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Dealing with loneliness:
a social perspective
Women and the church – a closer look
A life that made a difference
Balancing faith and fitness: a holistic
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during 'City-to-City Evangelistic
Campaigns' in Kenya

+ Messenger summaries

The Present Truth.

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."—St. John 17: 17.

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TRUTH AND ERROR.

BY ELD. URIAH SMITH.

SINCE first in Eden (in an entrance found,
When sad success the Tempter's efforts crowned;
Since first the sunlight saw its hideous birth,
Dark floods of error have swept o'er the earth,
Stern and unceasing has the conflict been,
Between light and darkness, 'mong the sons of men;
Many the ways to weaken and his name deride;
God's truth to weaken and his name deride;
Many the snares he ne'er has ceased to weave,
Many his doctrines fashioned to deceive,
Many his artful schemes, mankind to win
From ways of holiness to ways of sin;
Many his frauds to make the world believe,
While grasping error, they the truth receive.
So must we closely search if we would know
Where blooms the truth, where poisonous errors grow;
With closest scrutiny each form must scan,
Lest it conceal the Tempter's artful plan.

O sacred Truth! dack was for thee the hour,
When man first bowed to the Deceiver's power;
When sin first came, thy spotless page to mar,
And on thy precepts wage unholy war;
To pour rank poison in thy purest streams,
To shut men's vision to thy brightest beams,
To make apostates of our fallen race,
And drive thee, slighted, from thy rightful place.
Yet art thou not cast down: thy lovely form
Has rode triumphant over every storm;
Sin has not undermined thy structure fair,
Though it has turned mankind from worship there;
Firm thou hast ever stood, and e'er shalt stand,
Guarded by Heaven, upheld by God's own hand;
Still dost thou shed, fair as the morning light,
Thy holy radiance o'er earth's moral night;
Still dost thou form, majestic, lead the way,
And point us onward to eternal day.

GENERAL ARTICLES.

"Bear: for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my
lips shall be right things."—Prov. vi. 4.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

It is the duty of every Christian to seek a
thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. The
importance of this can hardly be over-estima-
ted. "Given by inspiration of God," "able
to make us wise unto salvation," rendering
"the man of God perfect, thoroughly furni-
shed unto all good works," the Book of
books has the highest claim to our reverent
attention. We must not be satisfied with su-
perficial knowledge, but must seek to learn the
full meaning of the words of truth, and to
drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles.
To read a certain number of chapters daily,
or commit to memory a stipulated amount

without careful thought as to the meaning of
the sacred text, is a work of little profit. We
cannot obtain wisdom without earnest atten-
tion and prayerful study. Some portions of
Scripture are, indeed, too plain to be misun-
derstood; but there are others whose meaning
does not lie upon the surface, to be seen at a
glance. Scripture must be compared with
scripture; there must be careful research and
patient reflection. And such study will be
richly repaid. As the miner discovers veins
of precious metal concealed beneath the sur-
face of the earth, so will he who perseveringly
searches the word of God as for hid treasure,
find truths of greatest value, which are con-
cealed from the view of the careless seeker.

No effort should be spared to establish a
right habit of study. If the mind wanders,
bring it back. If the intellectual and moral
taste has been perverted by the over-wrought
and exciting tales of fiction, so that you are
disinclined to apply yourself to the diligent
study of God's word, then you have a battle
to fight with yourself to overcome this de-
praved habit. A love for fictitious reading
should be broken up at once. Rigid rules
should be enforced to hold the mind in a proper
channel. The pernicious practice of story-
reading is one of the means employed by Satan
to destroy souls. The mind that is occupied
with exciting stories, loses all relish for solid
reading that would improve the memory and
strengthen the intellect.

I am acquainted with many sad examples
of the evil effects of this baneful practice. In
youth, the persons of whom I speak had well-
balanced minds. God had endowed them
with mental powers of no ordinary character.
But they took up the reading of romance, and
the more they indulged the appetite for this
food, the greater was the demand. The imagi-
nation constantly craved its accustomed stim-
ulus, as the inebriate longs for his wine or
tobacco. Their mental and moral powers
were weakened and perverted. They lost
their interest in the Scriptures, and their relish
for prayer; and they were as truly ruined,
mentally and spiritually, as is the liquor-
drinker or the tobacco devotee. Novel-readers
are mental inebriates; and they need to sign
a pledge of total abstinence as verily as does
the victim of any other form of intemperance.

Another source of danger, against which we
should be constantly on our guard, is the read-
ing of infidel authors. Such works are in-
spired by Satan, and no one can read them
without loss to the soul. It is true that some
who are affected by them may finally recover;
but all who tamper in the least with their foul
influence, place themselves on Satan's ground,
and he makes the most of his advantage. As
and he makes his temptations, they have not
wisdom to discern or strength to resist them.
With a fascinating, bewitching power, unbe-
lief and infidelity fasten themselves upon the
mind. To harbor their suggestions is like
recklessly taking to your bosom a serpent
whose sting is always poisonous and often
fatal.

We are surrounded by unbelief. The very
atmosphere seems charged with it; only by

constant effort can we resist its power. Those
who value their soul's salvation, should shun
infidel writings as they would shun the leprosy.

Dear youth, be careful what you read.
While the mind is directed into hurtful chan-
nels by an improper course of reading, it is
impossible for you to make the truth of God
the subject of constant meditation. If there
was ever a time when a knowledge of the
Scriptures was more important than at any
other period, that time is the present. I ap-
peal to young and old: Make the word of God
your text-book. Here you will find the true
standard of character. Here you may learn
what it is to be a Christian in the true acce-
ptation of the term.

The Sabbath-school affords to parents and
children a precious opportunity for the study
of God's word. But in order to gain that ben-
efit which they should gain in the Sabbath-
school, both parents and children should de-
vote time to study of the lessons, seeking to
obtain a thorough knowledge of the facts pre-
sented, and also of the spiritual truths which
these facts are designed to teach. We should
especially impress upon the minds of the young
the importance of seeking the full significance
of the scripture under consideration.

Parents, set apart a little time each day for
the study of the Sabbath-school lesson with
your children. Give up the social visit if it
be, rather than sacrifice the hour devoted to
the precious lessons of sacred history. Par-
ents as well as children will receive benefit
from this study. Let the more important pas-
sages of Scripture connected with the lesson
be committed to memory, not as a task, but as
a privilege. Though at first the memory may
be defective, it will gain strength by exer-
cise, so that after a time you will delight thus
to treasure up the precious words of truth;
and the habit will prove a most valuable aid
to religious growth.

If the time that is worse than wasted in
gossip, in ministering to pride, or for the grati-
fication of appetite, were devoted with equal
interest to the study of the Bible, what en-
couragement would be given to our Sabbath-
schools! But when parents are more anxious
to have their children fashionably dressed than
to have their minds stored with the truths of
God's word, the children themselves will soon
learn to regard dress and display as of more
consequence than the things which concern
their salvation.

Parents, yours is an important and solemn
responsibility. Make it your life-work to form
the characters of your children according to
the divine Pattern. If they ever possess the
inward adorning, the ornament of a meek and
quiet spirit, it will be because you persevere-
ingly trained them to love the teachings of
God's word, and to seek the approval of Jesus
above the approbation of the world.

Observe system in the study of the Scrip-
tures in your families. Neglect anything of a
temporal nature, dispense with all unneces-
sary sewing, and with needless provision for
the table, but be sure that the soul is fed with
the bread of life. It is impossible to estimate
the good results of one hour or even half an

140
YEARS
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION

140 years of the Stanborough Press

WHAT IS

"Reflecting Hope" is the BUC's **response** and **adaptation** to the General Conference's to "Christ for Europe" mission initiative. It is a contemporary lay-led, clergy-engaged, locality-appropriate evangelistic initiative for the 'European' mindset supported by AWR.

2023

- 272 baptisms
- 150 digital evangelists trained
- 68 contacts from the Shetlands (unentered territory – regular visits)
- 62 churches participated
- 5 regions in the BUC
- 3 brand new outreach resources
- 2 new active committees
- 2 reporting videos
- 1 collaboration with AWR

2024

1. Addressing secularism
2. New trainers
3. Funding from AWR/GC
4. 6 new resources
5. 2 collaborative projects
6. Monthly webinars
7. Prayer endeavour

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

Editorial

by Dusanka Rancic,
Editor

Dear reader,

A few days before Christmas, I was not doing my usual work at the Stanborough Press. Instead, I was helping, alongside other managers, in the dispatch department. We were working passionately to get every order out before Christmas. I found the experience to be enlightening.

