

An event for everyone

'There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

'At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises:

"Glory to God in the heavenly heights,
Peace to all men and women on earth who please him."

'As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the shepherders were impressed.' (Luke 2:8-18, *The Message*.)

'An event for everyone' . . . what an apt heading for the story of Jesus' birth. Eugene Peterson was inspired to choose it, for the birth of our Saviour all those years ago is just what God's angel said: 'a great and joyful event that is meant **for everybody, worldwide**. . .'. No race, culture, language, coalition or clique may claim custodial or distribution rights to what happened that night in Bethlehem. No nation or hemisphere – north, south, east or west – owns this event. It will always be an event for everyone. For you and yours, for me and mine . . . for that great collective 'Us' we call humanity.

Don't be afraid to elbow consumerism roughly aside this Christmas. Don't let it manage your festive season. Nimble sidestep its baubles, tinsel and flickering lights. Ignore its enticements . . . and in imaginative awe, wide-eyed and gaping, relive the launch of the great Redemption Story, just as the shepherders did.

We wish you such a Christmas!

Warmly,
The Editorial Team





Mental wellness – Part 2g

Mental health decline – research solutions

In this final episode addressing mental health decline we look at some holistic solutions arising from contemporary research.

Research demonstrates that, where mental health decline exists, specific interventions can enhance well-being.

In their 2016 publication, *Fundamental Facts about Mental Health*, the Mental Health Foundation highlights the following:

- Exercise can help improve mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and dementia.
- Good nutrition enhances mental health by maintaining a balanced mood and feeling of well-being.
- Art therapy involving the visual arts and dance helps to explore and articulate feelings and emotions, resulting in mental benefits.¹

Let's look now at some specific research findings:

Exercise:

A 2016 study by Carter et al. analysed 26 adolescents with depression who engaged in an exercise intervention of their choice. The results demonstrated that 72% had feelings of improved mood and enjoyment, with an associated reduction in depressive symptoms.²

The efficacy of specific exercises was reviewed in a 2014 study by Stanton and Happell.³ They found that aerobic exercises, such as treadmill use, walking or cycling for 30-40 minutes three times a week for a minimum of 12 weeks, were effective at improving mental health outcomes in individuals with schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder.

Nutrition:

In their 2016 report the Mental Health Foundation⁴ cited the following

research findings:

- Stranges et al. (2014) found that vegetable consumption was associated with high levels of mental well-being.
- O'Neil et al. (2014) showed that a higher intake of refined foods was linked to lower mental health in children.
- Omega-3-rich foods were shown to be helpful in the control of bipolar depressive symptoms.

The arts:

A Mental Health Foundation report (2016) cited the following findings:

- The British Journal of Psychiatry (2011)⁵ reports that music therapy, combined with standard care, is effective for improving depression symptoms among working-age people.
- Uttley et al. (2015)⁶ found that patients receiving art therapy for non-psychotic mental problems (such as depression, anxiety or trauma) had positive improvements in their mental health symptoms compared to the control group.

Good health!

¹ <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/fundamental-facts-about-mental-health-2016.pdf> Carter, T., Morres, L., Repper, J. & Callaghan, P. (2016), 'Exercise for Adolescents with Depression: Valued Aspects and Perceived Change', *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 23 (1), 37-44 ²Stanton, R. & Happell, B. (2014), 'A systematic review of the aerobic exercise programme variables for people with schizophrenia', *Current Sports Medicine Reports*, 13 (4), 260-266 ³<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/fundamental-facts-about-mental-health-2016.pdf> ⁴Erkkilä, J., Punkanen, M., Fachner, J., Ala-Ruona, E., Pöntiö, I., Tervaniemi, M. & Gold, C. (2011), 'Individual music therapy for depression: randomised controlled trial', *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 199 (2), 132-139 ⁵Uttley, L., Stevenson, M., Scope, A., Rawdin, A. & Sutton, A. (2015), 'The clinical and cost effectiveness of group art therapy for people with non-psychotic mental health disorders: a systematic review and cost-effectiveness analysis', *BMC Psychiatry*, 15 (151), 1-13



His favourite gifts

Christmas is in the air. Trees, tinsel, flickering lights and decorative angels are everywhere. Mince pies proliferate. Soon the festive music will be throbbing too. And those quiet but nagging questions will begin to dominate: 'What shall I get for John and Dina? What did we give them last year? Chocolates or shortbread? Perhaps a voucher would be better this year – yes, let them choose for themselves.'

Christmas can be frustrating, can't it? For some, exasperating! Let's face it: not everyone copes well with Christmas, at least not with the commercialisation of it. Neither do we all enjoy navigating through the social expectations, niceties and protocols that come packaged with it. For example, who hasn't gone to bed on the twenty-fifth wondering whether or not their gifts were well received?

The real narrative

Sadly, for many, the biblical narrative upon which our modern celebrations are based is a vague and fuzzy memory at best. They are happy to place a little angel on their Christmas tree, but are not aware of what that angelic messenger really said or meant:

'Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."' (Luke 2:10-11, NKJV)

The birth of Jesus was also about gifts and giving. But He was both Gift and Giver that night in Bethlehem, and we were blessed with a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Then celestial reinforcements arrived to heighten the drama:

'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"
(Luke 2:13-14, NKJV.)

Praise God – there were more gifts for us – lasting peace was now within reach, and God's 'goodwill towards' us was no longer in doubt. A prophecy had been fulfilled. Now, at last, the angels could use His unique name in their song of praise, 'Immanuel' – 'God with us'. What more could Heaven give than this?

Is there something we can give?

All those beautifully crafted nativity scenes, printed cards and church tableaux seem to consolidate the visits of the shepherds and the wise men from the east into a single event, although neither Scripture nor *The Desire of Ages* appears to record it that way. First at the manger were the shepherds, and some time later the magi, who were 'among the first to welcome the Redeemer' (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 65, emphasis supplied).

It is the magi, however, who are remembered as bringing those expensive and exotic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, as confirmed in *The Desire of Ages*: 'Their [the magi's] gift was the first that was laid at His feet. And through that gift, what privilege of ministry was theirs!' (*Ibid*, my emphasis.)

From the same source it becomes clear that those gifts facilitated the family's escape to Egypt: 'And through the gifts of the magi from a heathen country, the Lord supplied the means for the journey into Egypt and the sojourn in a land of strangers.'

