

‘Sometimes it is just too much ...’

MESSENGER News Service

A browse through the online archives of the *London Evening Standard* for the first three months of 2019 makes grim reading. Fatal stabbings in London as of 2 April reached 49: almost the same number as killed by a gunman in Christchurch, New Zealand in one day at two mosques on 19 March. A few days earlier, on 14 March, Cyclone Idai hit and left a trail of devastation in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, with an official death toll as of 30 March at 709.

But behind the headline numbers, there's pain beyond imagination; grief at the unexpected loss of a loved one, a child, a parent, a sibling, a friend, a neighbour. The piercing arrow of grief is exactly the same in Christchurch as it is in Beira (Mozambique) and as it is in London. As my Sabbath School teacher shared from the heart last week, in this very context, 'Sometimes it is just too much. . . .' Ironically, most of us are just distant observers.

And then we dare to make a link to the Brexit story. At the time of writing, during the first week of April, resolution there was not, but seemingly government and opposition were working together to find a solution. By the time this copy of *MESSENGER* reaches you, the UK and Northern Ireland should be close to being out of the European Union – with some form of extension to ensure a deal. For sure, there's pain and frustration about Brexit, but it really is nothing, absolutely nothing, when compared to the raw grief of death, personal life injury or disease.

People of faith will naturally wonder what the Lord makes of all this. Grieving families wonder not only if there is a God, but if He in any way cares – and, if He does, how will He make it shown? In these moments, a theological discussion about the sovereignty of God won't restore the soul. But could there be an ancient word from Scripture that continues to reveal what God is like?

'When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul!' (Psalm 94:19, ESV)

'Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father!' (Matthew 10:29, ESV)

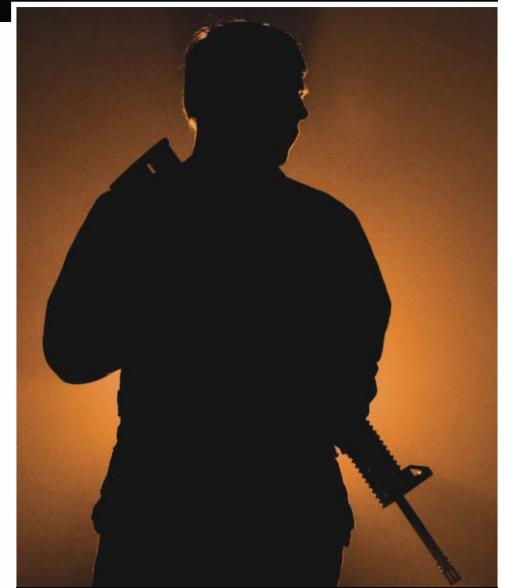
Ellen White shares an encouraging and familiar insight in *Steps to Christ*:

'Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. . . .' (Steps to Christ, page 100)

Perspective is helpful in these matters, but not totally. This week's *MESSENGER* reports about how our community is responding to these crises in both word and deed.



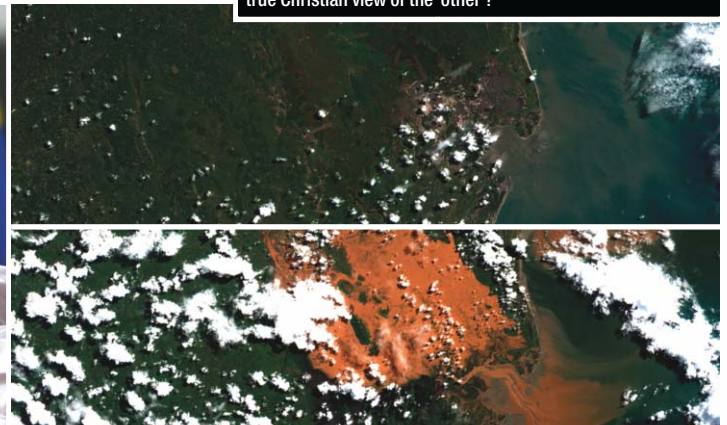
Willesden youth, Jaden, Ambrose, Bradley and Kymani, dare to be different as they prepare for an 'I Am Urban' march against knife crime



In its extreme, can fear of the 'other' lead to this? What is the true Christian view of the 'other'?



Shouldn't prayer be part of the solution?



Flooding in Mozambique before and after landfall of Cyclone Idai in March 2019



Sleep and wellbeing – Part 3

Larks and owls

In part 2, I suggested visiting <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-27161671> in order to get an idea of your sleep pattern and assess how balanced your sleep behaviour is. I found it an insightful exercise.

The National Sleep Foundation explains our sleep/wake cycle (circadian rhythm), which is controlled by the hypothalamus in the brain:

'Your circadian rhythm is basically a 24-hour internal clock . . . and cycles between sleepiness and alertness at regular intervals. . . . Those times can be different if you're naturally a night owl or a morning person.'¹

The National Sleep Foundation agrees that most adults require 7-9 hours of sleep in a 24-hour day. However, they explain that: 'exactly when our bodies naturally tend to fall asleep and wake up each day can vary. Scientists believe that people have inherent differences in when they sleep and wake best.'²

In describing the difference in sleep behaviour, David Ludden, PhD, published an article in *Psychology Today*, under the title: 'Are You a Morning Lark or a Night Owl?'³ He states:

'On the one hand, morning "larks" prefer getting up and going to bed early, and are at their peak performance early in the day. On the other hand, night "owls" like sleeping in and staying up late, and don't perform well until afternoon or evening.'

The *Independent*⁴ presented data from the sleep study of Elise Facer-Childs, of the University of Birmingham, which found that:

- Compared to larks, night owls are significantly sleepier in the

- morning, making their reaction time slower by 8.4%.
- Owls are 7.4% weaker in the morning (using a maximum grip strength test) than their morning lark counterparts.
- Morning larks tended to perform better earlier in the day, and night owls performed better later in the evening.

Sleep Watch (Body Matter)⁵ also published research data in their comparative analysis of larks and owls. Here are some findings:

- Individuals who go to bed earlier are 40% more likely to report feeling more rested upon waking.
- Early sleepers (larks) get on average 48 more minutes of sleep than late sleepers (owls).
- Larks exhibit greater sleep rhythm.

In drawing their conclusions, Sleep Watch state:

'It is apparent that while we have a genetic predisposition to rise early or go to bed late, lifestyle demands (i.e. our work schedules, time commitments, and other activities, etc.) may get us out of sync with our intrinsic circadian rhythm. . . . It is reasonable to assert that we have more control over what time we go to bed than when we wake up.'

Good health!

¹<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/what-circadian-rhythm> ²<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/shift-work-and-lark-night-owl-tendencies?page=3> ³<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/talking-apes/201805/are-you-morning-lark-or-night-owl> ⁴<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/morning-people-night-owls-body-clocks-waking-up-social-jetlag-athletes-performance-a8690251.html> ⁵<https://www.sleepwatchapp.com/blog/2018/4/30/on-the-nature-of-larks-owls-in-their-modern-habitat>



David Neal, Editor

Who is, and who was, and who is to come

From time to time, the church where I once served as pastor agreed that a local North London Jewish community could use the church sanctuary on an occasional basis for their special feasts and holy days. For Judaism, none is more special than Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

This particular year it fell on a Tuesday, and by coincidence I needed to go to the church to pick up my briefcase, left in the vestry from the previous Sabbath. As a keyholder, access was not a problem, until this particular day. As I casually walked up the steps to the door, I was 'greeted' by a large, serious-looking fellow in a leather jacket who quickly manoeuvred himself in front of me and asked abruptly, 'Who are you?' A little startled, I explained I was the church pastor and told him why I was there. 'Shalom, shalom, my brother, come on in,' he said, the grim face turning into a warm smile. For the first time in my life I gained just a glimpse of what it might be like to worship in fear. The very idea that someone hostile would physically attack me because I worship in a certain way – unreal.

