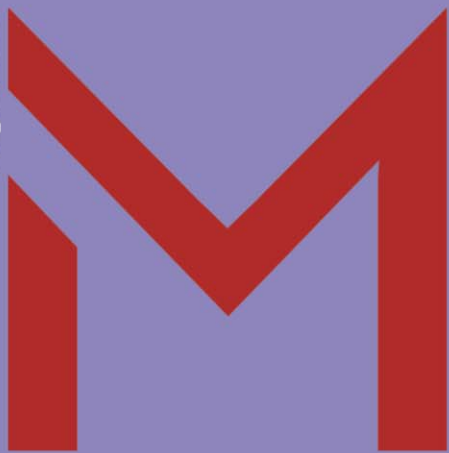


August 2026



Messenger

Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
in the United Kingdom and Ireland
Established 1902

Looking to the future



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Nothing to fear

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Newbold
Celebration

Nothing to fear Looking to the future of the British Union Conference

by Pastor Kirk Thomas,
BUC President



On 2 July, when I was elected to the role of the President of the British Union Conference (BUC), it was a nerve-wracking time. Once voted, I was rushed off to take pictures and give a 90-second interview about my hopes for the future. In a matter of moments, I had a new job in a different building, and was leaving the familiar space of the South England Conference to serve throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland.

This season in the BUC is one of waiting, transition and change. While offering numerous possibilities for mission and growth, change can be unsettling. Walking into the unknown can pose a challenge for some. But I'd like to provide encouragement from the Word of God.

New leadership

When Moses died, the Lord appeared to Joshua, his successor, and said, 'Be strong and of a good courage' (Joshua 1:6, KJV). Joshua had served faithfully with Moses, and it was generally accepted that he would take over. But being second-in-command is different to God propelling you to the helm of the ship.

outright disregard and disrespect with the words, 'Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt' (Exodus 16:3, KJV).

This is the reality of leadership.

God with us

But, before God commands Joshua to be 'strong and very courageous', He promises, 'As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee' (Joshua 1:5, KJV). This reassurance is not just part of an ancient story: it applies to new leaders today as they transition into new roles, or as they are re-elected to serve with new teammates. The God who mandated the call will also give us the courage to lead with conviction and integrity once we continue to put Him at the centre of His mission and our work. The God that was with Moses, Joshua and the biblical matriarchs and patriarchs has not changed, and He is still with us and will be with us over the next five years of the journey. The God who was with our parents and guardians is the God that will be with us on our Kingdom mission.

Pray for us

In the BUC office, our executive leadership team has changed, and I would like to offer my appreciation to both Pastors Eglan Brooks and Jacques Venter for their contribution over the past five years. Please pray for Pastor Emanuel Bran, Mr Wederly Aguiar and me as we begin our journey together, that we will be united in leading the people of God and propelling the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland.

I would also like to pray for the other leaders who were recently selected at the Session in July or by their executive committees: Pastor Adam Keough (Irish Mission), Pastor Obi Iheoma (Scottish Mission), Pastor Jeremy Johnson (Welsh Mission) and Pastor Kwesi Moore (South England Conference), who was recently voted in due to my departure from the SEC. Please also pray for Pastor Steve Palmer (North England Conference) as he and his team solidify their leadership due to several movements to other fields. Our appreciation to Pastors Jimmy Botha and Max McKenzie-Cook as they await new assignments.

As presidents, we have all been in our current roles for around two years or less; and, while this provides an opportunity for innovation and greater collaboration, change will need to be managed with wisdom that only comes from the Lord.

Final word

'In reviewing our past history, having travelled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have **nothing to fear** for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history' (Ellen White, *Life Sketches*, p. 196).

We look forward to journeying with you over the next five years!



Left to right: Pastor Emanuel Bran, Pastor Kirk Thomas, Mr Wederly Aguiar

¹www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46473/if--

Change as a constant

by Dusanka Rancic, *Editor*

EDITORIAL

‘Change’ is one of those words that can fill us with excitement or unease, sometimes both at the same time. Change means becoming something different, experiencing something new, or leaving behind what has become familiar. It can be as joyful as watching a toddler grow into a teenager or as emotional as seeing your son become a man. Every stage brings both gratitude for what has been and uncertainty about what lies ahead.

Many cultures view change not as something to fear, but as an invitation to adapt, to rebuild, and to look forward with hope. It reminds us that life is not static. We are continually learning, growing, and transforming.

I was reminded of this while thinking back to a university lecture many years ago. One of my professors spoke about the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus, who famously said, ‘You cannot step into the same river twice,’ meaning that the river is constantly flowing, and so are we. By the time we take a second step, neither the water nor the person stepping into it is exactly the same.

For centuries this idea has shaped human thinking. The phrase ‘Change is the one constant in life’ still resonates because it reflects our daily experience. The real question is not whether change will come – it certainly will – but how we choose to respond to it.

Over the past few years, our family has experienced change in so many different ways. So, for example, when we moved from Wales to England, three years ago, our children left behind friends, familiar classrooms and the security of everything they knew. Like many children facing a new school, they felt anxious and uncertain. Yet they were welcomed so warmly at Dudley House School that what initially seemed frightening soon became a place where they flourished.

Then, just eighteen months later, everything changed again. The school unexpectedly closed, and we found ourselves navigating another transition. This time it felt much harder. Even after a year in their new school, the adjustment has been slower and more challenging. Yet another change is already on the horizon. In September, our daughter begins secondary school. She admits she is nervous because she does not know what to expect, but she is also eagerly counting down the days. Isn’t that often how change feels? A mixture of anticipation and uncertainty, hope and hesitation.

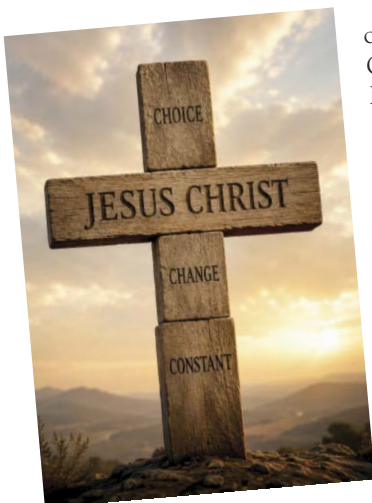
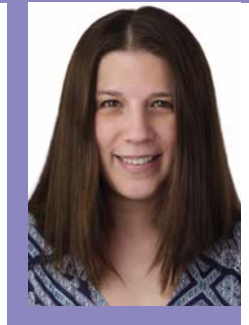
As I reflected on these personal experiences, I couldn’t help but think about another significant season of change – the recent British Union Conference Session. Nearly 400 delegates gathered to review the Church’s ministry, discuss its future, and elect new leaders. While much attention naturally focused on reports, committees and elections, it was impossible to forget that every decision involved real people. Behind every name was a family, a ministry, hopes, sacrifices and the willingness to serve wherever God might lead.

Leadership changes are never simply administrative. They affect lives. Some individuals begin new responsibilities, while others conclude seasons of faithful service. Some step into unfamiliar roles with excitement; others face uncertainty as doors close and new ones open. Each transition deserves not only our respect, but also our prayers, because life unfolds in seasons. Some seasons stretch us so that we learn patience. Others deepen our faith, bring healing, provide opportunities to serve, or invite us to rest and be renewed by the Holy Spirit. Rather than resisting every unexpected turn, we are invited to trust that God is at work even when we cannot yet see the bigger picture.

The Bible acknowledges that life is constantly changing (Ecclesiastes 3). While our circumstances continually shift, Scripture points us to the One who never changes. ‘Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever’ (Hebrews 13:8, NKJV). In a changing world, He remains our unchanging foundation. Because of that assurance, we need not fear the unknown. ‘Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding’ (Proverbs 3:5, NKJV). Let go of what is behind, and press on towards what lies ahead (Philippians 3:13). As Joshua stood on the threshold of a completely new chapter, God gave him words that still speak to us today: ‘Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go’ (Joshua 1:9, NIV).

None of us knows what changes the coming months will bring. Some may be welcomed with joy; others may arrive uninvited. Yet every new season presents another opportunity to discover God’s faithfulness. We may not always understand why circumstances change, but we can trust the One who walks beside us through every transition.

After all, while change may be one constant in life, God’s presence is the only constant we truly need.



Stanborough Press Open Day 6 September – SAVE THE DATE

Walking, loving, and doing: BUC Session looks ahead to the next five years

by Dusanka Rancic, Stanborough Press Editor-in-Chief, with input from the BUC Communication Department



The tenth quinquennial British Union Conference (BUC) Session brought together 368 delegates, together with invitees and observers, at the Atrium Hotel Heathrow, London, from 1 to 3 July 2026. Representing churches and institutions from across the BUC territory, delegates gathered to prayerfully review the work of the Church over the past five years and to help shape its mission for the years ahead.

Although Britain experienced another spell of unusually hot weather, the atmosphere inside the Session was defined less by the temperature outside than by three days of worship, thoughtful discussion, careful decision-making, and a shared desire to seek God's leading for His church.

Reviewing the Church's ministry
Alongside worship, delegates received reports from the Union officers, departmental directors, missions and institutions. To see the full reports, scan the QR code above.

The reports reflected on the ministry of the past quinquennium while outlining opportunities and challenges for the future. Despite all the challenges, reports clearly showed that membership has greatly increased over the quinquennium, and tithe income has increased by more than a third. Departmental leaders reported on successful events – for example, the distribution of one million 'Reflecting Hope' leaflets, as highlighted by Pastor Christian Salcianu, Adventist Discovery Centre Director, and the numerous baptisms resulting from the Adventurer and Pathfinder Bible Experience, as reported by Pastor Njabulo Ndlovu, BUC Youth Ministries Director.

The delegates engaged actively with the presentations, asking thoughtful questions and offering constructive observations. Several reports generated significant discussion, particularly in areas such as safeguarding, health ministries,

youth ministry and pastoral care.

The report of Mrs Lorraine McDonald, BUC Education Director, was welcomed by the delegates; she referred to the improving quality of education and increasingly Christ-centred ethos in Seventh-day Adventist schools within the BUC territory, resulting in baptisms and Bible studies among students.

Numerous questions and comments on Adventist education and youth ministry challenged all attendees to move from wishful thinking into meaningful action aiming to save our schools, which are still under financial pressure following government policy changes, and to put in place strategic plans to help young people with counselling.

The delegates appreciated the creative way in which the Stewardship report was presented by Mrs Catherine Anthony Boldeau as a bedtime story, together with members of the British Union Conference Stewardship Working Group, reflecting the two years since her appointment. They also appreciated the Stanborough Press report from Ms Elisabeth Sangüesa, Stanborough Press General Manager, which featured the large variety of resources the Press had produced over the quinquennium.