By contrast, the shepherds came empty-handed. They brought nothing tangible to augment their quiet sense of wonder and humility.

Take a second look . . .

Their empty-handedness notwithstanding, perhaps those shepherds beckon us to take a second look at the nature of giving. For I am reminded of John Milton's words in that heavy-hearted sonnet, *On his blindness* (my emphasis):

'But patience . . . soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state
Is kingly. Thousands at His bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait."'

Perhaps Milton was suggesting the very thing we see epitomised in the attitude of the shepherds: that the spirit of humble, grateful worship is the primary gift we can give our Saviour. Whether in private or public, **authentic worship trumps all other gifts fit for the King of Kings**. The same emphasis is also seen in the visit of the magi: 'And when they had come into the house, they saw the



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young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.' (Matthew 2:11-12, NKJV.) **Whether we have much or little, worship is what God deserves first!**

Pass it on!

The contribution of the shepherds in the Nativity story is not exhausted yet. Notice what happened after they left the presence of Jesus: 'Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.' (Luke 2:17-18, NKJV, my emphasis.) **They gave another gift to Jesus. They immediately told and retold their personal experience to all who would listen:** and in such a way that people 'marvelled' – were 'filled with wonder or astonishment' – at what they heard!

Now to that Christmas gift list . . .

Is Immanuel on it? Is He near the top? I hope He is, for between the shepherds and the magi we have now discovered His favourite gifts, haven't we? **One of them is reserved only for Him, while the other can be shared with everyone we meet!**



How wrong I was!

When I first came across the report, I was challenged by its conclusions. Actually, more than challenged – I secretly believed it to be plain wrong. The report sought to answer this question: ‘At which age or stage of life are people most lonely?’ My answer, based on my studies at the ‘University of Life’, indicated that loneliness increases from birth, but its rate of growth is largely slow with a sharp upward trajectory when one hits retirement!

How wrong I was. A study of 15,000 people in Germany which was reported in *Psychology Today*¹ showed results not in sync with my understanding.

Surprising to me, the study showed that loneliness peaked during young adulthood! It indicated that adults under 30 (who by our denominational definition are still youth) reported significantly higher levels of loneliness than almost any other age group, except those over the age of 80.

Part of my surprise with the findings is that I know young people who have hundreds – if not thousands – of Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram followers, not including their hundreds of Facebook friends. Young people often have more followers and friends than I had members in my congregations. How can they be lonely?

Maybe the question that first needs to be answered is, ‘What is loneliness?’

In this *Psychology Today* report it stated that ‘loneliness is defined by the discrepancy between our desired and actual social bonds. Therefore, whether a person is lonely is entirely subjective.’ The *Collins Dictionary* gives a more simplistic definition that is nonetheless powerful in its impact: ‘Loneliness is the unhappiness that is felt by someone because they do not have any friends or do not have anyone to talk to.’²

As we approach the Christmas season, for many people this is not the time to be merry

but rather the season to be gloomy, with loneliness being a contributing factor. For some readers this Christmas will be the first one experienced following the passing of a loved one, and the memories of happier Christmases past will come to mind – times when we enjoyed their company.

Joseph may well have felt lonely and isolated after Mary announced that she was pregnant. Not wanting to cause her further embarrassment, he was planning to quietly leave her: but God reassured Joseph that Mary had not been unfaithful to him and that their marriage should proceed as planned, because her pregnancy was of a supernatural nature. At this point, Matthew made this comment and quoted the prophet Isaiah:

‘Now all this happened in order to make come true what the Lord had said through the prophet, “A virgin will become pregnant and have a son, and he will be called Immanuel” (which means, “God is with us”’) (Matthew 1:22, 23, GNT).

Loneliness is real for many people and there is a UK-wide Campaign to End Loneliness underway at present. According to Age UK, ‘Nearly one million older people get lonelier around Christmas.’ This highly respected charity ‘estimates that 873,000 people aged 65 and over do not see or hear from someone for days on end over the festive period.’³

The sad irony of this passage is that the Christmas story and the announcement of Immanuel were to undo the pain of loneliness. God’s answer to humanity’s loneliness was to visit us on earth – an action He reinforced with the name given to His Son.

God realised that our need as human beings was for a closer relationship with Him, and so He proactively sent His Son to be with us. God being with us is the antidote to our spiritual loneliness.

His action is to be our action too. God

created us to be social, and we need that contact as much today as did Adam in a perfect world: ‘... It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him’ (Genesis 2:18, GNT). Adam was created to live forever, but sin and death have changed all that, inevitably robbing us of companionship.

In January 2006, officials from a north London housing association made a grim discovery while repossessing a bedsit in London. Lying on the sofa was the body of a 38-year-old woman who had died almost three years earlier. Her identity was revealed to be Joyce Carol Vincent.

The sadness of her death can be seen from numerous angles. The sadness is not only that Joyce Vincent’s body lay undiscovered for three years, but also that she was not missed by anybody except when rental payments were unpaid.

We know that people of all ages need connections that matter and go beyond the superficial. The campaign to end loneliness gives 12 tips, of which I’d like to share five, hoping that we could prayerfully consider adopting them or adaptations of them this Christmas season.

1. Take time to talk.
2. Give someone a call.
3. Give a neighbour a card (and stop for a chat).
4. Lend a hand at your local care home.
5. Share a mince pie.

I am very fortunate to have a large, closely connected family with whom I will meet up over Christmas. But as we plan to celebrate Christmas in the company of our family and friends, let’s invite those who might not have the extended family and friend network we have. Don’t assume someone else will extend them an invitation: let’s take the responsibility ourselves.

While we might not be lonely this Christmas, let us remember that our Saviour would have us share in the company of someone who is lonely, so that they may see, through our friendship, that God is truly with us... Immanuel!

¹ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-squeaky-wheel/201605/what-age-do-people-feel-most-lonely>
² <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/loneliness>
³ <https://www.aol.co.uk/news/2017/12/01/age-uk-says-nearly-one-million-older-people-get-lonelier-around/>



Doing all things well



The first verse of that old favourite hymn, *All the Way My Saviour Leads Me*, concludes with the words, *For I know, whate’er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well*. These words had special meaning for the author. Blind for as long as she could remember, she was used to being led through unfamiliar territory and putting her complete trust in others. This was also true in her spiritual life. Over the years, through her day-to-day challenges, Fanny Crosby learned to put her trust in Jesus. She came to know Him as the One who always had her best interests at heart. Even when her weary steps would falter, He would always be there to carry her.