I was going through the orders, picking up specific books; looking at how some orders are focusing on children of a particular age, Sabbath School materials or devotionals. I could imagine somebody receiving it with a smile on their face, reading it in a peaceful corner of their home, teaching children early in the morning, or reading them a bedtime story while they are yawning in their pyjamas with messy hair. The fact that I am a part of this ministry filled me with immense delight. Ellen G. White's words were lingering in my head: 'We must prepare ourselves for most solemn duties. A world is to be saved. . . . Publications are to be distributed like the leaves of autumn.'¹

And here I was, walking around the boxes filled with books about our Creator and Saviour. As I opened box after box, I recalled the humble beginnings of our church and the inspiring courage and faith of our pioneers. A penniless James White bravely followed God's guidance: 'Publish a little paper. . . . If you go ahead and print – other people will send the money to continue publishing.' So the *Present Truth* was born with its first thousand copies. And 'the money came in as promised,'² but even more, as a result, people were embracing the truth about God, the church was growing, and more people were saved each day.

I also remembered M. C. Wilcox, who was learning from James White and Uriah Smith. After serving 'an apprenticeship in typesetting and editing under Uriah Smith at the Review and Herald Publishing House, Battle Creek', Wilcox sailed to England.³ In May 1884, the first issue of the periodical *Present Truth* was published in Britain under his editorship. And the Stanborough Press was born.⁴

I wondered how many lives have been transformed through the influence of these publications throughout the years. Books were distributed like the leaves of autumn; people were encouraged; lives were saved.

I remember reading about E. J. Waggoner, Arthur S. Maxwell's bedtime stories, and David Marshall's encouraging books. All of them were Stanborough Press editors. And now I am standing here; **WE** are standing here, carrying the torch, contributing to history.

The new year has just begun. Somebody might just be born this year; start walking or talking; somebody might celebrate their first birthday. You are probably aware that the King sends congratulatory messages to British nationals celebrating their 100th birthday to mark an impressive milestone. And it is impressive to think of what somebody has accomplished, experienced, and learned during their lengthy life. How many lives has that person influenced and shaped? It is even more impressive if you know that individual and can join in the celebration.

Thus, 2024 should be a year that we all remember, because Stanborough Press will celebrate its 140th birthday. And Stanborough Press is all of us: we publish; you distribute; God changes lives.

Stanborough Press was the first SDA institution established in Great Britain, and it's the third-oldest SDA publishing house in the world. It has been 140 years since that first periodical was published. We were not born when it all began, but we all witness the impact and influence that this publishing house has had and continues to have.

So, let's make its birthday special this year:

- By distributing its publications 'like the leaves of autumn', with the goal of transforming and saving lives;
 - By making special donations that enable us to proclaim the good news until Jesus returns to take us all home;
 - By planning to visit the Press on Open Day, 8 September, to celebrate this significant milestone together.
- May God bless all of us in our ministry for Him this year.*



¹Ellen G. White, *The Publishing Ministry*, p. 368
²Barry Bell, 'Spotlight on the Stanborough Press', *Messenger*, 27 July 1979, pp. 9, 10
³Milton Hook, 'Wilcox, Milton Charles (1853-1935)', ESDA 'The original name was The International Tract & Missionary Society. In 1919, it was renamed The Stanborough Press Ltd. (David Marshall, 'Stanborough Press: 120 years of service', *Messenger*, 15 August 2014, p. 1)



Dealing with loneliness: a social perspective

by Pauline Oxley

'I am so lonely . . . loneliness is killing me.' How often have you heard those words from individuals longing for the company of those who could fill the loneliness gap?

Within our innermost hidden desires there is a need for love, acceptance, and social interaction with others



Knowing that we are created as social beings with the capacity to form good and healthy relationships, the question may be asked as to why there are so many people in the world who are dying for want of others to bring companionship and wholeness into their lives?

A Community Life survey conducted by the Government during 2020 and 2021 revealed that three million people in the United Kingdom alone reported feeling lonely either all the time or often.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, BBC News reported that what they termed as 'lockdown loneliness' had reached record levels (Coughlan, 2020). This in turn led to poor social skills and introversion (Cherry, 2023).

What is loneliness?

By definition, loneliness is considered to be a state of sadness caused by the lack of social linking with friends or company. It is referred to as a feeling of wanting healthy associations with others, and as a lack of communication and fulfilment within us. It may exist on an emotional, social and existential level that is felt even though you may be in a crowd of people (Barcella, 2019).

Impact of loneliness

The impact of loneliness has far-reaching implications and can be

quite devastating and debilitating, because it causes a negative outlook on life. It contributes in some way to lack of acceptance and equality in many social circles. The inclination becomes one of self-isolation through fear, which in turn can create a vicious circle that leads to feelings of aloneness.

One of the first steps in confronting the impact of loneliness is the ability to recognise underlying causes. Doing so can influence our mental outlook. It can propel us to seek out those we can talk to and share our experience of being lonely and exchange coping strategies to enhance relationships.

In addition to mental health risks such as depression and anxiety, a recent report by BMC Public Health revealed that individuals suffering from loneliness are at a higher risk of developing physical issues such as cardiovascular disease and mortality (Allen, 2022).

Causes of loneliness

The causes of loneliness are numerous. Among some factors can be:

- Living in a different location to family or friends
 - Living alone as a single parent
 - Loss of a loved one through death, separation, or divorce
 - Living away from home for the first time at university or school
- Dr Romeo Vitell, a Canadian psychologist, referred to the

challenges experienced by those who lose a partner and the resultant grief and loneliness. He states that it 'also represents perhaps the greatest challenge for seniors dealing with the loss of a spouse, making it particularly hard to move on with their lives afterwards' (Vitell, 2015).

These factors require methods to resolve and remedy the situation that lonely people experience. Without support, encouragement and motivation from external sources, the varying reasons for loneliness lead to isolation and accompanying melancholy.

Loneliness vs solitude

'Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed' (Mark 1:35, NKJV).

There is a difference between loneliness and solitude, which is considered to be a choice to be on our own, and fully accepting the expression of self-awareness (Griffiths, 2017). This difference between the two may be influenced in different ways. The decision to voluntarily live in solitude is that the option is taken to maintain absolute privacy of your life in seclusion for personal reflection.

Great examples of solitude worth mentioning (as opposed to loneliness) are when our Lord Jesus Christ often withdrew from the pressure of the crowds for solitude

while connecting in prayer with His Heavenly Father. Jesus was alone but never lonely. He also spent forty days and forty nights in the wilderness during His temptation by the devil (Matthew 4:1-11).

Adam experienced aloneness before God created Eve, when God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone' (Genesis 2:18, NKJV). Jesus fashioned the need for social interaction that fulfils our sense of purpose for which we were created; at the same time, He identifies with the need to come apart for peace and quiet solitude in His presence.

The importance of separateness for prayer and praise can be a solution for times of aloneness and the need for a peaceful and renewed spirit of thanksgiving, for 'in quietness and confidence shall be your strength' (Isaiah 30:15, NKJV).

Overcoming loneliness

The deep underlying need for love and affection is inherent in all of us. Maslow, the great psychologist, referred to the levels of needs we have, in which love is central. Within our innermost hidden desires there is a need for love, acceptance, and social interaction with others (Maslow, 1998). Any lack of the fulfilment of this need can produce the experience of loneliness and the quest for meaningful friendships and companionship.

One suggested way of overcoming loneliness may be the courage to conquer the fear of meeting other people. Proverbs 18:24 indicates that the secret to gaining friends is to develop a friendly disposition. Using hidden skills and abilities can provide therapeutic avenues that enrich your life. Being comfortable with who you are can also be

beneficial, with the avoidance of comparing yourself with others.

The determination to develop a single purpose and a focused view of being alone can act as an antidote. Along the trajectory of life, with its many twists and turns, loneliness can present different challenges for different people.

In his book, *The Road Less Travelled*, Dr Scott Peck outlined some of the difficulties of dealing with the loneliness struggle. According to Dr Peck, dealing with loneliness can cause emotional spin-offs like frustration, guilt, anger, fear, or anguish. Therefore, prayer and praise, along with gratitude, can be a positive solution in overcoming life's struggles (James 5:13).

The role of organisations

'Individuals and families, schools and workplaces, healthcare and public health systems, technology companies, governments, faith organisations, and communities' must cooperate in effecting change (Murthy, 2023) by meeting the needs of lonely people who may be on the fringes of society due to loneliness.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church promotes initiatives in dealing with loneliness through prayer groups, video calls, social dates, giving a gift and simply driving by to say hello (Lale, 2020). Helping others pertains to Paul's teaching to 'look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others' (Philippians 2:4, KJV).

Loneliness has become a social dilemma, irrespective of age, cultural differences, gender or person/s with a natural loner personality. By strengthening relationships in the community, social connections can

be rebuilt in order to effectively engage in 'healthier and happier lives' for all (Murthy, 2023).