The three Union officers each highlighted different aspects of the Church's mission in their reports.



Tribute to Pastor Brooks

'I want to acknowledge the years of service Eglan has given to the British Union, the burdens he has carried, and his commitment to the mission of the Church. Public leadership often means that people see the decision, but few see the prayers, the pressures, the late nights and the personal costs. I want to acknowledge Pastor Eglan Brooks's service with gratitude. I pray that the same God who called him into His service and also sustained him throughout will guide him beyond this assignment into the next chapter of his life and ministry.'

DR DANIEL DUDA, PRESIDENT OF THE TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION

In his presidential report, the outgoing president, Pastor Eglan Brooks, used the familiar nursery rhyme 'There's a Hole in My Bucket' to illustrate the importance of faithful stewardship. He reminded delegates that effective mission depends on healthy leadership, transparent governance, trust and accountability. As he explained, 'If the governance, constitutional stewardship, safeguarding, transparency and trust leak – if the bucket leaks – then the mission work will suffer.'

Using the metaphor of the leaking bucket, Pastor Brooks observed that organisations can

easily become preoccupied with analysing problems rather than addressing them. 'The question is not who made the hole in the bucket, but who can repair it,' he said, challenging delegates to move beyond blame and focus on restoration. He concluded with a powerful spiritual appeal, reminding delegates that the Church has been entrusted with the living water of the Holy Spirit: 'I am done believing that the bucket cannot be repaired. . . I am done accepting less than God's best for this church. God can do anything through His church. We just need a few willing people who can see the hole in their bucket, and who pray, "God, can You repair the hole in my bucket?"'

The outgoing executive secretary,



Pastor Jacques Venter, talked about the future opportunities, such as to strengthen people management, risk management, information systems and membership support, while emphasising that leadership must always be exercised in a redemptive, prayerful and Christlike manner.

Treasurer Mr Wederly Aguiar demonstrated how careful financial stewardship enables mission, highlighting developments in property stewardship, digital treasury systems and long-term financial planning. 'Financial health allows stability and helps the Church to focus on mission; and behind the healthy finances of our Union are real people, faithful, generous and prayerful,' he said.

Throughout the reports, one theme remained consistent: every department, institution and resource exists to support the Church's mission of making disciples.

Respectful dialogue and shared purpose

As expected during a session

involving governance and elections, there were moments when discussions became robust, and delegates expressed differing viewpoints. However, the General Conference Vice President, Pastor Thomas Lemon, expertly chaired the Session, facilitating the smooth progression of the proceedings.

Questions surrounding reports, constitutional matters and committee processes demonstrated that delegates took their responsibilities seriously. At times the atmosphere became tense, yet what stood out was the respectful spirit with which disagreements were handled. Reflecting on the importance of maintaining Christlike relationships even when opinions differ, Pastor Jonathan Holder of the North England Conference (NEC) reminded delegates: 'We need the maturity to have conversations and disagree. We have dress codes, but not character codes.' His appeal served as a timely reminder that Christian leadership is measured not only by decisions made, but also by the spirit in which they are made.

Delegates listened carefully, exercised patience, and sought to treat one another with Christian courtesy. Differences of opinion did not overshadow their shared commitment to seeking God's will for His church. Throughout the proceedings, the values of respect, grace and cooperation remained evident.

This spirit reflected the repeated challenge from the devotional messages: that the Church's business should always be conducted in a manner worthy of Christ.

Selecting new leadership

A significant part of the Session focused on selecting leadership for the next quinquennium.

While delegates continued receiving reports, the Recommendations Committee met to prepare nominations for the Nominating Committee. During the formation of the Nominating Committee, delegates spent considerable time discussing the composition of the committee. Concerns were raised by Pastors Samuel Ngui (SEC) and Jonathan Holder (NEC), who questioned whether it was constitutionally appropriate for serving Conference presidents to be included on the Nominating Committee. Todd McFarland, General Conference Chief Legal Counsel and Session parliamentarian, explained that this practice is common in many parts of the world, although some delegates remained unconvinced that it aligned with the Constitution. Following further discussion and a short recess, the matter was resolved when the two Conference presidents voluntarily withdrew their names from consideration. Once approved by the Session, the Nominating Committee began its important work of prayerfully considering recommendations for leadership positions across the British Union Conference.

One of the most anticipated moments of the Session came with the election of the Union officers.

The delegates elected Pastor Kirk Thomas as the new president of the British Union Conference, succeeding Pastor Eglan Brooks. Dr Thomas assumes the role following



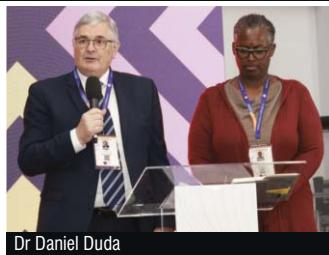
Pastor Eglan Brooks, Mr Wederly Aguiar, Pastor Jacques Venter

his service as President of the South England Conference (SEC) from September 2023 to the

present. He is a seasoned pastor with more than 30 years of pastoral experience, having previously served in the Inter-American Division before pastoring in the Willesden district of churches in West London. He was then called to serve as the Personal Ministries and Sabbath School Director in the SEC, where he set up the School of Evangelism before taking up varied roles in the British Union Conference, including Evangelism, Personal Ministries, Publishing, Sabbath School, Adventist Mission, Church Growth and Discipleship.

Pastor Emanuel Bran was elected as the new executive secretary, succeeding Pastor Jacques Venter. He had previously been serving as the NEC Executive Secretary, and before then as Welsh Mission President, prior to which he had been serving as a pastor in the NEC. Pastor Robert Csizmadia (Trans-European Division Executive Secretary) welcomed Emanuel, saying, 'Emanuel is an excellent team player who leads by example.'

Pastor Bran is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration (MBA), seeking to combine sound organisational leadership with a Christ-centred approach to ministry. He is passionate about helping people discover their God-given potential and believes that effective leadership is rooted in humility,



Dr Daniel Duda

integrity, collaboration, and empowering others.

Mr Wederly Aguiar was re-elected as Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Mr Aguiar has served in the role since 2021, providing financial leadership during the past quinquennium. He is a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (FCCA). He has served in financial leadership across the Church for more than two decades, including at Conference, Division and Union levels.

Reflecting on his re-election, Mr Aguiar

expressed gratitude for the opportunity to continue serving the Church and reaffirmed his commitment to supporting its mission.

'As we go forwards, we will continue to break down barriers to enable resources so that, ultimately, we can enable mission where it matters most – at local churches and in community hubs, serving the needs of all those around us.'

Mission leaders elected

The delegates also elected Mission leaders:

- The Irish Mission (IM) President: Pastor Adam Keough (re-elected) and the Irish Mission Executive Secretary: Pastor Ben Pontanar (re-elected).
- The Scottish Mission (SM) President: Pastor Obinnaya (Obi) Iheoma, who until now has been working as a pastor in the NEC (he succeeds Pastor James Botha).
- The Welsh Mission (WM) President: Pastor Jeremy Johnson, who until now has been working as a pastor in the Welsh Mission (he succeeds Pastor Max McKenzie-Cook, who had been serving as the interim WM president following Pastor Graham Allcock's retirement).

BUC departmental leaders

Also, two departmental directors

have been re-elected: Mrs Lorraine McDonald for the Education Department, and Mrs Sharon Platt-McDonald for the Health Department.

Furthermore, the delegates voted the Constitution Committee members as well as the BUC Executive Committee board members.

Due to time constraints, no other appointments were made, and a special virtual Session meeting will convene on 6 August, when the remainder of the departmental directors, associate secretary, associate treasurer and institution heads will hopefully all be voted. Complete lists of appointments will be in the edition of *BUC News* following the virtual session.

Looking beyond governance

One of the distinctive features of this year's session was the introduction of the Big Themes programme.

Designed to complement the governance aspects of Session, Big Themes created space for delegates to reflect on some of the most significant issues facing the Church today.

Presentations by Dr Laszlo Gallusz, Dr William Ackah and Dr Anthony WagenerSmith explored topics including proclaiming the three angels' messages in today's world, rebuilding trust within church communities, and responding faithfully to the challenges of contemporary society.

Rather than focusing solely on organisational matters, these presentations encouraged delegates to think carefully about how the Church can communicate the everlasting Gospel with hope, authenticity and compassion.

The programme concluded with an opportunity for delegates to offer recommendations to the incoming leadership team. The contributions reflected a genuine desire to strengthen the Church's mission and ministry, covering subjects such as safeguarding, leadership development, church property, transparency, discipleship, pastoral care and succession planning. Among the many thoughtful suggestions were these appeals:

'We need to have mission as a

standing agenda item on our Executive Committee meetings,' said Dr Eleazer Paul Dorairaj (SEC).

Vasile Chelban (IM) encouraged leaders to foster a culture of authenticity, saying, 'Don't be afraid to be honest when presenting reports. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable. Don't chase quantity, but quality.'

More than meetings

Alongside the formal business, delegates also had opportunities to visit exhibition displays presented by ADRA-UK, Newbold College of Higher Education, and the Stanborough Press; and the BUC Education Department featured an array of materials promoting our six Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Union. The displays showcased the diverse ministries supporting the mission of the Church, while the Stanborough Press provided delegates with opportunities to explore a wide range of Christian books and resources.

Throughout the three days, music played an important role in creating an atmosphere of worship, with the praise team leading delegates in singing and helping to maintain the spiritual focus of the Session.

Continuing the journey

Although many important decisions were made during the three-day gathering, the work of the Session is not yet complete. Therefore, the motion has been voted for the Nominating Committee to continue its work over the coming weeks before delegates reconvene virtually on 6 August 2026, at 7pm, to consider recommendations for the remaining departmental and institutional appointments.

As delegates returned to their churches and ministries across the British Union Conference, they did so having experienced not simply a business meeting, but a gathering that consistently pointed them back to Christ and His mission.

The repeated invitation to 'Walk. Love. Do' became more than the Session theme. It became a reminder that faithful leadership is measured not only by decisions made in committee rooms, but by lives that reflect the character of Jesus in every aspect of ministry.

Beginning with Christ: devotionals shape the spiritual journey of the Session

by Don Roberts, SEC Communication and Media Assistant

The Session opened with worship led by the praise team, followed by a season of prayer that immediately established the spiritual tone of the gathering. As delegates assembled each morning and evening during the Session, worship became far more than an introduction or conclusion to the day's proceedings. Before reports were presented, officers elected and decisions taken, the devotional messages consistently redirected attention towards the spiritual purpose behind every item of business.