We, too, go through ups and downs in our Christian journey, and when we sing this hymn we usually think of ourselves, our trials, and the way that Jesus has been a comfort and guide to us.

But there is another way to look at it. If we understand the church to be the ‘body of Christ’, then it is our job, as church members, to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world today. So, going back to the hymn, instead of just singing the words, we should make it our mission to be the ones leading the blind, showing tender mercy, dispensing peace and comfort, cheering others on their winding paths, and being a spring of joy to the weary and stumbling.

Okay, we knew this already. It’s what we’re supposed to be doing. But my question is, are we doing it well?

As I visit churches all over the territory of the British Union Conference, and as I sit on different committees and boards, I’m not convinced that doing things *well* is always a priority. Everyone wants to do *more*: giving more, praying more, running more evangelistic campaigns, visiting more, and knocking on more doors. But not so much emphasis is placed on doing things *better*.

It’s a shame, because it often only takes a little bit of effort to turn *mediocre* into *good*, and *good* into *better*.

Doing things well can also pay big dividends, which is something that government and industry have woken up to in recent years. At a recent pensions conference in London we had a presentation on a class of investments called ‘Environmental, Social and Governance’, or ESG for short. These are starting to take the place of what used to be called ‘Ethical Investments’. Now, of course, we

as a church keep our pension funds in ethical investments – avoiding companies that deal in alcohol and tobacco, gambling, or armaments – but we, and many others like us, are beginning to realise that avoiding the bad may not be enough. If we are serious about ‘doing all things well’ then we need to look at other aspects of the companies we invest in: how do they treat their workers, what is their carbon footprint, how well are they governed? Interestingly, the data coming in seems to show that companies with sound ‘ESG’ credentials also seem to be successful, often outperforming their non-ESG competitors.

Is it possible that the same could be true in our churches? Could a number of small improvements in the simple, basic things help to turn our churches into the market leaders they should be?

This is something that we in Secretariat are particularly interested in. We support some of the key people in our churches: the Secretary (or Church Clerk), the Designated Safeguarding Person, the Health and Safety Officer, the Disclosure Clerk, and the Data Protection Co-ordinator (this last one is new). I can’t say that any of these positions is particularly glamorous, and they may not be the first positions to be filled when you have your nominating committee, but they can make a very big difference to the way your church runs.

If members and visitors know that the church cares about their safety and takes it seriously, they’ll be more likely to come again. They’ll be more likely to bring their ageing parents and trust their children to the Sabbath School teacher or Pathfinder leader. If members of the public see a privacy statement when you are conducting a survey, they’ll know you value their personal data and, by inference, value them as a person. If business meetings are carefully minuted, and the minutes are read out and voted on at the subsequent meeting, members will have more respect for the whole governance process and may even be a bit more judicious in the things they choose to say at those meetings.

‘Doing all things well’ is a process that we can all be involved in. Only a few are cut out to be evangelists, or preachers, or Pathfinder leaders, but with a bit of effort we can all do things a little better. Together we can make our churches cleaner, safer, friendlier, more visible, more accessible, better publicised, and more effective at meeting the needs of our members and guests. A New Year’s resolution perhaps?

President of the Seventh-day Adventist world church calls for prayers after fire in California



The following release was submitted for distribution by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists’ Office of the President.

We want to express our sincere condolences and Christian love to the many people who are facing great loss from the horrific fire in the town of Paradise and other parts of Butte County in northern California. While we do not yet know the full extent of the damage, our hearts go out to all who are affected by this calamity.

We particularly extend our sympathy to the members and friends of the Paradise Seventh-day Adventist church, who have lost their beautiful church home. We praise God that, as far as we know at this time, there was no loss of life.

We also thank the Lord that much of Adventist Health’s Feather River Hospital was preserved, and honour the Adventist Health team at Enloe Medical Centre and Oroville Hospital and all of the first responders who safely evacuated the staff and patients of Adventist Health Feather River.

Although the Kindergarten to Grade 4 section of Paradise Adventist Academy was lost in the fire, we are thankful that the rest of the school remains intact.

Living in this sinful world full of unexpected disasters, we hold in our hearts God’s promise that, very soon, we will live forever in the New Earth free from sin and disasters. Jesus is coming soon! I call on Seventh-day Adventists worldwide to pray for the recovery and resettlement of the thousands who have faced this tragedy. As you see people around you in need, let’s follow Christ’s ministry of helping people physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually.

TED N. C. WILSON, PRESIDENT
14 NOVEMBER 2018





... Over 200,000 older people have not had a conversation with a friend or relative in the last 4-6 weeks.

Isolation and loneliness: can we help?

January 17 was just an ordinary day in terms of the news, which was filled with the usual items relating to the Brexit debate. There was one about a red-faced Manchester United supporter who had flown to the Caribbean to meet his online girlfriend of six months, only to discover that she didn't exist! He had been conned.

There was one exception, however, under the headline, 'PM commits to government-wide drive to tackle loneliness', that caught my attention. Why? For the simple reason that it had to do with the dream of that Cambridge graduate and MP, Joanne Cox, who was brutally murdered on 16 June 2016. Cox died after being shot and stabbed multiple times in Birstall, where she had been due to hold a constituency surgery. Thomas Mair, a man associated with far-right organisations, was found guilty of her murder and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Cox was a good MP who cared. She touched the lives of many, and her untimely death tore at the heart of Britain. She was a neighbour next door, a mother, a wife and a champion of the poor. She was someone who stood tall on behalf of equality and justice for all.

Jo Cox's work, like that of so many good people who pass before their time, was unfinished: for, in the months prior to her death, she had passionately championed the issue of loneliness and social isolation in Britain across all cultures. The Jo Cox Loneliness Commission, which was set up just before she died, delivered their findings late in 2017, and the results shocked the country. They were the direct catalyst behind Theresa May's announcement on 17 January this year of a new ministerial role to combat loneliness and isolation among all ages.

The commission's findings were shocking.

Britain is a lonely place and the impact of isolation is very real. More than 9 million people always or often feel lonely. Over 200,000 older people have not had a conversation with a friend or relative in the last 4-6 weeks. The situation is worse if you are young and disabled. Eighty-five per cent of disabled adults in the 18-34 category report significant loneliness. It seems that many Britons have become engulfed in working hard to achieve personal aspirations, while leaving very little room to build relationships outside of their immediate circle. The result of this is that, for many living in Britain, life is lonely.