Supportive efforts make a difference towards total inclusivity for those whose abyss of loneliness is killing them.

There is a Christian mandate in reaching out to others: *'Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world'* (James 1:27, NKJV).

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Women and the church – a closer look

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,
BUC Director for Health, Adventist Community Services & Women's Ministries

Over the centuries, the role of women has been challenged and debated, including at General Conference sessions.¹ The British Union Conference (BUC) Women's Ministries Department seeks to affirm the value of women and their inclusion in all aspects of church life, and is currently developing resources and welcoming publications to enable them to thrive. One such book is *Justice for Women* by Dr Jude Jeanville. In an interview, Dr Jeanville presents the issues that need to be addressed on gender disparities, and solutions to remedy them:

SPM: Dr Jeanville, you have undertaken extensive research into historical and current perspectives on issues pertaining to women and the church. I was intrigued by the title of your book, *Justice for Women*. What led you to publish this?

JJ: My discovery that the truth about women in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy is not being taught or practised led me on this journey. Consequently, I developed a methodology to unlock the interpretation of the controversial sayings about women in the Bible that positively addresses how women should be seen and treated. I want to empower millions of voices to join in the cry to end the pandemic of misogyny, patriarchy, and gender-based discrimination against women, especially in religious institutions.

The title is indicative of the fact that injustices exist in our perspectives, policies and practices regarding women.

SPM: You mention Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy as a foundation for your writing. Please share some examples of this.

JJ: In Genesis, gender was on God's

agenda from the beginning. Hence God created man and woman, male and female, in His image. The image of God comprises love, oneness and equality. Therefore, Genesis postulates a theology of woman that fosters equality. . . . It also states that both Adam and Eve were given dominion over the earth, and not domination over one another.

On the question of whether women should lead or exercise authority, Judges confirms that women do lead and exercise authority, as in the case of Deborah, who was both a prophetess and a judge in Israel. There are other prophetesses in the Bible as well.

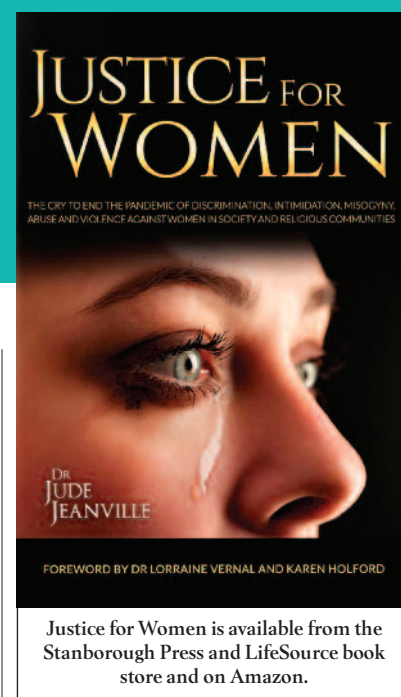
Joel 2:28 expressly declares, 'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy' (KJV). There is no differentiation in regard to gender.

Ellen G. White said, 'The tithe should go to those who labour in word and doctrine, be they men or women.' Women who do such labour, especially full-time, are to be paid fairly from the tithe. She added, 'Seventh-day Adventists are not in any way to belittle woman's work' (*Evangelism*, vol. 5, p. 492).

SPM: What are some of the themes in your book that arose from your previous research?

JJ: The findings from my doctoral research on gender inclusiveness in the church are incredibly stunning and irrefutable. Inequalities between men and women at home, at work, in society at large, and especially in religious organisations, have been unsuccessfully challenged for well over 2,000 years.

Daily, the media report gender-based crimes against women and girls in the home, workplace, religious organisations and society, greatly influenced by a misinterpretation of



the Scriptures. My book arms readers with the tools to refute traditionally held arguments used to substantiate misogyny, patriarchy, male privilege, violence, and systemic discrimination against women, and frees women from the scourge of inequalities they experience for being female.

SPM: What would you say to readers of your publication?

JJ: Join me and the millions of women and men who are taking a stand to end patriarchy and halt the rise of misogyny by giving women back their God-ordained value, visibility, voice and vocational opportunities.

SPM: What closing message would you like to leave with our church?

JJ: Be consistent and inclusive; women's gifts should equally make room for them, just as for their male counterparts. The church does not have a theological basis to limit women. Church policies should be in harmony with Scripture, not culture.

The book Justice for Women has been endorsed by the Women's Ministries departments of the Trans-European Division, the British Union Conference, and the South England and North England Conferences.

¹<https://www.adventist.org/official-statements/womens-issues/>

A life that made a difference

by Marica Mirilov

Deep down, every Christian desires a life that amounts to something – a life that makes a difference. The life of Mereani Tepola (Pola) Bulanauca (48) – a Fijian registered nurse; the wife of a British soldier, Emani; mother to Maloni, Maraia and Jack – although cut short on 1 September 2023 – was a life that made a difference.

Emani, Pola's husband of 25 years, in his last tribute at her funeral in Colerne, near Bath, on 3 October 2023, stated, 'With Pola, there was no compromise when it came to order of priority: God was always in the first place.' On his last two-year term post abroad from the Aldershot military base to the Akrotiri British base in Cyprus, he had an idea of enjoying life with his wife on a beautiful, sunny tourist island. Pola, however, had a better plan.

Pola's deepest desire was to see her husband and their three children as part of the Kingdom of God. As soon as the two of them arrived in Cyprus, she made contact with a small Seventh-day Adventist church community in Limassol. In no time, both got fully involved in the life and mission of the church. Emani not only immersed himself in the study of the Word of God, but also got immersed in the baptismal water of the calm Mediterranean Sea on 4 June 2022. This was the pinnacle of Pola's happiness.

Pola never saw 'serving' as a Christian duty, but rather as the state of a grateful, loving heart that had learnt to heed Jesus' commands: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. . . . Love your neighbour as yourself' (Mark 12:30, 31, NIV).

The Limassol church family will remember Pola being actively involved in church life as an eager



Sabbath School teacher, Women's Ministries supporter, and ADRA charity volunteer in donations and fundraising. Together with her husband, Pola was trained and invested as a Pathfinder Master Guide at the TED/NAD Master Guide Camp in Iceland on 25 June 2022. Pola found a special joy in supporting Newbold College of Higher Education's One Year in Mission and Service (OYiMS) young missionaries to Cyprus. Ethan, Victoria, Jeni, Georgina, Jade, Mirella and Steven made it to Pola's funeral, and their presence, as well as the presence of the Principal of Newbold College, Dr Stephen Currow, and his wife, Narisa, spoke volumes.

Pola, as Mary, who anointed the feet of Jesus, 'did what she could' (Mark 14:8, NIV). She was always ready to cook for and with the young missionaries, who were the age of her children. She shared her best recipes, and no one could beat her Lamington cakes. She washed their clothes, drove them around Cyprus, took them to the hospital when needed, and listened to their heartaches. Pola was the first one to support their missionary programmes, including the School of English. Pola even went out of her comfort zone: she did street acting

during the outreach programmes.

Before their repatriation to England in June this year, Emani and Pola were among the main organisers of the 'Retracing the apostle Paul and Barnabas's missionary journey through Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12)' tour, as a part of the 'Europe for Christ' initiative. Pola faithfully and tirelessly took care of the walkers on a 110-mile journey as a safety car driver and walked some parts of the journey from 18 to 27 May 2023. The words of the apostle Paul, in whose steps she walked, are true for Pola: 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith' (2 Timothy 4:7, NIV).

Pola's funeral was her last mission outreach. The strong and vibrant Seventh-day Adventist Fijian community has been supportive of Sister Pola's family. They prepared 150 gift bags for funeral attendees, with *Steps to Christ* books, *Focus* magazines, Adventist Discovery Centre free courses pamphlets, and bookmarks with Pola's favourite verse and the repentant sinner's prayer. There, from the ashes of loss and pain, new commitments were made. Emani and several of Pola's close friends and relatives want to lift the banner of faith high, just as she did. What an inspiration to live a life that makes a difference!



Balancing faith and fitness: a holistic journey in the Adventist community

by Hezron Ottey

Within the dynamic landscape of the Adventist Church, a deep bond emerges, intertwining spiritual devotion with physical vitality. Faith and fitness converge, shaping a holistic well-being ethos at the core of the Adventist movement. This synergy is not coincidental; it is grounded in fundamental church teachings.

