the soon return of our Saviour.

On matters of justice for the marginalised and minorities, tragedies that have dominated our media and streets, we must not lose our relevance as an end-time movement where the rate of internal change lags behind the pace of external change. We need to pause, pray, reflect and powerfully champion our biblical values granted to us by the grace of God. Most importantly, we will not regain our relevance until we chip off the calcified layers that lock us in the prison of precedent by reminding each of ourselves daily to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

I want you to know that my prayers are with every person and every family who mourns the loss of a loved one as a result of this pandemic. I am also praying for those suffering from the pandemic of injustice. The business of heaven is our focus, doing what God desires. Only God's mission is compelling enough to overcome the gravitational pull of media-absorbing tragedies. Only in looking to God will we find the necessary power for individual and organisational renewal of heart and mind.

Brothers and sisters, go and make disciples for Christ; be a catalyst to help bring about a future that is in alignment with God's will. The earth will groan until the Second Coming of Christ, but in the meantime we have an opportunity to influence our families, church communities and neighbourhoods with God-given values and hope of restoration to the Father.

I wish to conclude with a well-known passage: 'I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength' (Philippians 4:12, 13, NKJV).



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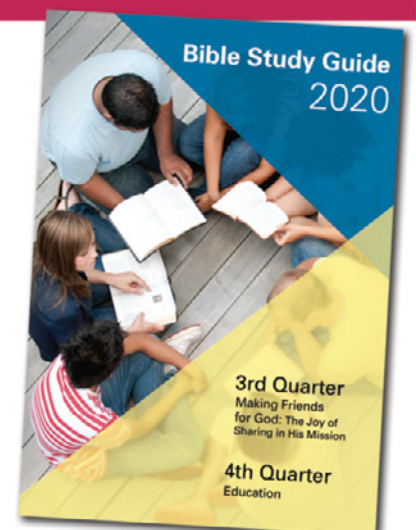
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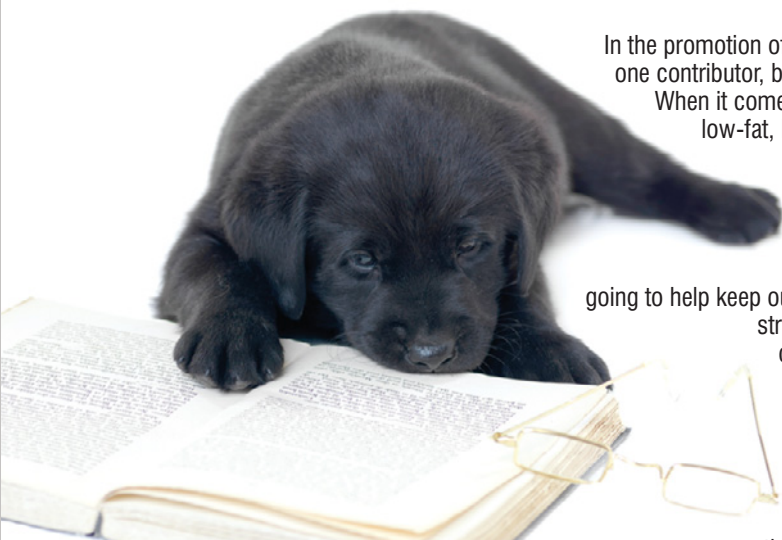


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David Neal, Editor

You are what you eat! A spiritual battle?



In the promotion of good health, diet is but one contributor, but an essential one.

When it comes to what we eat, a low-fat, low-salt, low-sugar diet which regularly includes fresh fruit and vegetables and as little processed food as possible is going to help keep our immune system strong. Conversely, when our diet contains high levels of fat, sugar and salt over the long term, we experience significant health problems. We must be quick to admit that the science of nutrition is far more complex than my brief

summary, but common sense tells us the direction of travel in which we should be heading.

'If only it were that simple!' Agreed, because if it were, we'd all experience the best of health. Most of us know the nutrition story, including the food pyramid.³

But come with me for a moment to do the weekly shop in ASDA, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, or Tesco. I can tell you, every time I enter one of these stores, I find myself involved in a great battle; for, both consciously and sub-consciously, they are targeting every sense I have to spend more – on what they want me to buy. Here's how they do it, with some typical examples:

- **The layout:** At the checkout, confectionary is positioned to encourage impulse buys. 'You deserve a treat – particularly your children' (pester power). Why are fruits and vegetables placed at the start of the shopping journey? To put me in a good mood, and to make me feel better about buying food with nasty red labels later on.
- **The smell:** I love the smell of freshly baked bread, giving me a warm feeling of comfort and security. I must have it . . . and, sure enough, I didn't plan to buy that exotic loaf, but it just jumped into the trolley.
- **Colour everywhere:** premium products are placed at eye level for me, at the end of aisles, and on lower shelves for children: colour everywhere, closely connected with a particular brand. Here's an easy test. What are the main packaging colours of the following: Heinz beans, McVitie's digestives, Weetabix?
- **Mood music:** on my visit to ASDA this

week a rock song was playing, with the lyrics, 'Things are going to get better' – at least, that's what I think I heard! When slow music plays, it causes the customer to linger, and pick more.

- **Taste:** not so common at the moment, but did I enjoy the free samples at the deli section! And, once tasted, I felt the need to buy and take the taste home with me.⁴

Let's talk about red 'traffic light' labels and price. Have you noticed, the more there are, the cheaper the price? **Not red label, but red alert!** Supermarkets are clearly not on our side in the nutrition battle. They are not charities promoting good, but in the business of making money. In their highly competitive market, their aim is to make sure we spend as much as possible in their store, for good or ill! Oh, and who needs cheap food the most – the poor? There is a case to answer, as the Bible points out:

'Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honours him' (Proverbs 14:31, ESV).

I'm prepared to admit that the weekly shop for me is about fighting the power of temptation. While I'm quick to claim the promise of 1 Corinthians 10:13, the pressure to give in is great. I know that I have the ability at times to both shop and eat emotionally: not to be missed by the ASDA marketing guru, who knows very well that currently many customers right now need cheering up – to feel better – and to buy. The supermarkets argue that they provide the customer with choice, convenience, and low prices. That's what we want, for good or ill! Together we call it 'choice'.

But we need help in making the right choices – both for those with faith, and for those without it. Thank the Lord for every cookery and nutrition seminar we run. With our insight into the 'optimum health story' (thank you, Ellen White!) we are uniquely positioned to help a struggling community as it prepares for a possible second wave of the virus. Because we have something tremendously relevant and helpful to share, could not cooking classes and nutrition seminars (for which we are second to none) be high up on the outreach agenda? If this is your spiritual gift, don't wait for the church hall and kitchen to open up again: why not zoom the class from your own kitchen? I can see a franchise developing, called *adventistkitchen.com*. Why not?

I wonder if a helpful mindset to have while wandering each supermarket aisle is: *'The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need'* (Psalm 23:1, NLT), and with the prayer, 'Lord, give me a discerning spirit over what I eat and drink. For Your sake, Amen.'

A long time ago, a good friend once lent us the book *You Are What You Eat*. Enter into the story, Matt, our young Collie-Lab puppy. Left alone one afternoon while the family were out, he decided to test the claim: are you really what you eat? We returned home to find a chewed, mangled, torn and saliva-soaked book. 'Bad dog; bad dog; bad dog,' was all we could keep saying, but we were laughing at the same time over the irony of it. Needless to say, we purchased another copy to return to our friend.