Centred on the Session theme, 'Walk. Love. Do', the worship experiences challenged delegates to ensure that administration remained an expression of mission rather than an end in itself. The opening worship invited delegates to prepare their hearts before the Session commenced, and to approach the business of the Session with Christlike attitudes of love, humility and respect. Through Scripture, prayer and personal reflection, Catherine Anthony Boldeau, BUC Stewardship Director, and Linda Asare, South England Conference (SEC) Prayer Ministries Coordinator, encouraged delegates to walk faithfully with Christ, resolve differences, pursue reconciliation, extend forgiveness, and recommit themselves to God's mission.

Serving as devotional speaker throughout the first four worship services, Dr Nicardo K. Delahaye, Executive Secretary of the Northeastern Conference in the United States, built a series of messages around one central conviction: organisational effectiveness can never replace spiritual dependence.

Drawing from Mark 9; Micah 6; Psalm 46; and Matthew 14, Delahaye explored spiritual power, justice, humility, unity and trust in God. While each sermon focused on a different biblical passage, together they formed a consistent appeal for delegates to look beyond procedures and policies to the Church's primary purpose. 'The primary topic on our agenda ought to be how we reach lost souls with the Gospel of Jesus Christ,' he reminded delegates during the opening devotional.

Throughout the Session, Delahaye warned against replacing authentic spirituality with activity, urging delegates to lay aside pride, hidden agendas and division in favour of humility, prayer and dependence on God. He also reminded them that church leadership is ultimately about people rather than structures, describing justice as 'love in action' and encouraging mercy to become a daily way of life.

'The meeting exists for the mission,' he said. 'The church does not exist to protect the institution. The institution exists for the mission.'

His final message encouraged delegates to keep their eyes fixed on Christ amid uncertainty, assuring them that 'the presence of the storm does not mean the absence of Jesus.'

The concluding morning worship was led by Pastor Anthony WagenerSmith, former Mission director of the Trans-European Division, who challenged delegates to examine what truly holds first place in their lives. Preaching from Exodus 32, he warned that even good things can become idols when they replace wholehearted dependence on God.

Across the five worship experiences, a clear message emerged: the business of the Church has lasting value only when it advances God's mission through people who walk faithfully with Christ, love others, and serve with humility.

Pastor Kwesi Moore appointed as SEC President

On 12 July 2026, subsequent to Dr Kirk Thomas's appointment as President of the British Union Conference, the South England Conference (SEC) Executive Committee chose Pastor Kwesi Moore, who has been serving as the SEC Ministerial Association Secretary since 2023, to fill Dr Kirk Thomas's previous role as President of the SEC. May God bless both Pastor Moore and the SEC under his leadership.



BUC Session delegates elect and re-elect Mission presidents for Ireland, Scotland and Wales

by Andrew Puckering



Pastor Adam Keough & Pastor Ben Pontanar



Pastors Kirk Thomas, James Botha & Max McKenzie-Cook

Back in October 2021, Pastor James (or 'Jimmy') Botha was elected Scottish Mission President, taking over from Pastor Paul Tompkins, who was retiring. Pastor Botha led the Scottish Mission for five years until the Session this July, working at the Mission office alongside his wife Cedrene with the motto 'Gratefully received, abundantly shared'.

Also in October 2021, Pastor Graham Allcock became President of the Welsh Mission, taking over from Pastor Emanuel Bran, who at that time became North England Conference Executive Secretary. Pastor Allcock had previously worked for Adventist Frontier Missions, and before that he had pastored churches in the NEC. He retired in April this year, following which Pastor Max McKenzie-Cook, who was then British Union Conference Associate Executive Secretary, took on the additional role of Interim Welsh Mission President until the Session this July, when Pastors Obinnaya ('Obi') Iheoma and Jeremy Johnson were elected to serve as Presidents in the Scottish Mission and the Welsh Mission respectively.

Pastor Obi, who originally trained as a petroleum engineer, has a deep faith, academic rigour, and a heart for people – widely known for his chaplaincy work and his



Pastor Obinnaya Iheoma



Pastor Jeremy Johnson

bread-baking ministry, he has served as a pastor to churches in Scotland, the North England Conference and the South England Conference, as well as Area 5 Field Secretary. Following his election as Scottish Mission President, he said, 'I am hoping that we will focus on

just three things: prayer, people and mission. Let us be like the city on the hill. Let us be a mission that has been commissioned by God Himself. Let's walk together as one.'

Pastor Jeremy Johnson had previously worked in logistics, but, after graduating from Newbold, he served congregations in the Midlands, London, the Home Counties and Wales. A preacher of the Word and a pastor with approachability, he has displayed compassion, an ability to connect across generations and cultures, and a warm heart for people. Now, as Welsh Mission President, he says, 'I can only ask that we as a mission field utilise our many talents and skills to make God known. I look

forward to working with my many ministerial colleagues and members of our churches as we spread the good news of God's amazing grace throughout the regions of Wales.'

In the Irish Mission, Pastor Adam Keough continues serving as President, having been re-elected at this year's BUC Session. It's a role he has held since 1 September 2024, when he replaced Pastor Dan Serb, who accepted a call to serve as Vice-Principal of Newbold College of Higher Education, from which Pastor Keough graduated. Pastor Keough has served in the Irish Mission for twenty-two years as a pastor as well as Youth Sponsor, Executive Secretary and President. He loves to see others flourish, both spiritually and personally, and is particularly passionate about developing leaders, empowering church members, and creating a healthy organisational culture where mission can thrive.

Likewise, Pastor Ben Pontanar was re-elected to serve as Irish Mission Executive Secretary, a role he too has held since 2024. He has been sharing God's Word since he was a child in the Philippines, and served as a literature evangelist, Bible worker, and Head of Theology at South Philippine College before coming to serve as a pastor in the Irish Mission in 2008. He is passionate about what he considers 'the heart of Christianity and Adventism: grace and hope'.

Irish Mission Session charts course for mission, growth and discipleship

by Pastor Sam O. Davies, BUC Communication and Media Director



Approximately 100 delegates and invitees attended the Irish Mission Session at the City North Hotel in Gormanston on Sunday 24 June. Pastor Eglan Brooks, then British Union Conference President, gave them a powerful challenge to set the tone for the day: if the church is to fulfil its God-given mission in the years ahead, transformation must begin not with structures or strategies, but with hearts and minds renewed by Jesus. Pastor Brooks's message was followed by a season of prayer led by Pastor Sam O. Davies, BUC Communication and Media Director, seeking God's guidance for the Session. Proceedings were then opened, with Pastor Jacques Venter, then BUC Executive Secretary, serving as parliamentarian.

Four newly organised congregations were officially recognised – Portlaoise, Drogheda, Drumcondra and Tralee. The Mission has expanded significantly over recent decades, and now comprises 34 congregations, including seven in Dublin.

In his report, Irish Mission President Pastor Adam Keough testified of God's leading and members' collective efforts. He paid tribute to former leaders, including the former president, Pastor Dan Serb, whose decade of leadership contributed significantly to the Mission's development. The report also highlighted several strategic developments, including the establishment of Hope Media Ireland.

Irish Mission Executive Secretary Pastor Ben Pontanar acknowledged the Mission's challenges in operating across two legal jurisdictions: the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. This means working within different regulatory, charitable and governance frameworks. Delegates heard updates regarding ongoing efforts to establish registration structures in Northern Ireland while maintaining compliance with both civil and church requirements.

However, Pastor Pontanar repeatedly emphasised that governance structures exist to support the Mission rather than define it. While policies, procedures and legal frameworks are necessary, the church is primarily a movement of faith dedicated to making disciples and preparing people for Christ's return.

Delegates also received a comprehensive report from Mr Aftab Barki, the BUC-appointed Treasurer, which revealed a healthy financial position and sustained growth in income, driven by member faithfulness, population growth, and the successful adoption of digital giving platforms. Delegates heard how the Mission has reduced its dependence on appropriations and strengthened its contribution to the global church.

A major focus of the Session was the global OneVoice27 initiative, a worldwide evangelistic project marking the 2,000th anniversary of the baptism of Jesus. Presentations highlighted plans for a coordinated proclamation through television, radio, social media and digital platforms. Delegates were challenged to support the initiative and prepare their local congregations to receive and nurture those who respond. As media efforts sow Gospel seeds on an

unprecedented scale, local churches must be equipped to provide Bible studies, discipleship pathways, small groups, and welcoming church communities capable of supporting spiritual growth.

The Session devoted significant time to shaping the future. Collaborative planning exercises centred on the Mission's long-term discipleship framework: 'Rooted in Christ, Connected in Love, Sent in Mission'. Working groups explored practical recommendations for strengthening spiritual formation, cultivating healthy relationships, and expanding community engagement. The framework seeks to balance personal spirituality with active mission and discipleship. Many delegates welcomed the opportunity to shape the Mission's direction.

As the Session closed, Pastor Keough reminded delegates that the Mission's success would be measured by members remaining rooted in Christ, connected in love, and committed to God's mission. Incoming leaders and Executive Committee members were invited forward for a dedicatory prayer, and Pastor Brooks committed the Mission to God's continued care.

The Nominating Committee report voted by the delegates:

Departmental sponsors: Adventist Community Services (Helena Kunova); Children's Ministries (Priscila Nascimento de Paula); Church Growth/Evangelism (Pastor Damieon Lewis); Family Ministries (Ruth Rainu); Health Ministries (Elmien Ellis); Men's Ministries (Pastor Tiago Rossendy); Media and Communications (Deborah Lessa); Associate, Media and Communications (Iain Irvine); Prayer Ministries (Isaac Krofa); Risk Management (Jeason Kanagaraj); Safeguarding NI (referred to incoming Executive Committee); Safeguarding ROI (Nirmal Gomba); Stewardship (Pastor Florin Iacob); Women's Ministries (Luciana Riges); Youth and Pathfinders (Jefferson Melki); Possibility Ministries (referred to incoming Executive Committee).

Executive Committee: Pastor Florin Iacob, Heather Robinson, Josephat Mhondiwa, Nataliya Didkivska-Zasymova, Philani Dube, Shirley Stephenson, Wagner Ruckdeschel, Pastor Todd Frias, Pastor Vasile Chelban, Pastor Adam Keough, Pastor Ben Pontanar, Aftab Barki, Pastor Eglan Brooks, Pastor Jacques Venter, Wederly Aguiar.

THIS ARTICLE WAS FIRST PUBLISHED ON THE BUC WEBSITE.