It seems that economic factors are having an impact on our social interaction as well. For example, recent news reports indicate that on average nineteen pubs in England are closing every week, which in some ways may not be such a bad thing. On the other hand, it means that for many there is less opportunity for social contact and interaction. But pub footfall is not the only sign that we are in the grip of a quiet but relentless social revolution. High street stores are closing, with just two of the recent casualties being *Toys 'R' Us* and *Maplin*. Even the darling of the retail world, *John Lewis*, my mother's favourite shop, reported a 77% drop in profits. Practically speaking, this means that there are fewer locations country-wide where people can shop and interact with each other.

These days we buy groceries, shop for clothes, look for love, book restaurants and travel, get music and bank online via our phones – all activities which used to take us out of our homes, onto the street and into public spaces to meet people. Our lives are becoming more isolated today as we do more and more at and from home, and less and less together.

Jo Cox's report found:

- Loneliness can be triggered by a life event,

- such as bereavement or parenthood, with certain groups, particularly young people, particularly at risk.
- Loneliness can kill. It's proven to be worse for health than smoking 15 cigarettes a day, but it can be overcome and needn't be a negative factor in older people's lives.
- Loneliness causes a higher rate of death, even when taking those with poor physical health into account.
- Loneliness knows no borders or barriers; it crosses over race, gender and socio-economic boundaries.
- There is a strong correlation between loneliness, depression and suicide.

The key question for us is: 'What can Seventh-day Adventists do to reduce this widespread occurrence of isolation and loneliness?'

Perhaps the answer lies in us running our own **Spare Chair Ministry**, based on the Spare Chair Sunday project that was launched between Contact the Elderly and the corporate giant Bisto a few years ago. As a business, Bisto decided to promote the concept of inviting seniors in the community who are lonely to come to Sunday dinner after research had found that over 40% of people over 70 skip meals due to loneliness.

The nation's response to Spare Chair Sunday has been positive, with over 1,600 registered volunteers hosting Sunday lunches or becoming regular tea party volunteers in their local community. However, there is still so much that could be done. Isn't this a chance for us to become involved, either individually or as part of a church project, in running a **Spare Chair Ministry**? We already have thousands of eminently qualified cooks and caterers in our churches who could do this monthly, or whenever convenient. There are others who could act as drivers, hosts/hostesses or even make their cosy homes available. We are tailor-made for such a ministry – especially with our long tradition in the provision of good food and warm fellowship. Are you up for the challenge?

In one of the Bible's epic scenes, that of the *Parable of the Great Banquet*, we see a clear invitation to such a Spare Chair Ministry: 'He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."' (Luke 14:12-14, ESV.)

https://journals.lww.com/psychosomaticmedicine/Abstract/2002/05000/Loneliness_and_Health_Potential_Mechanisms.5.aspx



A Christmas gift



Life in the Congo is harsh. People are fleeing their homes at a worrying pace as worsening violence and rampant diseases like ebola, polio and cholera destroy lives and livelihoods across the country. Latest reports indicate that over 800,000 people have left the country since 1994, and these refugees settle wherever they are welcome, including Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

In Zambia alone we are anticipating an influx of more than 50,000 refugees from the Congo by the end of 2018. One area where the new refugees will be settled is in a camp called Meheba in Northern Zambia.

During a recent visit to Zambia (17-20 September) I met with the representatives of UNHCR (UN Refugee Agency) and UNICEF (UN Children's Fund) in Zambia and discussed the situation. They are willing to work with ADRA Zambia to help refugees in the Meheba camp.

This is an older camp and in desperate need of refurbishment. The Meheba Refugee Camp was opened in 1971 near the borders of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola.

We have helped ADRA Zambia set up a sub-office at the camp to co-ordinate its work in this camp. ADRA is now working there to provide refugees with education, health and agricultural facilities so that they can one day go back home, integrate locally or settle in a third country.

To set up the sub-office and have one staff member attending co-ordination meetings and positioning ADRA to work with UNHCR and UNICEF in this camp we need £10,000. This would provide a one-year budget.

When I was there I promised Kennedy Habasimibi, the country director of ADRA Zambia, to find the money. We now have a working office in Meheba. Will you help support this important project in Zambia? Why not give a gift this Christmas that will change people's lives!

Simply text MEHC18 £10 to 70070 to donate to ADRA and make a difference today. You can also donate online at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/meheba>.



LET'S GO TO THE PHILIPPINES

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As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

Here are some ideas . . .

Take a look at what some of our movers, shakers and innovators are doing



Community service at the seaside

different. Their family members and friends were grateful and overwhelmed by this gesture from the church, and there were numerous testimonies of how they appreciated the effort taken to impact their lives. Two family members even made their own way to Eastbourne and met us on the promenade. One family stated that their man had not been outside of the residential home for more than a year. His daughter wept, thanking the team for making this moment happen. It just confirmed what an impact the trip had on their lives.

Another visitor (daughter of a resident) even admitted that the trip had challenged her thinking about 'the church establishment' and that she was grateful to have been invited.

Spending time with their loved ones over a fish-and-chips lunch followed by an ice cream and a leisurely stroll along the promenade in the fresh sea air were just what the doctor ordered.

It was heart-warming to hear the residents open up and talk about their life stories, and share childhood memories.

The day ended with watermelon-soaked smiles. The residents and their families loved the day out, and the team identified that this may well have set the tone for future community ministry days!

MICHELE GORDON/NATASHA WALLACE

Community ministry leader, Hewitt Grant, spent days on reconnaissance missions to various seaside towns on the south coast to find a location suitable for multiple wheelchairs, with easy parking and access to the beach, which would awaken pleasant memories of times past.

They chose Eastbourne because it ticked all the boxes of accessibility, sand, great ice cream and good fish and chips.

T-shirts were designed by Pastor Greg Wilson (Lewisham's intern pastor) bearing the theme, 'It wasn't me; it was Jesus.' This reinforced the notion that any ounce of goodness that we can muster up is not of ourselves, but is based upon the strength that God gives us to fulfil the 'Jesus method' of evangelism.

It required a marathon team effort to organise transportation and support for the day because wheelchair-accessible coaches were needed to both lift and accommodate numerous wheelchairs.