Embedded within the core tenets of Adventist beliefs, the health message serves as a guiding light, illuminating the path towards holistic well-being. It encompasses not only spiritual fortitude, but also physical vitality, recognising the intricate link between faith and fitness. However, my research within the Adventist churches in the UK has unveiled a concerning trend. While the health message promotes healthier lifestyles, there has been a notable lack of emphasis on physical activity (PA) in health promotion within the church. This is a critical revelation, given the World Health Organisation's identification of physical inactivity as a leading contributor to increased mortality worldwide due to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. NCDs pose a significant threat to both the global and Adventist communities, impacting longevity and overall well-being.

The health message extends beyond one dimension, aligning our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, promoting a holistic approach

to health. My study underscores the importance of bridging the gap between faith and fitness, recognising that our spiritual commitment should be a driving force behind our commitment to PA. The Adventist Church, with its rich faith composition, provides an ideal platform to promote healthier lifestyles. As stewards of our bodies, we are entrusted with their care and upkeep. Neglecting regular PA undermines this sacred trust. By refocusing on PA within the health message, we can address the issue of physical inactivity, contribute to the prevention of NCDs, and ultimately fulfil our mission of living abundant and healthy lives in harmony with our spiritual beliefs.

Within many faith organisations, the introduction of faith-based PA intervention programmes aimed at enhancing PA among members marks a pivotal step towards achieving holistic well-being. Researchers have effectively used innovative PA intervention programmes such as Faith and Nutrition (FAN), Body and Soul, Share 'N' Praise, Faith on the Move, and Faithfully Fit Forever (FFF) to inspire and engage congregants in regular PA. These programmes not only foster a deeper connection between faith and fitness, but also serve as powerful tools to elevate physical well-being among church members. This harmonious alignment enriches our spiritual journey and empowers us to cherish our bodies as divine gifts, ultimately guiding us towards a healthier future.

However, the findings of my study suggest that integration of our Adventist beliefs with PA or exercise

is more complicated than one might have perceived; this is supported in part by the divergence of views relating to Adventist identity and association with PA. So, while the study showed there is a general acceptance that PA is part of the health message, the challenge of a unified understanding of the association between church identity and PA suggests that what may be explicit may not necessarily be implicit.

In the rich fabric of Adventist faith and fitness, a fulfilling journey awaits. Active participation in a PA or exercise programme can enrich your spiritual and physical well-being, bringing you closer to the divine gifts of health and vitality. As you embark on this path, remember that you're not alone; you are part of a community united by faith and a commitment to wholesome living. The fusion of faith and fitness isn't just about exercise: it's a holistic approach to honouring God through the stewardship of your body. Embrace this opportunity, and let the harmony of faith and fitness inspire you to lead a life that glorifies God in body and spirit.

In the Adventist faith, the fusion of health and spirituality serves a divine purpose. Our bodies, cherished as temples of the Holy Spirit, deserve our devoted care. Balancing faith and fitness is not just a choice: it is a sacred calling. Let our commitment to physical well-being stand as a testament of our reverence to God for the gift of life. As we harmonise faith and fitness, we embark on a journey of wholeness, nurturing our spiritual devotion while strengthening our earthly vessels.

Assessing well-being

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

BUC Director for Health, Adventist Community Services & Women's Ministries

A snapshot of individuals' health in the UK was captured in the 2022 report from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Their report, titled 'UK Health Indicators: 2019 to 2020',¹ revealed data results from the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) that 16,269 people from 12,344 households had undertaken (a 41.5% response rate). Here are some key findings:

- Almost half of the UK population (45.7% of men and 50.1% of women) reported having a long-standing health problem.
- More women (22.3%) reported being limited (but not severely) in activities because of a health problem in the last six months than men (18.5%).
- The four most common chronic conditions in the UK for men and women were allergy, high blood pressure, low back disorder and depression.
- Allergy was the most common reported chronic health condition in both men and women (30.4% and 36.0% respectively).
- Around 4 in 10 men (39.7%) and women (43.9%) had a healthy body mass index (BMI) score, ranging between 18.5 and 24.9; however, a greater proportion of men (37.9%) were overweight than women (29.3%), based on a BMI score ranging between 25 and 29.9.
- The majority of the UK population (75.3% of men and 75.7% of women) reported being in good or very good health.

Imagine being invited to take part in such a survey – would you identify yourself as being in good health?

How healthy are you?

Taking time to reflect on our well-being can be a revealing exercise, but also a beneficial one. Undertaking relevant health surveys or assessment tools that calibrate responses and provide a health analysis is useful, as it gives a snapshot of our current status, highlights areas of potential concern, and gives opportunity to address problem areas and seek appropriate help.

The Well-Being Index, in their article titled 'The Importance of Routinely Assessing Well-Being',² make the following statement: 'Most people go to the doctor when they're sick or get physicals once a year, but that only covers physical health. Overall well-being includes your mental and emotional health, which are just as important. A well-being assessment gives you the opportunity to get a picture of your complete health. Here are five reasons why you should be going through a self-evaluation process on a regular basis.' The Well-Being Index team then list the following benefits of regular health assessments:

- Reduce the risk of professional burnout.
- Plan health-improving changes.
- Manage mental and emotional health.
- Reduce the risk of getting sick.
- Track well-being trends over time.

Assessing your well-being

So, how do you feel about undertaking a well-being survey via an assessment tool? Here are a few to get you started:



- St John Ambulance well-being assessment tool: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/wellbeingassessmenttool>
- NHS survey tools for self-management: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/supported-self-management/health-system-support-framework-for-supported-self-management/examples-of-survey-tools-for-use-in-supported-self-management/>
- HERO health assessment: <https://hero-health.org/blog/new-well-being-assessment-provides-a-tool-to-measure-broader-health-and-well-being-impact/>

General well-being checks

For adults aged 40-70, the NHS Health Check is a free check-up of your overall health. It can also provide information to assess whether you are at higher risk of getting certain health problems. For more information, see: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check/>.

A word from Scripture

As we journey through 2024, I echo the prayer of the apostle in 3 John 2 (NKJV), when he petitions: 'Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.'

Good health!

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlife/expectancies/bulletins/ukhealthindicators/2019to2020>
²<https://www.mywellbeingindex.org/blog/well-being-index/the-importance-of-routinely-assessing-well-being>



Drama on the high seas

by Dr Jeff Couzins

Dr Jeff Couzins and his family arrived safely back in the UK. They did, however, experience some drama in the North Sea.

You may have heard on the national news about two cargo vessels colliding in the North Sea, with one ship sinking with loss of life. I and my family were on the cruise ship *Iona*, which was in the vicinity, and it stopped to help in the search for survivors.

Early on Tuesday morning 24 October, just after 5am, while we still sleeping, the loudspeaker alarm sounded in every cabin, calling for 'Rescue Boat Crews to Muster'. It was sounded a number of times. I knew instantly what it meant – that there was someone in the water who needed rescuing. I also knew that it wasn't a passenger or crew member on the ship we were on, because the call would have been 'Man Overboard'. I suspected that the cruise ship had encountered one of the migrant boats trying to cross the channel.

Anyway, I went onto the deck and saw a number of ships and smaller boats criss-crossing the sea. Our ship, and a number of other larger vessels, were shining strong searchlights down onto the surface of the sea, searching for any survivors. The cruise ship we were on was asked by the German authorities to stay involved in the search long after other vessels had left the area, because of the medical facilities and fast speedboats on the ship. The *Iona* was stationary for over 12 hours while the search for survivors continued. A helicopter was seen landing on and taking off from the

Iona's deck several times during the rescue effort. We eventually became aware that a British cargo ship, the *Verity*, had sunk in the North Sea early on Tuesday morning.

The collision had happened some 200 yards away from the *Iona*. The *Verity* had collided with a larger ship, the Bahamian-flagged *Polesie*, off the German coast at about 5am (local time), around 22km (13 miles) south-west of Heligoland, a German archipelago which is part of the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Two sea-rescue cruisers from the German Maritime Search and Rescue Service, a German navy helicopter, and a German police boat were also used in the search efforts. Two of the seven crew members on board the *Verity* were rescued. The body of another member was found in the water. Rescue divers attempted to find signs of life in the wreck, but said they were hampered by difficult conditions. Eventually, though, German authorities called off the search for the four missing crew members of the *Verity*.

The *Verity* was on its way to the UK, carrying steel from the northern German city of Bremen to Immingham in Lincolnshire. None of the twenty-two crew on the *Polesie* were hurt. The cause of the collision is still unclear.

The *Iona* captain announced over the loudspeaker system that we had a legal and moral responsibility to stop and search for anyone who was in danger of losing their life.

The significance and irony of this was not lost on me.

We have a great commission to search for

anyone who is lost in sin. If secular organisations take seriously the call to help save someone, how much more earnestly should the church take the search for lost people, who may not only lose their lives, but also their very existence. As Jesus said in Matthew 10:28-31 (NKJV), 'Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.'

We serve a risen Saviour who gave His life for everyone – including those who perished at sea.