For most in the UK and Ireland, lockdown is beginning to ease, with the high street reopening: but, while the number of COVID-19 cases is currently falling, scientific modelling is showing the possibility of a second wave of infections, peaking in January and February next year.¹ Whether this is accurate or not remains to be seen, but I think there is something we can do to limit our vulnerability if we should catch the virus.

If there is one blessing our community of faith has, it is the continuing prophetic gift through the nineteenth-century life of Ellen White, who connected the dots between body, mind, and spirit. The result is that the 'optimum health' story remains constantly on our radar – not only for our benefit, but for all in the name of Christ, who lived to provide healing in every sense of the word. In these times, I think its relevance increases.

Current scientific research indicates that the COVID-19 virus seems to have the most freedom to attack and destroy body organs when the immune system is weakened. It is possible that future research may nuance or contradict this, but for the moment this seems to be the general understanding.²

¹<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2248691-a-bad-uk-winter-could-cause-120000-covid-19-deaths-in-hospitals/>

²For further reading: <https://www.immunology.org/news/coronavirus-immunology-qa-what-you-need-know-about-our-new-report> ³<https://www.safefood.eu/Healthy-Eating/The-Food-Pyramid-and-The-Eatwell-Guide/The-Food-Pyramid.aspx>

⁴https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/articles/how_supermarkets_tempt

Terry Messenger, senior pastor, Stanborough Park Church

MESSENGER editor, David Neal, speaks to Terry Messenger about his new role as senior pastor of the Stanborough Park church.

Having trained for ministry at Newbold College from 1982 to 1988, one year of Pastor Messenger's two years of internship training was at Stanborough Park Church. He has served as the pastor of a number of churches in the South England Conference, including Lewisham, Guildford, Basingstoke, Portsmouth, the Isle of Wight, Greenwich and Welling. In 2007 he was called to serve as Personal Ministries Director for the South England Conference, and as Executive Secretary from 2011 to 2015. Terry holds a Doctor of Ministry degree, with an emphasis in training members for outreach and evangelism. Prior to his most recent call to Stanborough Park (2020), he was the pastor of the Bedford and Milton Keynes International churches. Terry is married to Lynette (and has been for 37 years). They are the parents of two daughters, Almaz and Kychia, and are also blessed with a granddaughter.

Recently, I caught up with Terry for a chat about his new role.

David Neal: Terry, with your recent call to serve at Stanborough Park Church, in one sense it must have been like a coming-home experience.

Terry Messenger: Absolutely, and I have been made so welcome by all, reconnecting with friends and members from my first years in ministry, and getting to know members I've not met before. One of the thrills for me now is to see their children and even grandchildren taking leadership roles in the church.

DN: I want to home in straight away on what gifts and talents you bring as the pastor, in addition to your years of experience in ministry and leadership, to help and support Stanborough members in their life and witness of Christ.

TM: I don't think you can be in ministry for as long as I have been without discovering what your spiritual gifts are. In my case, there are three: first, the gift of pastoral care/visitation; second, the gift of Bible study; and third, the gift of preaching.

DN: It seems today that visitation by the

pastor is somehow a forgotten aspect of ministry. Why do you feel it is still important?

TM: First of all, I enjoy visiting members and listening to their stories. It is in the home that the pastor gets a clearer picture of what is going on in their lives. My role is to provide a spiritual context to the joys, problems and sometimes distressing life challenges they face. If I can listen, empathise, and provide a word of comfort or guidance from the Lord, then I feel I am fulfilling what the Lord has called me to do.

DN: Your gift of 'Bible study' is a teaching ministry. I get the idea that you like digging into and sharing Scripture?

TM: I became an Adventist in my youth because of searching Scripture for myself. I believed much of the Bible, and was content with life, when someone shared with me the truth about following God wholeheartedly, including keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. At first I didn't like this idea. My life was good. I would enjoy shopping with my sister on a Saturday. I would watch West Ham, my beloved football team, on a Saturday afternoon. I did not want to have to change my lifestyle because of some instruction from the Bible. But something stirred in me which began to appreciate that life works best when it is in harmony not only with the teachings of the Bible, but with its Author, Jesus Christ. Now, when I share the teachings of the Bible with others, I love to see the 'light go on' as they too realise what it means to follow Christ.

DN: Your third gift is preaching. Why do you feel it is a gift, and why do you still enjoy entering the pulpit?

TM: I think I see it as an extension of my love for sharing Scripture. As I enjoy sharing one-to-one, I also enjoy sharing in a community. If I can also help the members I serve to have a love for the Bible and its relevance for our lives today, particularly in the times we live, then I feel that is my calling.

DN: You mention the times in which we live. On your first Sabbath at Stanborough in



Pastor Terry and Lynette Messenger

January, a line in the prayer of dedication said, 'We do not know what lies ahead in this year.' None of us could have imagined for a moment how life would change so quickly. How has the experience been?

TM: I am amazed how adaptable the members have been. Almost no sooner than we had begun to make some plans for the year, lockdown arrived: but we were up and running again with online worship services, prayer meetings, and committee meetings. It has taken a tremendous amount of team effort from everyone – and I stress *everyone* – to help keep the church going, but that is the spirit of Stanborough members. I also want to say here how much I appreciate the elders and board members. I am impressed with how active and engaged they are in the life of the church. They are a committed leadership team.

Your question began noting 'the times in which we live'. What lockdown has taught me is how quickly things in life and society can change. That is why we need the Word of God to keep us anchored when things around us get unstable.

DN: Your ministry associate is Pastor Geert Tapp. Your role is defined as the 'senior pastor'. I know you, Terry, and you are not the kind of person who pulls rank! How does the pastoral team at Stanborough work?

TM: I am genuinely blessed to be working with Geert. I have shared with you my ministry gifts. Geert has different gifts to help build up this church, and we need them. Ours is a team ministry, working together with different roles, but for one purpose: to help those who do not know Christ to know Him.

DN: Recent editions of *MESSENGER* have reported on the activities of the One Vision community support project, currently operating out of the Stanborough Centre. From your perspective, how has this affected the life and ministry of the church?

TM: First of all, I think the One Vision project is a wonderful and urgent way for us to connect with the community and serve their current needs. The Gospel commission Jesus shared with His disciples was to 'go'. I see that in collaborating with One Vision we are honouring that call. We cannot wait for the community to come to us. Second, the goodwill generated for our church among the Watford community has risen significantly. Here's what I see: I see Stanborough members and people from the Watford

community working together. And do you know what? The community helpers – and leaders, I might add – are taking a noticeable interest in our church. They like what they see; and, while they do not yet believe, they want to belong. This is wonderful. I see the Holy Spirit working.

DN: Thank you for sharing your experience with *MESSENGER* readers. Here's hoping that as you lead the church, the Lord will use your gifts, and the complementary gifts of the

members you serve, to build His Kingdom. Can you end our time together with a 'life text' which provides you with meaning and purpose?

TM: '“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).

<https://youtu.be/HBGnA5uRH2k>

ADRA-UK and the TED partner to tackle the fallout of COVID-19

by Catherine Anthony Boldeau,

Development Education Officer and 'I am Urban' lead

ADRA-UK, through its 'I am Urban' initiative, has partnered with the Trans-European Division (TED) to deliver the Umbrella Project (UP).