Left to right: Dr Julian Thompson, Dr Tihomir Lazic, Dr Laurence Turner, Dr Laszlo Gallusz, Dr Ivan Mianov

Dr Laurence Turner honoured by Newbold College

One of the most poignant events during the weekend of 26-28 June 2026, celebrating the 125th anniversary of Newbold College of Higher Education, took place on Sabbath afternoon. Dr Laurence A. Turner, Principal Lecturer Emeritus in Old Testament Studies at Newbold College, firstly delivered a very interesting and challenging lecture, 'God's Journey Through the Old Testament'.¹ Then, unbeknown to Dr Turner, Dr Daniel Duda, President of the Trans-European Division, presented a brief academic biography of Dr Turner during his more-than-four-decades-long teaching and researching academic career and announced the presentation of a festschrift. Dr Laszlo Gallusz, Head of the Department of Theology and Mission at Newbold College, invited the lecturers from the department to the stage, where Dr Ivan Milanov, Senior Lecturer in Old Testament Studies, Dr Turner's doctoral student and editor of the festschrift, presented Dr Turner

with the monograph.

The book, published by Newbold Academic Press, celebrates the 32nd anniversary of the distinguished teaching and researching achievements of Dr Laurence Turner while at Newbold College. The title, *In the Beginning Was the Plot*, is an homage to Dr Turner's pioneering work in utilising narrative criticism as an interpretative tool for understanding the book of Genesis within the Seventh-day Adventist scholarship. Twenty-four scholars from higher-education institutions across Europe, the USA and Australia, many of them colleagues and former students of Dr Turner, have each contributed a chapter to this volume. The monograph is divided into four major sections: Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Systematic Theology Studies and Practical Theology Studies. Each author has attempted to address one aspect of Dr Turner's academic interests: narrative criticism, interpretation of the Bible and homiletical delivery. The readers will be able to dive deep in the latest

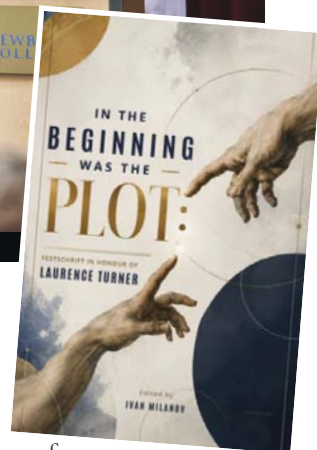
scholarly output on issues of narrative critical

interpretations of the Bible, interdisciplinary approaches to the biblical text, explorations in epistemology and hermeneutics, pastoral reflections and homilies. In addition to this, the volume presents the biographical and bibliographical data of Dr Turner's career, along with tributes from Dr Turner's closest family members and the contributors.

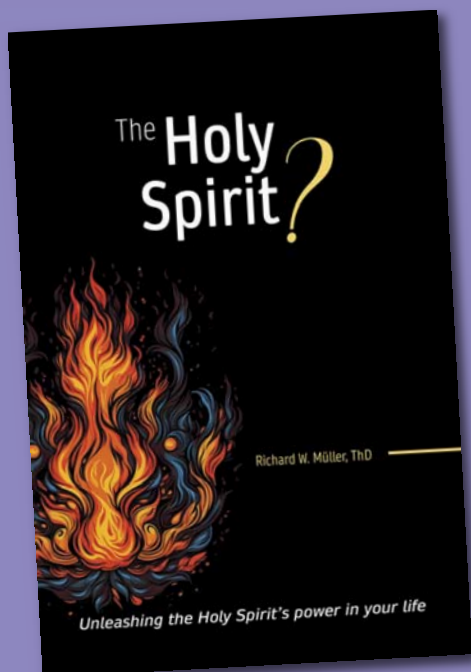
The presentation of the festschrift took Dr Turner by surprise, which had been the purpose of the publisher and authors of the chapters from the time when the idea was conceived. His first comment, made more for himself but loud enough to be heard to those closer to him, was: 'I feel as if I have received an Oscar.' Clearly emotional, Dr Turner took some time to utter only two words: 'Thank you.' However, we, his colleagues and former students, feel much more grateful to him for his wisdom and care.

DR IVAN MILANOV

¹<https://www.newbold.ac.uk/125years/>



The Book of the Month



The Holy Spirit? Unleashing the Holy Spirit's power in your life

The Holy Spirit is often spoken of yet frequently misunderstood. Who is He truly? What is His divine nature and mission? And what can we discover about Him from the very book He inspired – the Holy Bible?

In this captivating and accessible journey, Dr Richard Müller, a Seventh-day Adventist doctor of theology who has served in many countries throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa, guides you through the richness of Christian history and the depth of Scripture to reveal the Spirit's powerful, redemptive and transformative work. Experience how the Holy Spirit moves for us, in us and through us – leading hearts to Jesus Christ and glorifying God the Father.

This book will deepen your understanding, strengthen your faith, and ignite your desire to walk daily with the Holy Spirit.



To order this excellent book for yourself or to give it as a gift to someone you care about, telephone 01476 591700 (8.30am-5.30pm, Monday-Thursday) or visit www.lifefsourcebookshop.co.uk.

Fight, flight . . . or faith?

by Dara Dare



The 'fight or flight' response is an automatic physiological reaction that occurs when we perceive a threat to our safety or survival. We experience it more often than we realise: the racing heart when something suddenly startles us, the sweating palms before a big presentation, or the instinct to either shout back during an argument or withdraw to avoid confrontation.

While our bodies may be wired for fight or flight, Scripture often points to a different response.

For a long time, I was terrified of dogs (and occasionally still am). I remember one incident when a dog was walking towards me on a narrow walkway. Without thinking, I jumped straight onto the road – without checking for dangers such as a bus pulling into the nearby stop. In that moment, my instinctive response to fear could easily have created a far more dangerous situation.

Sometimes our natural response to pressure pushes us to act impulsively, creating more chaos than calm.

Think of people sinking deeper into quicksand because they panic and struggle, afraid they will drown. In reality, quicksand is a water-saturated mixture of sand and water that behaves like a solid until it is disturbed. Once agitated, it becomes more liquid and loses its ability to support weight. The more a person thrashes and struggles, the harder it becomes to escape.

In Psalm 40:1-3, David offers a different response to despair. He describes being in a pit; yet, instead of reacting impulsively, he 'waited patiently for the Lord' (verse 1, NIV). God lifted him out of the 'slimy pit, out of the mud and mire', and then set his 'feet on a rock' and gave him 'a firm place to stand' (verse 2, NIV). God then concluded by placing a new song of praise in his mouth.

David chose stillness. He surrendered his struggle to God. His deliverance did not come through his own frantic effort, but through God's faithfulness.

When we find ourselves in life's pits or quicksand moments, our wisest response is not to panic, but to trust. The God who lifted David from the mud and mire is still in the business of rescue today. Sometimes the most powerful response to fear is not to fight or flee – but to have faith and wait for God to lift us onto solid ground.



Honouring the past, preparing for the future: Newbold marks 125 years Equipping generations for faithful service and mission

by Pastor Joe Philpott, *Trans-European Division Associate Communication Director*

A long familiar pathways, former classmates greeted one another with embraces and laughter at Newbold College's 125th Anniversary Celebration from 25 to 28 June 2026. But the event brought more than just treasured memories: the college repeatedly turned its attention to the future, asking how Adventist higher education can continue to prepare pastors, teachers, missionaries and leaders to serve an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world.

The anniversary weekend brought together church leaders from across the General Conference (GC) of Seventh-day Adventists, the Trans-European Division (TED) and beyond, as well as alumni, former principals, lecturers, students and members of the local community. Through worship, historical reflection, academic discussion and celebration, one message emerged consistently: in a changing world, the college's mission remains constant.

The anniversary celebrations began on Thursday evening with a special opening service led by Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, GC Education Director, before alumni gathered on Friday to reconnect with former classmates, lecturers and friends. A cream tea and afternoon conversation with former Newbold principal and former Andrews University president Andrea Luxton provided an opportunity to reflect on the college's history and consider the enduring influence it has had on generations of students.

Speaking about her journey from student to lecturer and eventually principal, Luxton described Newbold as foundational to her own ministry, reflecting on the changing landscape of Adventist higher education while emphasising that institutions such as Newbold must continue adapting without losing sight of their spiritual purpose.

That balance continued throughout Friday evening's alumni

vespers. David Trim, Director of the Office of Archives, Statistics and Research at the GC and himself both a former student and faculty member, guided attendees through Newbold's journey from its beginnings as Duncombe Hall College in 1901 to the international institution it is today. Despite many changes, Trim observed that one defining characteristic has remained unchanged: Newbold exists to prepare people to share the Gospel.

One of the stories he highlighted was that of George D. Keough, one of Newbold's earliest missionary graduates, who accepted an unexpected appointment to Egypt, where he learnt Arabic, immersed himself in local culture, and built authentic relationships. Rather than remaining socially distant, Keough intentionally lived among the people he served, earning their trust before sharing his faith. His ministry, Trim suggested, reflected the Christ-centred approach to mission that Newbold has sought to cultivate throughout its history.

The evening also recognised those whose leadership helped shape the college's story, and awards were presented to the families of Roy Graham and George D. Keough. Taken together, the day's events highlighted that Newbold's history is not simply measured by its buildings, programme offerings or anniversaries, but by the countless lives it has helped prepare for service to God.

Sabbath morning invited attendees to consider the college's future. Under clear blue skies, alumni and guests dispersed across the campus for panel discussions exploring some of the most pressing questions facing Adventist theology, education and mission today, examining how theological education can equip leaders for an



increasingly secular society while remaining faithfully rooted in Scripture. Among the topics were twenty-first-century theology, artificial intelligence, and Christian witness in secular Europe.

Meanwhile, the Divine Service reminded attendees that Newbold's purpose extends beyond academic excellence. Throughout its 125-year history, the college has sought to prepare people not simply for careers in ministry, but for lives centred on Christ.

The service brought together leaders from across the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, including GC President Erton Köhler; Magdiel Perez-Schultz, Assistant to the GC President; GC Vice President Audrey Andersson; a former GC president, Jan Paulsen; Jeffrey Brown, GC Associate Ministerial Director and Associate Editor of *Ministry* magazine; TED President Daniel Duda; other TED officers and directors; British Union Conference leaders; and Conference and Mission presidents, as well as alumni, students and members of the local community.

Preaching from Daniel 2, Köhler reflected on God's faithfulness throughout history, inviting the congregation to continue God's mission with the same courage and conviction. Closing his sermon with a personal appeal, Köhler reminded listeners that God's calling remains unchanged: 'Don't forget your dream. Remember that the One who called you is with you.'

Saturday evening's service brought together music, recognition and vision, acknowledging both the

individuals who have helped shape Newbold's history and those responsible for carrying its mission forwards.

Principal Dan Serb used the occasion to recognise the partnerships that have sustained the college throughout its history. Representatives from the General Conference, Trans-European Division, British Union Conference and other church entities were presented with commemorative coins as expressions of gratitude, and former principals, including Paulsen and Luxton, were also recognised for their contributions.