Safeguarding tomorrow: navigating insurance protection

by Wederly Aguiar,
BUC Treasurer

This year, one of the goals of the Treasury Department is to diversify and grow the assets we have at the BUC, while continuing to nurture and protect our existing assets.

With more than 300 properties in the BUC's portfolio (of which the Seventh-day Adventist Association Ltd is the legal owner, and the conferences and missions are beneficial owners), one of the quickest and easiest ways we can protect these assets is by ensuring that adequate insurance is in place should an unfortunate event such as a fire or flood occur.

It is important that church-owned properties be appropriately valued. This is done by using a property's **rebuilding** cost rather than the market value of the property, as the market value includes the value of the land, which is uninsurable – therefore, the church would be paying an inflated and unnecessary premium for its coverage. Appropriate insurance cover is not only a denominational working policy requirement, but is also reviewed by our auditors for compliance as they assess the financial risks of the organisation.

The implications of having inaccurate values for your

church could mean:

- If the property is under-insured and the worst should happen, the insurance pay-out may not cover the total costs of rectifying any damage.
- If the property is over-insured, then the mission/conference and its local churches would be needlessly paying too much in insurance premiums.

Our church-owned insurance company, Adventist Risk Management Inc. (ARM), recommends that this revaluation exercise should normally be completed every two-to-five years; and, in between, industry standard indexes (BCIS) are used to update the values on an annual basis to ensure that the values are as accurate as possible to take account of inflation in building supplies and labour.

Since June 2023, with authorisation from the Executive Committee, we have been working diligently to find a national provider able to carry out this exercise across the missions, and have secured a 20% 'bulk buy' discount. ARM is generously covering a third of the total cost, with the missions covering at least a third, meaning that the majority of the cost (at least two thirds) is covered, minimising the impact on local churches. The company that has been engaged to carry out this exercise has also been approved by ARM.

In addition to the building cover, ARM also covers contents and electronic equipment owned by the church. It is recommended that an annual inventory be taken of all the

contents and electronic equipment, and that the cost to replace them be duly noted so that these can be reported easily to ARM should a claim need to be made to replace the equipment in case of a loss.

ARM serves 21 million church members, 88,000 churches, 8,773 schools and 563 hospitals owned by the Adventist Church worldwide through its various insurance policies, so it has eighty years of invaluable industry experience to offer.

With extensive knowledge of the church structure and operations, ARM is able to offer specific policies that other insurance companies might not necessarily be able to provide to the church. One example of this is ARM's free money cover policy, which covers any tithe and offering that might be stolen after it has been physically collected.

While many insurance policies are in place to protect the diverse activities of the church, it is important to remember that the best way to protect the church is to mitigate any risk in the first place, and ARM offers many resources to assist with this on its website: www.adventistrisk.org.

Many of you reading this article serve on church boards, spearhead Pathfinder clubs, or engage in various facets of your church's evangelistic activities. It's crucial to bear in mind that excellence begins from the grassroots level. The more we immerse our members in the comprehensive services and operations of the church, the more effectively we can refine our processes, enhance our services, and project a positive image to the world.



PEOPLE IN ACTS

C D P H I L I P R T H E U D A S E W D R
J A M S R O S A H P I A N O I H T E O H
B S I P H S A E L I A C S A M E Y R R O
A N S A B A C O R N E L I U S C O D A S
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R S M P E S T A N A N I A S S O S P I H
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O P W E A T O N O A M A R Y P C E F A N
D P R M H F S N M C O R N E L A S T L T
A A E O U R A H I D N A I O U S I L E E
L S I M A N J O S A M O H T H O M A X P

PETER
JAMES
JOHN
ANDREW
PHILIP
THOMAS
BARTHOLOMEW
SIMON

CAIAPHAS
ALEXANDER
HEROD
ANANIAS
SAPPHIRA
BARNABAS
DORCAS
THEUDAS

RHODA
STEPHEN
ETHIOPIAN
CORNELIUS
MARY
JASON
PAUL
SILAS

Taken from *Hidden Words: Book 6*, by Helen Johnson.
To purchase your copy, follow this link:
<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/hidden-words/>

Red Lentil & Coconut Soup

I've been making this tasty recipe for years. I love red lentils as they are so easy to cook and in most countries they are a really cheap ingredient. The coconut gives it a rich (but not too rich) flavour. Serve this with some homemade bread rolls.

- 1 Heat the **oil** in a large saucepan over a medium heat and cook the **onions**, **ginger**, **garlic** and **fenugreek** (if using) until the onion is tender.
- 2 Add the **lentils**, **squash** and **coriander** into the pot.
- 3 Stir in the **water**, **coconut milk** and **tomato purée**.
- 4 Season with **curry powder**, **cayenne pepper**, **nutmeg**, **salt** and **pepper**.
- 5 Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes, or until the lentils and squash are tender.



Shopping list

Oil – 1 tbsp
Onion – 1 small, chopped
Ginger root – 1 inch of, chopped
Garlic – 1 clove, chopped
Fenugreek seeds* – pinch of
Red lentils – 1 cup (200g; 7oz), dry
Butternut squash – ½ a small one, peeled, deseeded and cubed
Coriander – ⅓ cup (40g; 1½ oz), fresh, finely chopped
Water – 2 cups (500ml; 1 pint)
Coconut milk – ¾ cup (185ml; ¼ pint and 4 tbsp)
Tomato purée – 2 tbsp
Curry powder – 1 tsp
Cayenne pepper – 1 pinch
Ground nutmeg – 1 pinch
Salt and pepper – to taste

*Please note: fenugreek seeds are not recommended during pregnancy.

This recipe is taken from the book, *Cooking with Kids*, by Kirly-Sue.
To purchase your copy, follow this link:
<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/cooking-with-kids/>



Harmony in nature: discover tranquillity and luxury at Hay's Wood Retreat, Norfolk's hidden oasis



Situated within the picturesque landscape of Norfolk, Hay's Wood Retreat beckons those seeking a harmonious blend of luxury and an escape into nature.

With a commitment to creating an atmosphere of peace and unity, this stunning nature retreat is poised to become a cherished destination for all that visit. As a holiday resort,

with its lakes, woodlands and highland cows, it offers an oasis for relaxation and connection with nature for couples, families and friends. As an event venue, with its picture-perfect backdrops, multi-conference rooms for up to 170 guests, and commercial kitchen facilities, it transforms into a blank canvas for both small- and large-scale events. So, whether you're planning a family holiday, a church retreat, or a conference, this venue's flexible spaces and dedicated staff ensure a seamless experience.

Hay's Wood Retreat's commitment to providing a peaceful haven offers an environment conducive to prayer, meditation, and spiritual rejuvenation. The quietude of the surroundings caters to those seeking a deeper connection to their faith and communion with God. Nestled within its woodlands, each of the twenty-one self-catering cabins is a private haven, allowing guests to immerse themselves in the natural beauty that surrounds them. The tranquil setting, combined with

modern facilities, ensures that every moment spent at Hay's Wood Retreat is filled with inspiration, reflection and relaxation.

Our dedicated staff are passionate about curating an experience that goes beyond a typical holiday. They are committed to helping guests reconnect not only with the earth, but also with themselves. Whether you choose to explore the walking trails, relax by the lakes, or simply unwind in the comfort of your cabin, the memories created at Hay's Wood Retreat are bound to last a lifetime.

Visitors to the park write . . .

'This is a genuine oasis of calm within lovely, peaceful countryside.'

– *TripAdvisor, May 2023*

'A break that everyone deserves.'

– *TripAdvisor, November 2023*

'I am still feeling the benefit of all that lovely fresh air and precious quality time with our family. It was pure bliss!!'

– *TripAdvisor, November 2023*

'The surroundings are an oasis of tranquillity. I felt revived, rejuvenated and inspired.'

– *TripAdvisor, September 2023*

'A feeling of remoteness and tranquillity.'

– *TripAdvisor, September 2023*

'Once again, a lovely stay at this peaceful, calming gem in the middle of some wonderful countryside. This was our second visit, and we have already booked another visit next year.'

– *TripAdvisor, September 2023*

'It was heavenly. Most gorgeous grounds. Beautiful surroundings.'

– *TripAdvisor, September 2023*

'They go the extra mile to make you comfortable.'

– *TripAdvisor, September 2023*

'The lodge was beautiful and spacious for all the family, and set in tranquil and peaceful surroundings.'

– *TripAdvisor, August 2023*

If you would like to book your stay or event, or find out more about this Norfolk oasis, please call the Hay's Wood Retreat team on 01553 606000, or email bookings@hayswoodretreat.com.

Step into nature while sleeping in luxury.