In what we know today as the eastern part of Turkey, around AD 90, followers of Christ worshipped in fear for their lives, because Domitian, the despot Caesar, considered himself to be a god. The critical demand he placed on every citizen was that just once a year – just once a year, mind you – they show up at the market place, stand in front of his statue and say three simple words: 'Caesar is Lord.' Three words, that's all! Was it really such a big deal? Couldn't Brother Justin or Sister Chloe stand and mutter the words quietly, pay a small tax – duty done – and move on, with the guarantee that they would be left in peace for another year?

But the Christian could not do that. Caesar is not Lord. Christ, the Risen One, is Lord!

I imagine a small group of Christians worshipping in a home in Smyrna, behind closed doors, frightened about what might happen. With some of their friends in prison and some already martyred, would they suffer the same? As they worship together and share the amazing story of the Risen One, there's a knock at the door.

'Who's that?' says Dad with fear in his eyes. Mother's stomach churns, as Brother Justin and Sister Chloe start to pray. Dad goes to the door and timidly says, 'Who is it?'

This time he needn't have worried, as he hears a familiar friendly voice. 'It's me, Brother Gaius from over Ephesus way. I have something very special for you. Let me in quickly, before I'm seen.'

As Gaius enters and greets the Smyrna believers, the fear eases. And then Gaius says the words they so desperately needed to hear. 'I have a message from John.'

Before Gaius can even get the parchment out of his sack, everyone jumps up and dances and hugs each other. The children present join in the celebration. It has been a while since they've seen their parents so relaxed. 'Praise the Lord! Praise to Jesus, the Risen One; John is still alive!' When things calm down they begin to read the message from Patmos.

'The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John.' They keep reading together. 'John's had a vision of Christ,' says Dad, aloud. 'It looks like John has a prophecy for us. Here we go. . . .'

'Blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.' *What time?* they wonder.

'John to the seven churches that are in Asia. . . .' ('That's for us here in Smyrna!') And then the next words Dad can hardly say, he's so choked up with emotion.

It had been a most terrible time the last few months. He's lived on adrenaline – Mum too – with the continual pit in his stomach, not knowing if they'll be arrested and put in prison themselves. Why? They've not been to the marketplace to say, 'Caesar is Lord' – just



couldn't do it. Some civil servant will soon find out, when the records are checked. And then what will happen. . . . ?

'Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come. . . .' Not just any words, but words from Jesus! 'To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.'

I don't know whether that small group had an extended discussion about the 'whereabouts' of Christ, or spent hours trying to interpret John's symbols and images. All I know is that they hung on to his every word for assurance in the middle of trouble. The Good News: Jesus loves me. Jesus loves His church. We – we are His kingdom, and, whatever happens, the One 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty', is in control.

In these times, need we say any more?

Prayer pointers

'Prayer is a mini-Sabbath stuck into our daily routines. It's a time to step back from activity, thank God for the goodness of life, pray for others, and put our own lives in perspective.'

'If I don't have time for that, I'm way too busy.'

(The Complete Idiot's Guide to Prayer, p. 125)

- **Pray** for the victims of Cyclone Idai, affecting close to 3 million people in the countries of Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe; also for the work of ADRA and all relief agencies providing emergency aid.
- **Pray** for the city of Christchurch, New Zealand. Pray for the healing of the city. Pray for the local Adventist ministerial team as they care for traumatised members, and as they connect with and support Muslim friends and neighbours.
- **Pray** for parents and siblings grieving over the loss of their son/daughter, brother/sister to London knife crime. Pray for government, police, church, school and community workers trying to solve this problem. Pray for worried parents. Pray for teens and youth.
- **Pray** about Brexit. Give thanks to the Lord that, above the political turmoil and uncertainty of our times, He is still in control. Pray for the Lord to guide our national leaders. Where our nation is divided, where our community is divided, pray for the Lord to demonstrate His reconciling love through us in both word and deed.
- **Pray** for our pastors. Thank the Lord for providing them with the spiritual gift of leadership, and their response to His calling. Lift up their family in prayer. For pastors facing difficulty and crisis at this time, pray for the Lord to reveal, renew and refresh their lives. Pray that He will use us to support them by whatever means possible.

Because prayer matters, Prayer Pointers is a MESSENGER ministry designed to help. Use as a personal resource, for church worship, prayer meetings, and small groups.



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Christchurch, New Zealand – and the salt of kindness

Pastor Stephen Wilson, Irish by birth, served as an Irish Mission pastor from 2005 to 2015. Three years ago, he received a call to serve as the pastor of the Papanui church, Christchurch, New Zealand. He and Lindita Vani, his wife, and two children, Samuel and Deborah, are fully immersed into church and city life. On 19 March, a lone gunman walked into two Christchurch mosques and killed 50 people at worship.

One week after the shooting, Stephen wrote a reflective blog.

'The past week has been like a blur – a dream, but not a good one. As a pastor, I have spent so many hours in meetings with church, school and community responses to the terror attack that stopped our city and broke our hearts. Alongside Pastor Younis and our presidents, Pastor Mike and Pastor Eddie, we have attended the funerals and visited Muslim community leaders and the families of those killed.

'The emotions have been difficult to articulate and come to

terms with. The predominant feeling was simply exhaustion. The greatest blessing this week has been being able to offer words of encouragement to our Muslim neighbours. Most Muslims hug three times, and that gesture, and how willing people are to accept that simple act of kindness, has touched my heart and helped me heal. Not only that, but I have heard over and over again how much love and kindness the Muslim community have experienced, and how grateful

they are to those of us who stretch our arms out in love.

'Hasham is a local Muslim and a young father who runs the Family Support Centre in Hagley Park. Every time we've met him, he has been tired and busy, but always he has spent time with us, asking questions about who Adventists are and sharing his faith with us. When Pastor Younis and myself first went to the family centre, he introduced us to his brother-in-law Hashmat, who was so excited to see Adventists, because his best friend in Dunedin is an Adventist. And so the doors opened up, and God has given our corporate church opportunities to serve and make connections this week.

'There is power in personal interaction. We may be fearful of culture, language and perhaps some politics in the background, but never let that stop us reaching out and being a neighbour to anyone in need. God is looking for His people to be a light of peace and the salt of kindness in a sinful world falling apart. This Sabbath's Global Youth Day event for our entire church is a great opportunity, surrounded by family,



to be a blessing to our community. I know many of our church members are already serving, and it has been a blessing to see familiar faces on the media reporting, and at the vigils and laying of flowers. Let us step up to the challenge as followers of God and find someone in our community to connect with personally, and show kindness to. There are many people out there who need the hug of a Christian today.'

'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.' 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4, NIV.



'I am urban'

At first sight it seems a strange identity label for ADRA and BUC Adventist Community Services (ACS). Sharon Platt-McDonald, ACS Director, says, 'The purpose of I AM URBAN is to work with local congregations to listen, to connect with and serve the community in ways that are relevant to them. We want to solicit total member involvement, especially the millennial generation, to engage in social action projects in their local communities.'

