

# Messenger

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# Editorial

by Dusanka Rancic,  
Editor



Dear reader,

What is your opinion on new beginnings? I've had to make many new beginnings in my life. I'm sure you have too. After the dark depths of winter, spring is a season of fresh starts and new beginnings.

What is it about new beginnings that we like? It is actually a sense of hope. We like the idea of a new opportunity to change something in our own lives – another chance to grow. We buy flowers as buds, but the culmination of their beauty is when they fully bloom. Similarly, we want to flourish and reach our full potential in life. But what if we have made some bad choices in the past and are not even close to reaching our full potential? We are powerless to change the past. However, we do have the ability to make choices for a different future. As Carl Bard says, 'Although no one can go back and make a brand-new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand-new ending.'

It is very encouraging that we serve the God of new beginnings. Starting from creation, we have many fresh-start narratives, such as the experiences of Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Jesus' coming to this earth was a brand-new start for all of humanity. He renewed people's hope. He is *Hope*.

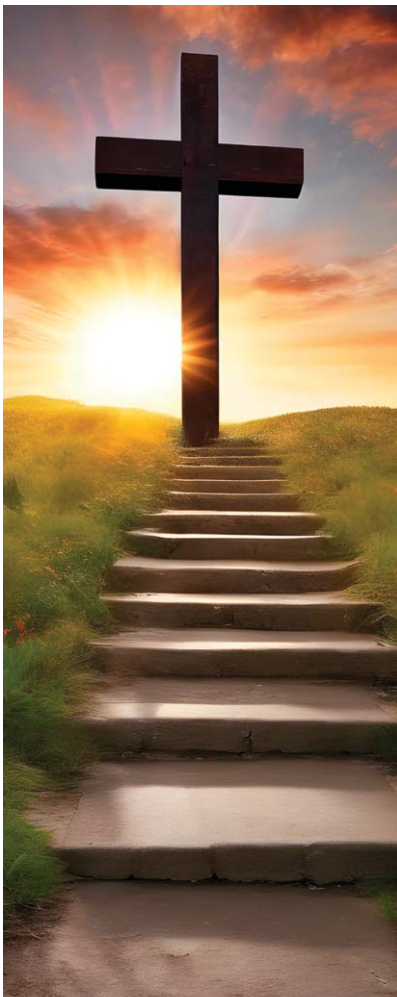
The apostle Paul invites us to follow God's example; to imitate Him in everything we do; and to 'see then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is' (Ephesians 5:15-17, NKJV).

In this passage, Paul assumes that Christians are wise, not foolish. Also, Christian wisdom is practical because it teaches us how to behave. He uses the verb 'walk', emphasising that Christian walking is not according to the world. Rather, we should walk 'as children of light' (5:8), sharing God's love, sharing *Hope* with anyone we come into contact with.

Everything worth doing requires care. We all worry about the things that we believe are important, such as our families, careers, education, or looks. Thus, we, as Christians, need to be concerned with living a Christian life. It needs to be taken seriously, since it is a serious business.

This passage teaches us that wise people make the most of their time. They are aware of how valuable time is. Also, they are certain that true wisdom comes from understanding God's will for their lives, and they act accordingly. So, if we want a new beginning in our walk with God, we must reconsider our life choices. We need to make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.

Consider all the individuals who have been granted a fresh start and a second chance throughout history. What about the ones who were not given the opportunity for a new beginning? Think of yourself. Do you desire to press that reset button and experience a new beginning with the God who loves you? If so, walk wisely with God, appreciate every opportunity to develop and grow, and pray to understand God's will for you. Start afresh, sharing *Hope* with those living in the deep darkness of the world.



As promised in our last issue in March, you will have noticed that this issue of *MESSANGER* has arrived in your hands at the beginning of the month, and so will every issue from now on.



# Making disciples is a process

by Dr Jeff Couzins

**D**isciple-making is a process. Preparing disciples occurs before baptism, and teaching continues after it, as we read in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19, 20: ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you’ (NKJV).

Jesus also used agricultural terms several times when He spoke about sharing faith and discipleship. The Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13 illustrates the consequences of not preparing the ground before sowing, and the blessing that comes from good preparation. Jesus also said that people are known by the fruits of their lives (for example, in Matthew 7). And in Matthew 21 the barren fig tree is presented as an example of the consequences of barrenness of faith. In John 15, disciples are identified as branches of the vine, which is Jesus Himself.

Commenting on disciple-making, Ellen White wrote in *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 145: ‘Many have no faith in God and have lost confidence in man. But they appreciate acts of sympathy and helpfulness. As they see one with no inducement of earthly praise or compensation come into their homes, ministering to the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the sad, and

tenderly pointing all to Him of whose love and pity the human worker is but the messenger – as they see this, their hearts are touched. Gratitude springs up. Faith is kindled. They see that God cares for them, and they are prepared to listen as His word is opened.’

Using the Bible and Ellen White’s writings, we can recognise a five-phase process to disciple-making: prepare; plant; cultivate; harvest; and preserve, following an agricultural growing and harvesting cycle. These terms are outlined below by ‘GROW Your Church’ (<https://grow.adventist.org/>):

- **Prepare:** The first phase of making disciples is to *prepare* the soil of the heart. When we come close to people in friendship and service, we show that we care and gain their confidence. Acts of loving kindness help to prepare hearts to receive the Gospel.
- **Plant:** After preparing the soil with friendship and service, the next phase in disciple-making is to *plant* seeds of spiritual truth by introducing spiritual elements into our conversations, offering personal testimonies, and sharing truth-filled literature or media.
- **Cultivate:** After planting the seed of God’s word and giving our personal testimony, the next phase in disciple-making is to *cultivate* the growing spiritual interest with ongoing Bible studies.
- **Harvest:** After cultivating interest, it is time to reap a *harvest* of spiritual decisions that culminates in the decision to be baptised.
- **Preserve:** After the joy of the harvest, we must not relax our disciple-making efforts. Jesus called us to make disciples, not

members. To do so requires us to *preserve* the harvest through intentional and systematic discipleship after baptism. In order for the disciple-making process to be a disciple-making cycle, we must nurture new church members and train them to engage in making other disciples.

Consequently, we find that disciple-making involves every stage of the process. We cannot elevate one stage above the others.

There is also something else to note. The first two phases, *prepare* and *plant*, involve friendship, Christian service, and introducing spiritual elements into our conversations, offering personal testimonies, or sharing truth-filled literature or media. In other words, this is ‘front-line ministry’. For example, health ministry, community services, friendship ministry, and mingling with people (as per Christ’s method) are front-line ministries.

The stages that follow – *cultivate*, *harvest*, and *preserve* – are when the spiritual interests grow from being a consumer to becoming a producer. This is the ‘growing for service’ stage of ministry. Bible studies, proclamation of the Gospel, nurturing new church members and training them in discipleship are ‘growing for service’ ministries.

I have heard many people talk about Bible studies and public proclamation as the Queen of the Ministries, but no single element is more significant than any other, because all are equally important. We cannot usually skip over any stage in the process when making disciples, because each stage is necessary in its own right.

# Hospital chaplaincy and spiritual care: a vital service

by Pastor Caleb Akinola, Senior Hospital Chaplain, NHS



In the journey of life, there are moments of vulnerability and uncertainty, and perhaps none more so than when one is faced with illness or injury requiring hospitalisation. In these times of physical distress, it is easy to overlook the importance of addressing the spiritual and emotional aspects of our well-being.

However, for Seventh-day Adventist members, the provision of hospital chaplaincy and spiritual care should be recognised as an invaluable resource not to be missed when they find themselves on admission.

Seventh-day Adventists, with their emphasis on holistic health, recognise the connection between body and mind. This holistic approach to healthcare is deeply rooted in the teachings of the church and emphasises the importance of addressing not only the physical symptoms of illness, but also the

spiritual and emotional needs of individuals. Hospital chaplaincy serves as a vital component of this holistic care, providing support, comfort and guidance to patients and their families during times of illness and crisis.

Here are several reasons why Seventh-day Adventist members should actively seek out hospital chaplaincy and spiritual care when they are on admission:

- **Spiritual support:** Illness and hospitalisation can often bring about feelings of fear, anxiety and spiritual distress. Chaplains are trained to provide spiritual support and pastoral care, offering comfort, encouragement and prayer to patients and their families as they navigate through difficult circumstances.
- **Connection to a faith community:** Hospital chaplains can serve as a link between patients and their faith community, providing resources and support to help individuals stay connected to their spiritual beliefs and practices during their hospital stay.
- **Guidance in ethical and moral dilemmas:** In situations where difficult decisions need to be made regarding medical

treatment or end-of-life care, chaplains can offer guidance and support, helping patients and families navigate through ethical and moral dilemmas in accordance with their religious beliefs and values.

- **Coping with grief and loss:** In the event of loss or bereavement, chaplains provide compassionate care and support to help individuals cope with grief and find meaning and hope in the midst of loss.
- **Advocacy and empowerment:** Chaplains advocate for the spiritual and emotional needs of patients within the healthcare setting, ensuring that these needs are recognised and addressed as an integral part of the healing process. They empower individuals to voice their concerns, fears and hopes, fostering a sense of empowerment and resilience in the face of illness.