Paulsen said the college's influence extended far beyond its campus. Throughout decades of international ministry, he had repeatedly encountered church leaders whose foundations had been laid at Newbold. 'So many I met whose roots were firmly established at this institution. . . . You made them servants for God and for the church.'

Audrey Andersson delivered the plenary address, highlighting Newbold's ongoing role in preparing people for faithful service and reminding attendees that Newbold's mission remains connected to the needs of the church and the world.

One of the weekend's most significant announcements was the launch of Newbold Connect, a new digital learning platform designed to make Newbold's distinctive approach to faith-integrated education accessible well beyond the College campus. Just as previous generations responded creatively to the mission needs of their time, Newbold is seeking fresh ways to equip today's church for mission.

Newbold Awards Ceremony 2026

On Sunday 28 June, students, church leaders and civic representatives gathered to celebrate the achievements of the graduating class of 2026, marking the conclusion of the anniversary celebrations. The annual awards ceremony recognised graduates who had successfully completed programmes offered through the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, alongside two Doctor of



Ministry graduates who had completed their degrees in partnership with Andrews University. Degrees and awards ranged from the Bachelor of Arts degree (with honours) in Biblical and Pastoral Studies to Master's degrees, postgraduate certificates and doctoral qualifications.

Reflecting on the occasion, Principal Dr Dan Serb noted, 'In receiving their awards, [our graduates] were joining a fellowship spanning 125 years and stretching across every continent. We are immensely proud of each of them, and we pray for the Lord's guidance and blessing as they carry Newbold's legacy forward in service to God, the church, and the wider community.' He also reaffirmed the college's commitment to 'holistic ministerial and theological education that forms not just the mind, but the whole person, spiritually grounded, intellectually rigorous and practically equipped for ministry in a complex world. . . . We are founded in faith and forged in purpose, and we're moving forwards together.'

Next, the Mayor of the Borough of Bracknell Forest, Councillor Peter Frewer, spoke warmly of the college's place within the local community, drawing on his own experience delivering post to the campus for many years. Frewer said that Newbold enjoys widespread respect among local residents. 'I can't tell you how well loved Newbold is in the local community, how well respected the college is. The students are so well-liked and respected, and they're welcomed everywhere they go. There is an unshakable bond between the college and the community. We are so proud to have you as partners, as residents and as part of this community. We are all

looking forward to working with you for the next 125 years.'

Before introducing GC President Dr Erton Köhler, Dr Daniel Duda, Trans-European Division President, reflected on the purpose of Christian education and encouraged graduates to embrace lifelong learning, noting that 'the best leaders never stop learning' – they remain 'curious', 'humble' and 'teachable'.

'Serious thinking can be an act of worship.' He challenged graduates to see their qualifications 'as a sign of a new beginning'.

Drawing from Exodus 4, Köhler centred his address on God's question to Moses: 'What is that in your hand?' He reminded graduates that God works through ordinary people willing to place their gifts in His service: 'I believe that you have a calling in your hands. God placed you here, shaped you here, and now He's sending you from here.'

Köhler observed, 'It is easy to criticise . . . but tearing down is not wisdom. It is not even courage. Real courage is picking up the stones and building something.' He urged them to use their skills 'where they are most needed, not only where they are most rewarded', before concluding by encouraging graduates to remain focused on the Church's mission: 'God does not need great resources. He needs available hands.'

Responding on behalf of the graduating class, BA (Hons) in Biblical & Pastoral Studies graduate Alastair Boyd paid tribute to lecturers and staff; thanked fellow students, families and God for their support; and reflected on the friendships, encouragement and spiritual growth experienced during his years at Newbold: 'Being a Newbold student has truly been the greatest pleasure of my life.'

The ceremony also included the presentation of Newbold's Service Award to Adam Best and Leslie Dixon in recognition of their outstanding contribution to campus life and service to the wider church community during their five years as students.

This article was first published as two separate articles on the TED website.



DINNER



Stew Peas with Spinners

This is my vegan version of a Jamaican classic. Spinners are a type of dumpling made from flour and water, often added to soups and stews in Jamaican cuisine.

Stew

- 1 Put the **soaked kidney beans** and **garlic** together in a pan and boil until the beans are tender (about an hour and a half).
- 2 Add the **coconut milk**, **spring onions**, **scotch bonnet pepper** (very hot red chilli peppers – if using), **thyme** and **seasonings** and simmer for 40 minutes.

Spinners

- 1 Put the **flour** and **salt** in a medium bowl.
- 2 Add enough **water** to bind, then work the mixture with your hands to make a stiff dough.
- 3 Roll it into slim, inch-long pieces.
- 4 Drop the spinners into the stew, cover and cook for around 20 minutes.
- 5 Mix the three tablespoons of **flour** with the four tablespoons of **water**, then add to the stew and stir.
- 7 Boil until the stew thickens,



Shopping list

Kidney beans – 2 cups (370g; 13 oz), soaked overnight
Garlic – 3 cloves
Coconut milk – 2 cups (500ml; 1 pint)
Spring onions (scallions) – 2, chopped
Thyme – 3 sprigs
Pimento seeds – 6, crushed
Season-all – 2 level tsp
Salt and pepper – to taste
Flour – 3 tbsp
Water – 4 tbsp

For the spinners:

Flour – 1 cup (150g; 5 oz)
Salt – ½ tsp
Water to bind

Taken from *Cooking with Kids*.

To purchase yours, follow this link: <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/cooking-with-kids-paperback/>

Armour of God (Ephesians 6)

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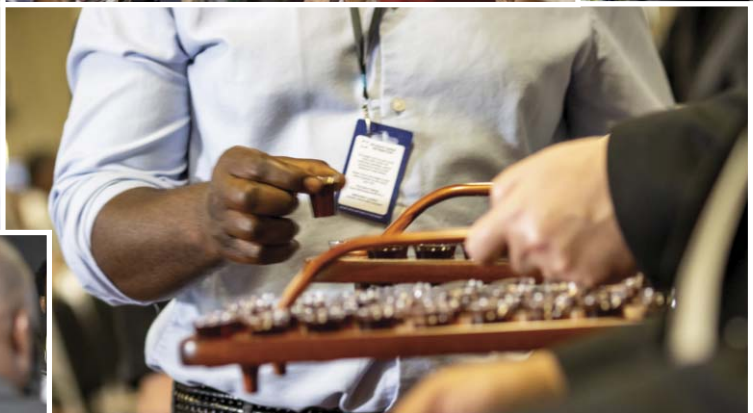
ARMOUR
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DARKNESS
 HELMET
 PERSEVERANCE
 PRINCIPALITIES
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‘Rediscovering Seventh-day Adventism’ – North England Conference Camp Meeting 2026

by Charlene Martin and Gabrielle Smith-Strachan



Those attending for the first time, as one delegate shared, were excited to learn new

where they could not only sit and listen, but lead conversations on what impacts their identities in the world they live in. Encouraging these conversations was Pastor Adam Ramdin, who presented to the teens the need to ‘find a purpose greater than themselves’. Pastor Steven George, the youth speaker for the week, discussed service, participation and pouring our worship out to God. Additional presentations following the theme of discovering who the youth are in Christ ensured a deep understanding of what their lives have been made for. The youth and teens also enjoyed spending time together off site, taking part in various activities.

The adults were blessed to have Pastor John Lomacang as the main speaker, pastor of Thompsonville Seventh-day Adventist Church and Director of World Evangelism for 3ABN. Pastor Lomacang ministered through song and presentations for the delegates to discover personally what Adventism is, and to become ‘sons and daughters of God’. The

For those attending, this was not just another year of any event. The North England Conference (NEC) 2026 Camp Meeting took place at the Yarnfield Training and Conference Centre from 27 to 31 May. Attendees returned to spend time delving into truths that some may have been taught but that others may have been hearing for the first time under the theme ‘Rediscovering Seventh-day Adventism – Part 2’. What was in store for the delegates over the week was conscientiously planned and delivered by the NEC to build a deeper understanding of identity. Those who attended the previous year would continue to rediscover who they are biblically, uncovering truths by digging deeper to find out what God intended to be understood and lived, leading to revival. It equipped many to serve in the mission field, whether that be at home, work, school or further afield.

lessons that would be useful in spreading the Gospel back home. The excitement on their faces was evidence of this.

Part of that excitement was due to the array of guest speakers. Local pastors, presenters and international speakers came to take part in rediscovering Adventism. The Children’s Ministries Director, Bekezela Peters, along with her team, created a children’s programme entitled ‘Identity Lab’. The children discovered that they had been created by God for His purpose through songs, activities and presentations brought alive by Pastor Wesley Bishop, who himself enjoyed the science experiments that helped the children to understand the lessons.

Pastor Derek Simon, Youth Ministries Director, and Elder Horace Radcliff, Teens’ Ministries Director, worked together to ensure the youth and teens had a space



Pastor John Lomacang



Pastor James Rafferty



Bible is our guide to this understanding, which Pastor James Rafferty,

Director of Discipleship Ministry for 3ABN, taught in the daily Bible study hours. Pastor Rafferty took time to speak with all those who questioned him throughout the days at Camp Meeting, reiterating the importance of staying connected to Jesus.

Echoing the importance of this, Rise Rafferty, a registered dietitian and health educator, instructed attendees on how to ensure the body is well taken care of. Giving practical advice on how to sustain health in this ever-busy world, Sister Rafferty broached topics on the brain and the gut, two major parts of the body that can affect how we communicate with and respond to God. Learning how to communicate with and respond to God begins in the home; therefore, it was only fitting that Family Ministries speakers Dr

Zebbron and Dr Peggie Ncube each day discussed identity within the family. Dr Peggie shared the concept that 'planting seeds ready to be nurtured to bloom and flourish' is extremely important in the family setting, and indeed important for the wider church family, as the church works together to spread the good news of Jesus.

The family at prayer is a place of surrender to God, where sons and daughters can hear from God what they are to do. Delegates were able to attend early morning prayer sessions, and the NEC Prayer Room was available throughout the day as a quiet space for reflection and personal prayer.

On site, the Adventist Book Centre was accessible each day. Walking through the book centre were not only delegates to Camp Meeting, but also visitors to other conferences at Yarnfield, making the Stanborough Press display another great witnessing tool.

Yet another great witnessing tool

throughout the week was the praise team, led by Dionne Ray. The praise team ensured that songs were chosen to uplift and praise God, with words that spoke to the hearts of many. 'Don't forget the Sabbath' was the hymn to open the Communion Service, reminding us of the rest the Father calls us to. Tara Goddard presented the special item, which reminded us that nothing but the blood of Jesus can make us whole, which led beautifully into time when we shared in partaking of the emblems. That night the congregation were there to 'celebrate the blood of Jesus Christ'. Pastor Lomacang spoke on the importance of Jesus and how He has saved His people from their sins. Delegates partook of the emblems, the symbolic unleavened bread and unfermented wine, representing the sacrifice of Jesus – the bread as His body and the unfermented wine as His blood – without which there would be no forgiveness of sins.