The most recent I AM URBAN project was to support the Holloway youth march from their church to Highbury Corner on 16 March. Written on banners held high were the words, 'Stop Knives, Save Lives'. This was in response to the 35 high-profile stabbings in the capital since the beginning of 2019. According to a report in the *Islington Gazette*, Holloway church members have lost 'loved ones to knife crime, twice in three years. The *Gazette*, quoting youth leader Danelle Cuffie, revealed how close-up and personal the problem is for Holloway members: 'As a church we have experienced knife crime. We have lost one of our young people. Two or three weeks ago one of our older

members lost her great-grandson.' Max McKenzie-Cook, who serves to help ADRA-UK engage millennials in micro-volunteering, reported that 'two young men in a fancy car stopped us on the march to ask what we were doing and applauded us for our efforts. It's amazing how surprised people were that there are other people in the world who are engaged in social outreach and who care.'

Not only were Holloway youth focusing on the #ENDITNOW knife crime march, but they were also showing compassion by adopting a care home and performing 'random acts of kindness' on streets and at a local shopping centre.

ADRA-UK Director, Bert Smit, finds the I AM URBAN partnership both humbling and heart-warming. 'The engagement of youth champions has greatly enhanced the scope of our ministry, and, more importantly, it demonstrates that, as a church family, adults and youth can work effectively together to bring hope and restoration to broken lives.'

<https://www.islingtongazette.co.uk/news/crime-court/holloway-seventh-day-adventists-congregation-march-against-rising-knife-crime-1-5951569>

ADRA responds

Cyclone Idai has taken the lives of 468 people in Mozambique, 259 in Malawi and 56 in Zimbabwe. As the floodwaters recede, the death toll will continue to rise – it is thought the number of total lives lost may never be known.

The disaster has left more than 2 million people in desperate need of our help. To make matters worse, the survivors of Cyclone Idai now have to battle a new kind of disaster – cholera – a disease that will continue to spread, given the crowded camps, schools and churches the survivors are now living in.

Reported cases of cholera have risen to more than 1,000 in cyclone-stricken areas of Mozambique, as authorities scramble to contain the spread of the highly contagious, largely waterborne disease.

The main, and most effective, treatment is fluid intake and the administering of antibiotics. However, access to these is limited due to the current living conditions, and therefore many children, women and men will be affected by this outbreak.

In Malawi, ADRA is distributing food to 21,000 households in Phalombe (one of the worst-affected areas) in partnership with the World Food Programme. In Mozambique, ADRA is currently implementing projects in NFI, Shelter and Food, targeting a total of 25,245 households and 126,226 individuals. Since 17 March 2019, ADRA Zimbabwe has been in the district. In the initial response ADRA provided the food command centre in Silver Stream with 6.5 tonnes of mealie-meal for distribution.

Your donation will ensure they stay safe from contaminated food and the dirty floodwater that is currently receding. Your help will save lives!

Your help is needed to achieve the rest. There is no ADRA without you!

Please donate now to help make a real difference!

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Safe havens

by Anita Marshall

When I was 12 years old we lost our family home, and Mum and we four children spent almost a year 'flitting' from one unsuitable room to another in the homes of relatives or strangers. Then came the great day when, thanks to Mum's determined efforts, we went to view our 'new' home, a little rented two-up-two-down house in a small, one-sided terrace (the other side having been blown away in the war and since grassed over).

In our great loss, we'd managed to salvage a wind-up gramophone, but only one record: 'Green Door', a lively song about the secrets and delights to be found behind said door. Now, as we trooped down the pathway to our new home, my younger brother became very excited. 'It's got a green door!'

We stopped in our tracks, silent, until Mum said quietly, 'It's as if it's been waiting just for us.'

Since that memorable day, I have to admit that when faced with a door, especially a closed door, I have a strong urge to find out what secrets or wonders it might be hiding. The green door hid a cramped but infinitely cosy safe haven, where we could spread out our few possessions safe in the knowledge that we wouldn't have to move again for a long time.

The door which had me fascinated recently was a big double door above which was a sign saying: 'Chemotherapy Unit', from which a nurse would emerge every now and then, calling out a name and then escorting the patient into the mysterious room beyond.

As my husband and I sat in the waiting room, waiting (as you'd expect) to hear my own name called, I tried to imagine what was behind those doors. A ward full of hospital beds? I'd had enough of them over the past few months. Despite my lively imagination, however, nothing prepared me for what I saw when my name was finally called. Because it was my first treatment, David was allowed in with me just that once, and we were both amazed at the sight, not of hospital beds, but lots of lovely reclining chairs in assorted bright colours, full of patients reading, or eating sandwiches, talking to their neighbours, or sleeping peacefully while all manner of healing poisons were being drip-fed into their veins. Busy nurses moved between the chairs, fixing drips, talking to the patients, checking things on computer screens, and answering patients' queries in the pleasantest way possible, and over the next six weeks I found the chemo room to be another safe haven in the uncertain world of cancer, particularly when something went wrong on my fourth visit.

We were warned that during treatment if we felt even the slightest bit 'odd', we were to call for the nurse. Ten minutes into my fourth

treatment I felt decidedly odd. One word escaped my lips: 'Nurse!' And immediately no fewer than three nurses were at my side and I heard one say, 'I've turned off the drip.' What impressed me most was that she didn't just turn it off; she *told* me she had, and from that moment, though I felt pretty awful physically, I found a great calm enveloping me. I felt safe. Twenty minutes later I was chatting as normal with the lady opposite me. What also impressed me was that, prior to my call, all the nurses had been busy with other patients, yet in no time at all they had dropped what they were doing and rushed to my aid. One of them stayed with me throughout until my breathing stabilised and general unwellness went.

When I asked later why I'd reacted to the drugs when I'd tolerated the earlier three, they said it happened occasionally. We later worked out that I had been dehydrated, not having had time since my arrival to down my usual drinks. It hasn't happened since.

When David (this time waiting outside and unaware of any drama) joined me later, I told him what had happened, but was also able to tell him that at no time had I felt that my life had been in danger. In fact, the main feeling – and it was a strong one – was that I was very safe, and that the once-scary chemo room had indeed become a safe haven.

I've been through those double doors a few more times since that day, and have recently started a new six-week course of chemo, but I don't dread my visits. There's no fear. And my blood cancer markers* have gone down significantly, so I'm reassured that the treatment is working, and that it's all worthwhile, even with the nasty side effects!

You have lots of time to think when going for chemo – and, I've found, lots of time to pray, not just for yourself, but for the people in those colourful chairs, and the nurses, who never seem to stop! That experience behind those doors got me thinking, too. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the doors into our churches opened into sanctuaries that were just that: safe havens full of people whose only care was for the comfort and safety of others; who, instead of seeing and talking up the negatives, stressed only the positives, and gave everyone the benefit of the doubt, seeing each person as a 'patient' in need of a doctor – the ultimate Doctor – our Saviour, Jesus Christ? But we won't be able to do that unless we stop looking at the ailments we're all prone to, and instead



concentrate on how we can bring folk to the healing hands of Doctor Jesus.

Safe 'haven': interesting word. Add another letter and you have 'heaven', the final safe haven. Let's all be determined to be there, and to encourage as many of our fellow travellers as we can to be there too when Jesus returns.

Note: This is a follow-up to Anita's article in *MESSENGER* 123:12, date 22/6/18, entitled 'I used to be strong'.