In conclusion, hospital chaplaincy and spiritual care are essential services that Seventh-day Adventist members should not overlook when they are on admission. By actively seeking out chaplaincy services, individuals can receive the support,

comfort and guidance they need to navigate through the challenges of illness and hospitalisation while staying true to their spiritual beliefs and values. As Seventh-day Adventists, let us embrace the holistic approach to healthcare and recognise the importance of addressing the spiritual dimension of healing in our journey towards wholeness and wellness.





## BUC women reflect on Heather-Dawn Small's impact in ministry

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

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

*'A woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.'*

(Proverbs 31:30, NKJV)

Our gratitude extends to God for giving the world sixty-six years of the life of Heather-Dawn Small, a virtuous and remarkable woman. Her global impact and lasting influence during her eighteen-year tenure as General Conference Women's Ministries Director is immeasurable. Her godly character, tenacious faith, inspirational leadership, notable wisdom, consistent kindness, warm compassion, and phenomenal capacity to care for the hurting were exemplary.

The women of the British Union Conference were blessed by her exceptional ministry. Her memorable visits remain indelibly etched on our lives. Indeed, she leaves a rich heritage of impactful resources, ministry tools, and life lessons that nurture and empower us for service to God and humanity.

Her many attributes equipped her as a world-class leader and humble servant of God. Subsequently, the outpouring of grief at her passing was immense.

Reaching out to women across the British Union Conference, the Conference's Women's Ministries Director, Sharon Platt-McDonald, invited tributes from those who worked with Heather-Dawn over the years. Here are some of their testimonials:

**Beulah Plunkett (North England Conference Women's Ministries Director) writes:**

'Heather-Dawn was a wonderful

example of kindness, friendliness, and joy. "Joy" was her favourite biblical word, and she reflected that joy in her interactions with us all. Heather-Dawn worked from dawn till dusk; she had a keen desire to encourage women on their spiritual growth journey to become true disciples of Christ.

'The photo on the facing page tells the story of when I met Heather-Dawn for the first time in 2017, and we became instant friends – she just had this open-door approach to everyone. She personified by her actions how to be kind and welcoming to those you meet.

'In the summer of 2023, Heather-Dawn Small and her husband, Pastor Joseph Small, came to the NEC and spent a week with us. The women are still talking about the amazing time that we had. I also got to know this wonderful couple who inspired me very much.

'Heather-Dawn will be truly missed. She is a captain that has been taken too soon.'

**Samantha Fessal (Welsh Mission Women's Ministries Sponsor) shares:**

'She demonstrated through her life and ministry what it truly means to "abide in Christ". Despite her challenges with physical and emotional health, she still gave her all, right up until the day God called her home.

'I am grateful to have met her and to have experienced her whole-hearted attitude to service. She consistently spoke of God's marvellous works, rejoicing in Him at all times. I am so thankful for her humility, her love, her joy, her authenticity, and the pragmatic approach she took in her ministry, sharing practical skills worldwide to help God's children draw closer to Him. She truly was a beautiful shining daughter of God, whose

testimonies will continue to touch my life until the day God calls me home.

'Rest in peace, my dear sister, Heather-Dawn Small.'

**A tribute from Margareth Mukisa (Scottish Mission Women's Ministries Sponsor) read:**

*'In loving memory:* Heather-Dawn Small, a revered Adventist leader, peacefully departed on 2 January 2024, leaving an enduring legacy from her eighteen-year tenure as Women's Ministries Director. Her mission of empowering women through their unique talents deeply resonated with her.

'I had the privilege of meeting Sister Heather-Dawn at a BUC-organised NEC meeting in England. Her impactful leadership in a powerful Emphasis Day of Prayer for more than 300 women remains etched in our hearts.

'Deeply mourning our beloved leader, we anticipated her visit to Scotland this year. May the Lord bring comfort to her family and Women's Ministries worldwide.'

**Florence Allen (representing the South England Conference Women's Ministries) asserts:**

'"Her worth is far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10, NKJV). Those words epitomise Heather-Dawn Small. As the Women's Ministries Director of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, she raised the bar for all women in Christian leadership. She was filled with compassion, energy, and positivity, as reflected in her conversations, sermons, and devotionals.

'Heather-Dawn's global travel brought hope to all. We voice the loss of a loved woman whose presentations in the UK are treasures that will remain in our hearts. We will continue to pray for her family as



Heather-Dawn and Pastor Joe Small interviewed by Sharon Platt-McDonald at Brixton SDA Church, 17 June 2023 with an additional panel member, TED Women's Ministries Director, Karen Holford



Left to right: Margareth Mukisa, Heather-Dawn Small, Sharon Platt-McDonald and Samantha Fessal, 24 June 2023, NEC Women's Ministries event



Elder Jacqueline Otokpa & Dr. Jude Jeanville meeting Heather-Dawn and Pastor Joe Small at Heathrow Airport for Women's Ministries UK events (8-25 June 2023)



Beulah Plunkett, NEC Women's Ministries Director, with Heather-Dawn



Hyacinth Gayle with Heather-Dawn Small following her Woman of Virtue Programme interview, March 2015

we admonish each other to live for Christ, with the hope to meet Sister Heather-Dawn again on that glorious morning when Christ returns.'

**Elder Jacqueline Otokpa (SEC Women's Ministries Director) added:**

'Resilience, perseverance, discipleship, being dedicated, and going beyond her call of duty marked Heather-Dawn's life.'

**Sister Michelle Moore (representing the SEC Ministerial Spouses Association) shares her tribute:**

'Receipt of the disquieting news of her demise raised a surge of perplexing emotions.'

'Heather-Dawn Small shared many meaningful conversations and life lessons with us honestly, simply and truthfully, impacting our lives with laughter, love, genuine warmth, embraces and gracious smiles. We honour her legacy and cherish the

moments we shared, which continue to inspire and uplift us – such a dear, amazing, inspirational friend.

'The SEC's Ministerial Spouses Association joins Pastor Small, Dalonne, Jerry, and countless relatives and church family members and colleagues of the world church in praying that we may find solace, knowing that God "is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18, NIV).'

**Hyacinth Gayle (BUC Women of Virtue Programme Team Leader) penned:**

"Inspirational", "joyous", "a mother in Israel" – these words come to mind when reflecting on the world church's Women's Ministries Leader, Heather-Dawn Small. Whether close up, at an event, or far away, I always sensed that God had enlarged her heart and arms to embrace all

women, regardless of class, race or social status.

'Heather did not know me, so, when I was afforded the honour of interviewing her at a BUC Women of Virtue event, I did not know what to expect. However, Heather's integrity was on point; she was warm, gracious and immensely relatable, even when speaking privately with her. It's an encounter I am humbly thankful for, and it's forever etched in my memory. Rest in peace, dear woman of virtue, as your legacy lives on.'

Platt-McDonald concludes: 'As I worked closely with Heather-Dawn for thirteen years, she became my treasured mentor and dear friend. Her timely wisdom, warm affirmation and unwavering encouragement fostered my development, helping me to navigate challenging times and to thrive.'

'Her favourite word, "joy", prompts me not just to dwell on mourning her passing, but also to celebrate her life; her embracing warmth; her selfless love; her spiritual fervour; and her total surrender to God.'

'We now await the glorious appearing of our Lord, when the call of the Life-giver will raise Heather-Dawn to life eternal and our reunion with her throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.'



# Bad breath, awkward silences, and the art of being uncomfortable

by Pastor Adrian Peck

Among the most awkward places to find ourselves is in close proximity to an ‘uncomfortable’ person. There is the individual with bad breath or poor hygiene who encroaches on your personal space. How about that someone who is terrible at small talk but great at awkward silences? Or how about the people who speak too softly or too loudly; or those who speak, but only to moan, to dump their problems on you, or to describe their ailments in excruciating and inappropriate detail? Or what about the person who seems to get offended with little cause or encouragement?

Board meetings are rife with uncomfortable people: the ones who never keep up with what anyone else is saying, ask questions already answered, repeat themselves endlessly, or make a fuss if they don’t get their own way! In Sabbath School classes we can find frustrated preachers who deliver sermonettes, individuals who always bring the topic of conversation round to their pet subject, or those who are able to start an argument in a room on their own.

Church communities can be full of such people . . . probably because, in our own way, we too are an uncomfortable presence for others at times. It seems that to enter into the life of a church community is to enter inevitably into a life of discomfort.

Returning to the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-35, the victim of the mugging finds

himself nowhere near his comfort zone at first, but arguably ends up in the more comfortable situation when compared to his rescuer. The victim gets to have his wounds tended to and dressed; is taken to a place of safety; and gets free bed and board. Nevertheless, we are more likely to identify with the Samaritan than him. Aspiring to be a Good Samaritan, however, means being a neighbour. Neighbours go out of their way to help others. More than being inconvenienced, this sees them risking their lives. Neighbours commit to care plans ensuring accommodation is in place. Neighbours alter their travel arrangements, no matter how troublesome that might be. Neighbours have less wine and oil. Neighbours give up what is theirs to put others first. Neighbours get uncomfortable with being uncomfortable.