UP is a UK-based partnership between 73 urban community hubs, three small urban charities, eight civil society organisations and a faith-based organisation, led by ADRA-UK, through its 'I am Urban' initiative to address some of the issues caused by the fallout from COVID-19. These entities are working together to provide a multi-agency approach to food security, physical and mental well-being and sustainable livelihoods for some of the UK's most vulnerable groups (the homeless, rough sleepers, refugees, the unemployed, people on low incomes, people living with long-term chronic health conditions and BAME people living with HIV/AIDS) across key major cities in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.


While in-person worship was restricted and church services were held on virtual platforms, 'church without walls' was active in community hubs throughout the UK, being the hands and feet of Jesus to thousands of people who were hungry, who were in need of hygiene products, baby clothes and food, or who were concerned about their mental well-being. Food has been served, delivered and distributed. Personal protective equipment in the forms of masks, shielding equipment and hygiene products has been made and distributed. Mental wellness initiatives have been carried out over Zoom, in person and over the telephone, and some of the key hubs will be addressing the need for sustainable livelihoods with the service users and beneficiaries, where applicable.

Stories have emerged of interest being sparked in the Christian faith, and in the particular beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, from the interactions with the hubs. Beautine Wester, who is leading the Clapton community hub, stated, 'In my 28 years of being an Adventist, this is the first time that I have connected with my whole neighbourhood in such a way where there is so much love, care, passion and drive. She continues, 'I have never seen so many people come out with the church to support the vulnerable.'

'The onslaught of COVID-19 has been extremely challenging for so many people in the UK,' said Ian Sweeney, BUC President and Chair of the Board of ADRA-UK. 'We have lost members to this dreadful virus and we continue to grieve with their families. Many of our members have been challenged with the lockdown and want to return to worship in their own sanctuaries. But, with the apostle Paul, I believe that *"in all things God works for the good of those who love him"* (Romans 8:28, NIV); and through these community hubs we were able to have a tangible presence in local areas and impact the lives of those we have previously not been able to reach with the Gospel.'

Speaking about the partnership, Raafat Kamal, President of the TED, stated, 'We are excited about the 'I am Urban' initiative and this partnership. I recognise that ADRA-UK, in partnership with Community Services (NEC, SEC, BUC and TED), has embarked on an ambitious initiative that can leave impactful footprints within the BUC on a national scale. I have many positive expectations of this project.'






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came the new earth.
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was the sign that
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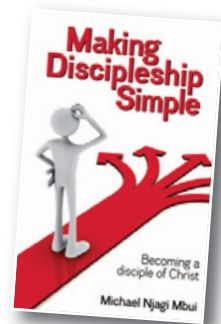


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Discipleship is a received gift

by Pastor Michael Mbui



As Pastor Michael Mbui shares this excerpt from his book, *Making Discipleship Simple*, he explains what it means for the disciple of Christ to be born both of 'the water' and of 'the Spirit'. While it is an absolute necessity, in reality both are miraculous gifts.

Unless you first receive the life of Christ, you cannot begin to live His life. It is only as the Holy Spirit reveals and instills that life through the Scriptures that you start on the discipleship pathway. All you need to do is look steadfastly at the crucified Saviour, and His life will become your life.

We have two daughters. Hellen, our firstborn, is named after my mother, and Eunice is named after my mother-in-law. In my community, the Kikuyu of Kenya, children are named after grandparents or their aunts and uncles.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the firstborn child of each gender is given names from the father's side of the family, and the second child from the mother's side. Since our plan was to have two children, we prayed for the Lord to give us either two boys or two girls so that each side of the family could be represented. The Lord gave us daughters who strongly resemble their parents. Hellen takes very much after me, and Eunice takes after her mother, in other traits as well as outward appearance. There is also much they take from both of us. They resemble us because we are their parents. We are the ones who, through the power of God, gave them life.

Life, as we all have it, begins as a gift freely given by our parents, without any contribution from us. In the same manner, discipleship is a gift of the life of Christ given by the Holy Spirit to the willing receiver. This was the experience that Jesus offered to Nicodemus when He said to him in John 3:5, 8, '*Unless they are born of water and the Spirit. . . . So it is with everyone born of the Spirit*' (NIV).

In the visit and dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus we learn three important facts about discipleship: first, that discipleship begins through the ministry of the Spirit; second, that discipleship allows us to see and enter the Kingdom of God; last, that discipleship comes when we look at the crucified Christ.

The symbolism of birth – being 'born of water and the Spirit' – reveals the supernatural or miraculous nature of discipleship. No child can

bring himself or herself into existence. Only another person can do that. In the same vein, it is the Spirit who brings about a new birth: the life of Christ in the disciple. This is the work of the Spirit. Jesus revealed this when He said what the Holy Spirit would do: '*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you*' (John 16:13, 14, NIV). To be disciples we need the life of Christ, which the Holy Spirit will give to us. It is not something we can originate or contribute to, but something we can only receive. The miracle of conversion is the working out of God's Spirit in the believer's life.

Being born of the Spirit

To establish what it means to be born of the Spirit, we need to ask two important questions on the motivation of Nicodemus's actions. Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus to begin with? And why did he come at night?

Nicodemus visited Jesus in a bid to understand and experience what the message and mission of Christ meant for him and his people. From his opening statement to Jesus he was aware of the actions and words of

Christ: '*We know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no-one could*

Life, as we all have it, begins as a gift freely given by our parents, without any contribution from us.

perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him' (John 3:2, NIV).

He must have heard about Jesus, and most likely listened to Jesus himself during many of His teaching sessions. He had seen the things that Jesus had done in the temple, as well as in the lives of many. This must have aroused his curiosity to know more about this Man. You could therefore argue that his actions were prompted, to an extent, by a self-centred desire to know more about Jesus. (Not every self-centred desire, action or reaction is negative. It is simply something originating from within the person, as opposed to other sources.)

That said, he came at night for a different set of reasons. He chose to come during the night because he feared the reactions of others. Based on his high standing in society and his ties to a sect that did not think very highly of Jesus (the Pharisees), he may have been afraid of being misunderstood. John reports that many leaders who believed in Christ were afraid of being thrown out of the synagogues (John 12:42). His decision to come at night may, therefore, have been influenced by the opinions of others.

The actions of Nicodemus were based on his concern for himself, as well as the opinions of others. That is still true for the majority of people today: a lot of who we are and what we do arises from our self-centredness and the opinions of other people. In asking Nicodemus to be born of the Spirit, Jesus was offering Nicodemus a new form of motivation: attitudes and actions prompted by God through the Holy Spirit.

To be born of the Spirit is to have your life led and enabled by the Spirit of God. The life given by the Spirit is that of Christ. By acquainting Nicodemus with the option of a new birth, Jesus was offering him an opportunity for a new life, one under the direction of the Holy Spirit. This is the life of Christ.

Nicodemus, like all of us, received his life and values from his parents, family and society. The statement of Jesus in John 3:6 – '*Flesh gives birth to flesh*' (NIV) – affirms the origin of our actions. Just as Nicodemus's previous actions were influenced by self and society, he could also receive a new life and new values from the Spirit. To be 'born of' humans is to imitate them in looks, mindset, and mannerisms.

To be 'born of' the Spirit, according to John 3:8, is to take after the Holy Spirit in thinking and behaviour. The Holy Spirit initiates discipleship when He begins to plant in the life of the willing follower the very life of Christ.