*Cancer markers: indications in a blood test which show the degree of active cancer in the body.

Think on!

'Some years after opening that green door I became a Christian and learned beyond doubt that Someone had been watching over us and protecting us all along. Jesus opened that door for us.'

Anita.

'So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.'

Jesus Christ (Luke 11:9, NRSV).

'When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us.'

Alexander Graham Bell.

'The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned.'

Maya Angelou.

After 40 years of wandering, a new church for Maidenhead

Sabbath 16 February 2019 saw the culmination of 45 years of hopes, plans and prayers for the Maidenhead church with the official opening of their new Burberry Hall Seventh-day Adventist church. Some 40 regulars were swelled in number by a similar number of past members and pastors who came to share this occasion of thanksgiving. Conference president, Pastor Emmanuel Osei, led the celebration and encouraged the church to present the love of God and message of salvation to the community around.

The late Pastor Billy Frazer, then pastor of Newbold, first drew together in 1971 a group of believers in Maidenhead. Sabbath meetings were started in a youth and community building, and the church was organised in 1974. A building fund was started right away, while the church was to move to two further hired locations over the subsequent years. The dedication and generosity of members over those years enabled the purchase outright of the old Burberry Hall in 2009, and funded the professional and planning fees through three tortuous planning processes that followed.

The old Burberry Hall was a 'tin tabernacle' building erected in 1914 through the generosity of Thomas Burberry, founder of the Burberry fashion house. It served the local Methodist community for many years, as well as other groups, before falling into a degree of disrepair. Maidenhead Adventists were, nevertheless, able to move in, and enjoyed some of the charming period features of the worship hall and its prominent position in a pleasant residential area. However, there was very little in the way of other



facilities, not least for children, and very rudimentary provision of essential facilities. In addition, the building lacked even basic insulation!

Planning processes extended beyond any anticipated timescale, but, with the help of funding from the South England Conference, we were able to demolish the old building in the summer of 2017, with completion of the new Burberry Hall a year later. The local community have also enthused with the church at the transformation that has taken place, enhancing the neighbourhood as well as the worship experience.

The opening service was an opportunity to express thanks to past members, including those who have passed to their rest, for their contribution – financial and in other ways – enabling the result; also to present members who have carried it to completion; to the SEC for enabling the works; and above all to our loving God, who has led to this blessed fulfilment: a fulfilment, but also a start for a fresh witness to the Maidenhead community. The service was enhanced by special music from Estilla Keszeg (cello) and Marina Sadzachov (piano).

Presentations were made of archaeological Bibles by the local pastor, Sinisa Horvat, to the architect and builders, Neil Barr of DLK Architects and Mark Langley of Adams & Wade. Their work was praised by all involved and all present.

The celebration of the wonderful guidance of God concluded with a meal in the fifteenth-century Neville Hall in the nearby village of Waltham St Lawrence – a location used by the church during the building of the new Burberry Hall.

ANGELA SHARP (CHURCH CLERK)

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CLOSING DATE FOR REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT: April 24th 2019
CONTACT RENATELA IUNAC
AT THE BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE
TEL: 01923672251
EMAIL: RENATELA@ADVENTIST.UK

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

Literature Evangelism and Publishing Ministries Coordinator Training

'Don't just sit on the authority which God has given us' These were the words of Dr Kirk Thomas, the British Union Conference (BUC) Evangelism Director, as he appealed for the fulfilment of the Great Commission – to make disciples – which Jesus gave to the Church (Matt. 28:18-20). Dr Thomas was speaking at the Literature Evangelism and Publishing Ministries Coordinator Training Programme, a special time of worship, witnessing and wonder at positive responses gained while engaging with the public.

The event took place over the last weekend in February and was hosted by Birmingham Aston-Newtown Community Church.

Of the various highlights, Dr Thomas preached a sermon entitled 'Predicament or Responsibility?' which explored the experience of Jeremiah. The prophet 'resigned' from the work because he had not received the

results he was hoping for (Jer. 20:7, 8, 14-18). Dr Thomas explained that the discouragements of reaching out can cause us to lose our perspective. Yet, 'while we cannot know the details of our future, we can know that it includes helping someone to come to Christ.' Therefore, he urged members not to be content to eat, drink and 'pamper' themselves within church walls while people outside are spiritually dying. In a play on words, Dr Thomas described how, after he 'resigned', Jeremiah 're-signed' (Jer. 21:1-9) – that is, he signed up to his calling once again, because the message was 'as a burning fire shut up in [his] bones', which he could not contain (Jer. 20:9, KJV). Likewise, rather than bemoaning challenges we face on the way, Dr Thomas encouraged a focus on the Great Commission which God has given to all.

The message resonated with

Rose Penaranda and Priscilla Kiragu from Liverpool. As former Literature Evangelists they believed that the message to 're-sign' up for the commission was for them personally. Describing an 'awakening' within, Rose said the sermon 'brought to my mind those things which remain unidentified, unspoken, but are the reasons why we lose enthusiasm for the work'.

Priscilla also commented: 'I felt like [God] was talking to me. I was once very successful. . . . We should be able to face any challenge so someone can be saved.'

The friends 're-signed' that afternoon when the congregation went into the community to distribute literature and conduct door-to-door surveys, giving participants books and magazines afterwards. Just one hour later, participants returned with inspiring stories. Aston-Newtown members Michael Wilson and O'Keeffe Wellington mentioned good responses gained by wearing Pathfinder uniforms and obtaining entry into seemingly inaccessible flats. Lauren Blake, an 11-year-old Pathfinder, met a Sunday-keeping Christian who was happy to visit the church. Nickeza Wilson described how a woman was enthralled by the children, and they certainly sped from house to house with infectious enthusiasm. Pastor Sayers aptly remarked on the importance of training children and youth because of the exceptional energy they bring to the work.

Heather Sayers and Aston-Newtown member Bridget McNulty discovered an absent church attendee who was delighted to see them because she wanted to return. A man who was connected to medical tubes answered his door to newly baptised Jackie Latty. He didn't have long to live and was lonely. The church members are now able to visit him. Romel Ricarte, another member of Liverpool North Church and a former publishing director from the Philippines, met members of a household who wanted to learn more about the Bible. Altogether, the church received 16 requests for Bible studies.

Lisa Moore, a Liverpool North



member, remarked: 'We must step up to the plate.' The day ended with a happy buzz in the congregation, who had allowed God to use them.

Managing Director for the Stanborough Press, Elisabeth Sangüesa, is 'forgetful', leaving books on trains, in hotels, and in other places where people can find them. She also prompted members to consider practical measures for starting literature ministries in local churches.

The Stanborough Press manager also publicised the yearly 'Power of 40,000' initiative for which each church receives a free allocation of literature from the BUC to distribute, and the 'Sharing Hope' app as a format which some members may feel more comfortable to pass on.

She concluded: 'Pray that this will just be the beginning of a thriving, lively and powerful ministry that is going to spread. . . . We have the same power [as missionaries of the past], the same God. . . . Don't feel alone: contact the training team. Connect with someone and say, "We can do it together." We are a family, and when families work together they are successful.'

A Story of Perseverance, a video produced by the Hope Channel on the history of literature work in the UK, may be found on YouTube.