US Navy Seals are trained to be comfortable being uncomfortable, and moments of discomfort can bring about personal growth.<sup>1</sup> Training is needed, because our default mode is for us to search for ways to optimise our comfort, or at least minimise our discomfort.

As Adventists, we believe our ultimate destination is the New Earth (Revelation 21). That doesn’t stop some yearning for the ultimate comfort zone that is heaven – a heavenly place, by definition, where pain, suffering, and discomfort are understood to be no more; where only the transformed are found, and awkward silences and unsociable body aromas are absent. Escaping to such a place is tempting . . . however, it is not our reality or our function for now.

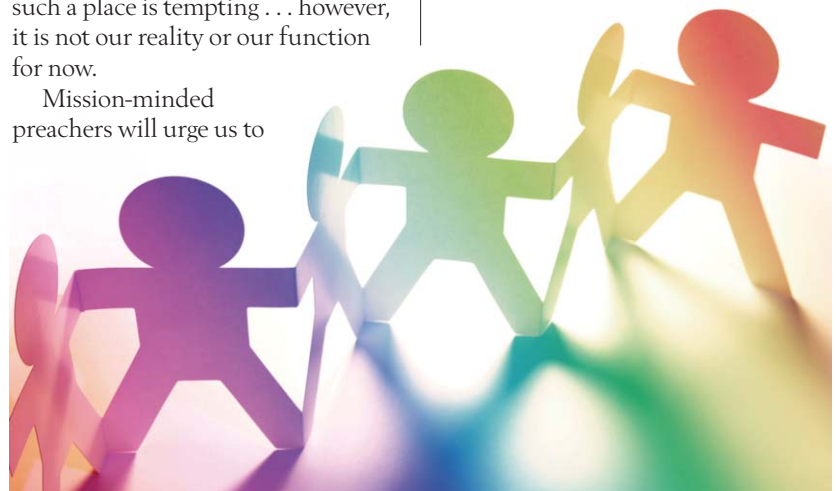
Mission-minded preachers will urge us to

get comfortable being uncomfortable ‘out there’. It seems, however, that there is a need to get comfortable being uncomfortable in a place much closer to home . . . within the very heart of the church community itself: a place where 2 out of 5 people get so uncomfortable, they leave.<sup>2</sup> This is not to suggest that they failed to get comfortable with us. Rather, we who remain have perhaps neglected to get uncomfortable with them.

Let us dream a little, therefore. Let us dare to imagine the church community as a foretaste of the Kingdom of God: to see church as a hint of heaven on earth before that fully becomes a reality with the descent of the New Jerusalem; where there are not just Seventh-day Adventist members, but a community of Seventh-day Adventist neighbours; where people go out of their way to help others, even if it means taking risks; where there is a community where care plans are offered and travel plans altered, no matter how inconvenient; where soothing, healing oil and life-enriching wine are offered; where others are routinely put first . . . a place where it’s routine to get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

<sup>1</sup><https://special-ops.org/9-navy-seal-quotes-to-improve-your-life/> <sup>2</sup><https://www.adventistresearch.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/Annual-Council-statistical-report-slides-copy.pdf>

The above article is an abridged excerpt from Peck’s book, *Church on the Move*. To purchase your complete copy, call 01476 591700, or visit [www.lifeforcebookshop.co.uk/product/church-on-the-move](http://www.lifeforcebookshop.co.uk/product/church-on-the-move).





# Best decision ever!

by Precious Chitwa



As the civil war intensified in Sudan<sup>1</sup> around 1990, Agasi Yanga's family, among others, decided to move across the Ugandan border when he was only a year and some months old. Hence, he spent most of his childhood in the Ugandan refugee camp. His mum, being a nurse by profession, got the opportunity to work for an organisation called Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)<sup>2</sup> during this time.

Though his mother had a Christian background and his father an Islamic one, Agasi's family never consistently attended church; and, having never met his father, Islam was a foreign religion to him. At 11, however, a youthful Muslim missionary was conducting an evangelistic meeting in their area which attracted a lot of young people. It was at this point that Agasi, along with his brother, ventured into Islam for a year, after which their mother got a job as a nurse at a Catholic boarding school, which required them to relocate.

Since church attendance at the Catholic school was compulsory, Agasi got some exposure to reading the Bible and began to get an understanding of who Jesus was. After two years, however, Agasi and his brother moved to Australia, while his mother and little brother stayed behind.

While in Australia, Agasi and his brother tried attending a Catholic church for a while but eventually stopped, because the people in

attendance were usually elderly, which made them feel out of place. After a while, some family friends invited Agasi and his brother to a Baptist church, where they began to worship regularly. Soon Agasi started an in-depth study of the Scripture, and, over time, he began to understand who God was and what salvation meant. He grew in faith and was soon appointed to be a Sunday School teacher. He later got baptised in the Baptist church, and his interest in the Scriptures continued to grow.

Three years after Agasi and his brother arrived, Agasi's mother and young brother joined them in Australia, and what a joyous time it was! Then, a year later, his mother died. 'This was a very trying time for me, but, because of my newfound faith, I was able to endure and stay strong during the grieving process,' he said.

One day, his brother approached him and shared a question that was troubling him. He had been asked by a friend why he worshipped on Sunday when the fourth commandment spoke about keeping the Sabbath holy. Since Agasi had no answer to this question, he began to research it. Over time he became convinced that Saturday was the right day of worship, and so he began to worship both on Saturday and Sunday.

While pursuing his Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology, Agasi lost his cousin. This, coupled with him worshipping on both Saturday and Sunday, affected his academic performance. Since he did not have enough time to study, his friend advised him to choose one day on which he would go to church. This



was a crucial decision to make. But, because he was convinced that Saturday was the right day of worship, Agasi knew exactly what to do. He left the Baptist Church and continued with the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

'For me, this was probably one of the best decisions I ever made; and, this time, I felt my life was heading in the right direction. I was very zealous in the study of the Scriptures, and my performance at the university improved significantly. My outlook on life changed, and life seemed to be more stable.'

In June 2011 Agasi got baptised, and currently he is serving as the Assistant Youth Director and Church Choir Leader at Brisbane African Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia. He enjoys having Bible studies and sharing the word of God.

<sup>1</sup>It was only in 2011 that South Sudan seceded from Sudan and became the world's newest nation.

<sup>2</sup>Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an international, independent, medical humanitarian organisation that delivers emergency aid to people affected by armed conflict, epidemics, pandemics, natural disasters and exclusion from healthcare.



# Balancing acts: Ellen G. White's wisdom in faith and fitness

by Hezron Ottey

Ellen White's profound contribution to Adventism includes the systematic approach to the health message and its application to contemporary times, enriching the Adventist landscape with a radiant source of wisdom that guides us towards complete well-being. Her prolific writings in volumes like *Counsels on Health*, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, *Healthful Living*, *Counsels for the Church*, and *Counsels on Stewardship* are a treasure trove of guidance on physical activity (PA) and exercise for Adventists. With the possibility of collating her insights into a dedicated volume titled *Counsels on Exercise*, we can amplify the impact of her teachings in a world where physical inactivity has reached alarming levels.

In 2023, the United Kingdom witnessed an unprecedented surge in type 2 diabetes cases, largely attributed to the perils of physical inactivity and its complicity in obesity cases. The devastating consequences of these levels of physical inactivity extend to an elevated risk of other noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including cardiovascular disease (heart attacks, strokes), most cancers, and chronic respiratory diseases, affecting the global population, including the Adventist community. In fact, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified NCDs as the leading cause of global mortality, responsible for 74% of deaths worldwide.

As Adventists, we generally avoid other risk factors (tobacco, harmful diets, harmful use of alcohol), which makes physical inactivity an important aspect to address both organisationally and individually. Although my research showed that most Adventists reported some degree of PA, only 33% participated in activities that required moderate exertion, such as walking, hiking, or jogging. The duration of these exercise sessions varied, but ranged between 30 and 60 minutes per session.

Essentially, addressing the issue of behaviour change regarding PA within the Adventist Church requires a nuanced approach that also accounts for socioeconomic dimensions. A key finding in my study among Adventists in the UK was that any health-orientated activities, including gym memberships and fitness classes or clubs, often involve financial costs, which can serve as a considerable barrier for some members. Therefore, to encourage regular exercise and PA, especially among those facing financial constraints, it is imperative to consider these socioeconomic factors when designing exercise or PA programmes.

Ellen White's timeless teachings provide invaluable insight into the variety of exercise options available to individuals. Her emphasis on engaging in outdoor exercise whenever possible echoes the significance of connecting with nature while nurturing our physical well-being. She delves into the results of exercise on the body, informing us on when and how to engage in exercise activity. Ellen White's wisdom is a clear reminder that our modern, often sedentary lifestyles

require vigilant adherence to regular exercise for the holistic well-being of our bodies.

Ellen White's guidance also extends to the role of pastors relative to PA, recognising that even their noble efforts require periods of rest and regular exercise to maintain the strength and efficiency of their service. In her book *Gospel Workers*, she calls on ministers to prioritise their physical well-being, reinforcing the symbiotic relationship between faith, service, and exercise.