Camp Meeting is a time to focus; a time to leave the disruptions of everyday life to learn, understand, and embed wisdom only given by God. While rediscovering Adventism, it is important to rediscover as individuals what commitment to God looks like each day. With the array of presentations throughout the week, delegates started to pinpoint the areas of their lives that needed changing, revamping and beginning. Delegates rediscovered their journey of faith.

Administration is ministry: building stronger churches through collaboration, stewardship and innovation

by Wederly Aguiar, *BUC Treasurer*



From 15 to 17 May 2026, more than 340 treasurers and clerks gathered from across the British Union Conference at the Leonardo Hotel, Hinckley Island, for the Local Church Treasury and Clerks' Conference. While much of the work of church clerks and treasurers is done behind the scenes, the conference served as a powerful reminder that faithful stewardship, accurate records, strong governance and effective systems are essential ministries that support the Church's mission and help local congregations to flourish.

In response to growing requests from across the field for greater support, training and collaboration, this year's conference intentionally brought treasurers and clerks together, reflecting the increasingly interconnected nature of their responsibilities. From membership administration and financial reporting to compliance, governance, communication and accountability, the work of clerks and treasurers often overlaps in ways that directly impact the effectiveness of local church ministry. Delegates expressed appreciation for the opportunity to better understand each other's responsibilities, share experiences,

and develop relationships with colleagues from across the British Union Conference.

Worship, prayer, music, singing, fellowship, learning and networking combined to create an environment that was both

professionally enriching and spiritually uplifting. Informal moments of connection during meals and breaks between sessions were highlighted as being just as meaningful as the formal programme itself.

The weekend's keynote speaker, Pastor Ian Sweeney, challenged attendees to view stewardship, service and accountability through a mission-centred lens. Healthy mission depends on healthy systems. Whether through stewardship, membership care, governance, compliance or digital transformation, strong administrative foundations enable local churches to focus more effectively on their mission to serve their communities and share the Gospel.

This theme was particularly evident in discussions surrounding the Adventist Church Management System (ACMS), which featured prominently throughout the programme – part of a broader vision to strengthen collaboration, improve data integrity, enhance security, and create more seamless connections between local churches, conferences, missions, unions and the worldwide church. Sherri Ingram-Hudgins, Director for Adventist Membership Systems at the General Conference, provided insight into the global infrastructure being developed to support membership systems across the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide. One particularly encouraging takeaway was the recognition that the British Union

Conference is helping to pioneer aspects of ACMS implementation within the global church – by actively engaging with the platform's development, testing and implementation, the UK is shaping systems that will support church administration for years to come.

The conversations throughout the weekend reflected growing enthusiasm for the opportunities that integrated systems such as ACMS and the 7me platform can bring to local churches, particularly in strengthening communication, improving accuracy, reducing duplication of effort, and supporting volunteers in their service.

Delegates participated in workshops covering treasury essentials, auditing, cyber security, GDPR, property management, stewardship, insurance and risk management, alongside dedicated ACMS and secretariat-focused sessions. The joint plenary experiences and specialised breakout sessions tailored specifically for treasurers and clerks ensured that delegates not only received role-specific training, but also developed a broader appreciation of how interconnected their ministries are.

The spirit of collaboration was evident among all those involved in the event's planning and delivery. Their commitment, professionalism and willingness to work together ensured a programme that was both highly practical and deeply meaningful. Deep appreciation is also extended to every presenter, workshop leader and speaker who contributed; as well as the many volunteers, administrative staff, technical teams, hospitality teams and support personnel; and, of course, the clerks and treasurers who attended – their faithfulness, dedication and willingness to serve are at the heart of healthy local church ministry.

'Save Me' – digital evangelism workshop

In preparation for the 'Save Me' youth campaign,* and in line with OneVoice27, Tottenham Lighthouse Church organised a digital evangelism workshop at 5pm on Sabbath 23 May at Edmonton church. The presenter was Elder Nicolae Boaghi, a digital creator from the East London Romanian church. The event was attended by youth and adults from other churches. Edmonton and Enfield Pastor Juan Carlos Patrick was also present. Further training will be provided online.

Before the presentation started, the Edmonton youth blessed attendees with a lively song service. Elder Boaghi shared his riveting testimony of how he accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour two years ago. He had developed skills over the years creating secular posts for social

media, and God now called him to use them to spread the Gospel.

To help us understand the digital landscape, Elder Boaghi shared some startling statistics:

- 5.6+ billion people use social media every day.
- People spend on average 4-7 hours in front of screens every day, with 2-3 hours spent just scrolling.
- Of the 16,000+ videos uploaded to social media every minute, only 0.6% guide people towards Jesus.
- Out of these 0.6% Christ-centred videos, only 0.02%, or three videos out of 16,000+, were sharing the Adventist message.

There is, therefore, a need to create powerful Christian posts – videos, Bible animations, youth testimonies, prophecy visuals, short films, children's animations, mission

projects, and so on – so that we can become influencers instead of just forwarding other people's posts.

With a social media video being able to

get 100,000 views in one day, it is the responsibility of the youth, blessed with wisdom and technology, to use it to spread God's Word to the world. No generation could share their testimony with all their family, friends, classmates, co-workers and associates in just one day until now. All it takes is posting a story on social media.

*The youth of Tottenham Lighthouse, Edmonton, Enfield and Leytonstone Churches have teamed up to organise an evangelistic campaign with the theme, 'Save Me'. The motto is IMPACT – Inspired Missionaries Proclaiming the Advent of Christ Today.

The 'Save Me' youth campaign started at Leytonstone on Wednesday 17 June, where it lasted until Wednesday 8 July. The other three churches had their campaign starting on Sabbath 18 July and lasting until Sabbath 1 August. There was a baptismal service on Sabbath 1 August. That same afternoon, all the churches attended Tottenham Lighthouse for a celebration concert to glorify God.

For more information, please visit: <https://sec.adventist.uk/events/save-me-youth-campaign>.

MAXINE DONOVAN, PRAYER LEADER



Welling youth in action

As a precursor to the Youth Week of Prayer, which was held from 22 to 28 March 2026, members of the Welling youth visited two nursing homes within the community on Sabbath 21 March. Led by Sister Amala and Sister Cathrine, the youth are being trained to recognise that love in action reveals what Jesus looks like. Residents and staff were tremendously blessed by the joyful singing, poetry and meaningful conversations.

From Sunday to Friday, the youth confidently demonstrated their gifts and talents by leading out in the nightly meetings. Under the theme 'Communion in Action', our dynamic youth speaker Pastor Darian Rouse from East Tobago presented the world with simplicity, clarity and power.

The week culminated with the youth day on Sabbath, themed 'Faith on Trial – Will You Stand?' From the opening moments of Sabbath School to the evening programme, the prosecutor, defence, judge and accused took their places in the courtroom scene. Elder Shirley Grant delivered the message for Divine Service with inspirational true stories alongside biblical accounts underscoring the reality that our youth are on trial. Our posture, whether we stand or bow, is intrinsically linked to our personal relationship with God.

Elder Shirley shared invaluable nuggets of truth, challenging us to stand firm in our faith. 'Don't trade your heritage for temporary things, your purity for pleasure, your purpose for popularity, or your identity in Christ for the admiration of the world.'

As the day drew to a close, it was evident that the youth were inspired and empowered to grow deeper in their faith and stand boldly for God. A faith that is continually growing and guided by the Holy Spirit will stand the test of time and make all the difference between here and eternity.

LESLIAN ELLIS, COMMUNICATION TEAM



Adventurer investiture at Winchester

On 7 March 2026, two years of hard work culminated in an investiture service at Winchester Church, where six young children had completed Adventurer badges as part of the Little Lambs course. It has been an exciting journey for them – learning new things about themselves, their families, their environment, their community and their God. Everyone in the congregation was very proud of these youngsters as Pastor Nathan Stickland handed them their certificates and awards. They are a precious part of our church family.

MARGARET ALEN



Brixton Adventurers and Pathfinders lead the way

'Pack your bags, everyone; we are on our way to Poland,' the Brixton Pathfinder director said to the club – but how did this come about?

The Pathfinder club at Brixton Church is considered to be just as important as any of the other church departments. Many children, having graduated from the Pathfinder club, have gone on to hold leadership positions in the church and elsewhere.

The club has deeply scriptural foundations, so everyone was excited when the Brixton Adventurers and Pathfinders entered the Area-level Bible Experience quiz held at Brixton on 10 January 2026. The competition was very strong, with Adventurers and Pathfinders from all churches taking part, studying hard to remember the contents of the Bible books. Although Brixton had entered these competitions before, they had never got to the finals. This year, however, both Brixton teams received first place.

The next stage was the South England Conference level held at Newbold College of Higher Education on 7 February – and, once again, Brixton Adventurers and Pathfinders received first place. The excitement began to grow as they moved on to take part in the Bible Experience at the British Union Conference level on 7 March. At the end of the competition, both teams were placed first, and word reached the church members, who thanked God for the victory.

Now it was time to travel to Poland, where they would represent Brixton at the Trans-European Division-level testing on 11 April. They were able to meet and fellowship with other club members. However, they never forgot their mission, and both teams again achieved first place. Could they go all the way?

The North American Division was the final stage of the competition, and it was held online under strict scrutiny on 18 April. The church prayed for success, and God heard our prayers, as both teams successfully came first among their peers. Our congratulations go to Micah, Esther, Preston, Timothy, Taraji, Biel and Benji from the Adventurer team, and Kai, Kerian, Jonelle, Angella, Anaya, Matthew and Ethan from the Pathfinder team. A big thank-you to the parents, coaches and Pathfinder leadership, and ultimately to God for what He has done.

VALERIE MOODIE

World Adventurer Day celebration at Welling Church

Welling Church joyfully celebrated World Adventurer Day on 16 May 2026. The day began with great excitement as two Adventurers, accompanied by one of our church elders, were given the special opportunity to ride in the mayoral limousine of the London Borough of Bexley. From beginning to end, the enthusiasm was unmistakable. The service commenced with a vibrant procession as the Adventurers, accompanied by the drummer, flag bearers, councillors and Pathfinders, marched into the church and recited the Adventurer Pledge and Law.

Councillor Christine Catterall, Mayor of Bexley, and her consort, Mr Dave Curtois, had graciously accepted our invitation to celebrate with us. During a question-and-answer session, the Mayor spoke briefly about her responsibilities and civic duties, providing the Adventurers with valuable insight into how they can become actively involved in community projects and develop as responsible citizens.