For further information on literature distribution or resources, contact the Stanborough Press on: 01476 591700, or sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk – or the British Union Conference Evangelism Department Secretary, Kerrine Guthrie, at: Kerrineguthrie@adventist.uk

DIVINA REYNOLDS

On becoming a church ambassador

The South England Conference (SEC) Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department (PARL), in association with the Advent Religio-Legal Perspective Ministry (Adventrlp), held a workshop at the Advent Centre for Religious Liberty leaders and members on Sunday 24 February.

The purpose of the seminar was primarily to seek to raise awareness of the need and urgency for Seventh-day Adventist Public Affairs and Religious Liberty leaders to become its 'church ambassadors'. The event marked a formal training and equipping process to reach that end for dedicated members.

In his presentation on how to become a church ambassador, Adventrlp Director Dr Brighton Kavaloh explained the characteristics of those who are called to represent Christ in such a role. 'An ambassador is one who represents a country or state and works with other representatives on a number of issues with the aim to bring about peace and reconciliation,' said Dr Kavaloh. He added: 'PARL resembles that of a country's foreign affairs ministry, which focuses on three main areas: diplomacy, events and communication.' Focusing on the cost of discipleship, found in Luke 14:27-33, Dr Kavaloh showed how Jesus was a strong advocate of the need for ambassadors in public life. 'Jesus does not send His disciples (ambassadors) to cause war with others, but rather to bring reconciliation and peace. Jesus also makes this clear in Matthew 5:9 (KJV) where He says, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."'

Dr Ray Allen, a patron of Adventrlp, added: "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV). Therefore we can move forwards in confidence, knowing that God goes before us and will put the words in our mouth to speak to individuals of influence, in order to

Dr Kavaloh stressed the importance of Seventh-day Adventists developing a deep and meaningful relationship with Jesus. Resting on this strong foundation, those called to the role of church ambassador can make a positive impact in public and religious affairs.

Following the presentation, Adventrlp assistants gave some practical tips to help those who have been called to a church ambassador role. Adventrlp Associate Director, Alex Nsimbi, pointed out that ambassadors existed in Old Testament times. 'Daniel was a great ambassador for God among many different people, nations and leaders,' he said. 'Daniel's humble spirit and strong prayer life were attributes which enabled God to use him to positively influence and effect change in the spiritual and political realms of Babylon and Medo-Persia respectively.'

Adventrlp Chief Liaison Officer, Sonia Monroe, encouraged church ambassadors to be creative in their presentation of issues affecting church members. 'Have a clear mind, research with diligence and communicate the truth. Information is presented not to scare people, but to make them aware of events going on at both national and international levels which concern religious liberty.'

Dr Ray Allen, a patron of Adventrlp, added: "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV). Therefore we can move forwards in confidence, knowing that God goes before us and will put the words in our mouth to speak to individuals of influence, in order to

bring about the change needed to safeguard freedom of conscience and religious liberty for all.'


SEC President, Emmanuel Osei, thanked the team for highlighting the importance of religious liberty. He went on to assure us that Conference support is available in response to the varied political and legislative issues which potentially challenge Adventist values.

'Religious liberty is an important department in the church which is given our full support at the Conference, and we are here to encourage members and leaders to be aware of the issues, their relation to the prophetic word and our response to them, guided through the Holy Spirit.'

With all that is going on in the world today, church ambassadors are surely needed to bring light to this dark and disillusioned world. Thereby can they offer the hope and freedom to be found in reconciliation to God through a relationship with Jesus Christ – King of kings and Lord of lords.

DARELL J. PHILIP
PHOTOS BY THEO GUTHRIE





Adventist Book Center.com

New ABC titles for Family Life

As we focus on families this quarter, here are some great titles that we believe will enhance your experience and help you grow stronger together. We are excited about our very own Pastor Les Ackie's new book, which we have just released.


- Hope for Today's Families**, by Willie and Elaine Oliver (GC Missionary Book of the Year 2019): 45p
- Family Seasons** – companion book, by Claudio & Pamela Consuegra: £3.75
- Moments with God for Couples**, by Pastor Les Ackie: £7.95

These are all available at the ABC shops, or you can order from Stanborough Press: sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk
Or call our hotline: +4401476591700, Monday-Thursday, 8am-5.30pm
www.stanboroughpress.org.uk

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01476 591700

sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk

Find us on Facebook:  Adventist Book Centre – UK

Michael's testimony

Recently baptised Michael Pearce shares his testimony of how he came to know Christ and understand Scripture in a new and meaningful way.

Michael first spoke to an Adventist sister and discussed biblical matters and so on in Kimora, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, approximately three years ago.

'Before attending the Seventh-day Adventist church in Colchester, I spent approximately forty years from 1977 attending Jehovah's Witness meetings, but never once desired to be baptised. Thankfully, I've now been made aware after all this time of biblical truth.

'I now consider myself truly blessed – my eyes are now open' KEN JONES





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Bradford celebrates with the 14

Baptism is always a wonderful and joyous occasion which brings joy and the amazing experience of God's hand in saving people. It was indeed a high day in Bradford Central Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sabbath 23 February 2019, as 14 people were baptised in one pool on one day. These baptismal candidates included 13 Pathfinders and an adult who amazingly converted from the Islamic faith to Christianity following an invitation from his Muslim friend and a deep conviction that salvation is only through Jesus Christ. The whole church was in very high spirits and revived by this special service, as all eyes witnessed the young people and an adult making this important life decision to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The young people had been nurtured carefully by the church family and at home. The Pathfinders have been attending baptism classes, and all shared different testimonies of how they have decided to remain faithful to God and make the stance for baptism.

'I love Jesus because His love is unconditional. I like Bradford Church because it is a warm and comfortable place; the people are amazing and generous, and provide exquisite food,' said one of the candidates, Tanaka Belma Makore.

The whole church was speechless to note that Tinaye Mazonde had really wanted to know more about Jesus Christ and which church is the true church. He said that he then searched the internet and prayerfully studied the Scriptures for himself, and was glad to be pointed to the Bradford Central church. 'I love Jesus because He died for my sins and He is mighty. I love Bradford Church because it's a church that I have been sent to and chosen,' confessed Tinaye in his baptism statement.

The baptism service was conducted by two pastors – Pastor Ikwisa Mwasumbi and Pastor Isaac Liburd – who both shared powerful sermons on salvation through Jesus Christ and how safe our lives are in Him.

The day ended with the church family going out and celebrating with the 14. And they ate together. . .

RUDO CHENGETA



SAVE THE DATE
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GosFest
 in the Park

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Nadine asks vital questions

Whenever it happens, whether it's after an evangelism programme or through personal study, baptism is always an amazing journey of faith as a follower of Jesus Christ. No one is ever too old, or too late, to take this necessary step. Nadine Metcalfe, 70 years of age, was baptised into our Bradford church on 26 January. The striking thing about Nadine's conversion is that it was after her own careful search for a true living church. In her testimony she shared that her family had encouraged her to search for the truth. 'It was when my youngest son, who is quite religious, started asking me some thought-provoking questions about my previous church. It was then that I started to long to know the truth,' said Nadine. Nadine was convicted about God's commandments and wanted to have fellowship with God through salvation in Jesus Christ.

Nadine's family members attended her baptism. Nadine is praying that one day they too will discover the truth about Jesus and His saving power.

RUDO CHENGETA, BRADFORD COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Darlington young men follow Christ

Close to the 2018 year end, Darlington members witnessed the moving baptism of two young men. This was followed, in early February 2019, with yet another baptism, this time for Copeland McNeil and Igor Wieczorek.