In an era when the pace of life often leaves little room for exercise, it is paramount to recognise the important role of PA in the nurturing of the mind, body and spirit. Ellen White's wisdom, coupled with the modern challenge of physical inactivity, underscores the urgency of incorporating exercise into our daily lives. The Adventist community in fact has benefited enormously from aligning faith with fitness.

Therefore, in a world where the demands of daily life can sometimes drown out the whispers of our spirituality, the union of faith and fitness emerges as our unwavering anchor. It is a reminder that our bodies are precious vessels, entrusted to us for a divine purpose. With each step we take (physically), every moment we dedicate to physical well-being, we honour our Creator. In these acts of care and stewardship, we find a profound connection between the earthly and the divine. Just as Ellen White's wisdom transcended her time, our commitment to harmonising faith and fitness can transcend the challenges of our era. Together, we are a testament to the extraordinary synergy of faith and fitness, an inspiration to those who seek wholeness in body and spirit.

# Health markers: assessing your well-being profile – part 2

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

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

## Cardiovascular health and your blood pressure

In part one of this series we examined seven health markers by Charlie Seltzer MD that are determinants of health. He stated: 'Certain **health markers** . . . can indicate whether or not your health is where it should be. . . . It is always a good idea to keep your eye on these important markers that can alert you to some health problems early enough to address them.'<sup>1</sup> This issue, we concentrate on cardiovascular well-being with a look at blood pressure – what it is; potential dangers when it is high; and the importance of maintaining an acceptable range.

### What is blood pressure?

A simple definition of blood pressure as found on the NHS website states: 'Blood pressure is a measure of the force that your heart uses to pump blood around your body.'<sup>2</sup> The same NHS website goes on to highlight the following key points:

1. Blood pressure is measured in millimetres of mercury (mmHg) and is given as 2 figures:
  - systolic pressure – the pressure when your heart pushes blood out
  - diastolic pressure – the pressure when your heart rests between beats

For example, if your blood pressure is '140 over 90' or 140/90mmHg, it means you have a systolic pressure of 140mmHg and a diastolic pressure of 90mmHg.

2. As a general guide:
  - ideal blood pressure is considered to be between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg
  - high blood pressure is considered to be 140/90mmHg or higher
  - low blood pressure is considered to be below 90/60mmHg

### High blood pressure

Indicating the potential risks of high blood pressure, the NHS cautions: 'If your blood pressure is too high, it puts extra strain on your blood vessels, heart and other organs, such as the brain, kidneys and eyes. Persistent high blood pressure can increase your risk of a number of serious and potentially life-threatening health conditions.'<sup>3</sup> Highlighting the potential dangers of high blood pressure, the following list of adverse health outcomes is posted on the NHS website: heart disease; heart attacks; strokes; heart failure; peripheral artery disease; aortic aneurysms; vascular dementia.

### Cultural significance

Citing the impact of ethnic background on blood pressure levels, Blood Pressure UK<sup>4</sup> asserts: 'If you are from an African, Caribbean or South Asian background you are at higher risk of developing high blood pressure than the rest of the population. South Asian people also have a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes, which, combined with high blood pressure, makes heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and other health problems more likely.'

### High blood pressure causes

A variety of factors have been found to increase blood pressure. Further explaining these causes, Blood Pressure UK reports: 'People develop high blood pressure for a number of reasons. Your lifestyle will affect your blood pressure: for example, eating too much salt, being overweight and not being physically active. Some foods traditionally eaten in South Asia, Africa and the Caribbean tend to be high in salt and saturated fat, which will have an



effect. Your genes could play a role too, and you're more likely to develop high blood pressure if other people in your family have high blood pressure or have done in the past.'

### Recommendations

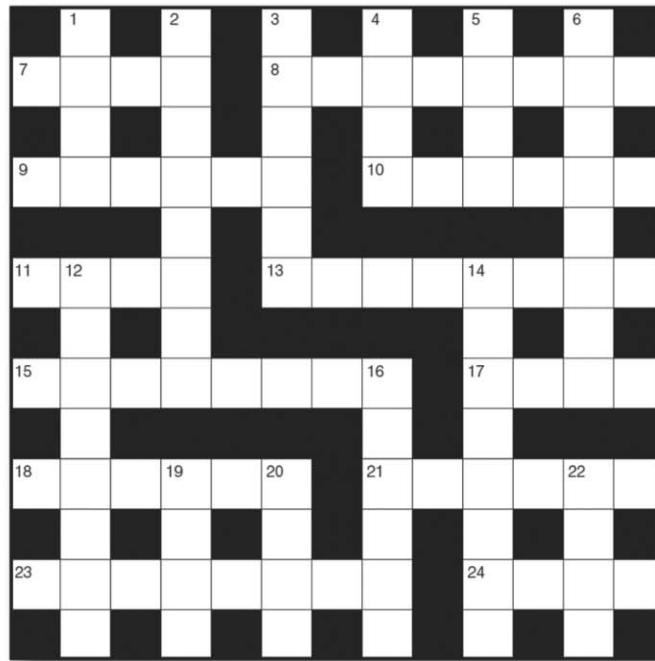
So what are some of the benefits of lower blood pressure? Giving advice on steps to take, Blood Pressure UK advises: 'Keeping your blood pressure healthy helps to keep your blood vessels and your heart healthy. Even small changes can make a big difference: lowering your blood pressure by just 10mmHg lowers your risk of a stroke or heart attack by a fifth. And there is support available.'<sup>5</sup>

If you are concerned about your blood pressure, the British Heart Foundation gives further advice and support. Visit the following link for more information: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/medical/ask-the-experts/how-to-lower-blood-pressure>

The next issue looks at lifestyle changes to better manage blood pressure.

### Good health!

<sup>1</sup><https://www.builtlean.com/health-markers-track/>  
<sup>2</sup><https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/lifestyle/what-is-blood-pressure/>  
<sup>3</sup><https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/>  
<sup>4</sup><https://www.bloodpressureuk.org/your-blood-pressure/how-to-lower-your-blood-pressure/healthy-eating/your-ethnic-background-and-your-blood-pressure/>  
<sup>5</sup><https://www.bloodpressureuk.org/your-blood-pressure/how-to-lower-your-blood-pressure/>



**Across**

- 7. One of the midwives in Exodus 1. (4)
- 8. Precious stones. (8)
- 9. Jewels on the twelve gates in Revelation 21. (6)
- 10. Places where the king's concubines were kept as in Esther 2. (6)
- 11. Celebrate the Passover in this month in Deuteronomy 16. (4)
- 13. God calls the Israelites these in Leviticus 25:55. (8)
- 15. Lawbreaker in 1 Peter 4:15. (8)
- 17. Father of Nimrod in Genesis 10. (4)
- 18. Paralytic who was healed in Acts 9. (6)
- 21. Leaders. (6)
- 23. Name of Caesar in Luke 2. (8)
- 24. He sold his birthright. (4)