Paul writes extensively on the role and importance of the Spirit in the lives of all believers. The Spirit must live in the believer (Romans 8:11; John 14:17). The believer must be led by the Spirit in order for him to be able to reject and resist the actions of his sinful nature (Romans 8:5-8). He must desire what the Spirit desires, and live by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16). The New Testament reports that the Holy Spirit, who is always with us, can also fill our lives (Ephesians 5:18). To be full of the Spirit is to have the entire life led and controlled by the Spirit.

Therefore, discipleship is, first and foremost, a received gift. It is not something the prospective disciple can originate. We must receive it by responding to the Holy Spirit. Regarding the Holy Spirit, Jesus declared to His disciples, '*He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you*' (John 16:14, NIV). The Spirit takes the life of Christ and makes it known and experienced by His disciples.

The new life brings new realities

Jesus declared to Nicodemus that being born again would enable him to see and enter the Kingdom of God. Seeing and entering have literal and symbolic meanings that will apply to the disciples of Christ. Literally seeing has to do with vision: looking with the eyes. The symbolic meaning is related to understanding. For example, the saying, 'Now I see what you have been trying to tell me' uses 'seeing' to express understanding. Similarly, 'entering' has the literal meaning of physically going into a geographical location, such as a building. The symbolic meaning has to do with an experience. When you enter into a cool room from hot surroundings, you will experience a cooling effect. To 'enter' the Kingdom of God is to experience the principles of that Kingdom. Seeing and entering, in the context of discipleship, are about understanding and experiencing the Kingdom of God.

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Coleraine – the light's still on

by Pam Petersen



Northern Irish members gather together for a day of fellowship with the then-pastor, Weiers Coetser



The Coleraine church building was dedicated in 1974. The Adventist story in the area, though, goes way back to around 1910. The story starts when two brave men rented an old cottage in Carnglass, a small settlement near the current village of Ballybogeey, Northern Ireland. They were Pastor R. Musson, an evangelist, and Robert Whiteside, who later became a pastor. Six nights a week, for several months, the two men held meetings in the big cottage kitchen, with between 35 and 40 men attending each night. Great interest was aroused, but with it came great prejudice. Night after night, horns were blown, stones were thrown, and shots were fired. One time all the windows were broken. At times the police had to come from Portrush to protect them. Still they continued. At the close of the campaign, 14 were baptised in the ocean near the Giant's Causeway. With these 14 believers a company was formed. They met in the barn of the McAfee family on Kilmoyle Road. They stood firm to their new beliefs, regardless of the ridicule and abuse they received. One morning, one of the believers awoke to find a poem stuck on his barn door. (See below and right.) Their witness was powerful.

The group met at the McAfee farm until around 1946, when they moved to a Nissen hut in Coleraine. The church group worshipped here for about 20 years. They then moved and used a room in the nearby Orange Hall. In 1974 a new church building was completed, and the new Coleraine Seventh-day Adventist church was officially opened on 12 October 1974.

Coleraine Church, once a vibrant congregation, has dwindled in size. People have moved away; others have passed away: but the small group of members who remain are committed and faithful. Most do not live in Coleraine, but in the surrounding district. Please join them in praying that God will use them to be a shining light in their neighbourhoods.

The Light of Carnglass

*O glorious advent, O beautiful light,
Thou hast come to Carnglass in the hour of thy might;
And people who wallow in folly and sin
Have opened their arms for to welcome thee in.*

*Since Musson and Whiteside have dropped from the skies
The people have shaken the scales from their eyes;
They have slumbered too long on this heathenish shore –
How curious nobody told them before!*

*They listened to the tales of these wonderful men,
Who told them the glad tidings all over again;
And soon they had formed quite a neat little band,
Who commenced to work with a heart and a hand.*

*The first to receive the new light was John Shiels.
You can only imagine the joy that he feels;
For he constantly laboured and never lost hope,
So they raised his position and made him a 'pope'.*

*When Robert McGonaghy heard the glad news
He, too, joined the party of the wondering 'Jews',
And Sister McVicker was close on his heels,
But none of them all took the place of 'Pope Shiels'.*

*When Musson got up and read out the new rules,
They took such effect on the Seventh-day 'fools',
That they vow'd they'd for ever be true to their cause,
And never forget the Old Testament laws.*

*They read the commandments with pleasure untold
And they stuck to the fourth like a nugget of gold;
'Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work',
And 'woe to the man that is found eating pork!'*

*If you break this commandment you'll rank with the cursed;
Thou shalt rest on the seventh instead of the first;
You must spare the preachers a tenth of your pay,
And cut down the rations to two meals a day.*

*Sweet Seventh-day Advent, O glory divine,
For a share of thy blessing the lunatics pine;*

*All other religions will stand in the shade,
But the light of thy majesty never will fade.*

*I fervently hope, when the leaders have gone,
That Pope Shiels will be able to still lead them on,
And march with his army, with banner unfurled,
To a synagogue raised as a mark to the world.*

Editor's note: Enter through the front door of the Coleraine church, and quickly the visitor feels at home. Participants in Sabbath School sit in a circle for the study. Nothing unique there, perhaps, but there is a warmth

Meet Gideon Petersen, pastor for the Coleraine and Derry/Londonderry churches

The Irish Mission has the privilege of having some amazing pastors. Among them is Pastor Gideon

Petersen, the newest pastor on the pastoral team, who arrived at the beginning of this year; he's serving as the pastor at the Coleraine and Derry/Londonderry churches in Northern Ireland.

Gideon is from Cape Town, South Africa. He grew up during the troublesome 1970s and 1980s: a time of riots, violence and school boycotts. He grew up in an Adventist home that had church, worship and service as core values. This environment nurtured his spiritual growth, as he explains: *'My journey with Jesus started as a child. Listening to Bible stories and modern mission stories drew me into a relationship with Jesus. As a teenager, I saw the effects of sin on my community and made an early choice to seek to live a lifestyle based on love, kindness and peace. I saw the effects of a selfish life and chose a life of service to others. I saw this as being a child of God. I wanted this life – a life of giving to others. I wanted to imitate Jesus as I lived each day.'*

When asked who was the most influential person in his life, without hesitation Gideon's response is: *'My father. My life was spent learning at his feet what it means to be a servant of God.'* His father was a lay preacher, and Sabbath afternoons were spent in some form of ministry to others. This had a profound impact on the young Gideon. As he shared: *'From the age of five or six I heard the call of God to be a missionary. I spent my growing years learning about missions and what it means to serve people. This was reinforced as I participated in activities to help others in my community as a child.'* Service, for Gideon, is closely intertwined with ministry. He puts it like this: *'Serving people is my passion in ministry.'* Asked what motivates him, he replies: *'Since my youth I used the motto: "The love of Christ constrains me." When I see the accomplishments of people like Martin Luther King, Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, I can say that it is possible for love to win.'*

An important aspect of ministry for the pastors is nurturing their own spiritual growth. For Gideon, this includes listening to gifted preachers, lots of reading, and serving others. Something he finds especially valuable during his devotional time is solitude, especially in the early mornings.