Copeland heard God's voice calling him as he was returning from Jamaica after a Christmas holiday. He thought it was just one of those things which happen when you have some quiet time, but this voice was different, as it was no normal calling. To sum it up, he felt he could not resist the call any longer to join the people of God. In the process, he made up his mind to be baptised. For his family especially it was a moving moment, as they had been praying and longing for this outcome a long time.

Igor has grown up in an Adventist family. Several times he has contemplated giving his life to Jesus and openly declaring his choice publicly. He finally did so on 2 February. He is the only child in the Wieczorek family, who are active members of the Darlington church family. Igor has just started his university journey. Both baptisms were conducted by Pastor Dan Dachin.

Please pray for the newly baptised members, that they stay faithful till Jesus comes.

ESTERY MWANJOKA

Chiswick drop-in service for the homeless

Many of us have seen the plight of the homeless on the streets of London, as reported in the news and on social media.

The report from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism in October 2018 showed that, in 2017, 449 people died homeless in the UK, more than one a day, and the death toll is likely to be significantly higher this year.

Against this background, the Chiswick Community Services team decided to start a 'drop-in service' for the homeless. The aim of the project is to assist guests in maintaining personal hygiene and provide a place for temporary relaxation, with opportunity to have a shower, receive clean clothes, have a hot meal and take food and toiletries away.

Launched on 3 February 2019, the Mayor of Hounslow, Councillor Samia Chaudhary, was present to officially open our drop-in service. On the day, four guests arrived. They enjoyed their time with us and they look forward to attending on a weekly basis. They said that they will be inviting their friends as well.

We provide this service every Sunday from 2pm to 4pm, and it is our aim to continue this service while the homeless problem remains.

MARCIA SILVERA, COMMUNITY SERVICES LEADER



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Mixed feelings as the Hibberts retire

On the Thursday afternoon of 28 March, the Stanborough Press family came together to recognise the combined contribution of Julian and Elize Hibbert: Julian as Editor, and Elize as Editorial Secretary. Among the tributes was one shared by Graphic Designer David Bell . . .



Today is a sad day . . . for me, at least! I seem to be going through editors at an alarming rate. David Marshall was my first editor (1978-2010), but when he jumped ship at the end of 2010, along came Julian and Elize.

And now even they are leaving me!

When it was announced that some bloke and his wife were coming from South Africa (who, I hasten to add, no one had even heard of) I don't mind admitting to being just a little nervous. Would he be a tyrant? Would he come here with a big stick and completely change the way we do things? Would we even get on?

Well, suffice to say, the last eight years or so have been an absolute pleasure. Julian has been a fantastic editor to work with, and work under. . . . David, you've got big boots to fill.

Yes, first and foremost, Julian was my editor and boss, but he was and is also my friend. He has always been interested in me, my family, my dog and my life. He wanted to know what I had been up to, where I had been and what I had seen. I could slump in his chair at any time to vent or moan, or just to chew the fat. His ear was always pliable! Or he would just let me simply stand in his doorway and scratch my back on his doorframe: something David is now going to have to get used to.

Let's not forget that it's not just Julian here, because, as we all know, behind every great

editor is a great secretary, and Elize is certainly no exception to that fact. I often wondered how they did it. I love my wife very much, and I like to think she feels the same towards me, but for nine hours a day during the working week we are apart, as in most marriages: but to have to work together as well surely must take a special kind of person, so I take my hat off to these two for managing this so well and with such dignity.

Elize has been a great asset to the Editorial Department. She wasn't my secretary directly, but she was always happy and willing to do

whatever I pushed in her direction, and with a smile.

On a personal level I am going to miss you both; but, while I am sad to see you go, I know it's at the right time, and that it's well-deserved. I am excited at the thought of all the new adventures you will have together – sleeping under the stars in the back of Julian's homemade 4x4; listening to the sounds of the lions and hyenas just outside your window. Good luck with that one, pal!

Thank you both for the last eight years: for your direction, for your friendship and for keeping me on the straight and narrow. Between us we have churned out approximately 214 *MESSENGERS*, 28 *FOCUS* magazines and numerous books, so I think we have done OK.

To quote the late Gerry Rafferty . . .

'Take the money and run; buy yourself a place in the sun.'

So now it only seems fitting that I should welcome my third editor, David Neal. As I said earlier, you have big boots to fill, but I have big hopes for you. I know that we are going to get along, and I feel that with time, and the support of your very able team here, I think and hope you will do OK.

'On behalf of the British Union church family, I want to thank Julian and Elize for their hard work in helping the Stanborough Press bat above average as a global Adventist publishing house. I have found Julian's writing informed and inspiring. Every best wish to them both in retirement.'

PASTOR IAN SWEENEY, PRESIDENT, BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE

'Julian and Elize have been at the heart of the Stanborough Press family. I am most grateful for their contribution to the work of the Stanborough Press and its ministry. As they begin their new life adventure, on behalf of us all in Grantham, I wish them God's richest blessing.'

ELISABETH SANGÜESA, MANAGER, STANBOROUGH PRESS

'I think the world of Julian and Elize. They are great friends, and I very much enjoyed working with them. Julian's been a great editor – first class!'

ALISON JEINS, AUTUMN HOUSE PUBLICATIONS



2020 and beyond

MESSENGER – our story

The story of *MESSENGER* is our story. Described on the header of every edition is the following: 'Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United Kingdom and Ireland'.

Now into its 124th volume, it is more than well established as the story of British Union Conference members, providing a detailed contemporary record of the church during all of the twentieth century, and the fringes of the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries respectively. Like the book of Acts, *MESSENGER* shows 'some acts of some disciples' both past and present, with joys and sorrows, seeking to be faithful followers of Christ.

As I take over the editorial role from Julian Hibbert, it's the right time to engage with *MESSENGER* readers about its future. Recognising the magazine's historical contribution to the life and development of the Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland, how do we shape its ministry for 2020 and beyond, into the third decade of the twenty-first century?

What do you think *MESSENGER's* role and function should be? What would you like to see more of, less of?

In no particular order, some or all of the following?

1. Be a good read
2. Celebrate diversity
3. Be a voice for members
4. Serve as a news journal
5. Keep the BUC family together
6. Be the voice of BUC leaders and entities
7. Inform about upcoming events (legal and general)
8. Perform a prophetic role in speaking to the times & truth to power
9. Inspire, instruct and educate members in matters of faith and witness
10. Tell the story of John and Mary Adventist as our lives connect with Christ's life

I would love to hear your thoughts on the matter. You can contact me at: editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk



The Stanborough Press Ltd.

Our Heritage

Publishing and distributing Christian literature was the founding method of witness in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and continues to be a defining resource in communicating God's message to the public and for the enrichment of church members.

The Stanborough Press Ltd. is the publishing house owned by the British Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the production and distribution of Adventist literature.

The Adventist Book Centre is the retail outlet of the world church's publishing portfolio for whom Stanborough Press is the UK partner.

Autumn House is the trademark for our generic Christian literature for the general public.

The Stanborough Press has made a significant contribution to Adventist interpretation of Scripture throughout the English-speaking world. Arthur S. Maxwell, editor (1920-1938), whose faith and values-based stories initiated our specialty in children's literature, continues to have a formative impact on millions of people.

By tradition 'the Press' printed, but now furthers its objects as creator, editor, publisher, promoter and distributor of Christian literature in the UK and around the world.