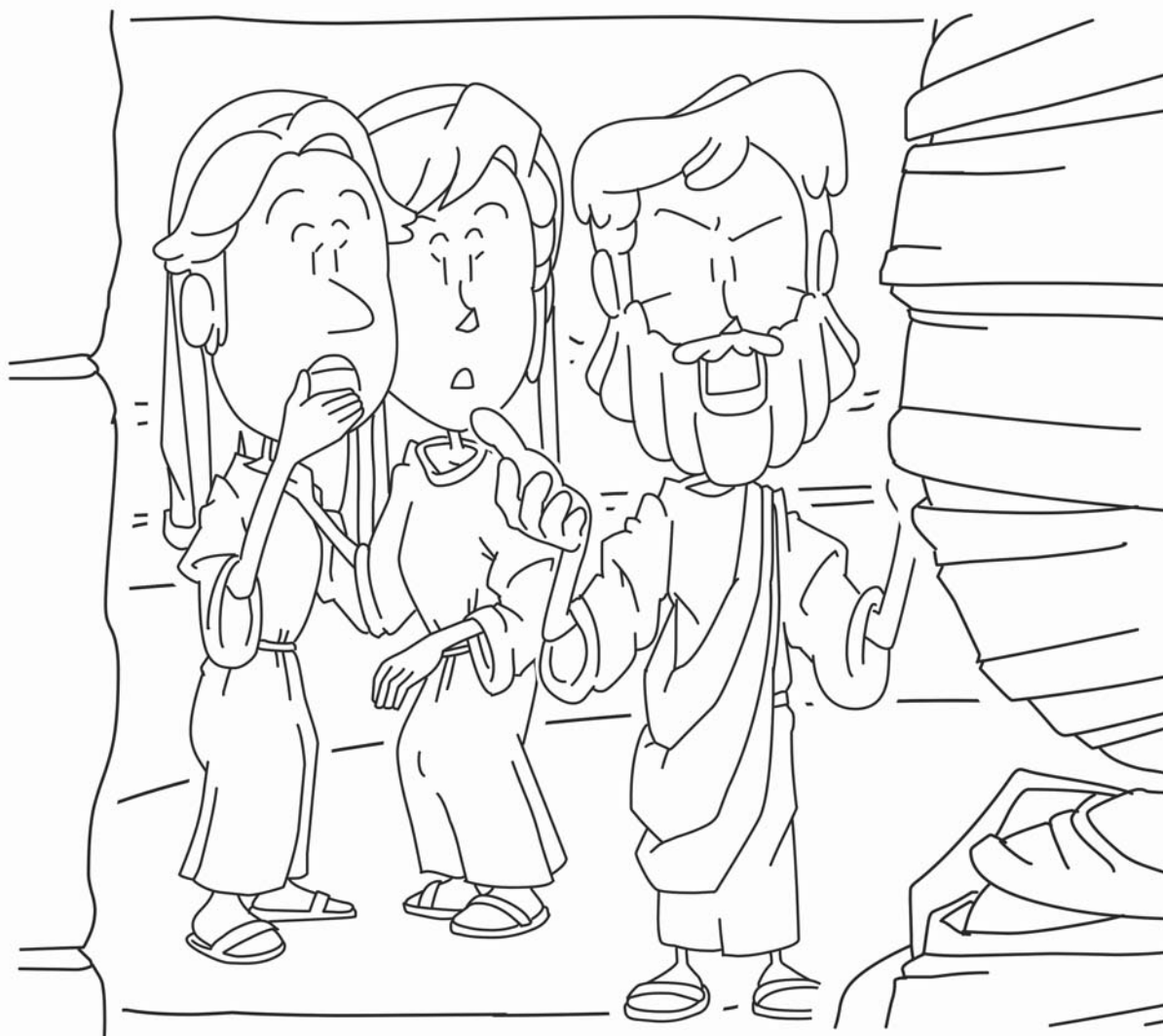
**Down**

- 1. Very big. (4)
- 2. They were carved on walls in 1 Kings 6. (8)
- 3. Survey of population. (6)
- 4. Part of the territory allotted to Zebulun in Joshua 19:13. (4)
- 5. Ezra pulled this from his head in Ezra 9. (4)
- 6. Esau was father of these people in Genesis 36. (8)
- 12. Jewish sorcerer and false prophet in Acts 13. (3-5)
- 14. Historical documents; records. (8)
- 16. This insect ate the fig and olive trees in Amos 4. (6)
- 19. He made a double-edged sword in Judges 3. (4)
- 20. One of the sons of Adam. (4)
- 22. She selects this along with wool in Proverbs 31. (4)



Taken from *Bible Brain Teasers*, by Sylvia Coupland.

To purchase your copy, follow this link: <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/bible-brain-teasers/>



## Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

<sup>39</sup>He said, "Move the stone away." Martha said, "But, Lord, it has been four days since Lazarus died. There will be a bad smell." Martha was the sister of the dead man. <sup>40</sup>Then Jesus said to her, "Remember what I told you? I said that if you believed, you would see God's divine greatness."

<sup>41</sup>So they moved the stone away from the entrance. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. <sup>42</sup>I know that you always hear me. But I said these things because of the people here around me. I want them to believe that you sent me." <sup>43</sup>After Jesus said this he called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" <sup>44</sup>The dead man came out. His hands and feet were wrapped with pieces of cloth. He had a handkerchief covering his face. Jesus said to the people, "Take off the cloth and let him go."

John 11:39-44



Taken from the book, *Colouring books for kids: The story of Jesus*.

To purchase your copy, follow this link: <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/colouring-books-for-kids-story-of-jesus/>



# Visit to Ukraine: a lesson in resilience

by Pastor Dan Serb, *President of the Irish Mission*

My trip to Ukraine began with a false start. Storm Isha had reached Ireland and was wreaking havoc in Dublin, thus grounding most planes at Dublin Airport. After sitting for twelve hours at the gate, we were told that the flight to Budapest had been postponed until the next day at noon. On Monday 22 January I finally began my journey; and, after an overnight car ride from Budapest, I reached Polyana in western Ukraine in the early hours of Tuesday morning. There I met up with Dr John-Robert Curtin and Tony Belak, the two American mediation professors who had already begun teaching the

practical module in mediation.

This training had commenced two months earlier with the online modules, and it was facilitated by the Centre for Conflict Resolution (La Sierra University, USA) and the Centre for Conflict Resolution Europe (British Union Conference).\* The programme was offered free of charge to Ukrainian pastors in support of their ministry within the difficult context of war. Dr Maksym Krupski (Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Director for the Ukrainian Union and Director of the Ukrainian Hope Channel) was very efficient in handling all logistical matters regarding the training, which ended up being a most enriching event for all participants.

Twenty-one pastors and administrators took part in the three days of training. J-R and Tony were impressed by the level of class participation and the jovial atmosphere during the classes. The students were immersed in the case studies and mediation roleplaying

they were required to undertake, and at the end of the training they expressed appreciation for the useful skills acquired during the course. The trainers also found the experience rewarding, and appreciated the candid manner in which the participants engaged with the material, expressing hope that it would be put to good use in healing a church community and society drastically affected by tragedy.

From time to time, a pastor would anxiously leave the room and then return. 'They got news from home,' I was told. There was always the day-to-day worry of an attack that could happen at any time while they were away. We were relatively safe in Polyana, but this did not take away the uneasiness some of us felt. I saw some of the pastors checking their messages or airstrike warning apps.

After the training on Wednesday, I took the overnight train to Kyiv, where I was welcomed by Oleksandr (Sasha) and Volodymyr (an English professor and my translator for the



Mediation trainers and trainees



Bombed-out buildings



With Volodymyr in front of the 'Smiling Servicewoman' mural



Kyiv

weekend). From the train station we went to the Adventist Institute in Bucha, and, after freshening up and a traditional Ukrainian breakfast, we began our journey to Borodianka. While driving through Bucha I was impressed to see that the city had been rebuilt almost in its entirety. When I asked how that was possible, Sasha, a pastor and Hope Channel Ukraine employee, told me the people of Bucha had decided to move on from the tragic destruction they had suffered. Their resolve and resilience came from a deep sense of historical necessity and faith in being victorious against oppression.

Borodianka still carries the ugly consequences of war: bombarded homes, monuments shredded by bullets, and deep craters left behind by rockets. It is being rebuilt, and people were working tirelessly everywhere to remove rubble, install sewage and water pipes, and rebuild dwellings.

While walking back to the car, my companions suggested we go back to the city of Bucha. We passed a few military checkpoints and found ourselves on Vokzalna street. This street had become another symbol of resistance and resilience. While this was the scene of some of the most horrid crimes of war ever committed, it is now entirely rebuilt. New beautiful houses stand tall on both sides of the road. I remember one of the pastors sharing, during the

mediation training, how his house – in another part of Ukraine – had been destroyed twice, and he had rebuilt it twice. Such is the spirit of unwavering fortitude. Sasha stopped the car and began telling me how he had escaped the siege of the city together with his family. He said: ‘On the third day of the siege, people were telling me that I had better leave Bucha. I wanted my family to be safe, but I hesitated. Why? Because I remembered the verse where it says that we should pray that our flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath (Matthew 24:20). And it was the end of winter, and the next day would have been Sabbath. I decided to be faithful to God and waited two more days. The siege had tightened, and Russian soldiers were now walking our streets. However, five days after the invasion, God provided a safe passage for me and my family to leave Bucha.’ He had used the same road we were on.

As I retired to my room on the Adventist campus, I was overwhelmed by a sense of deep appreciation and solidarity. We take so much for granted, but when tragedy strikes God gives us strength to endure. Tragedy shakes us and it can break us, but it can also reveal our God-given ability to face and survive the unimaginable. It further rearranges our priorities, as one of the Institute’s staff recognised: ‘When I lost my home, I thought that

was the worst thing that could happen to me. Then my son was killed, and the loss of my home meant nothing compared to losing him.’

On Friday night I was privileged to speak to the students and encouraged them to persevere in the belief that ‘God is (still) for us.’ On Sabbath I preached in Podil Church in Kyiv and then had a leisurely walk around the city: St Andrew’s Church, the wall of remembrance of national heroes, the arch of brotherhood (which now has a painted ‘crack’ in it, and the statue of the two brothers is demolished – symbol of a broken relationship between two nations). As we drove and walked around Kyiv, I could almost have forgotten that we were in a country at war if it weren’t for the military checkpoints and reinforced official buildings. The people of the city were going about their business, refusing to be held hostage in their own homes. There had been airstrikes for the past two weeks, but most people didn’t even seek shelter any longer. This has become their new normal. . . .

As I was saying goodbye in front of the central train station, Volodymyr said: ‘I feel as if I’ve known you for twenty years. I will miss you!’ The feeling was mutual. In a short time, I had grown fond of people I learnt to respect and admire. Their courage, resilience, kind demeanour and quiet faith touched me deeply, and have awakened in me a sense of togetherness and brotherhood rarely experienced. I heard no one complain or display a victim’s attitude during my stay. Even though I had gone there to support and encourage them, I was the one leaving encouraged and affirmed in my trust in God and faith in humanity. As Christians, as believers in a God who transcends the sphere of human geopolitics, we should abstain from taking sides on political fronts – there are innocent victims on all sides. But we ought to stand with the oppressed, and the suffering, and the disenfranchised.