Ministry is a recurring theme in Gideon's life. At university he started an urban youth ministry. He took a gap year during his university career and spent time as a student missionary at Maluti Hospital in Lesotho and Riverside Farm in Zambia. He married Pam in December 1993. After Gideon graduated, they moved to Namibia in 1995 and spent the next 17 years planting a church among the OvaHimba. Following this, they served as missionary consultants with Adventist Frontier Missions. In 2013, they were called to serve in Madagascar. Gideon is excited about ministry here in Northern Ireland. *'Being new to Northern Ireland, I am still learning how to live out my faith in this context. With lockdown interfering with this process, it may take a while longer to discover*



in the discussion and conversation. Heartfelt singing enriches worship. The fellowship lunch helps keep the family together: good conversation, and often a listening ear. However, while the church enjoys growing together, members are ever reminded of why they do worship together. I was always stirred by a notice at the exit of their car park: *'You are now entering the mission field.'* It has always been tough being an Adventist in Northern Ireland. The fact that it continues to be the Bible-belt of the UK doesn't make it any easier to be an Adventist. My experience was that, for some, the prejudice referred to in this article still exists. Remember the church family: not just in Coleraine, but throughout Northern Ireland.

appropriate methods or ways of living as a Christian today in Northern Ireland, but I'm excited to be here.'

We are glad he is here, and we wish him God's blessings on his ministry.

PAUL HIEBERT

Cork and Newmarket Churches reopen for worship

Last Sabbath, 11 July, was an important landmark in the Irish Mission, where, within the context of the COVID-19 special measures, two churches reopened: Cork and Newmarket-on-Fergus. It was my privilege to visit Cork, and this is what I saw . . .

The church leadership have taken all necessary measures to ensure that the church experience was both uplifting and safe. All safety controls were in place, with a rota/schedule ensuring that members and families would be able to attend church, while also adhering to the limited numbers required by law.

There was a muted sense of excitement and some nervousness as we all acknowledged the unnatural way of worshipping, where masks cover our smiles and Christian courtesy is limited to a head nod or elbow bump.

The children were 'present' with a prerecorded special musical item, while most of them were watching the service, together with their families, online.

Pastor Lorance Johnson preached a timely message from Matthew 25:40, saying: *'It is critical that we discern the still, small voice of God when He impresses our hearts to help others.'*

In many ways it was such a blessed and refreshing Sabbath, which gave us all some hope of a return to 'normal' church worship and fellowship.

Both Newmarket and Cork are to be commended for their hard and responsible work in ensuring the safety and well-being of their congregants (both spiritual and physical). Across the Irish Mission, we still have a long way to go. We advise prudence and thorough preparation as we practise faith rather than presumption in our Christian walk.

PASTOR DAN SERB (PRESIDENT, IRISH MISSION)



Pastors Johnson and Serb lead worship

The story of a blanket

Hearts and Hands has been in operation almost 9 years, and the ladies of Crieff have made vast quantities of items out of rolls of kindly donated material, including cushions and cushion covers, shopping bags which fit on frames, knitted blankets and soft toys.

This is the story of one of the blankets which Hearts and Hands gave to Perthshire Women's Aid. It fell into the hands of Sarah (not her real name), a lady who had been subjected to domestic abuse. A week ago, the following email was received by the church webmaster:

'This might be an odd request. Do you still have a sewing group, and, if so, do you have a contact for them? Many years ago I was at Women's Aid in Perth and we were given these beautiful blankets. I remember they were

made by people at your church. I was so happy to be given one, and it meant the world to me at the time. I want you to know that I still have it. I couldn't believe someone had worked so hard on

something and given it to me.

I now work in a refuge for women asylum seekers and refugees, and was wondering if we would be eligible for a donation if you were still making

the quilts. I know it's probably a long shot as that was many years ago now, but I thought I would ask.'

Sarah's message was forwarded to Dorothy Logan.



Isobel McEwan, Ann Lawrence, Sheila Sinclair, Shirley Froude, Margater Greer, Morag Galloway and Ruth Farrer



Stanborough Secondary School, open for September 2020 enrolment

Stanborough Secondary School, a Seventh-day Adventist secondary school, is situated on the serene Stanborough Park in Watford. From inception in 1919, school administration has held firm to the principle that education is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental and the spiritual powers. Stanborough still seeks to prepare its pupils for the joy of service in this world, and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.

COVID-19 has undoubtedly impacted Stanborough School, and the school is currently closed. However, God is the Master of this school and guides its operations. The teachers were prepared to move all the teaching onto online platforms when the Government declared a lockdown in March. A robust teaching programme has continued throughout this turbulent time.

In 2019, the school celebrated its centenary and looks set for another 100 years (unless Jesus comes before then). We will continue to run our school by biblical principles.

This is to advise all prospective parents and guardians that we are accepting pupils for September 2020 enrolment. Please visit our website, www.spsch.org, for a virtual guided tour of the school. For further information, or to discuss our admissions procedures further, please contact the school on info@spsch.org.

May God bless you, and keep safe!



Safeguarding mental well-being during times of crisis

part 4

Physical activity

Not everyone gets excited when the word 'exercise' is mentioned. In fact, during times of crisis, especially when people are feeling low in mood, or if they have an existing mental health challenge, it is harder to feel motivated to exercise. *Healthy Place*¹ highlights this lack of motivation in an online article titled 'Movement for Mental Health: A Mind-Body Connection', stating: 'Many of the myriad mental health struggles people face are paralysing. Depression, PTSD, anxiety, stress, and more can stop us in our tracks. It's hard to move at all, let alone think about moving forwards.'

Healthy Place goes on to explain how important movement is, and what impact it has on our body: 'While often difficult initially, the best cure for the inability to move is movement. Movement and exercise are powerful. They simultaneously stimulate and soothe, improving the functioning of the central nervous system (including the brain), heart, and lungs, among other things.'

Outlining the specific short-term and long-term mental health benefits of physical activity, *Healthy Place* lists the following:

- It encourages and improves deep breathing.
- It quiets the mind and body's automatic stress response.
- It cools the fight-or-flight response.
- It induces relaxation.
- It provides natural energy.
- It increases self-confidence and self-worth.
- It improves nervous system functioning.
- It regulates mood.
- It improves sleep.

The Mental Health Foundation, in its report 'How to look after your mental health using exercise',² states: 'A study asked people to rate their mood immediately after periods of physical activity (for example, going for a walk or doing housework), and periods of inactivity (for example, reading a book or watching television). Researchers found that the participants felt more content, more awake and calmer after being physically active, compared to after periods of inactivity.'

A Mayo Clinic online article by their clinic staff, titled 'Exercise and stress: get moving to manage stress',³ outlines the chemical impact on the brain: 'Exercise in almost any form can act as a stress reliever. Being active can boost your feel-good endorphins and distract you from daily worries.' The Mayo Clinic report further explains: 'Physical activity helps bump up the production of your brain's feel-good neurotransmitters, called endorphins.' This, they state, results in stress-busting benefits.

Try these resources to motivate you to action:

- **Online videos:** Easy ways to move more: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/move-more/>. This is a great website outlining age-related activities and being active with a disability.
- **Free walking app:** <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/move-more/active-10/>.
- **Free fitness exercises:** <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/free-fitness-ideas/>.
- **Department of Health (2011) 'UK physical activity guidelines':** www.gov.uk/government/collections/physical-activity-guidelines.

Good health!