Our Vision

Our primary purpose is to share the redeeming Gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in every country of the world in preparation for 'the Kingdom' to come.

With this in view we seek to offer the means of the abundant life through health, education, service and liberty. We are vendors of hope and cheer with a view to eternity.

Our Mission

We support the Seventh-day Adventist Church with Bible-based resources for outreach: children's and educational books, parenting manuals, family health, personal and spiritual development books and magazines, games and other resources.

Our products will find their witness in every home and office within the British Isles.

Our Values

We are a mission-based charity organisation with a small but dedicated workforce, and we aim to maintain the highest standards of service. The quality of our products and their presentation will always represent the significance of our message.

We aim to produce and distribute resources that reflect Christ, build value in people, inspire hope and change people's lives for the better.

We conduct our business with honour, integrity and cultural sensitivity.

Our Means

By developing, producing, and distributing books, periodicals, electronic media, and other products that introduce people to Jesus and affirm the Seventh-day Adventist faith, we envision the Holy Spirit inspiring every believer to share these materials and help others prepare for eternity. We aim to bring our quality books to the market at prices our customers can afford.

Stanborough Park musicians hold ninth children's concert for ADRA

Stanborough Park Church held a charity concert on Saturday 9 March. The concert featured young musicians from Stanborough Park's College of Music playing a series of artistic compositions such as the theme from *Jupiter* by Gustav Holst, *Allegretto* by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, *Sad at Heart* by Robert Fuchs and *Ave Verum Corpus* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, among other pieces.

During the recital a collection was taken, with the proceeds set to support the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). The event was organised by Jieun Ahn, the director of the Stanborough Park College of Music, which was officially established in 2011. This year is the ninth children's concert aiding ADRA since the college began.

Jieun is a professional violinist who has been the Head of Music at Stanborough Park Secondary School since 2005 and runs the church's college of music with her sisters Jiae and Jihee. While speaking about this year's ADRA fundraiser, Jieun spoke highly of her students: 'We are very proud of all participants in every concert since it started in 2011. Every individual soloist and chamber musician did excellent work in the concert. It was so amazing to work with them and see them playing together. I am sure that their light will be spread in the world for other children.'

While Stanborough's musical fundraisers for ADRA are only performed once a year, the church's College of Music has a busy schedule over the next few months. Students are set to perform at a series of teatime concerts which will be held on 28 April, 26 May and 23 June. Moreover, the students will be showcasing their talent again at a recital on 7 July, and at another concert on 13 July with the theme, 'My Favourite Hymn'.

Next year's ADRA concert is already being planned and is set to take place on 14 March 2020.

JOSH ANDERSON-GREY



Dear Editor

Brothers and sisters, my message is very simple and straightforward. Do what you can, while you can – today. I'm not as fit as I once was, but I want to encourage you with this testimony.

A man used to give me £40, then £20, in my canister. I always called at the office for his annual donation; but this particular year he was unavailable when I called. The supervisor requested that I call later. I did, but my donor was still not in. This was repeated five times!

Just as I was getting tired of this, I found him on the sixth time – and, for my trouble, he gave me £100.

I hope you have been experiencing the joy of the Lord while collecting for ADRA this year.

Friends, keep going and never give up.
Hubert Smiley

Fellow Christians

Dear Editor,

I read with interest that Christianity is dying in the UK. Excuse me, but that's not true. I live in a small seaside town in Suffolk. There are a lot of churches here. The different churches support each other. There is none of, 'You are a Methodist; we don't want to know anything about what you are doing.' Every church supports each other. The churches are full each Sunday. The Salvation Army are needing a bigger church, because they are bursting to the brim each Sunday. They have a cafe that is open each working day. You can get lunch there, which is very cheap. There is also a community cafe where those can go who have little money to pay for a meal. It is free: all done by Christian volunteers. The amount done in the community by these wonderful Christian churches amazes me. You are made welcome when you visit these churches.

There is a spirit of caring here in Felixstowe. The spirit of Christianity is well flowing here in this part of the UK. It is lovely, especially at Christmas. It warms my soul to see all the work they do. Shoeboxes are given to the elderly. Food boxes are given to people in need. The shops also play a big part in helping the community.

There is no Adventist church. I wonder about my fellow Sunday-keeping Christians. How does God see them? They give their time and support for all those who need it. They do it because the love of God is in their souls. Yes, I am an Adventist and will always be grateful to them for introducing God to me.

Christianity is alive and kicking here in Felixstowe. There is very little judgement among the different churches. This is how it should be.

June Barker

Ursula Jackson (1940-2018) d. 16 October.

On 7 November 2018 Winchester Church said their final farewell to a much-loved friend. Ursula showed great courage and kept her wonderful sense of humour right through her illness and treatment, always ready with a quick reply and a cheerful answer.

Ursula loved to sing, and at Christmas would always be brought to tears when we sang 'Silent Night', her favourite Christmas hymn. I think it reminded her of her home country of Germany. After being given a colourful book about the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, at the age of 19 Ursula came to our land with little English and little money, and found a job with a very nice and caring family in the leafy suburbs of London as an au pair. She began worshipping at the New Gallery church, and I'm sure members who also worshipped there will remember her with fondness.

A young man spotted Ursula and headed quickly to her side, and was quick to tell her his name, Peter Jackson, and that he was the only one in church who could speak German! Not wholly true, I feel. Ursula and Peter did marry, and they had two lovely daughters, Philippa and Pia. Ursula became a British citizen and worked as a bilingual secretary, and Peter went into law and rose to become a judge.

With every day that passed, Ursula began to love England and its people, visiting castle after castle; and to the girls' amazement they found in Ursula's address book the telephone number of Buckingham Palace. The girls and her friends still wonder about that entry. The highlight of Ursula's day was 3 o'clock in the afternoon when tea was served, with a choice of blends including Lapsang Souchong, Earl Grey or, heaven forbid, builder's tea! The teapot was always warmed first, and the milk definitely went in last.

The Jacksons' marriage was good and very happy, and, although Peter died a number of years ago, Ursula said she had had a wonderful life and would live it all again if she had the chance. Ursula Jackson has left a space in all our lives: she was witty, loved driving fast, was true to her faith, and was a wonderful person to have in your life. She leaves behind two daughters, two grandsons and

many friends. We all look forward to meeting her again when Jesus comes to take us all home.

WENDY BRADLEY

Arnold Blackburn (1924-2019) d. 12 February.

Arnold was born on 15 March 1924 in Watford to Fred and Isobel Blackburn, the youngest of four children. The family had moved from Heckmanwike, Yorkshire, to the Watford area so the children could attend the Christian Adventist school at Stanborough Park. His father set up business opposite Stanborough Park as a cobbler, but unfortunately passed away when Arnold was only 10 years old. (Arnold's older brother, Clive, continued this business for some years afterwards.)

After school, Arnold attended Newbold Revel Seventh-day Adventist College in Rugby. During the war the army took over the buildings on the estate and used them for barracks. As he was a conscientious objector, he worked on the farm which the college continued to manage throughout the war. It was at this time that Arnold's love of farming was kindled. Because driving tests were suspended for the duration of the Second World War, he obtained a full licence without ever having to take a test.

After the war, Arnold and his brother Cyril went to Cornwall, looking for a farm to buy. They stayed with local Adventist farmers in Bodmin, Jack and Ethel Sanders, and their twin daughters Margaret and Mary. Arnold and his family eventually purchased Glebe Farm, at St Breward, on Midsummer's Day 1948. A friendship with Mary developed, and on 4 September 1956 they were married in Bodmin, and remained married for 62 years. Three children followed: Hamilton, Graham and Carolyn.