'Let your works shine' ZUSDAF Dorcas retreat 2023, Kents Hill Conference Centre, Milton Keynes, 20-22 October

Another very well-attended, Spirit-filled, and spiritually uplifting ZUSDAF Dorcas retreat.



For the second year running, ZUSDAF Dorcas, the women's arm of ZUSDAF (Zimbabwe UK Seventh-day Adventist Fellowship), held its annual retreat from 20 to 22 October this year. This year's retreat was attended by slightly more than 400 delegates.

This Spirit-filled event, held under the theme 'Let your works shine', was held at the Kents Hill Conference Centre, and Zimbabwean women came from all corners of the UK, as well as fellow Adventist women from Uganda, Jamaica, the Republic of Ireland, Zambia and Malawi, with the youthful Zimbabwe-born preacher, Sister Melissa Thandeka Nyoni, all the way from Canada, as the guest speaker, while Sister Sophia Munangati led the Morning Manna sessions.

To fulfil the Dorcas mission of community service, on the Sabbath afternoon, the Dorcas ladies teamed up with five groups of worshippers from Milton Keynes in a door-to-door distribution of literature. About 1,000 copies of *Steps to Christ*, *The Power of Hope and Health and Wellness* were distributed. Three people were willing to have their details forwarded to the local churches for follow-up with prayers and pastoral visits.

ZUSDAF Dorcas are grateful to the former SEC PM Director, Pastor Michael Mbui; the ZUSDAF Chaplain, Pastor N. J. Ndlovu; Pastor Pavle Trajkovski (Milton Keynes Central); Pastor Royston Smith (current SEC PM Director); and the sisters, Doreen Adams (Milton Keynes Main Church) and O. Pfende (West Bletchley Community Church), who all helped with resourcing

and coordinating the Sabbath afternoon Community Service programme.

What is ZUSDAF?

ZUSDAF (Zimbabwe UK Seventh-day Adventist Fellowship) comprises any Adventist persons of Zimbabwean descent residing in the United Kingdom. Its membership is drawn from the different churches across the British Isles. Now and again, they meet to motivate each other on Christian love; support Zimbabwe-based projects; celebrate their cultural identity; and continue integration in both the British Union Conference churches and British society. However, the underlying principle for both the young and old in ZUSDAF and its departments is sharing God's love to all. Such outreach is particularly inspired by familiar traditional praise and worship, as well as preaching, when opportunities avail to meet at beloved Zimbabwe days of fellowship, popularly known as 'Zimdays'.

What is Dorcas about in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

Encouraged by the legacy of the Adventist Dorcas Society, now incorporated in Community Services, ZUSDAF's Women's Ministries, Dorcas, aims to encourage women within and without the church to join arms in 'brightening the corners' wherever they may be, by meeting the physical and spiritual needs of less privileged people in all the corners of the British Isles.

L.M. CHARIDZA

Adventists honoured in IRIE Mind award ceremony

Women of distinction were honoured for services to the community in a special award ceremony by mental health charity IRIE Mind at IRIE Mind headquarters in Hackney on Thursday 12 October 2023, among whom were six Adventists.

Launched in October 2019, IRIE Mind is a mental health initiative providing community-based solutions in the Hackney area as well as within the City of London. IRIE stands for Inclusion, Respect, Integration and Empowerment. IRIE Mind Director, Nichola Lauder, introduced each of the community leaders, with the awards presented by Hackney Councillor Carole Williams, then Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources, Equalities and *Windrush*.

Beautine Wester received an award for services the E5 Baby Bank at Clapton SDA Church provided to young families in need during the pandemic and beyond.

Brenda Nelson and Eileen Philip, members of Hackney SDA Church, had attended the same school, both had two sons, worked in the same hospital, both got baptised at the Hackney SDA Church, and then worked together on a lifesaving programme called **ABWA: A Better Way Ahead**, which meets the needs of others experiencing mental ill health. In 2002, Eileen received an invitation to the Houses of Parliament in Westminster by Oona King MP for her contribution, with some of its key recommendations for change included in government policies.

Jacqueline Paton, a member of Stoke Newington SDA Church, received an award for her community work for IRIE Mind, and also accepted an award on behalf of Eileen Lenton, who created the Stoke Newington SDA Community Open Door Drop-In Centre.

Hackney SDA Community Ministries Leader, Vilma Williams, received an award for her many years of dedication and service to meeting local needs through the Hackney SDA Church Foodbank and a community outreach and feeding programme for the homeless.

Councillor Carole Williams, who also received an award for her service, said: 'I was truly honoured to join



Councillor Carole Williams and Nichola Lauder



Councillor Carole Williams with Jacqueline Paton

IRIE Mind's "Saluting Our Sisters of Excellence Awards" to celebrate the outstanding contributions of talented, compassionate, and dedicated women to our community.'

Nichola Lauder, awarded last year by the British Union Conference Community Services Department and the charity One Vision for services to the community, said with her colleague, Collette Alleyne, 'It was our ultimate privilege to "Salute Our Sisters", unsung heroines of the Hackney community.'

DARELL J. PHILIP, AREA 6C COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

West Bletchley SDA Community Armistice Day and Pathfinder investiture

On a crisp, bright Sabbath morning on 11 November, the Pathfinder Drum Corps for Area 5 were in attendance for the Armistice military parade in the district of Milton Keynes.

'Do you know that group of young people?' I was asked by a nearby stranger, when I was able to take up a brief opportunity to share some information about our Pathfinder club in West Bletchley. The Drum Corps were so appreciated that the organiser of the parade extended an invitation to attend again next year.

It was also the Pathfinder investiture at West Bletchley SDA Community Church that afternoon; and, as a result of the Drum Corps' involvement in the parade that morning, the organiser was eager to attend and warmly welcomed to this ceremony.

In attendance at both events were the BUC Pathfinder Director and his wife, Kevin and Margaret Johns. Pastor Johns invested all seven of the club members, making special mention in his closing remarks of the currently unique makeup of an all-boy club. When there is so much in the media about males being drawn into street crime, it is a God-given blessing to have these young men in Christian service.

SYLVONIE NOEL, COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT, WEST BLETCHLEY SDA COMMUNITY CHURCH



Abundant blessings at Holloway

Sabbath 21 October 2023 made baby blessing history at Holloway SDA Church as Pastor Kwesi Moore performed baby dedication services for seven children!

Interestingly, most of the parents who brought their children to the Lord are not currently members of the Adventist Church. However, they valued the deep spiritual significance of the service.

The atmosphere in the sanctuary was joyful, vibrant and celebratory yet reverent as each child was presented to God. The service was initiated by a similar service that occurred a few weeks prior. Word spread, and family members were impressed that they should also bring their

children (some of whom were now grown, walking and speaking) to be blessed.

The elders assisted with the laying on of hands and holding up the precious lives before the Lord. The church was filled with family and friends who came to witness this notable life event. Following the service, gifts were shared, and parents left the platform with tangible evidence of the love they'd received.

We should never underestimate the evangelistic impact of an intentional, Holy Spirit-filled baby dedication. God is willing to use all who are willing to be used by Him.

ANNELL SMITH

Tottenham Lighthouse participates in Haringey's Remembrance Sunday service

On Sunday 12 November Tottenham Lighthouse Church and other organisations joined Haringey Council for the annual Remembrance Sunday service at the West Green War Memorial, located in the park in front of the church.

With the Pathfinders and the Haringey Sea Cadets in position, the service started with a moment's silence. Later, the Deputy Mayor, accompanied by Councillor Barbara Blake, greeted and inspected them.

Before the service ended, Pastor Dr Jude Jeanville

presented Councillor Blake with a beautifully packaged copy of his book, *Justice for Women*. There was loud applause when Dr Jeanville stated that Councillor Blake was listed on page 18 as one of the 215 women of influence in our lifetime. Councillor Blake was acknowledged as having served the community with great distinction over many years.

Since 2021, Haringey Council has invited Tottenham Lighthouse to be involved in its Remembrance Sunday service. This year we participated in the service: Junior Soyam, Communication leader, provided technical expertise to ensure that voices could be heard above the noise of the passing traffic, and Sophia Charles

(Community Services) and Maureen Pollock (Personal Ministries) with their teams prepared and served post-service refreshments in the church.

Earlier in the day, in the London Borough of Hackney, Barry Morris, our Sabbath School Superintendent, was chosen by the Conservative Party to lay two wreaths at the Stoke Newington Town Hall and at the Cenotaph at St John at Hackney Church.

As we pay homage to the men and women who died in the two world wars and later conflicts, let us never forget the supreme sacrifice made by Jesus Christ to save us from our sins: 'But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us' (Romans 5:8, NKJV).