‘Blessed are those who are persecuted . . . for theirs is the kingdom of heaven’ (Matthew 5:10, NIV).

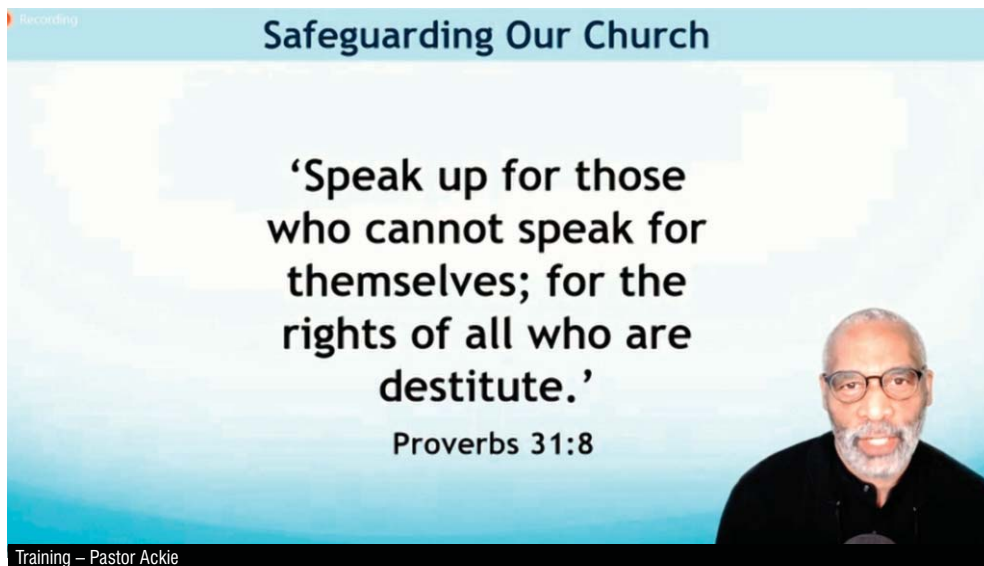
\*The Centre for Conflict Resolution Europe is a partner of the Centre for Conflict Resolution, La Sierra University, USA (Richard Pershing, Director), and its projects are sponsored by the Trans-European Division, the British Union Conference and the Versacare Foundation, USA.



Podil church, Kyiv



Wall of remembrance (Kyiv)



## Keeping watch over the flock: BUTREC training session, February 2024

How we care for one another is key to our Christianity. Protecting the vulnerable in our church communities requires careful measures. This was the topic as thirty-two workers and pastors from around the British Union Conference gathered online for a professional development session provided by the British Union Conference Training Resource Evangelism Centre (BUTREC) on 13 February 2024. The training was organised by the Ministerial Department, and focused on reviewing updates to the BUC's safeguarding policy, procedures and guidance, as well as the implications of the Government's recent *Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings* report.

The presenter, Pastor Les Ackie (BUC Family, Children and Possibility Ministries and Safeguarding Leader), acknowledged that religion is 'not a safeguard against the reality of abuse', noting that Jesus spent more time challenging abuse than any other social problem, which motivates us to take the issue seriously. Leaders must be courageous in rooting out any abuse that should arise.

To facilitate this, Pastor Ackie dispelled some common misconceptions – people sometimes wrongly think that forgiveness means treating the perpetrator of abuse as though the offence never happened, or that victims must return to abusive situations, or that forgiveness means an absence of consequences. These misapprehensions maintain abusive dynamics that trap victims and keep abusers unaccountable.

Pastor Ackie promoted awareness of different forms of abuse, describing, for example, how the explosion in social media usage has led to a huge increase in related sexual abuse among youth in the last decade.

However, emotional abuse remains prevalent in religious contexts. We must guard against misuse of power, shaming, blaming, gender inequality, mishandling of Bible texts and narcissistic behaviour (Matthew 23) as we keep watch over the flock (1 Peter 5:2). Pastor Ackie urged us to have a relationship with others, especially young people, before offering criticism: 'If they don't respect you, why would they listen to what you say?'

The youngest in our church family were a special focus. In the face of such prevalent unbiblical values all around us, we must train our youth to discern truth from error, including on sexuality – parents are to be the primary educators about this and discuss it with them in age-appropriate ways. Positive relationships between parents and children will help them feel safe to

discuss sensitive subjects and reduce the chance that they might seek attention through inappropriate relationships.

Pastor Ackie also warned against misquoting Scripture to justify abusive practices, and against doing 'the wrong thing with good intentions' without realising when one is being spiritually abusive.

The Church's policy has been reviewed, and Pastor Ackie ran through the proposed updates; yet he added that 'policy and procedures are just words on paper. Unless that policy is implemented, it is no good to man nor beast.'

The session certainly promoted awareness and informed attendees regarding the imperative to safeguard the vulnerable in the context of local church ministry. Pastor Thando Mlalazi of the North England Conference particularly appreciated how the necessity of safeguarding the flock was presented from biblical foundations. Dwayne Jones of the South England Conference also remarked on how safeguarding to protect the vulnerable 'will remain relevant until the Lord returns', adding: 'I found the training super important because it highlighted the need to have measures in place to prevent any form of abuse, especially against the vulnerable. It also reinforced the significance of my parental duty to educate my children about sex, the internet and how to relate to people of influence, be they male or female.'

BUTREC was established in 2011 with a view to equipping members in outreach, and now provides training for 'building resilient leaders, equipped to reach one life at a time'. BUTREC leader, host and BUC Ministerial Director, Pastor Samuel Ouadjo, quoted Acts 6:3 in his poignant appeal for leaders and churches with 'good reputation', 'full of the Holy Spirit', with an unquestionable connection with Christ, who are wise.

Themes to be covered in upcoming BUTREC training sessions in the months ahead will include 'The Heavenly Sanctuary in 2 Thessalonians 2', 'Fundamental Beliefs', and 'Management of Communication During Times of Crisis'. For further information on BUTREC training for workers and pastors, safeguarding, or related matters, contact the Ministerial or Family Life departments of the British Union Conference.

DIVINIA REYNOLDS



## Cornerstone Adventist Nigerian Association-UK

On Sabbath 20 January 2024, Cornerstone Adventist Nigerian Association-UK (CANA-UK) gathered at Newbold College of Higher Education for their annual Thanksgiving Day of Fellowship. It was a day of joy and celebration for the Nigerian Seventh-day Adventist community across the UK, and a profound recognition of God's power in our lives as He leads us into 2024. As President of CANA-UK, I was overjoyed to see attendees from various parts of the United Kingdom, some driving up to four hours to join this event.

The programme was a hybrid event, with numerous participants joining remotely. The day's highlight was the address by General Conference President Elder Ted Wilson via Zoom. He spoke fondly of his recent and well-received visit to Nigeria at the end of 2023, and of the challenges and opportunities of the world church. Elder Wilson shared a message of hope about looking forward and 'keeping our eyes on Jesus' throughout 2024, taking lessons from Matthew 14, with the account of Peter trying to walk on water with Jesus.

Notable leaders, including Pastor Ayodeji Adesina from Blessed Hope Church and Pastor Owolabi Oyeleke, West African Division Ministerial Secretary, were present along with other Nigerian Conference and Mission presidents. Pastor Maduka Ogbuonye of Lighthouse Community Church led us in prayer, thanking God for His sustaining power. Pastor Gbenga Adeoye delivered a sermonette, and Elder Zach Anucha led an interactive Sabbath School lesson study.

Our community was particularly heartened to see our young adults engaging in the Sabbath School lesson, led by Miss Korede Onatunde. It's gratifying to see them,



Attendees gathered at Newbold College of Higher Education



Elder Ted Wilson zoomed in

post-university and embarking on their careers, still coming together in faith and gratitude. Additionally, Ayo Chike-Michael led the children's service, inspiring them to be grateful for the new year and reminding them of Jesus' miracle at Cana, symbolising the beauty Jesus brings into our lives.

We, the Nigerian Seventh-day Adventists in the UK, remain deeply thankful to God for His blessings and sustaining grace as we step into 2024. Our prayer is to continue serving Jesus by working in our local communities and supporting our churches within the British Union, spreading the hopeful Gospel of Jesus' imminent second coming.

*UCHE NWOSU-ADEMUYIWA, PRESIDENT OF CORNERSTONE ADVENTIST NIGERIAN ASSOCIATION-UK*

## Teaching in the blood

As a recent graduate from Newbold College in 1954, a young Dorothy Logan (née Farrer) went to Laurieston School in Leeds to teach the junior class. She was aged 21 at the time.

Dorothy had graduated from Newbold College as a Bible instructor and a church school teacher. While at Newbold, as part of her training, she taught at Newbold Junior School at Egremont, as it was then, in the college grounds.

She taught in Leeds for a year prior to marrying Ron Logan, one of the King's Heralds singers and a Bible teacher at the Voice of Prophecy Bible Correspondence School. Not long after they set up home in Garston, Watford, an opportunity came to teach the Junior 3 class at Stanborough Primary School, as emergency cover.