Arnold enjoyed his daily routine around the farm, dressed in his bib & brace, tweed jacket and cap. Over the years, the farm supported the family with milk production in the earlier years, followed by oats, hens, and beef. He continued to check the cattle on tractor, quad, or foot, right up to the age of 90. On starry nights, he would lean on his stick, gazing at the sky, which he always felt was God's canvas!



Arnold had a good, long, healthy life, without experiencing any major illness or accidents until he fell and fractured his hip about two and a half years ago. He was fortunate to have Mary's full-time devotion as she cared for him throughout their married life, and particularly the last three years when he became significantly more incapacitated.

Arnold enjoyed singing hymns, finding particular comfort and uplift from the family singing together. He had a nice bass voice, and encouraged us children to sing regularly. Around the late fifties Arnold, along with his brother Cyril, father-in-law Jack Sanders, and the local minister, formed a male voice quartet, having a vinyl disc cut, and almost becoming famous!

Arnold was also a lay preacher for many years, and maintained a deep faith in Christ's saving grace and His soon second coming. This belief continued to support him until he fell asleep on 12 February, aged 94.

HAMILTON BLACKBURN

Dr John Barratt-Peacock (1942-2019) d. 5 March.

Dr John Barratt-Peacock died peacefully on 5 March 2019 after a long illness resulting from heart failure. He was 77.

Born on 21 February 1942 to parents John and Winnie Peacock, who attended the Coventry church, John and his wife Camille emigrated from Derby to Hobart in Tasmania in June 1978, but John may still be remembered by those with whom he studied at Newbold College, and by those he taught at Stanborough Park School. His name will always be associated with the GATE (God's Answer To Emptiness) folk club outreach programme and with street preaching.

In Australia, John was known as the Father of Home Education. He and Camille home-educated their five children, and John's PhD thesis was entitled, 'The Why and How of Home Education in Australia.' It won him the 'thesis of the year' award from La Trobe University, and resulted in him becoming a sought-after speaker at conferences, as well as frequent interviews on the radio and TV. However, he was most loved for the unstinting support that he gave to home educators in his own state and in every other state of Australia.

John's unashamedly Christian funeral was attended by 90

mourners from many ethnic groups and across all social classes and belief systems. An Indian Christian sat next to a Pakistani Moslem, and several people claiming to be agnostics said that they were touched. The rich and the well-educated mixed with ex-convicts whom John had befriended. It was a testament to his ability to reach out and engage in love with anyone whose path crossed his.

John is lovingly remembered by his wife; his remaining four children and his eight grandchildren; his younger siblings, Ella, Stephen and Lynn; and their families in the UK. It was a life well-lived.

CAMILLE BARRATT-PEACOCK

Messenger

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Sunset

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	Lon	Card	Nolt	Edin	Belf
April 19	8.03	8.16	8.11	8.27	8.34
26	8.15	8.27	8.23	8.41	8.47
May 3	8.27	8.39	8.36	8.55	9.01
10	8.38	8.50	8.48	9.09	9.14

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Plymouth's Global Youth Day 'Call to Adopt'

When faced with the theme of 'Adopt' for Global Youth Day, our immediate thoughts turn to children being looked after by parents that aren't their birth parents: they have been adopted because their birth parents have died or are unable to care for them any more. However, the word 'adopt' can be given to anything we choose to take up, follow, or use. We may choose to adopt a friend in need, courage in the face of adversity, or an unwanted table that we can lovingly restore and make new again.

Like previous years, on Sabbath 16 March Plymouth Church rose to the challenge to 'be the sermon'. We organised and ran the church morning service, which included a special musical item from Evi Costin. For the children's story I shared what it means to sponsor a child, showing the children photos of my sponsor child in Thailand whom I sponsor through Compassion, a leading Christian charity. I then encouraged them to be mindful of those in school that may not have any friends, and to 'adopt' them into their circle of friends.

Our very own Alex Baron was our speaker for the morning. He delivered a very thought-provoking message entitled 'The Weirdest Adoption', which emphasised just how much God loves us. He stressed the need to build our relationships with God through communicating and walking with Him daily. We should follow the examples of Noah, Abraham and Enoch, who each had a close personal relationship with Christ – so much so that God took Enoch, while still young, to Heaven to be with Him.

On Sabbath afternoon a group of 16 drove to Hillside Court, a retirement flat complex in Plympton, Plymouth. We were warmly greeted by enthusiastic residents who joined in hymn singing, followed by a quiz



session led by Pastor Clifford Herman.

The residents were thrilled and everyone had a great time, especially during the afternoon when they got to hand-paint terracotta pots. They thanked us profusely and urged us to return again soon. It was a wonderful afternoon, and it was great to chat and get to know the residents.

The day ended at Pastor Herman's house, where we shared food and played board games together. Last year the youth of Plymouth Church got together and produced a hoodie with the words 'STRONGER TOGETHER' on the reverse, and it's a motto we continue to live by and promote in every event, activity or meeting we have. Spending time together and unwinding with like-minded friends is the perfect end to a busy day.

JENNIE HALL



Hanwell Global Youth Day

As part of our AY programme, we gathered a willing team to bring some home-baked cupcakes, flapjacks, fruits and other goodies to pack into some decorative boxes to give out to local businesses and the local community. We also were able to place some small literature leaflets into some of the boxes as well.

Overall we gave out 70 boxes as well as additional literature by hand. John Harkup, youth leader, commented: 'We were encouraged that local businesses know us, and would like to stay connected with us. It's our prayer that Hanwell people come closer to Christ as we share Him in both word and deed.'

Although the weather wasn't great, this did not deter us as we

managed to hand out all our boxes and we arrived back at church joyful and full of positive experiences.

I pray that even if our message reached just one person, that person will take the next step to come closer to Christ.

JOHN HARKUP

Growing faith at Keele

The Keele ASC (Adventist Students on Campus) Society 'Genuine Faith' campaign was a three-day series held on the Keele University

campus. It all began as the students at Keele University wanted to explore what it means to have a deeper and more genuine relationship with God.

Guest speaker Asher McKenzie began the series by sharing about the transfiguration of Jesus, and how, although the disciples worshipped Him, some doubted. They saw how doubt can be experienced even by those with great faith, and Asher's testimonies also demonstrated that an increase in faith comes by tasting and seeing that the Lord is good.

On Sabbath they explored the faith of various Bible characters, and they were also blessed with touching testimonies. Memorable was a Sabbath School discussion about what it means to have faith, and to deepen our faith and relationship with God. This theme continued as Asher in his sermon shared that, despite our mistakes, our sins and doubts, God's love is

continuously poured out to us. It served as a reminder that even those with genuine faith are not perfect, and that we don't have to be perfect to chase after the heart of God and seek Him with all our hearts.

Members were kind enough to cook and provide everyone with equipment to feed our ASC members and guests. The Keele ASC committee was joined by ASC societies from other universities, as well as regular ASC members, Keele students, local church members, and other Christian groups from Keele. Sabbath afternoon was an open time for sharing. The testimonies shared by students and non-students encouraged us to have faith that God has good plans for us, despite what we may be going through. Overall, we felt that the Holy Spirit worked through everyone to bring us a word of encouragement and hope, and for this we praise God.