The 15th of July finally arrived with glorious sunshine. The residents loved the change of scenery and the opportunity to do something

The Lewisham community ministry team have been visiting Beechcroft Residential Home every month for over two years. During these visits their programme of singing favourite songs, readings and special items by the Pathfinders is sincerely appreciated – likewise, the time spent by the team interacting with the residents on a one-to-one basis, building long-standing relationships. During this period they identified some residents who did not receive visits from any family or friends. This is where the idea of a day trip was born. Rather than having a traditional community ministry day at church on this year's community ministry day, the team would take members of the community to the seaside.

This gave them the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of these residents with a donation from the SEC Community Ministry Department.



Edmonton's *Community Harvest* (22 September)

Upon entering Edmonton Church, I was wowed by a magnificent display of fruit, vegetables and bread symbolising the splendour of God's creation. The church members were responsible for this, fresh from their gardens, allotments and ovens.

Among the most striking items were a gigantic pumpkin the size of a smart car (almost) and a custom-made loaf of bread in the shape of a hay bale. Along with the colour and smell of all the fresh fruit and flowers it was a treat for the senses. The bread was donated by Mayfield Farm Bakery and School In Harlow, a company which has been repeatedly recognised for quality and won numerous

awards, including The Bakers' Marque from the Worshipful Company of Bakers.

Then things began with a procession of children, all wearing colourful harvest clothes and bringing in their harvest baskets while singing a harvest song of praise to the Lord for His provisions. This set the scene for an atmosphere of thanksgiving for the entire day.

The AY programme was a community event which commenced at the Hounsfeld Road site. There was a warm welcome from Terrence McKenzie-Cook, followed by an informative talk on seasonal gardening by Steven Roucou. Advice was given on lawn care and cutting back

roses, which was followed by a question-and-answer session.

Sherille Hyatt conducted an entertaining quiz, injected with her usual dry wit and humour. Next, Primrose Hyatt gave a wonderful talk on the family-run bakery that donated the intricately designed harvest loaf. Rakesh Boodhoo gave feedback on how he transformed the soil in his garden from being compacted and rocky to being good and full of nutrients. Winnie Roucou then did some games for the children and taught them that cucumbers are fruits. They also learnt some interesting facts on how the herbs on display were used during biblical times. Fifi McKenzie-Cook then informed everyone about the

health benefits of a vegetable called karela, which looks like a spiky cucumber.

A closing prayer was said and everyone was then treated to drinks and a choice of delicious cakes of various flavours. The Junior Sabbath School team provided gifts with Bible verses for the children, and gave away information to the youth on Cornerstone, drug awareness and overcoming negative habits.

At the end, there was so much produce to be given away that members of the church and the local community left with bags of goods to share with their neighbours. Some of it went to a local lady who is suffering with cancer, and a beautiful basket was delivered to Murrayfield Care Home, courtesy of Cuckoo Hall Seventh-day Adventist Church.

STEVEN ROUCOU

Ever heard of a 'crafternoon'?

We are getting 'creative' and oh so 'crafty' at The Mission – Leamington Spa Church. Our 'creative cafés' have taken the community by storm and we have made many new friends from toddlers to grandpas, and all ages between.

It all took off with a craft café in the school holidays where the parents and children from our longstanding toddler group were invited to a 'crafty morning'. Mums and older siblings made icicles for the upcoming festive season while toddlers coloured wooden nativity plaques, moulded clay hedgehogs or created unique hama bead designs. With 65 parents, children and helpers, things were buzzing at The Mission.

We followed this up with a ladies' café, where more than 30 daughters, mums and grandmums shared some 'me time' together. It was another chance for them to get crafty and enjoy the homemade delicacies from our amazing café!

At The Mission we love to get our families together, and this includes the families in our community. On the first Sunday of the month we have our creative café at The Mission, and on the second Sabbath of the month we have our 'crafternoons'. Attendance has grown to over 40 and includes men, women and children of all ages, from both the church family and the community. We do découpage, book folding, card making, mosaics, beading, decorative painting . . . oh, the list goes on and on!

We are delighted that through our 'creative' and 'crafty' efforts we have made many new friends in the community, and we look forward to continuing this new ministry! You can see what we are up to on our Facebook page, 'Creative Café at The Mission'.

We would like to thank Carolyn Schulz and her assistant Daiva Taskuniene for their leadership, hard work and commitment to this new successful ministry.



HAZEL LAYLAND

Showers from heaven

Milton Keynes Love In Action (MKLIA) is a non-profit organisation that assists destitute and homeless people within Milton Keynes. Every week the ministry provides free hot meals, clothes, tents, sleeping bags, food parcels and a laundry-cleaning service, in addition to counselling services such as Alcoholics Anonymous, social services and pastoral care. Over the last few years there have also been requests from women for personal hygiene facilities. Unfortunately, this could not be facilitated as there are currently no showers on the premises.

This need moved an individual member of MKLIA, Dawn Remy, a singer, songwriter and publisher of the gospel album 'Are You Ready?' to start her fund-raising projects for this cause.

The first fund-raising project she undertook was to produce a CD, *No Matter*. A total of 1,000 CDs were produced, costing £5 each, with all proceeds going to the MKLIA shower project. After two years of selling her CDs on the streets in all weather conditions she decided that there had to be another way to raise funds.



That's when the second fund-raising project was started, called **'The BIG SPLASH – can a black woman swim?'** on 3 September. Dawn gave it this title because she was unsure whether she could really do a sponsored swim to raise funds, as she was a novice swimmer. However, despite her apprehensions, God gave her the strength to achieve what she never thought was possible. The result of this

personal achievement was blessings showered down from heaven.

The final fund-raising event was the 'It's a Family Affair' concert held on 6 October, and it was a resounding success, with support from many voluntary artists, her family, and all those who pledged support. An amazing £1,711.11 was collected, which far exceeded expectations.

Hyland House versus Newbold Wolves

Parents and spectators alike watched a sensational football match between Hyland House Community Football Club and Newbold Wolves on Sunday 30 September. These are football clubs of primary-aged schoolchildren from Hyland House Primary School and Newbold Church. The game was a friendly and played in that spirit, but it delivered some great football. The score at full time was a draw – 4-4 – followed by a win on penalties for Newbold Wolves.