This led her to take on the further role of Junior 4 class teacher until 1957. Dorothy and Ron later relocated to Glasgow, Scotland in 1959. This led to many years as Adventist Youth (AY) leader and also Primary and Junior Sabbath School teaching. In 1997 they moved to Crieff, and Dorothy's love of Sabbath School teaching continued at the Crieff church. She said, 'As I look back over my life, it is almost as though teaching has been in my blood.'

Now, at almost 91 years of age, this love of teaching has never left her, and she has been, up until very recently, helping teach the Junior PowerPoints Sabbath School class. On Sabbath 27 January 2024, she was given a surprise presentation to mark her commitment and love of teaching the children. She is stepping back from regular class teaching, but is still very active in leading the monthly Hearts and Hands programme, making quilts and bags for use in the local community and associated fundraising ventures.

Thank you, Dorothy, and thanks also to the countless other volunteer church Sabbath School teachers who each week open the lessons of life to our young children.

*PASTOR PAUL TOMPKINS, COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT*



## Testimony on effective prostate cancer treatment

On the final day of the Ten Days of Prayer (Sabbath 20 January 2024), Camp Hill Church members were reminded that prayer and testimony go together, and this was also relevant to the week's Sabbath School Bible study, which highlighted the importance of testimony. After the lesson study, the congregation were asked by the Sabbath School department leader if anyone had a testimony to share.

Without hesitation, Elder Lassal Gordon walked boldly to the lectern. He told the congregation that he had prostate cancer surgery in October 2023 – it was his first Sabbath back in church that day – and he gave testimony of God's goodness in enabling him to be diagnosed after listening to a presentation by Dr Beatrice Kastrati, who is the Health and Possibilities Ministries Director for the NEC. His testimony summarised his experience in being diagnosed and treated. He is making a good recovery – thanks be to God!

This reminded us of the importance of sharing the health message, and demonstrated that it can have positive outcomes for members as well as our friends in the general public.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men living in the UK. There is no routine screening for it. No one will contact you to offer you a test to see if you have it. Symptoms can begin in a barely noticeable way, and can include:

- Needing to pass urine frequently, often during the night;
- Needing to rush to the toilet as you are not able to hold your urine;
- Difficulty in starting to pass urine, even though you have the urge to do so;
- Straining when trying to pass urine;
- Having a slow or weak flow of urine;
- Feeling that your bladder has not emptied fully after you have been to the toilet;
- Seeing blood in urine.

The NHS website has more information on this condition: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/prostate-cancer/symptoms/>. If you (or your loved ones) are worried about any symptoms, contact your GP or dial 111. Elder Gordon was blessed that he was made aware of the issue in time for action.

DR JACQUIE HALLIDAY-BELL



Elder Lassal Gordon giving his testimony



Left to right: Pastor Berhanu Tsehaye (holding baby Josiah), Pastor Michael Mbui, Elder Joe Adams (holding the microphone), Annmarie Adams and Abrielle Adams

## Hanwell baby dedication

On the morning of Sabbath 3 February 2024, at Hanwell Seventh-day Adventist Church, Elder Joe Adams and his wife Annmarie dedicated their two youngest children, Josiah Ebenezer David Kwesi Adams and Amariah-Grace Victoria Effe Adams, to the Lord. The whole family wore traditional African clothes.

Pastor Berhanu Tsehaye and the new pastor for Hanwell Church, Pastor Michael Mbui, conducted the service, the first baby dedication service for this new year, which was attended by Hanwell Church members, family and friends of Elder Joe and Annmarie, as well as visiting members. The sermon, which preceded the dedication, was entitled 'The 7 characteristics of a God-centred family'.

After the service, the whole church, along with visiting family and friends, enjoyed a big lunch which represented the cultural diversity of the church. After lunch, more pictures were taken with family and friends and a big, beautifully decorated dedication cake baked by one of Hanwell's talented young people, which was cut for everyone to enjoy.

The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended, and Elder Joe and Annmarie were grateful to the church, family, and friends who came to support and worship with them.

ANNMARIE ADAMS AND ANGELA PINNOCK



### York Pathfinder Club induction

The scripture verse 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he

will not depart from it' (Proverbs 22:6, NKJV) never rang so true as York Seventh-day Adventist Church launched its Pathfinder and Adventurer club on 27 January 2024. Never has there been a time when nurturing and training

young people was more imperative than now. We praise the Lord for this opportunity to equip and train young soldiers for His kingdom.

York seventh-day Adventist Church is nestled in the quiet village of Heworth, part of the historic tourist city of York. Our church came alive to the beat of the Pathfinder drums as the Pathfinders and Adventurers marched into the sanctuary in full class A regalia while the area coordinators, directors, Master Guides, supporting club (Hull) and the church members witnessed this historic moment.

The congregation recited the Pathfinder pledge and law, and heartily sang the Pathfinder song, showing that there are principles we never forget and memories we are proud to see the next generation make. Area Coordinator J. James shared a fitting message that reminded the church and our inductees of how to be pure in all aspects of life.

Having celebrated over 100 years of the Adventist message in the city, the launch of the club is a springboard for our vision of nurturing our young people to be pure, kind, and true Christians whose faith and obedience to God shine a light in their schools and in their communities that will draw other young souls to Christ.

JACKSON MOONGA



Jeremy Adjei Anokye & Roshon Ekoli

### Wood Green's second Pathfinders' banquet

Wood Green's second Pathfinders' banquet, on Sunday 28 January 2024, took place in a wonderfully decorated hall with delicious food and quality entertainment. The organiser, Pathfinder Leader Marsha Mills, and the rest of her team had worked extremely hard. It was well attended by the Pathfinders and their families, as well as church members, including Head Elder Cuniah and his wife Suzette. The Worship Leader and Music Head, Carolyn Weisey, guided us through the evening's events.

The packed programme opened with prayer and the singing of the Pathfinders' theme song. There were special musical items by Eden and Roshon Ekoli, Grace Owusu and Jeremy Adjei Anokye, Daniel Lewis and Odele Prince. Poetry was specially composed by Eden Ekoli and Matthew James, and Bible quizzes were compiled and presented by Jeremy and Carlton Weisey. A video was played of the history of Pathfinders, along with a short video montage of the Pathfinders' activities in 2023.

There was one birthday celebrated on this special occasion – that of Carolyn Weisey's grandson, Kyrell Crammer, who turned 3 on the day. After singing Happy Birthday to him, a special cake was presented to the whole family.

Special gifts were presented to all the Pathfinders for their achievements over the past year, acknowledged by Marsha Mills and presented by Elder Cuniah. Sister Marsha also thanked her team, including those who had worked hard in the kitchen, for making the evening such a special occasion.

We look forward to more memorable banquets in the coming years as the Pathfinders' Club nurtures and develops core life skills among the youth of the church.

ODELE PRINCE



Kyrell Crammer & his mother Lynear Cuffy



Marsha Mills, Pathfinder Leader

**TEENS AND TWEENS 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

**'Celebrating the Journey'**

**WHEN AND WHERE**  
 SATURDAY APRIL 27TH, 10AM – 7PM  
 C3 PAVILION, HATHERLEY LANE, CHELTENHAM GL51 6PN

Presenter: **Pastor Isaac Liburd**

Bring Bible, packed lunch and walking clothes. Light tea provided.

For more details contact: 07925 859297

**2024 SM Session Notification**

Notice is hereby given that the 12<sup>th</sup> Triennial Session of the Scottish Mission of Seventh-day Adventists will take place at the AK Bell Library, 2-8 York Place, Perth, PH2 8EP, on Sunday 30 June 2024. Delegates will receive documentation in advance of the session.

*Pastor Jacques Venter (Executive Secretary, Scottish Mission)*

British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
**COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY TRAINING WEEKEND**

**Dealing with Today's Giants**

**Dr Ganoune Diop**  
GC PARL Director

**Pr Heli Otamo-Csizmadia**  
TED Stewardship Director

**Eld Paulo Macedo**  
Communications & PARL Director  
GC Inter-European Division

**Dr Brighton Kavaloh**  
SEC PARL Director

**10-12 May 2024** Leonardo Hotel, Watling Street, Leicester, LE10 3JA

£75 per person if booked by 30 March 2024. Thereafter £150 per person. Deadline is 19 April 2024

For bookings or more info contact: [kguthrie@adventist.uk](mailto:kguthrie@adventist.uk) / 01923 672251

CALLING ALL YOUNG ADULTS 18+

**BACK TO BASICS THE UPDATE**

**BUC NUChC Youth Congress 2024**

**MON - SAT 22-27 JUL**  
Rijswijk, Netherlands

Standard Registrations: £180\*  
Late Registrations: £220\*\*

\*excluding site admin fee \*\*late registration commences 22nd April

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**ASNA FAMILY RESPITE WEEKEND 2024**

**26-29 April**

**'Building resilience in 2024'**

VENUE  
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COST  
 Adults £150 (£100 ASNA members)  
 CHILDREN: 4- 18 yrs £50 per person (Free: Under 4 and all children with disabilities up to 18 yrs)

For booking form or more information Contact  
 Website: [www.asna.info](http://www.asna.info) Email: [info@asna.info](mailto:info@asna.info) @OfficialASNA  
 ASNA is a Reg. Charity 1000447

# Share Your Story

Have you encountered God's extraordinary touch in your ordinary life? Have you found hope in unexpected ways through His grace?