¹<https://www.healthyplace.com/other-info/mental-health-newsletter/movement-for-mental-health-a-mind-body-connection#movement>

²<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/how-to-using-exercise>

³<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/exercise-and-stress/art-20044469>



During lockdown she and others have been busy making facemasks and other much-needed items. A stock of items suitable for refugees and asylum seekers had accumulated, and Dorothy thought these might be of use to the charity for which Sarah now works. A quick car trip to the big city last Sunday delivered a selection of goods to Sarah, who was both surprised and delighted to receive them. They will be used to help a small group of Pakistani and Sudanese asylum-seeking women. One

rarely hears a blanket story like this.

Hearts and Hands is a venture comprising a few ladies in the Crief congregation, who meet up once a month to do some crafts and handiwork, specifically to produce blankets, cushions and other needed materials for people in need. Recently, due to COVID-19 limitations, the ladies have been working from home.

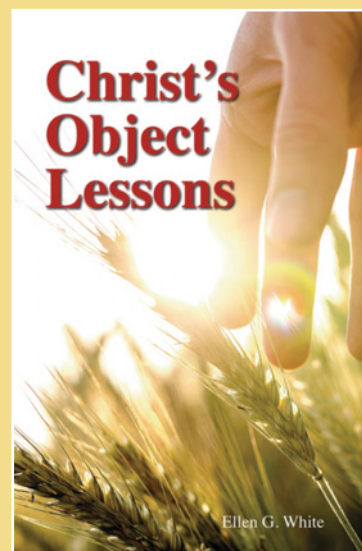
Thank you, Hearts and Hands, for demonstrating Christ's love in action! Please keep sewing the labels on!

JIMMY BOTHA

Christ's Object Lessons

In this, the second excerpt from the chapter 'Who is my neighbour?' from Christ's Object Lessons, Ellen White examines the possible reasoning of the priest and the Levite in not stopping to help the stricken traveller. She shows us that a mere religiosity, when unaccompanied by the divine love of Christ, will not suffice. The love of Christ for the needy and downtrodden must live in the heart, and God can put His love in the heart of any of His children. May His love be rekindled afresh in you as you read this message.

For your chance to purchase your own copy of *Christ's Object Lessons*, follow this link:
<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/christs-object-lessons/>



'Who is my neighbour?'

by Ellen G. White
(Part 2)

'The priest and the Levite had been for worship to the temple whose service was appointed by God Himself. To participate in that service was a great and exalted privilege, and the priest and Levite felt that having been thus honoured, it was beneath them to minister to an unknown sufferer by the wayside. Thus they neglected the special opportunity which God had offered them as His agents to bless a fellow being.'

'Many today are making a similar mistake. They separate their duties into two distinct classes. The one class is made up of great things, to be regulated by the law of God; the other class is made up of so-called little things, in which the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is ignored. This sphere of work is left to caprice, subject to inclination or impulse. Thus the character is marred, and the religion of Christ misrepresented.'

'There are those who would think it lowering to their dignity to minister to suffering humanity. Many look with indifference and contempt upon those who have laid the temple of the soul in ruins. Others neglect the poor from a different motive. They are working, as

they believe, in the cause of Christ, seeking to build up some worthy enterprise. They feel that they are doing a great work, and they cannot stop to notice the wants of the needy and distressed. In advancing their supposedly great work they may even oppress the poor. They may place them in hard and trying circumstances, deprive them of their rights, or neglect their needs. Yet they feel that all this is justifiable because they are, as they think, advancing the cause of Christ.'

'Many will allow a brother or a neighbour to struggle unaided under adverse circumstances. Because they profess to be Christians he may be led to think that in their cold selfishness they are representing Christ. Because the Lord's professed servants are not in co-operation with Him, the love of God, which should flow forth from them, is in great degree cut off from their fellow men. And a large revenue of praise and thanksgiving from human hearts and human lips is prevented from flowing back to God. He is robbed of the glory due to His holy name. He is robbed of the souls for whom Christ died, souls whom He longs to bring into His kingdom to dwell in His presence through endless ages.'

'Divine truth exerts little influence upon the world, when it should exert much influence through our practice. The mere profession of religion abounds, but it has little weight. We may claim to be followers of Christ, we may claim to believe every truth in the word of God; but this will do our neighbour no good unless our belief is carried into our daily life. Our profession may be as high as heaven, but it will save neither ourselves nor our fellow men unless we are Christians. A right example will do more to benefit the world than all our profession.'

'By no selfish practices can the cause of Christ be served. His cause is the cause of the oppressed and the poor. In the hearts of His professed followers there is need of the tender sympathy of Christ – a deeper love for those whom He has so valued as to give His own life for their salvation. These souls are precious, infinitely more precious than any other offering we can bring to God. To bend every energy towards some apparently great work, while we neglect the needy or turn the stranger from his right, is not a service that will meet His approval.'

'The sanctification of the soul by the working of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity. Gospel religion is Christ in the life – a living, active principle. It is the grace of Christ revealed in character and wrought out in good works. The principles of the gospel cannot be disconnected from any department of practical life. Every line of Christian experience and labour is to be a representation of the life of Christ.'



Thanks to God! My testimony – my story

by Kathleen Weekes

It was the early 1960s when the call came out to train as a nurse from my little island of Antigua (a British colony) at Luton and Dunstable Hospital in England. Yes, I was part of 'The Windrush Generation' recruited via the Department of Labour in England, as it was then known.

I came and trained in nursing and midwifery and as a public health nurse, which gave me the opportunities to care for patients from cradle to grave.

Jump several years to a 'meteoric rise' in the late eighties to becoming a chief nurse for the Mid and West Essex Health Authorities, serving a population from Maldon, Essex through to the Chelmsford and Harlow areas – a role I fulfilled for six years. That was a privilege – to lead the authorities' nursing workforce of over 6,000 nurses in hospital and community settings, and to lead on the development of nursing standards for patients and on practice development.

That was a great opportunity: *thanks to God!*

This job led me towards becoming Chief Nursing and Healthcare Employment Adviser at the Department for Education and Employment for 12 years. The job was to advise government ministers and senior civil servants on healthcare employment matters across England, Scotland and Wales (this was before these matters were devolved to Scotland and Wales).

It seemed that God had brought me full circle to be the lead nurse in the department that had recruited me in the early sixties: thanks to God.

This was a brilliant, challenging and demanding job with responsibility to lead on

policy, strategy and labour market issues relevant to the nursing and healthcare industry.

There was a need for extensive travel across the United Kingdom, and to work closely with other chief nurses across the three countries. I had to develop my skills quickly, and learn how to navigate the civil service landscape! With no black women to help provide mentorship in the department, my white chief nurse colleagues across the three countries and the nursing royal colleges were there to offer support.

The then permanent secretary sought my input for a small ethnic minority group of generic civil servants across Whitehall to help mentor and formulate strategies and enable recruitment of young, bright university graduates interested in entering the civil service. We needed to provide him with advice.

The focus on diversity was very evident, then as now, as ministers were keen to improve the visibility of ethnic minorities within government departments. Thanks to God for that level of support and guidance in working in the Government. A period of twelve years at the department had its highs and lows. An enjoyable yet demanding job had begun to take its toll in the form of rising blood pressure, and by 2003 my physician advised surgery following angiography, to have by-pass surgery to correct some narrowing.

What! Shock horror! How would I cope as a single woman, living alone with no one to help me after surgery – and no, I couldn't give up the job I loved just yet – the job in which I had invested so much. I wasn't ready! But

God is good. He provided all the answers, finding the right surgeon in the right hospital, and with the necessary aftercare provision.