MAXINE DONOVAN



Pastor Jude with some of the civic dignitaries



Pathfinders with Deputy Mayor

**These summaries were prepared with assistance from Darell J. Philip.*

Hope for London: LAAC Day of Fellowship

Hundreds poured into the Lighthouse Theatre in Camberwell for the London Area Advisory Council (LAAC) Day of Fellowship on Sabbath 15 July 2023, the first gathering in four years. The LAAC Chair, Pastor Anthony Opoku-Mensah, welcomed the Trans-European Field Secretary, Pastor Ian Sweeney; the BUC President, Pastor Eglan Brooks; and the then SEC President, Pastor Emmanuel Osei, all of whom addressed the theme of hope for London in their greetings. The Sabbath School's powerfully emotive play – *From Hardship to Faith*, directed by award-winning playwright Mark Grey – depicted the power of prayer in reuniting refugee siblings on the brink of losing hope of a right to stay in the UK. In his hope-filled message, guest speaker Dr Abraham Jules, a Trinidadian currently serving as President of the Northeastern Conference in New York, expounded on Revelation 21:1-6, telling of a God who 'has a tissue for every issue' and a crown of glory for all who remain faithful to Him.

DARELL J. PHILIP

Bristol Central Adventurers and Pathfinders sharing and caring at health event

In partnership with East Trees Surgery, The Bristol Central Community Health Department took part in a community health day held on Sabbath 22 July. Not even the rain could stop the Adventurers and Pathfinders, under the supervision of the Children's Ministries leader, Kim Garnet-Smith, from enthusiastically chopping, potting and serving food and fruit pots to attendees. Vicky Bowler, a doctor at the surgery, sang the children's praises, saying: 'The patients were appreciative of how cheerful, helpful and sweet they were,' while one of the children admitted that it felt good to 'demonstrate an act of kindness in sharing and caring for others'.

MARY PHILIP, BRISTOL CENTRAL COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY HEALTH MINISTRIES

Sydenham ordains deacons

Two long-serving deacons, Theo Barrett and Charles Elliott, were ordained to service in a solemn and dignified ceremony at Sydenham Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sabbath 14 October 2023. Pastor Simeon Esson welcomed church and



family members, friends and well-wishers. First Elder Carlisle Clarke joined Pastor Esson in giving a brief account of the life and service of each ordinand as they were each presented, and Pastor Esson charged them to be prayerful, vigilant, responsible and humble before offering the prayer of consecration with the laying-on of hands. May God continue to bless their ministry to the Master and to others.

COMMUNICATION TEAM

Wimbledon empowers breast cancer awareness

On 28 October 2023 Wimbledon

International Seventh-day Adventist Church Health Ministries hosted a breast cancer awareness event featuring a Breast Cancer Now representative, who provided crucial

information on breast health. The event raised £130 through donations towards ribbons and cakes. The event highlighted the church's collective strength in making a tangible impact on the ongoing battle against this disease.

NAMOOYA MUZYAMBA AND CZARINA AMOR NERCUA



'Amazing Love!' empowerment campaign

From Sunday 10 to Sabbath 30 September 2023, Stratford & Rainham Seventh-day Adventist Churches held a week of revival followed by an empowerment campaign series with international evangelist Pastor Jumoul Sancho from Guyana. Church members became 'Android Apostles', 'Electronic Evangelists' and 'Digital Disciples' by utilising social media to 'become fishers of men', which resulted in family and friends from as far afield as Belize and Guyana logging on. Committed Pathfinders attended each evening after school to welcome members and visitors. We praise God for their service!

Pastor Sancho took members and visitors (online and in the sanctuary) through themes such as 'From Trauma to Triumph', 'Positioning Yourself for Prosperity', 'From Bitter to Better', and 'Positive Parenting in a Problematic World'. Four precious souls were baptised – praise God!

MONIQUE FRANCOIS, COMMUNICATIONS, STRATFORD CHURCH



Area 5 pastor appreciation dinner

In October, the Area 5 pastoral team enjoyed a formal dinner full of fun and fellowship at the University of Birmingham, hosted by Dr Patrick Herbert – his last event as Area 5 Ministerial Field Secretary before becoming NEC Personal Ministries Director. The evening provided an opportunity to officially appreciate the efforts of the NEC workers of Area 5 over the past year.

After being welcomed with humour, the group enjoyed an icebreaker activity, shared a meal and recounted fond memories. Words of poetry on ministry, pastor's wives and Area 5 pastors were shared by Jemima Nambo, which lightened the mood. The attendees were also blessed by musical items shared by a local male quartet – *Imani* (translated as 'faith' from Swahili). Pastor Herbert and his wife, Ann-Marie, concluded the evening by presenting tokens of appreciation to each pastoral couple.

JEMIMA NAMBO



Tottenham Lighthouse:

A day of prayer & mission

On Sunday 22 October 2023 the Tottenham Lighthouse Prayer Ministries & Family Life Departments held a prayer breakfast before an event organised by the Community Services Department on the Green (the local park facing the church). With support from our sister churches, Barnet and Wood Green, we were blessed with warm Christian fellowship, singing, and a stirring message on the power of prayer by Sister Sindi Mabena before prayers, testimonies and an enjoyable fellowship breakfast.

Then, with the sun shining, children and parents flocked to the park to enjoy the food, bouncy castle, face painting, free slush puppies, popcorn and spiritual books. People could not believe that everything was free. Sister Lawanda, a member of the Personal Ministries team, reported that many took the free books on offer, with one

young lady also signing up for Bible studies. It was a very successful day as we witnessed and mingled with our community.

MAXINE DONOVAN, COMMUNICATIONS & PRAYER MINISTRIES



Culture counts

Colourful costumes filled Salford Central SDA Church on 28 October to mark Cultural Awareness Day, planned to celebrate the cultural diversity of church members and visitors. The children, holding flags while dressed in traditional clothes, took part in praise and worship. Guest speaker, Pastor Steve Palmer, encouraged worshippers to focus on what unites them and to dispense with racial stereotypes, instead embracing each other's rich cultural backgrounds.

Following an international potluck lunch, Pastor Palmer spoke on 'Cultural Intelligence', discussing race, racism and positive cultural interactions as well as the historical legacy of the *Windrush* generation. It was a very positive, uplifting and pleasant day, and the church looks forward to similar events in the future.

MELANIE STEWART, SALFORD CENTRAL SDA CHURCH



Watford Town Church investiture

Watford Town Church saw the investiture of six Pathfinders, with six also receiving awards and honours, on Sabbath 21 October 2023. Area Coordinators Yetunde Bright and Douglas Davis were joined by the guest speaker and SEC Pathfinders Director, Pastor Clifford Herman.

Herman recalled wondering when he would ever use a sheepshank, sheet bend or bowline knot, before encouraging children and parents to keep investing in the Pathfinder programme, which offers participants skills for life.

The club leader, Caroline Kamara, thanked all who participated, especially club teachers, and encouraged parents to continue supporting the club, knowing that their young participants will eventually become future leaders. We said goodbye to one adopted Pathfinder (Leila Jones) following a two-year stint with us as she returned to her parent club. We pray that she continues to use her gifts for Jesus.

KARL JOHNSON, COMMUNICATIONS, WATFORD TOWN CHURCH



THE NEWBOLDIAN 2023 OUT NOW!

Newbold College of Higher Education launches inspiring new edition of *The Newboldian* magazine

Newbold has launched the digital edition of *The Newboldian* magazine, a testament to the college's commitment to shaping tomorrow's Seventh-day Adventist leaders through ministry, mission, and service. You are invited to explore the profound impact of God's call on our lives, emphasising Newbold's dedication to serving the church and building vibrant communities of faith. Within these pages, discover narratives that encapsulate the essence of Newbold's mission – equipping individuals for leadership roles that align with Seventh-day Adventist principles. The magazine will reflect the college's dedication to nurturing leaders who

are not only academically proficient, but also deeply rooted in a sense of purpose. Join us in celebrating the launch of this enriching issue, which showcases unwavering dedication to excellence and the spiritual development of our community. *The Newboldian* magazine's editorial team hope that this edition will stand as a testament to our collective journey towards a brighter, purpose-driven future – guided by God's teachings. The digital copy can be found on the Newbold College website at: newbold.ac.uk/the-newboldian-magazine-2023/. Thank you for your support through all the years.

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For more information, please contact our office on 01727 865773. Applicants, email your CV to rfiddis@adventistrisk.org by **Friday 16 February 2024**.



LifeSource book sales

DATE	VENUE
28 Jan	Scottish Mission Training Day, Crieff
24 Feb	Manchester Southern Asia
19-24 Mar	EGW Symposium, Newbold College
24 Mar	Peckham

TIME

After sunset
10am-2pm

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Wrexham baptism

'It feels like we're coming to a wedding!' remarked one person upon arrival at the Rhyl church on Sabbath 2 September. There was a palpable air of excitement as members and visitors from the three North Wales churches (Llandudno Junction, Rhyl and Wrexham) came together to celebrate the baptism of Graham and Jayne Jones from Wrexham.