Both teams were formed for the same reason: to empower, nurture and mentor young people. The Hyland House Community Football Club coach is Pastor Anthony Fuller, who is also the South England Conference's (SEC) Youth Director and Chaplain of Hyland House School. He said, 'We want to mentor children so that they can have positive role models, but also form friendships within positive groups.' The club is open to the community and is an extension of the SEC's Youth Ministries initiative, 'Top Boys', which aims not to wait till boys and girls are teenagers, but to begin mentoring them now.

Newbold Wolves Football Club was formed to train Newbold Church primary school-aged children and is coached by its founder, Sasha Becejac. Sasha said, 'Our mission is to give the children an opportunity to gain good sporting attitudes in winning and losing with an excellent team spirit.' He continued to say that the club was

set up because all the other clubs in the area play their matches on Saturdays, and they charge for membership. 'We train on Sundays and the children enjoy it and are very enthusiastic. We are excited about the collaboration with Pastor Fuller and the rest of their school team.'

The match ended with the nomination of 'Man of the match' and 'Golden boot' from each team and then pizzas.

One parent said, 'This is undoubtedly a step forward to make sure our children grow up in safe groups, but also an enjoyable time for parents, family members and spectators.'

JUDITH MAKANIANKHONDO



bright, cheery learning environment.

Having a couple of days to spare, the team went shopping in Bangalore on one day; then, on the second spare day, the team organised and conducted the annual sports day for the seventy-five BESSO children.

The time spent playing, talking, hugging and singing with the children was precious and unforgettable. Some developed strong bonds with the children and a few were inspired to set up monthly sponsorships. In the team were Adam and Caitlyn Balderstone, who were keen to trace the steps of their father and grandfather, who was a trustee of STOP International. It was a particularly poignant experience for them to visit the Love Home where David Balderstone had inaugurated a building for the director and his family.

Following the two weeks of intense work, the team enjoyed a sightseeing trip to the city of Delhi, a visit to the world-famous Taj Mahal in Agra, and a trip to Jaipur city, with its beautiful Amber Palace and fort. The highlight of the Jaipur visit was the elephant sanctuary, where they spent time feeding, painting, bathing and riding elephants. The Sabbath was spent at the North India Union headquarters church in New Delhi and having lunch with a local church family.

The team returned to England with happy memories and hearts full of gratitude to God for a blessed mission project successfully completed. One of the volunteers, Desire Lewis, reflected, 'Immersing yourself in another culture can be slightly intimidating but so rewarding. I was touched by the warmth and love we received from day one, and reminded of how important it is to be able to see the joy and beauty of life even when you have so little. The most precious experience of this trip has been to know that doing something that might seem so insignificant can actually make such a big difference.'

The team members were: Adam and Caitlyn Balderstone, Beth Molteni, Sheena Murphy, Tim and Susan O'Neill, Susan Holmes, Paul Poddar, Desire Lewis, Jason Poddar, Kish Poddar, Ann Theanne, Sherri-Lee Galloway and Sirbrina Ramharack.

For further information of the July 2019 project please contact Kish Poddar at kishpoddar@gmail.com.

KISH PODDAR

STOP International Project 2018

On the evening of Sunday 22 July there was much excitement in the air for a group of fourteen STOP International volunteers. After months of planning, fund-raising and praying, the team were ready to board their flight from London Heathrow to Bangalore, India. Some of them had been anticipating this self-funded mission trip for two years, and finally the day had arrived. The group was made up of young adults and some retirees of varied professions.

Upon arrival, the team set off on a two-hour road trip to the Jeevan Jyothi campus in Hosur, the headquarters of the Southern Asia Division, their home for the next two weeks.

After breakfast in the guestroom canteen the next day, the team travelled 24km to the STOP Vocational Training Campus in Denkanikotta to begin their work, which involved painting, maintenance, repair and brush clearing. The campus was set up in 2008 for the vocational training of orphaned children, having two accommodation blocks for the

children of the Way to Life Charitable Trust and administration and maintenance rooms. The equipment for painting and maintenance was purchased in advance, so the work commenced soon after their arrival. The team's handymen set about repairing and replacing broken drain pipes and toilet doors in the orphanage complex. Others got to work cutting down overgrown shrubs and unblocking drains. The tropical heat did not seem to deter the volunteers, and the delicious refreshments at break time were energising. The volunteers' wonderful work ethic and team spirit ensured that the target for painting was reached earlier than expected.

In fact, the work schedule for the eight days was completed within three days, so the team moved to the BESSO Children's Home, which is sponsored by STOP International, where the primary school needed a facelift. Once again the volunteers got the work done quickly, with two coats of emulsion transforming the huge hall into a

The MESSENGER team wish
ALL OUR READERS a CHRIST-FILLED
and safe festive season.



Our group, Finlay front left and Vali front middle, at the school

Finlay's Romanian Quest: an update

Back in July 2018, the *MESSENGER* reported on Crieff Church members Finlay Logan (12), his mother Angela Logan, his grandmother Dorothy Logan and his great-aunt Ruth Farrer and their fund-raising project called 'Finlay's Romanian Quest'. We had set ourselves the goal of raising £3,000 to fund three different projects in the rural Transylvanian area of Romania. The projects were delivering food parcels and aid to two separate, desperately poor families and providing money to enable a remote Adventist school to purchase wood for heating for the winter.

By the time that we travelled to Romania in early October, we had not only reached our £3,000 goal: we had soared past it! Our final total was £6,700 – £1,300 of which came as a direct result of that *MESSENGER* article in July! Our base for the entire trip was the village of Chesău, with a family that Ruth has known for a very long time. The food parcels and aid were delivered to the two families living nearby. The poverty and living conditions we witnessed here were extremely sobering. We took gift bags filled with toys for a poor family of seven. They live in a tumbledown house comprising a makeshift kitchen and one room that served as the eating, sitting and sleeping area for the family. The children were so excited and thankful to receive these gifts, and a noisy, chaotic hour was spent helping them play with their new things. That visit was a very emotional experience for everyone involved. During the rest of our visit to Romania we saw a lot more poverty and hardship, which has left a lasting impression on all of us.