In April 2003 successful surgery followed at the City Hospital, Nottingham. Discharged after three days, my dearest Christian friends Cynthia and the late Pastor Egerton Francis were on hand just a short distance from the hospital to provide early aftercare in their home, in case I needed any urgent post-operative help from the hospital. My family were able to provide ongoing care after a week.

Surviving having one's chest opened up is 'no mean feat': but God is good. He pulled me through. *Thanks be to God.*

Fast-forward to 2019, and back to the City Hospital for knee surgery. Again, 'How would I cope post-surgery getting up and down stairs without immediate family nearby?'

But God is good. He provided the ways and means – the correct aids, the right gadgets, the physio support, and most importantly the brilliant support of family, neighbours, and church family. *Thanks be to God.*

God's care and support shone through my neighbours and friends, who provided meals, did shopping, gave injections and more.

Neighbours came during the night and in the morning to check on me and keep my spirits up. God's care was present in every smile and word of encouragement by all who helped me.

My special Psalm 46:1, 2 has never left me in all the many challenging times over my years: *'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed'* (NKJV).

God's goodness continues to shine through, and has enabled me to use the many skills developed during my full-time working life, to be a non-executive director on health trust boards, housing boards and education trust boards, and in voluntary service as an independent custody visitor – all while making time to be a home child carer and grandma! God has been so good to me. I will never forget His faithfulness.

'Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by *trying* to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within – when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance.

'It is not possible for the heart in which Christ abides to be destitute of love. If we love God because He first loved us, we shall love all for whom Christ died. We cannot come in touch with divinity without coming in touch with humanity; for in Him who sits upon the throne of the universe, divinity and humanity are combined. Connected with Christ, we are connected with our fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. Then the pity and compassion of Christ will be manifest in our life. We shall not wait to have the needy and unfortunate brought to us. We shall not need to be entreated to feel for the woes of others. It will be as natural for us to minister to the needy and suffering as it was for Christ to go about doing good.

'Wherever there is an impulse of love and sympathy, wherever the

heart reaches out to bless and uplift others, there is revealed the working of God's Holy Spirit. In the depths of heathenism, men who have had no knowledge of the written law of God, who have never even heard the name of Christ, have been kind to His servants, protecting them at the risk of their own lives. Their acts show the working of a divine power. The Holy Spirit has implanted the grace of Christ in the heart of the savage, quickening his sympathies contrary to his nature, contrary to his education. The "*Light . . . which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*" (John 1:9), is shining in his soul; and this light, if heeded, will guide his feet to the kingdom of God.

'The glory of heaven is in lifting up the fallen, comforting the distressed. And wherever Christ abides in human hearts, He will be revealed in the same way. Wherever it acts, the religion of Christ will bless. Wherever it works, there is brightness.'

The final excerpt from the chapter will appear in the next edition of *MESSINGER*.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1941), pp. 382-386

David Cyril Dewing (1940-2020)
d. 11 April.

Dave, as he liked to be known, was born in Norwich, Norfolk to Cyril and Edna Dewing, and he remained their only child. Years later Dave had a step-sister called Sandra, born the same day as his only son, Dale.

Pursuing his love of cars, he went to Norfolk University Technical College and became an auto engineer. To this day he is recognised on the honours board of the Norfolk University Technical College as the most outstanding apprentice in Norfolk during his training. He moved his then-wife and their two girls, aged 4 and 5, to Australia in 1969, and his extensive training and specialised skills soon became so renowned that he was approached by Toyota to become their technical sales service manager for South Australia. In his free time he learned judo, in which he became a black belt expert.

Most of his life Dave had been searching for something. It seems God had His eye on him. As a young boy the nuns took him to the Church of England's choir sessions. In Australia he tried several churches, but wasn't satisfied with them. However, he joined a Methodist-like church where he was baptised by immersion. One Sunday morning on *It Is Written* he was pleasantly surprised to hear Pastor George Vandeman talking about the book of Revelation, which he had previously been told needs no discussion. When he heard about the Sabbath, he said, 'God says it: I will do it.' This he repeated many times in his evangelistic work later on. During his work travels in South Australia he saw the book *Your Bible and You* in his hotel room, and in a second-hand book shop he saw *The Great Controversy*, which helped him decide to follow God. In the late seventies he joined the Adventist Church in Adelaide on 'profession of faith', following which the pastor took him on his evangelising endeavours. He had discovered where God wanted him to be.

His marriage ended in 1979, and he was left to raise three children, 7, 8 and 15 years old.



His 14-year-old daughter remained with her mother and returned to England. That was a difficult time for Dave, but he was overwhelmed by the support he received from the church family. Close friends planned his introduction to a Dutch missionary in the USA, Marty Aalmoes. They married in June 1981.

Dave was never comfortable in Australia, even after he and Marty started their own successful business repairing cars. In 1985 the family returned to England, leaving Dave's eldest married daughter in Australia. They settled in St Albans, Hertfordshire for nine years, and then Norwich, where all his family lived.

Dave held different responsibilities at church – elder, head deacon and Sabbath school teacher, as well as assistant treasurer. Dave and Marty invited people to their home most Sabbaths and assisted the homeless and disadvantaged. Dave also helped in prison ministry, Revelation seminars, and free Bible ministry.

The last years were difficult for Dave, as he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2015, but it never affected his faith and evangelism. Dave died in the hope of meeting his Saviour soon.

Dave is remembered by his devoted wife, Marty, and his children and their families. He was very proud of his children, and prayed every day that they would accept Jesus as their Saviour.

JEREMY BROOKS

Martin Luther Rodney (1934-2020)
d. 15 April.

Martin Luther Rodney was born on 3 June 1934 in Green Island, Hanover, Jamaica. He was the eldest of seven children born to Edward Charles Rodney and Ethlyn Lenora Johnson-Rodney. Martin Luther Rodney was named by his mother, who was anxious for him to be like the great Protestant reformer.

True to his name, Martin Luther was a leader and stood out as such to his many friends and within his family from a young age. Highly principled,

commanding great respect and truly loved by all, Martin Luther was known as 'Luther', 'Bro Luther', 'Uncle Luther'.

Martin Luther attended Cave Valley School in Marchtown, Hanover. Although naturally bright, from an early age his schooling was challenged. Martin Luther needed to assist his parents on the family homestead in Archwell to help support the family. He gave accounts of childhood exploits selling from his donkey, riding his father's horses and his bicycle as a fearless daredevil – with his younger brother Cebert on the handlebars.

He spoke of an exciting childhood and memorable times with his father Edward Rodney, a cane farmer, and brothers Lionel (deceased) and Charles. They were a crew to be reckoned with locally, and also later, when travelling to work.

Martin Luther was a carpenter whose Seventh-day Adventist mother attended the Cauldwell church. Aged 20, while reading the Bible in competition with a friend, the crucifixion story in Luke 23 converted Martin Luther to the advent message. Martin Luther fell in love with the church, and with his wife, Iona Hyacinth Campbell. Martin Luther was baptised into the Adventist faith and married Iona in the Cauldwell church on 25 October 1955. From then on, both in Jamaica and in the UK, Martin Luther diligently kept the Sabbath.