Under the overarching theme of 'Walking with Jesus', the congregation was reminded that the Christian journey is not always smooth and exciting. Rather, walking with Jesus is a thoughtful and sometimes challenging journey – one that may include disappointments along the way – yet it remains deeply rewarding and full of purpose.

Our young speakers, Munachimnso and Caleb, both aged 9, delivered inspiring messages that highlighted the importance of following Jesus daily. Their contributions added a special touch to the programme and demonstrated the spiritual growth and confidence being nurtured within our Adventurer club.

The celebration was a memorable occasion, filled with worship, learning, fellowship and a renewed commitment to walk faithfully with Jesus.

LESLIAN ELLIS

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Baptism in the Welsh Mission

On 30 May 2026, three baptismal candidates publicly declared their commitment to Jesus Christ through the sacred rite of baptism. Two candidates, Sister Vivian Asare and Sister Docea

Abena Bonsu, were from the Telford Ghana Seventh-day Adventist church, while Sister Nandi Ncube was from the Wrexham company.

The baptismal service – held at Abraham Darby Sports Centre, Madeley, led by the Interim Welsh Mission President, Pastor Max McKenzie-Cook – was a joyous occasion that brought glory and honour to God. Through this public profession of faith, these sisters have chosen to begin a new life in Christ and become part of the family of believers.

It is our prayer that these newly baptised members will remain steadfast in their walk with God, grow in their faith, and share the love of Christ with others. We also pray that the mission of reaching souls in North Wales will continue to prosper as God blesses the efforts of His people in spreading the Gospel. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Tottenham Lighthouse: mission-focused with baptisms

On Sabbath 23 May 2026 there was rejoicing in heaven and at Tottenham Lighthouse Church as three precious souls – Meeti Tolera, Lloyd Edgar and Herald Clennon – publicly declared their allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ by stepping into the watery grave of baptism. Pastor Michael Hamilton conducted the baptismal service.

This was a very special day for the baptismal candidates. Sister Meeti, the youngest of the three, had studied with Elder Janette Joseph and waited over a year for her baptism. She was so happy that the day had finally arrived. Not only were her family members present, but also her friends. Two of her friends were



visibly moved by the baptismal service as their tears flowed freely.

Brother Lloyd Edgar had studied and prayed with his sister, who is a member of Stoke Newington Seventh-day Adventist Church. After a while, he made the decision to follow Jesus all the way. As Tottenham Lighthouse was local to him, he started visiting early on Sabbath mornings and could be seen sitting at the back of the church. Elder Rodger Charles and the rest of the church family made him feel at home. When Brother Lloyd heard that there was going to be a baptismal service, he jumped at the opportunity to be baptised.

Brother Herald Clennon had once been a Seventh-day Baptist but strayed from the Lord. He started attending a Sunday church with his wife 'to keep the peace', as he puts it, but he would not do any work on Sabbaths. One Sabbath, as he watched sermons on YouTube, the Holy Spirit convicted his heart as he listened to a message from Pastor Jermaine Johnson, President of the North Jamaica Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Brother Herald decided that he wanted to become an Adventist and shared the news with his wife. With his daughter's help, he discovered that Tottenham Lighthouse was his nearest church. He became a regular visitor, arriving early on Sabbath mornings. He was always given a warm welcome by the members. Brother Herald was keen to learn more about Christ, and Elder Brenda Rutherford studied with him. He too was excited when he heard there would be a baptismal service, but he faced a dilemma. Should he miss the baptism and go on a planned overseas trip with his wife, or miss the trip and get baptised? Although he would have loved to accompany his wife, Brother Herald purposed in his heart that this opportunity to get baptised would not miss him. Brother Herald stepped out of the pool with a broad smile on his face.

We see the state of the world, and the fulfilment of the signs that Jesus Christ foretold would happen in the last days. As members of God's remnant church, let us take the Great Commission very seriously. 'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age' (Matthew 28:19, 20, NIV). Amen.

MAXINE DONOVAN, PRAYER LEADER





Bountiful blessings at Balham baptism

'Dad, I want to be baptised, and I want you to baptise me!'

There are so many levels of joy compacted into that simple statement: joy in heaven that a soul is making a commitment to follow the Lord; and what joy for a father to hear that his son not only seeks to have a closer relationship with Jesus, but also wants his dad to be in the pool with him.

There was a real sense of celebration at Balham as bountiful blessings descended in commemoration of Christian Fuller's public declaration to give his life to Jesus in April this year. As the only candidate, the entire service was focused on his surrender, with his grandparents, uncles and aunts offering scriptures and words of encouragement, and of course his father, Pastor Anthony Fuller of Parkside Reading and The Hub, leading out. The entire membership of Balham, and the many supporters from Reading Parkside and The Hub, were charged with the responsibility of mentoring Christian and keeping him accountable, which all in attendance fervently embraced.

The personal and bespoke nature of the service was a great blessing, and it created such an intimate atmosphere that I think there is room for future baptismal services to explore the feasibility of incorporating programmes of a similar structure, if circumstances allow, especially where there are only a few candidates.

The service was truly a celebration of Christian's commitment to walk with God – an event of high praise, worship and fellowship, which left me eagerly anticipating the next baptism, not only in my local church, but across the conference.

MARK GREY, COMMUNICATION LEAD, BALHAM SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH



Profession of faith – Sister Ann Curriethers

On Sabbath 27 June 2026, there was rejoicing in heaven and joy among the saints as Sydenham Seventh-day Adventist Church welcomed Sister Ann Curriethers into fellowship on profession of faith. The service was solemn, dignified and beautifully led by Pastor Otis Lewis.

Family members and friends had travelled from far and near to witness this special moment in Sister Ann's spiritual journey. Pastor Lewis delivered a short but powerful sermonette based on Jeremiah 33:3, the scripture chosen by Sister Ann as her favourite text. He reminded the congregation that God sees the bigger picture and has a divine plan for restoration, even when life appears to be falling apart around us.

Following the sermonette, First Elder Carlisle Clarke reverently guided Sister Ann through each of our Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. The congregation erupted in joy as Sister Ann affirmed the baptismal vows with a deep, resonating voice that filled the sanctuary.

After this momentous step of faith, Sister Ann shared a moving testimony of how the Holy Spirit had led her to the Seventh-day Adventist Church after worshipping on Sundays for 29 years. Her words were a powerful, heartfelt testament to God's guiding hand.

To God be the glory. We praise God for the beautiful things He continues to do in our church family, and for the precious addition of Sister Ann Curriethers to our fellowship.

SYDENHAM SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH COMMUNICATION TEAM



Ystrad Mynach Family Fun Day

On 4 May, Bank Holiday Monday, God did it again!

Ystrad Mynach church members were going to hold their second family fun day for the community in the local park. The rain was pouring down. However, the members went forward in faith, praying that God would hold the rain clouds back again . . . and He did! The rain stopped, and rays of sunshine broke through the clouds.

The Ystrad Mynach members and friends had a wonderful and blessed day fellowshiping with a multitude of families and individuals from the community. They had a bouncy castle, football play,

children's arts and crafts, Cardiff Church's Pathfinders' drum corps and honours/activities (making their own Jesus keyrings), the smoothie bike, and free vegan burgers for everyone who turned up.

The feedback from the community was filled with appreciation. Local families expressed their gratitude, asked the church to come again, and asked what other activities the church is doing locally. Parents and children came to offer heartfelt donations for the free service they'd received.

The Reflecting Hope book stand with Bible study leaflets was visited by a few genuine seekers for God and the Bible, where church members had good conversations with them about how to better understand God's word, while others wanted to find out more about who we are and what Reflecting Hope is all about.

We praise the Lord for another blessed day where God was ministering to the hearts of many in our midst. Let us pray that the Lord will continue to bless and water the seeds planted in their hearts.

This day would not have happened without the support of volunteers from other churches in the Welsh Mission. Special heartfelt thanks go to Cardiff Church and the Pathfinders' team; Swansea and Newport church members; the Merthyr Tydfil church group; Pastor Jeremy Johnson; and everyone from Ystrad Mynach Church and friends. This has been a wonderful reminder of what God can do when churches come together in a united effort to make an impact in the villages and towns of Wales and its border counties. Let's continue to press on together with the Good News of Hope in Jesus until He comes again!

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

New church plant in Merthyr Tydfil

In 1800 the young Mary Jones walked 26 miles over the hills and valleys of North Wales in order to get a Bible. That inspiration has brought us throughout the ages and led us into the valleys of South Wales, where, after toil and labour, the Holy Spirit has guided a new church group of young families to be planted within the Welsh Mission, all having the same desire and passion – to share the Bible and its truths with the entire community.

The Merthyr Tydfil group was formally recognised as a church plant by the Welsh Mission Executive Committee in January 2026. Under the leadership of Pastor Jeremy Johnson, the group was formed by the mother church, Cardiff Central, assisted by Ystrad Mynach Church.

This young and vibrant church plant, the first in the Welsh Mission for ten years, is the start of a revival in the valleys of Wales. The group has already started planting seeds in the local community. The head elder, Tudor Bostan and his wife, Ana, have already opened their home to the local community children, holding weekly Friday night vespers and a Bible study for them, along with food.

We ask for your prayers and continued support for this church plant as they continue to spread the Good News and reflect the hope that we have in the coming of Jesus Christ.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Hearts and Hands ministry

For over twenty years, women from Crieff Seventh-day Adventist Church have met together on the first Sunday of the month to continue the ministry of Hearts and Hands. This blessed group began when Ruth Farrer, who has often been heavily involved in charity work within Romania, was contacted by the manager of one of the Romanian nursing homes seeking blankets for the residents' beds. Naturally, her heart was willing, although she wondered how she would be able to source enough free material. However, she and her sister, Dorothy Logan, made some phone calls and were delightfully surprised to receive a vast donation of fabrics for the cause.

Following this, Dorothy founded Hearts and Hands: where those with willing hearts use their hands to lovingly sew joyful patchwork quilts and cushions, which are then sent off to those in need. Initial recipients included nursing home residents and families involved with Perthshire Woman's Aid, but the ministry has grown, and their creations have been sent overseas to war-torn Eastern Europe, where civilians have been left without electricity or are living in tents due to their homes being destroyed during the war. The group has also linked up with Crieff's local charity, Blythewood, who assist with shipping the quilts/cushions to where they are most needed.

To this day, the fabric donations continue to come, enabling the group to keep making beautiful heartfelt creations. In an interview, Dorothy reflected on how she has 'never had to purchase fabric' for their work, stating that 'doors have continually opened, providing everything needed.' Additionally, involvement from the volunteers, who show up with their sewing machines



monthly, has never wavered. I myself, although lacking in skills, was able to sew a 'Lovingly made by Hearts and Hands' label to each of the wonderful quilts. It is amazing to me how far this ministry reaches, and it is evident that God is guiding this ministry, which Dorothy reports 'will continue for as long as the need remains, and as long as God calls them to serve'.