The bulk of the fund-raising was to buy wood to heat a school for this winter. We drove for over two hours on potholed roads to reach the remote village of Vaidei. Here, as in many Romanian villages, village schools have been

shut down by the Romanian government, and so children are forced to travel to the towns for their schooling. A lot of children are not able to go to school because of lack of transportation and money, so they fall into gang-related crime and child prostitution. One local Adventist lady, Vali, decided to set up a school for these village children. She started with six children and now has 84 attending. She has devoted her life to these village children. The school desperately needs sponsors to continue operating. It faces major difficulties, but continues to be a beacon of hope and faith to those rural communities. Prayers are what keep this school going. On the day we arrived, we saw local villagers getting the wood ready for winter. Vali told us that she had been praying for a solution as to how she was going to get the wood ready; that morning local villagers arrived and started working. Vali was so full of praise to God for a direct answer to her prayers.

We also witnessed God's hand directly involved in this school. Weeks and weeks before we left for Romania, Ruth was given a big box of stationery items for the school. Ruth had no idea of the contents of this box and it remained unopened until it was delivered, along with a lot more boxes and bags, to Vali's office that afternoon. When the stationery box was opened by Vali, she pulled out a ream of copier paper and exclaimed, 'Wow! We used our very last piece of paper yesterday and I didn't know how I was going to get any more! Thank You, God!'

So this quest is now finished! We never imagined that we would raise £6,700 when we started in June. The majority of the money went to the school – besides the wood, we were able to help pay overdue salaries and tax bills, which has helped ease some financial worries for now.



School in Vaidei

Family of seven

We are so grateful and thankful to everyone who contributed to this project. You have all helped to make a difference in the lives of the children. We got to visit and experience it first-hand, but you all helped to make it possible.* Thanks again!

If you are interested in sponsoring the school in Vaidei on a long-term basis, please get in touch on angela@loganscotland.com or ruth@greencat.com. ANGELA LOGAN

*The donations received for this project are used exclusively for the needs described above. Expenses of the UK volunteers are personally funded.

As Ruth sees it . . .

The government closed three village schools six years ago, and the parents would not let their children make the dangerous journey to the next town – neither could they afford it. Vali, a dedicated Adventist, could not see these children go on the streets, get into petty crime and then go to prison. She started a school. All the children are from disadvantaged backgrounds. They come to school hungry, and this means they struggled to learn. Vali now gives them and the teachers a good, healthy breakfast every school day. All the families are extremely poor and cannot pay any school fees.

Vali grows vegetables to feed the children, chops logs for heating, transports the children and teachers to and from school, cares for their minor ailments and gets free clothing, but has to go a distance to get it all. But, most of all, she gives them love!

Vali is totally dependent on donations. Her income for the project includes less than £500 per month from the local Conference, and one or two other small donations as and when the donors can afford it. It costs roughly £1 a day to feed a child, and she has 84 of them, plus the staff, who often go for months without any salary and struggle to put food on their own tables. RUTH FARRER



Chelmsford's new church plant

After its first successful church plant at Braintree in 2015, in the third quarter of this year Chelmsford Church spread its influence to the neighbouring town of Maldon. With the help of members from Chelmsford Church, headed by Pastor Melki and Stephanie Garrick-Hardy (elder), those members living in the area started with a door-to-door promotion to launch the church plant.

Once Sabbath services were started at the town hall in Maldon, visitors who were interested in knowing the truth began to show up. The

members in Maldon have also begun reaching out to the community by holding their first health expo in the town hall. Please pray for the success of their new venture. DHEERAJ SWAMY (CHELMSFORD COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT)

Harvest Festival at Weston-super-Mare

On 6 October it was Harvest Festival Sabbath at Weston-super-Mare Church, and the produce received from members and friends, together with the morning's offering, was to be given to the Weston Foodbank. Frederique Wigmore, manager of the Foodbank, gave a short talk on the work that they do, ending it with the hope that one day she would be able to tell us that our donations and the Foodbank were no longer needed as every family in Weston had enough to eat. Sadly, at present the Foodbank is kept as busy as ever, supplying needy people with food.

Pastor Rio based his sermon on 1 Thessalonians 5:18, 'Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus' (NIV), stressing that we should make thankfulness a habit.

The service was enhanced by the musical talent of our young people who accompanied the hymns and presented two musical items. The service ended with Pastor Rio singing a solo, 'My Tribute' (To God Be the Glory), accompanied on the piano by his ten-year-old daughter Ryanne.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY



A family affair

On 28 July, in the garden of Lorna and Keith Nightingale, sisters Molly Nana Afua Pomaa (19) and Yaa Adwobah Morda (16) were baptised in a mobile baptistry just outside Winchester.

Both girls originate from Ghana and had part of their education there. During the last two years they've been studying in Winchester, and both girls have high hopes for their future. Molly took her A levels in Chemistry, Biology and English Language, and is now studying Pharmacy at Reading University.

Morda felt she needed some extra help and asked Jesus to come into her life, and she is now quite sure she did the right thing.

Their mother and brother, Kwame, came over to England for this special occasion and have since returned to Ghana. Their English family has grown, however, and they now have a great many sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles and grandparents in the Winchester church.

They were baptised by their local minister, Pastor Laszlo Liebhardt.

WENDY BRADLEY (COMMUNICATIONS)





Advent Centre outreach

True to the mission of our Church, the Advent Centre in the heart of London was the scene of evangelistic work from 8 to 22 September.

The Central London church organised this outreach, which was well planned and supported by its members. Part of this support involved a prayer and fasting programme, with different individuals praying and fasting every hour for 24 hours, starting at sunset, Saturday 28 July.

After this the members prayed daily for the success of the outreach, and they were not disappointed.

The Lord spoke through John Bishop's sermons, the sacred music, and the health messages that were presented nightly.

Another community day at the Park

Raising the profile of the Adventist Church's involvement in the Watford area was the aim of the Community Day held at Stanborough Park Church on 29 September.



Pat Walton and Norma Lewis

Coinciding this with the annual Harvest Festival, which would see food being distributed to the needy in the local area, was an inspired decision by Enoch Kanagaraj, leader of the church's Community Chaplaincy Department, and it led to the Chairman of Watford Borough Council attending during the morning and participating in the worship service.

During the day presentations were given by local charities informing the congregation of their work and asking for donations or for volunteers to become involved with them. Following a previous community day last summer the 'Messy Church' decided to support the 'Red Box Project', and a collection box was also placed in the church for donations of sanitary products and toiletries for girls attending local schools who were unable to afford them. A link was also established with 'Homeless Warriors', which provides food, clothing, and so on to the homeless of Watford.

In a bid to help the charities with their work and ensure more efficient use of resources by co-operation and avoiding duplication of resources, Enoch has set up the 'One Vision' project where representatives of the small charities are able to meet together to plan and network.