Just over a year ago, Graham came under strong conviction that he should read the Bible. He had not been brought up in a religious home, although his grandfather was a Methodist. Jayne came from a Catholic background, but was not particularly interested in reading the Bible. However, she got one for Graham; and, as he read, he shared what he was learning as they went on their regular walks.

Realising that the Bible teaches that Saturday is the Sabbath, they searched for a church that kept the Sabbath and showed up at Wrexham Church, just one week after the church reopened. They were warmly received by the handful of members in Wrexham, who gave them regular Bible studies on Sabbath afternoons, in addition to the studies they later received from Pastor David Mano.

Jayne had specifically asked to be baptised on 2 September, as it was her birthday. She shared how, looking back, she realised that God had been with her as she faced some challenges with her health.

Their young adult children were all present to witness the baptism of their parents. One of their daughters is already receiving Bible studies in the town where she lives, and one of the sons has also expressed an interest in visiting the church, after finding the members very friendly.

The hot, sunny weather gave everyone the opportunity to enjoy a time of fellowship and good food in the grounds of the Rhyl church as they celebrated this joyous occasion.

PAULINE ALLCOCK



Nine SEC pastors baptise 309 during 'City-to-City Evangelistic Campaigns' in Kenya

On 4 October 2023, Pastors Laszlo Liebhardt, Anthony Opoku-Mensah, Fergus Owusu-Boateng, Vili Costescu, Samuel Ngui, Sampson Aboagye, Emmanuel Asamoah and Kwadwo Kwarteng-Ampofo from the British Isles, led by Dr Hezron Otieno Adingo, a former Ministerial Association director of the South England Conference, were despatched to the major cities and towns within the West-Kenya Union Conference with a message from God, preaching on the theme, 'The King is coming'. Despite adverse weather, they presented the message to waiting audiences in Homabay, Kehancha, Kisumu, Eldoret, Kapsabet, Namgoi, Kitale, Bungoma and Rongo. Choirs sang and thousands of listeners trooped in every evening to partake of God's blessings.

Despite the challenges posed by torrential rain, decisions were made and lives surrendered to Jesus every evening when our pastors gave appeals. Baptisms took place each Sabbath in Lake Victoria, local rivers, streams and swimming pools. Altogether, 309 people were received into the fold of Christ, and two churches were

formed: Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Church Bungoma, and Great Hope Boateng Seventh-day Adventist Church Kitale (named after Pastor Fergus Owusu-Boateng). Dr Hezron Otieno Adingo had the privilege of praying for the Governor of Homa Bay County, Her Excellency Gladys Atieno Nyasuna Wanga, and her cabinet and county officials at the campaign's close.

Besides preaching, our ministers, overwhelmed with empathy, were involved in humanitarian activities, which saw them give a helping hand to needy people. Pastors Vili Costescu and Samuel Ngui significantly impacted lives through their acts of charity, which were well received by the locals.

In Kapsabet and Namgoi, the locals were so impressed by the ministries of Pastors Laszlo Liebhardt and Emmanuel Asamoah that the two were installed as Nandi (one of the Kenyan tribes) elders. Pastor Kwarteng-Ampofo acquired a Luo name, Otieno, in addition to his usual name as a sign of respect and acceptance.

God be praised for the great things He has done!

DR HEZRON OTIENO ADINGO

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General Conference official statement on the passing of Adventist Women's Ministries leader, Heather-Dawn Small (2 January 2024)

With heavy hearts and deep sorrow we must share the news that Heather-Dawn Small has fallen asleep in Jesus after a brief illness. She served as our world church Women's Ministries Director for over 18 years, from 2005 until her last breath. . . . Heather-Dawn had dedicated her life to serving the millions of Adventist women from almost every country on Earth. She would call them her sisters. Today we all join our sisters in deep

sorrow and eager anticipation of that glorious day when our Saviour will wake her up to eternal joy.

Please pray for her family, who will feel her irreplaceable absence more deeply. . . . Our world leader, Pastor Ted Wilson, shared these comforting words:

'Our hearts go out to the family of Heather-Dawn Small. What a tragedy that she has died. The process happened so quickly that it is difficult to grasp the situation. Heather-Dawn diligently served the world church as Women's Ministries Director for many years. She was so supportive of helping women become involved in evangelism and assisting the church in outreach and community activities. Heather-Dawn was very focused, through the Lord's guidance, in making a difference in the life of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church using the talents and dedication of the women of the church. May the Comforter come especially close to her husband, Pastor Joe Small, and the entire Small family, as well as those who are part of Women's Ministries worldwide . . . and the entire world church. We have a great hope in the soon coming of the Lord, when those in Christ who have died will rise first to meet Him in the air! We look forward to seeing Heather-Dawn at that glorious reunion with our Lord.'

Norma Kent (1945-2023) d. 4 September.

Norma was born in Hastings on 11 April 1945. Her parents brought her up to know the Lord, and she went to Newbold College to train as a Bible worker. She served in many different places, ending up in Nottingham. From there, she was assigned to work with an American evangelist who was conducting some meetings in Hull, and it was here that she met John.

John had just arrived back from camp with some young people and looked very dishevelled. However, Norma believed that God had sent her to Hull and that John was the man she would marry. After just three weeks they were engaged! The evangelist wanted to conduct their wedding six weeks later, at the end of his meetings, but Norma did not agree.

Instead, they were married a year later, on 11 December 1977, at the Adventist church in Hull, with Pastor Alan Conroy, a good friend, conducting the wedding. Shortly after this they were invited to Newbold College, where they worked for about eighteen years.

While living in Bracknell they fostered children. Their last foster child was Tony, who became very special to them, and they considered him their son. John and Norma had a heart for young people, and John became the area youth leader for ten churches. Norma was always at his side, putting on meals, sometimes for as many as 300 young people. They became active members of the Maidenhead church, and their home became an open house for all.

John and Norma spent some time working for ADRA International, serving as field directors in Azerbaijan.

In 2000 they retired to Scarborough, where their home became a place for Sabbath worship. Norma was very hospitable, and whoever came was always invited to stay for lunch. She was blessed with her father's musical and artistic talents, and Norma and John often sang with the Salvation Army at Filey. They made many friends from different local churches and held weekly Bible studies in their home. As an experienced Bible worker, Norma was able to facilitate interesting discussions.

In retirement, Norma's love for children saw her involved in a play group in town and a pre-school at a Christian centre. Even the funeral directors knew Norma from her work with children.



In her last few weeks in hospital, Norma shared her love for Jesus with staff through the spoken word and song. She praised God for His leading, and acknowledged that her life had been a good one.

Her funeral service was conducted by Pastor Graham Allcock, and the local Parkinson's group, of which Norma was a beloved member, provided refreshments.

Norma is survived by her husband, John; foster son, Tony, and his wife Heidi; and sister, Janet.

PAULINE ALLCOCK AND JOHN KENT

Colin Hawken (1929-2023) d. 6 November.

It is with sadness that we announce that on 6 November Colin Hawken passed away. The last fourteen months of his life were spent in West Lodge Care Home (Nottingham) due to his specialist health needs. Colin originated from Cornwall, where he spent his childhood growing up in a family market garden business. He spent most of his working life in service to God. At the age of 23 he attended Newbold College and earned his scholarship by selling literature. Partway through his second year he was called to do his National Service, which he carried out at Pinewood Hospital. This meant he was close enough to still be part of college life. It was towards the end of this period that he met Sylvia Marshall, a young lady who would later become his wife. At the beginning of 1956 he headed to Lincolnshire to start work as a literature evangelist. During that year Sylvia also joined him in the literature work, and they became husband and wife in that September. Colin spent eighteen years spreading God's word through literature evangelism before moving to Grantham in 1975 to start work at the Stanborough Press, where he worked for a further nineteen years before retiring. During September, he celebrated his 94th birthday and his 67th wedding anniversary. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, Davina Sly and Julia Hall; and their families. In the words of the hymn: 'Then, when all of life is over, and our work on earth is done, and the roll is called up yonder I'll be there.' We await the resurrection morning when we will be reunited again.

JULIA HALL

Messenger

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Sunset

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		Lon	Card	Not	Edin	Bell
Jan	26	4.38	4.51	4.37	4.32	4.49
Feb	2	4.51	5.03	4.50	4.47	5.03
	9	5.04	5.16	5.04	5.02	5.18
	16	5.17	5.29	5.17	5.18	5.32
	23	5.29	5.41	5.31	5.33	5.47

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