For many years the group has supplied quilts for Perthshire Woman's Aid, to be sent to women and children escaping domestic violence. The women hope and pray that each donation brings refuge and happiness to the recipients. Dorothy discussed a recent moment when she was contacted by a lady who had received one of these quilts many years prior. Knowing firsthand how it felt to receive a quilt during her time of need, this woman reached out to request quilts for a refugee centre in Glasgow.

Perhaps there are some people who feel their ministry is too small to make an impact – but, in the words of Dorothy Logan, 'You never know how far your help will go.' So step forward and use the gifts you have, and watch as God helps you to reach those who will benefit from your service and appreciate it the most.

MARIANN COWIN

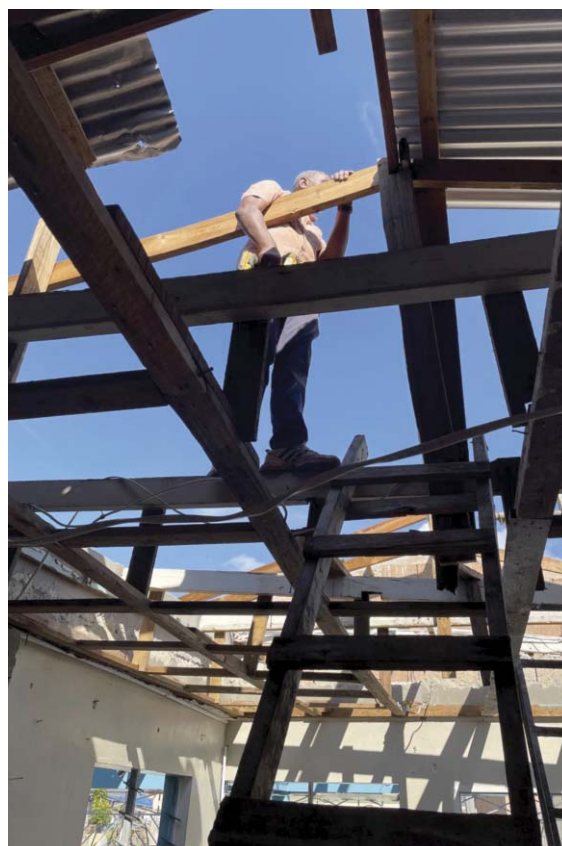
Project Hurricane Melissa accomplished

Ever since Jamaica was devastated by Hurricane Melissa, Elder Sunny Mullings from the Tamworth church has had a burden on his heart to help those displaced. He started a project aiming to ship barrels of food items, clothes and other essential things to the most needed areas of Jamaica. Initially he wanted to send five barrels over; but, because of the amazing generosity of Tamworth members, the community in and around Tamworth, and his work colleagues, Sunny was able to ship nine barrels of much-needed items. Some members also sent their own personal barrels. Not only were food, clothing, school supplies and much more donated, but Sunny also received financial support for other essential items.

Sunny spent three months in Jamaica, repairing damaged buildings and carrying out electrical work, before returning to the UK on 3 March 2026. Prayers were indeed answered. Together with help from the local people, he was able to distribute the donated items to the appropriate areas. Sunny's friend Alton from the Wolverhampton church shared the same burden as Sunny and spent three weeks with him in Jamaica, working on this great humanitarian project.

Elder Sunny is very grateful to all those who reached out to support him in his endeavours. We thank God for equipping him with the skills and all that he needed to help rebuild Jamaica and ease many burdens.

PAULINE NEWTON, COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



Klara walks a hundred miles for charity!

From 20 to 26 May, Klara Sokol, a trustee of the charity Kisii Junipers Purse of Hope, walked a hundred miles on the South Downs Way to raise funds for the charity. She said that she would be thinking of the children in Kisii, who have to walk in harsh conditions every day to attend school. The charity was founded by Rose Mogeni, a member of Exeter Church, to support the education of children beyond primary age. It is the responsibility of families to facilitate the education of their children in secondary school, but not every family is able to do this, because some children are orphaned, and others live in poverty. Kisii Junipers identify such children and support them by paying their school fees so that they can



progress to further studies or work where possible. Congratulations, Klara, on your achievement!

STELLA JEFFERY

Mission trip to Kenya yields converts and churches

On 25 March 2026, seven missionaries from the United Kingdom, led by Pastors Mario Phillip and Steve Palmer, embarked on a 12-day 'iCare so iShare' mission trip to Barasengo Village in Migori County, Kenya. What began as a journey of faith quickly became a powerful testimony of God's leading and transforming grace.

Within just one week of preaching, Bible teaching and community outreach, ninety-nine precious souls were baptised into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, including seven Pentecostal pastors. Additionally, three new Seventh-day Adventist congregations were established in the region.

This mission story, however, did not begin in 2026. More than six years earlier, Pastor Melkio Naranga, a Pentecostal pastor and church planter, came across an online sermon preached by Pastor Mario Phillip. Deeply moved by the message, he reached out with a sincere desire to study the Bible more thoroughly and discover deeper biblical truth.

For nearly three years, Pastor Melkio faithfully attended online Bible studies conducted by Pastor Phillip. During this time, the Holy Spirit led him into a fuller understanding of Scripture, including the biblical Sabbath. Convinced by the word of God, he courageously shared these truths with the members of his churches, many of whom embraced the Sabbath message alongside him.

On Sabbath 5 April 2026, Pastor Melkio, his entire family, fellow ministers and nearly one hundred believers publicly

declared their commitment to Christ through baptism into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Pastor Melkio's own ministry journey began in 1985 when he sensed God's call upon his life. Since then he has travelled extensively throughout Kenya and Tanzania, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, always seeking to serve God faithfully according to the knowledge he had received. Over the years, Pastor Melkio planted more than nine churches, three of which he continued to personally shepherd until this recent mission outreach. Despite financial hardship, uncertainty and opposition, Pastor Melkio persevered in ministry because he believed God had called him. At one point, even members of his family questioned how he could devote his life entirely to God's work, without a reliable source of income. However, God strengthened his resolve through an unexpected messenger – his young daughter – whose words encouraged him to surrender himself completely to God's service.

PASTOR MARIO PHILLIP



Downham Community revival series

From 2 to 9 May, on both Sabbaths, Sunday, Wednesday and Friday, Pastor Ray Patrick held a soul-enhancing revival series entitled 'The End Insight' at Downham Community Seventh-day Adventist Church. The messages came from Daniel and Revelation.

Pastor Ray Patrick spoke with power and spiritual conviction about getting ready for Jesus Christ's imminent Second Advent. The passion of his messages drew people from around the world on Zoom, and people came out in their numbers at Downham Church on both the Sabbath services.

At the end of the series, many confessed that they were blessed and ready to make a re-dedication and re-commitment of their lives to the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour from sin. Pastor Steve Roberts and Lay Pastor Christopher Williams attended the meetings and received a blessing from them.

We are thankful for Pastor Ray Patrick. May God's blessings be with him as he continues to minister for God.

ELAINE VICTOR, DOWNHAM CHURCH CLERK





Educating for eternity: celebrating the class of 2026 at Stanborough Secondary School

The graduation of the Stanborough Secondary School class of 2026 in June this year was a joyous celebration of achievement, growth, and the transformational power of Christian education.

Families, staff, governors, church members and friends gathered to recognise the accomplishments of our Year 11 students, as well as lives changed, character developed, and futures shaped through Christ-centred education.

Pastor Csizmadia, Executive Secretary of the Trans-European Division, whose own children attend Stanborough Secondary School, shared a heartfelt testimony about the positive impact the school has had on his family, reminding those present that Christian education nurtures not only academic excellence, but also spiritual growth, personal development, and a sense of purpose. At Stanborough, young people are encouraged to discover their God-given potential while being supported in their academic and spiritual journey.

Dr Sheila Luz challenged us to think beyond conventional measures of success, considering the value that education adds to individuals and society – such as the confidence students gain, the leadership qualities they develop, the compassion they demonstrate, and the faith that sustains them.

My first Seventh-day Adventist service

At last a Saturday came when I could go to the Seventh-day Adventist church in central Cardiff for my first ever attendance. I was impressed from entering to leaving over two hours later. I was greeted with many warm handshakes, then very enthralled by the singing of several songs of praise with five leading singers. Prayers preceded a perfectly rendered solo saxophone piece (with the music traced note by note on the large screens), leading into a very passionate sermon delivered with conviction. Final songs and prayers made me feel enlivened and ready to go back out into the troubled world. Then I was offered weekly contact and support, and also asked to stay to a communal lunch. The woes of my life were listened to, and sharing brings great relief. My personal view that all churches in the world are promoting good was propounded. I promised to make time to come again in a month, and I left elated, because this was a truly rewarding experience, and I could sense the good you are doing in the world.

ADRIAN WARNER, PHD

Every day, our teachers add value to the lives of our students by helping them grow intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Through worship, service opportunities, pastoral care and a Christ-centred curriculum, students are encouraged to become thoughtful, responsible and caring young adults.

Every child is created in the image of God and possesses unique gifts and talents. Our role is not only to help students achieve their academic potential, but also to guide them in developing strong values, a spirit of service and a personal relationship with Christ.

The class of 2026 celebrate not only their academic achievements, but the friendships formed, the lessons learnt, the challenges overcome and the character developed throughout their years at the school. As they move on to sixth-form studies, apprenticeships, university pathways and future careers, they carry with them the principles, values and faith foundations that have been nurtured during their time at Stanborough.

Christian education prepares young people not only for employment, but for service; not only for success, but for significance; not only for life in this world, but for eternity. We thank God for His guidance and blessings. We also thank our dedicated staff, supportive parents and church community, who partner with us in this important ministry.

DANIEL HOPA

Messenger

Volume 131 • 8 – August 2026

Editor: **Dusanka Rancic**
Design: **David Bell**

Proof reading: **Andrew Puckering**
Production and distribution: **Peter Oppong-Mensah**

COPY FOR No. 10 – 3 September 2026

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ABC Sales line: (01476) 591700
Mon-Thurs only, 8am-5.30pm.

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The Editor may alter, clarify, précis or expand articles sent to her if she thinks it necessary.
Published monthly on Fridays by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
For general enquiries, email: info@stanboroughpress.org.uk

Printed in the UK.

Visit the BUC website at:
www.adventist.uk
ISSN 0309-3654

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Aug 7	8.38	8.51	8.48	9.08	9.13
14	8.25	8.37	8.34	8.52	8.58
21	8.11	8.23	8.19	8.35	8.42
28	7.56	8.08	8.03	8.18	8.25
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