Martin Luther sailed to England for work just a few months later, almost not making it, as the ship caught fire mid-Atlantic. Many young men revelled on the ship while Martin Luther studied the Bible and prayed in his bunk. Those who had mocked at first turned to him for prayer as the fire raged. The crew successfully put the fire out. Iona remained in Jamaica, living with Edward and Ethlyn Rodney.

In 1956, Iona Rodney joined Martin Luther in the UK. Sixty-five years of marriage produced seven children, twelve grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Martin Luther was an evangelist, with a dream that everyone should hear of God's plan of salvation. He was a people person, a Bible teacher, a colporteur and a church planter. With his distinctive side parting, customary suit and tie, Martin

Luther served as an elder, finally retiring as the site manager at John Loughborough School, an institution he was pivotal in helping to establish.

Martin Luther played a wider and very prominent role in helping the UK Adventist movement diversify, serving as the fulcrum for the General Conference discussions with the British Union of Seventh-day Adventists in the seventies and eighties. Martin Luther Rodney went on to be the first layperson to be elected as chairman of the London Area Advisory Council (LAAC).

After his 1999 retirement, Martin Luther divided his time between Jamaica and the UK.

In July 2017, Martin Luther suffered a stroke, losing left-side functionality. His wife, children, family and friends attended to most of his care at home, augmenting the provisions of the local authority. Martin Luther made his final trip a nine-week visit to Jamaica in 2018, along with his wife and children.

Martin Luther is mourned and survived by his wife Iona; seven children: Christine, Pauline, Sharon, Sandra, Jacynth, Timothy and Mark; twelve grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. Also surviving are seven siblings: Charles Rodney, Clifford Rodney, Gerzel Arthurs, Eunice Rodney Archer, Hyacinth Rodney, Anita Arnold, and Cebert Rodney, along with many nieces, nephews and friends around the world.

The Chingford church, where Martin Luther last served as elder, is particularly saddened.

The life of Martin Luther Rodney truly delivered his mother's wish.

Gone but not forgotten – a UK Adventist pioneer, a husband, father, uncle, cousin and friend – by name, by service and by impact: Martin Luther Rodney.

Martin Luther Rodney now sleeps, awaiting the return of our God.

JACQUES VENTER

Joseph Gatharia Karauni (1960-2020)
d. 7 May.

Joseph Gatharia Karauni was born on 1 January, 1960 and raised in the Kanyariri area of Kenya. With his schooling and early working life all



Kenya-based, his first job was at Nairobi Hospital, where he worked from 1980 until 1992, while running a poultry business at the same time.

In 1993 he was baptised by Pastor Patrick Mwangi and became a member of Kanyariri Church. He was a devoted Christian and served as a deacon for several years. It was here that Joseph fell in love with Jennifer Wanjiru, and they were married on 16 August 1998 at the King'eero church.

Within two years of marriage, Joseph and Jennifer decided to move to Dublin, Ireland, where they successfully raised their three daughters. It was in 2014 that he later moved back to Kenya with his family to set up a business. A further move to England was to follow in 2016, with Joseph working for Amazon until March of this year.

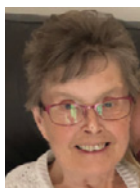
During mid-April he started feeling unwell, and self-isolated at home, but was then admitted to the Royal Bolton Hospital towards the end of April. The doctors diagnosed him with COVID-19, and, despite their efforts to improve his condition, Joseph passed away due to the effects of the coronavirus. He leaves behind his wife, Jennifer; his three daughters: Maureen, Suzan, and Shaina; and two grandchildren: Elijah and Ezekiel. The family hold fast to the hope and the promise of Revelation 14:13, the voice from heaven saying: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them!" (ESVUK.)

The funeral was conducted by the writer at the Bolton Funeralcare Chapel on 20 May, joined by extended family and friends via Zoom from close by, Kenya and Ireland. Joseph was buried in Heaton Cemetery, waiting for the promised resurrection. Maranatha.

DAVID NEAL

Margaret Gwennlian Todd (née Jones) (1938-2020)

d. 22 May. We were saddened to learn of the death of Margaret Todd on 22 May 2020. Margaret was born on 10 July 1938 in Walthamstow



and spent her childhood and youth in Barry. Margaret came into contact with Adventists when a friend invited her to a youth camp. In 1957 she accepted Jesus Christ as her Saviour and was baptised. On 2 June 1968 Margaret married Nigel Ronald Todd. Their union brought about their daughter, Katrina.

Margaret entered employment within the British Union Conference in 1960 as a teacher for Hyland House School in the South England Conference. She left Hyland House in 1971 when she gave birth to Katrina, and returned in 1989. She continued to serve Hyland House as a teacher until her retirement in 2000.

Margaret will be remembered for her kind spirit. She was strong and modelled love to the children under her care. We now look forward, with her family, to Christ's soon return and that glorious resurrection day. Please pray for her family as they navigate the funeral plans during this difficult period.

JACQUES VENTER

Brenya Kwame Obeng (1964-2020)

d. 18 June.

Brenya Kwame Obeng was born on 20 March 1964 at Tano-Odumasi, in the Agona region of Ghana. He was the second to be born into an Adventist family eventually numbering 10 siblings. He was the only individual in his family to have the opportunity to travel abroad and embark on higher education.

He completed his elementary education, but, having no sponsorship, was unable to proceed straight into secondary education. For a while Brenya had to work on a cocoa farm. Fortunately, his uncle, a retired Adventist pastor, who was at that time a theology student at Andrews University, promised Brenya that when his theology studies were finished, he would sponsor him and so enable him to attend secondary school.

In due course he attended Agona SDA Secondary School, where he was baptised and served in the role of Sabbath School superintendent. On successfully completing his high school exams, he received



admission to study German language at the University of Paderborn, Germany. After successfully completing this course, he was admitted to the University of Bochum in Bochum, Germany to study for a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry. While in Germany, he was the church clerk at Dusseldorf Ghanaian SDA Church, later taking on the role of church elder. He also served the congregation as an interpreter, translating sermons for both the Ghanaian and German congregations.

He next furthered his education by travelling to Deventer, Netherlands, where he completed a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA). He was awarded an additional postgraduate diploma in Business Administration by the University of Lincoln.

A Nigerian friend, whom he met during his studies in the Netherlands, invited him to visit his home in Dundee, Scotland. This led to his relocation to Dundee in August 2003. While in Dundee, he was recruited onto the ethnic minority housing programme by PATH Scotland, where he studied housing and became a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

This paved the way to his post at Dundee City Council as a housing officer, which he filled with distinction from 2009 until his death.

He joined the Dundee Seventh-day Adventist church in 2003, which he has served in various capacities, including head deacon, Sabbath School superintendent, Personal Ministries leader, assistant church treasurer and head elder.

He leaves behind his wife, Margaret, and son, Mervyn.

He was buried on 2 July in Dundee.

JIMMY BOTHA

Messenger

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MESSINGER 16

The next edition of *MESSINGER* will be published on Thursday 14 August.

If you have news to share, please provide copy to the editor by Friday 6 August.

Editor

Sunset

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	London	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Jul 17	9.09	9.21	9.20	9.45	9.48
24	9.00	9.12	9.11	9.34	9.38
31	8.50	9.02	8.59	9.21	9.26
Aug 7	8.38	8.50	8.47	9.07	9.12

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- Dr Carlton Byrd (*Breath of Life Ministries Director & Senior Pastor of Oakwood University Church*)

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