The church has a long-established welfare service providing clothing, household items, toys, books, food and so on to the needy. In addition, it continues its weekly 'Soup Run' for London's homeless, which started more than 30 years ago and still takes a group of volunteers into central London every Friday evening.

Norma Lewis, a Catholic, who is retiring from this project after three decades, was presented with a gift as thanks for her services to the

There were many visitors in attendance, both members and non-members. A number requested Bible studies, and two people asked for baptism.

On 22 September, at the end of the outreach, seven were baptised, including the two mentioned above. Five more are preparing for baptism in the future.

Pastors Elliott Williams (senior) and Clebson Braga (associate) at the Central London church and the Portuguese church conducted the baptism.

To God be the glory!

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

church. She went along with the volunteers to London for many years. Norma's work was recognised in 2011 when she was given the Audentior Award by Watford's mayor.

JUNE COOMBS



Women's retreat: Nottingham Central

Wold Lodge in Kenwick Park, Lincolnshire, was the venue for the Nottingham Central Women's Retreat from 21 to 24 September. The 29-strong women's group ranged in age from 21 to 80. The theme was 'He made a way', and we were blessed, challenged and moved by our speaker, Linda Mukwada, who explored how God, who made a way for others in the past, can do the same for us today. The retreat was an opportunity for the women to relax in a four-star environment and get to know each other better. This year we were blessed by having four non-members attend the retreat. On Sunday afternoon the women enjoyed the spa facilities before going out for a meal at a local restaurant. When we said our farewells on Monday morning we were refreshed, encouraged, uplifted and blessed.

JEAN GREGORY (WOMEN'S MINISTRIES LEADER)

Jean Mary Baildam (c. 1925-2018) d. 1 November.

Mrs Jean Mary Baildam, widow of Pastor Denys Baildam and mother of Dr John and Professor Andrew Baildam, passed away at 93 on 1 November.

Jean's hearing and eyesight had been failing for some time, and she had been generally unwell for a few months, spending seven weeks in hospital in Camberley, Berkshire, before moving to a nursing home where she fell asleep just three days later.

Born in Nottingham as the only daughter of Ettrick and Ida Whiting, Jean's childhood and



youth were spent in the Bournemouth area, with short periods in the West Country and the Channel Islands. She chose to study at Newbold College, then in the Midlands, completing the Bible Worker's course. While a Newbold student, Jean met Theology student Denys Baildam when she was just 17. Subsequently she served the Lord in the Oldham and Torquay districts while Denys was invited to serve in Glasgow. In those days pastors were not encouraged to marry until they had been 'in the work' for at least two years, and so it was not until 1949 that Jean and Denys were married in the Bournemouth church.

While they were in Glasgow their son John was born. They

subsequently moved to Dundee, then Dunfermline (where their second son, Andrew, was born) and Stirling, before the family moved to Cardiff, where Denys served as Youth Director for the Welsh Mission. Other moves entailed relocating to Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Edinburgh and then Glasgow once again, before Denys was called in 1986 to serve as the Ministerial Secretary for the British Union Conference. This meant a move away from their beloved Scotland, with them finally settling in Crowthorne, just a short drive from what has been the Newbold campus since 1946.

Jean was always devoted to her Lord, her Church and her family, and saw her role as one of a pastoral team. She exhibited

great hospitality, particularly to young interns and their spouses, and was an excellent vegetarian cook. She was utterly bereft when Denys passed away just over ten years ago, but until a few months ago tenaciously lived independently in her own home and attended church as often as possible.

Jean's funeral was held at Newbold Church on Wednesday 28 November. She will be sincerely missed by all who knew her, but mostly by John and Lynda, Andrew and Eileen, Jean's granddaughter Antonia and her grandson Tim and his wife Debbie.

JOHN BAILDAM

The Holgates' diamond

Larry and Inez Holgate celebrated their sixtieth (diamond) wedding anniversary on 13 January 2018. They were married in St Thomas, Jamaica, in 1958, after meeting on their way back from church one Sabbath afternoon. For Larry it was love at first sight, although Inez was not really keen at first; but Larry's humility and kindness eventually melted her heart and they were married.

Together they have six children, 17 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren, whom they love so dearly.

Larry and Inez celebrated their anniversary at Swindon Church in April, with Pastor Shepley leading the service. When asked by Pastor Shepley what keeps their marriage going, Inez replied, 'Patience, forgiveness and God's grace.' Larry, on the other hand, said, 'The treatment I get from her.'

Earlier this year, imagine their surprise when Inez answered the doorbell and the postman handed over an envelope from the Queen. Inside was a card, with a big picture of the Queen of the United Kingdom and a letter reading: 'I am so pleased to know that you are celebrating your diamond wedding anniversary on 1 January 2018. I send you my congratulations and best wishes to you on such a special occasion. Elizabeth.'

VIVIAN ZINYEMBA (ELDER)



Mcghan Humes turns 82

Mcghan Humes turned 82 in September. He was one of seven children and spent his early years in the Caribbean before moving to England in 1960. He began worshipping at the old Camp Hill church in 1964, but his late wife, Zipporah's, illness in the '80s caused a break in their attendance.

An uplifting visit from Monet Morris led the family to resume regular worship at Camp Hill, and both he and his wife were baptised at a tent meeting in 1996. Not long afterwards he began serving faithfully as a deacon. He enjoys reading his Bible, and when asked about his favourite Bible text he cited Psalm 34, which reminds him of God's blessings and encourages him never to turn back. His favourite hymn is 'I Sing the Mighty Power of God'.

Brother Humes continues to hold on to his faith and he still maintains an allotment. We pray that he will continue to be a shining light to all.

MARJORIE BOYLES/JACQUIE HALLIDAY-BELL

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Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by HM Nautical Almanac Office.

	Lon	Card	Nolt	Edin	Belf
Dec 14	3.52	4.04	3.48	3.38	3.58
21	3.54	4.06	3.50	3.40	3.59
28	3.58	4.10	3.55	3.45	4.04
Jan 4	4.05	4.18	4.02	3.53	4.12

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For further information contact:
Dejan Stojkovic: dejan@adventist.uk 07919 172 176
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The British Union would like to thank the SEC Youth Department for hosting this day.

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FUNDRAISING FOR ZIMBABWE MISSIONS AND NEW LIFE MUSIC/AV DEPT

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