At The Stanborough Press we believe each day, every thread, every experience, is a testament to God's favour of love and grace. Your story might be the very lifeline someone needs in their moment of doubt or despair.

We are inviting **you** to be part of an exciting inspirational Christian title to be published and shared with the world about the wonderful God we serve!

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**Connect:** Join a community of believers, united in faith and testimony.  
**Inspire:** Your journey could light the way for someone else.  
**Witness:** There's no better way to share Christ's love than through personal experiences.

### Submission Guidelines:

**Authenticity:** We value real, heartfelt narratives.  
**Length of story or article:** 1,500-2,500 words.  
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DATE	VENUE	TIME
13 April	Northampton International	After sunset
19-24 April	EGW Symposium, Newbold College	
21 April	Manchester South	10am-2pm

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Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church  
in the United Kingdom and Ireland

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Left to right: Pastor John Melki, Stefaan Percy Lister, Jeyamalar Percy Lister, Percy Lister Singaraj, Bhavish Sureshkarar, Pastor Arthur Campbell

## Kingston baptism

Sabbath morning of 27 January 2024 dawned beautifully for the Percy family, as it was the day of their baptism. Mr Percy, his wife Jeyamalar and their youngest son Stefaan decided to give their lives to Christ after four years of Bible studies from

Pastor John Melki. Their Christian journey began on 18 April 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when they received a Zoom link to attend a meeting held by Pastor Melki. They attended the meeting not knowing what to expect. Little did they know that this would be the beginning of their road to

baptism. The Percy family, originally from Sri Lanka, have been conservative Catholics for generations; and, needless to say, the decision to get baptised has not been an easy one. Mr Percy says they were hopeless and helpless – but not anymore! They have found hope in Christ! Stefaan (22 years old) feels proud to attend church every Sabbath and enjoys singing and taking part in Sabbath School. The whole congregation from both Kingston and Wimbledon churches rejoiced as the Percy family got baptised together.

Bhavish Sureshkarar (12 years old), who has been attending the Adventist Church since his childhood, also decided to give his life to Jesus, and was baptised by Pastor Melki. They were all warmly welcomed into Kingston Church. It was truly a blessed Sabbath for everyone.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

## Swinton Church organisation

The Swinton church plant was a group of believers who gathered with a burning desire to praise God and carry on God's mission in Portuguese. One of the cardinal impetuses for this group's formation was the difficulty of most members in expressing their faith in the English language. Thus, this group grew more robust in 2019, feeding on the Word of God and fraternal warmth.

While this group conducts its mission to reach diverse cultures, its evangelism has yielded substantial results in the Portuguese community, which has well over 3,500 residents within the Manchester metropolitan area. This fellowship has engaged in many community events, followed by two baptisms, which have yielded seven souls for Christ, with fifteen individuals currently having Bible studies.

With the in-depth support and direction from the Personal Ministries, Evangelism & Church Planting Director of the NEC, Dr Patrick Herbert, and the Global Mission Pioneer assigned to this fellowship, Elder Danny Apeadu, Swinton Church Plant was organised as a church on 17 February 2024 and was welcomed into the sisterhood of churches in the North England Conference, to the glory of God. It has more than sixty core members and contacts, and can boast of vibrant youth and children's ministries.

The core vision of the Swinton church is to become a



spiritually strong church that takes the Gospel to the world through different media; trains members for missionary work; and devises ways beyond conventional means to engage diverse cultures with the Gospel.

Dr Herbert, along with the North England Conference administration, would like to express gratitude to Elder Danny Apeadu for the work he has done, along with the members of this church plant, to ensure its transformation into a strong, vivacious church which, by God's grace, will be a lighthouse that will effectively be a witness drawing souls to experience the power of the Gospel.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT



## 100 not out

All the glory goes to God that Sister Magnol L. Thompson, affectionately known as Sis T., has been given years beyond four score and by reason of strength has reached 100 – a faithful servant of the Lord who has been looking forward to her 101<sup>st</sup> innings on 3 April 2024.

She is the widow of Sylvester N. Thompson (deceased 1992), with whom she parented four children – Erskine (deceased), Harriette, Evette and Sylvia – six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Sister T. was baptised into Hillaby Seventh-day Adventist Church on the sunny isle of Barbados, and remains a humble servant of the true and living God.

Her children were encouraged in the ways of the Lord, and accessed all church activities, both spiritual and social, including the annual trips to Aberdaron, where she has also assisted in the kitchen; and, in later

years, she attended the Coventry Family Camp, which she really enjoyed.

Sis T. sought employment that would place her in a position to see her children to and from school, and finally retired after working many years in Sorrento Maternity Hospital.

In joining fellowship at Camp Hill SDA Church in the late fifties, Sister Thompson gave wholehearted service in various departments, in particular the Welfare/Community Service Department, where she showed compassion for the community at large by visiting and meeting essential needs. It was on a day trip with the church when she sat beside the late A. Peters, who shared with her the benefits of vegetarianism, which she immediately embraced and attributes as one of the features for her long life.

Each Sabbath Sis T. opened her home to visitors and welcomed them for food and fellowship, sharing God's overflowing blessings – this is recorded in her guest book, which goes back to the 1970s.

Sister T. is a lifelong learner and became a 'silver surfer' during lockdown, which has enabled her to enjoy Zoom social interaction with Tamworth on Monday, the prayer meeting on Tuesday with Yardley, and the Wednesday prayer meeting with Croydon, as well as their Sabbath services.

In February 2023 it looked like she was about to be bowled out, and sickness overtook her; however, the



Pastor Caleb Akinola with his wife Esther holding Elizabeth and Dorcas and Solomon in front

## Au revoir, not farewell!

On 10 February, Exeter Church said 'au revoir' to Pastor Caleb Akinola, his wife Esther, and their children: Dorcas, Solomon and Elizabeth. They came to Exeter from Nigeria when Esther secured a post as a nurse at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. Pastor Caleb had been ordained as a minister in Nigeria. He trained as a hospital chaplain, gaining an MA from London South Bank University, and was very respected in his work in Exeter and Torquay Hospitals. He served as an active elder at Exeter Church.

From 1 February, Pastor Caleb started work as a pastor in Cornwall for the SEC. He preached in Exeter on 10 February, and Stella Jeffery presented the family with a gift and card to thank them for their valued contribution to the church.

STELLA JEFFERY

Almighty Umpire declared that she was not out, and she was able to leave hospital and two days later celebrated her 100th innings with friends and family – to God be the glory.

Sis T. is sincerely thankful for God's faithfulness towards her all these years, enabling her to still have a sound mind and a sense of humour, and to share her experiences with and encourage others, read God's words, and give Him praise.

As Proverbs 16:31 states (NRSV): 'Grey hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.' God's path is the one that she recommends for all. . . . Stay faithful till Jesus comes.

SYLVIA R. THOMPSON

## Messenger

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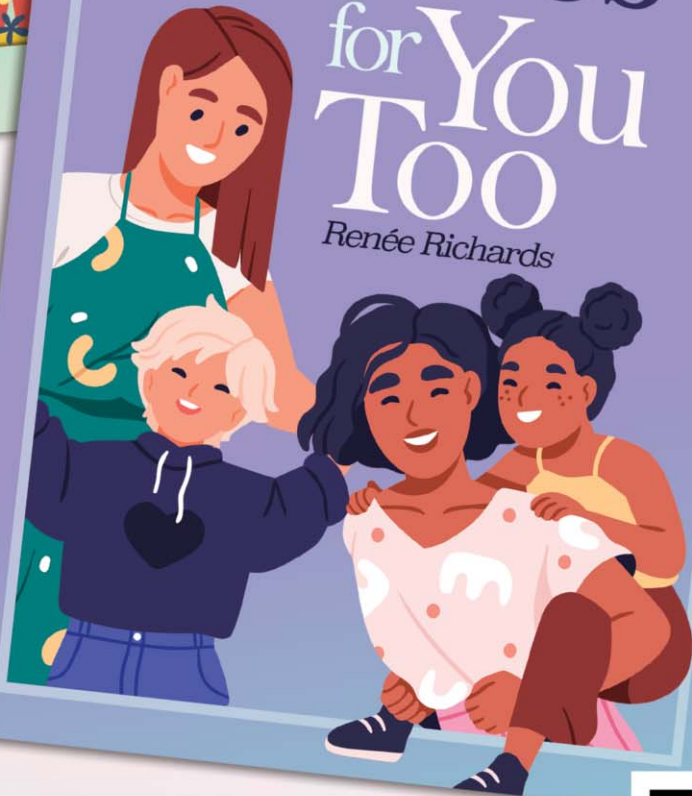
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26	8.16	8.29	8.25	8.43	8.49
May 3	8.28	8.40	8.37	8.57	9.02

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