

South England Conference Camp Meeting

Teens and youth focus

by Sam O. Davies (SEC Communications)

'God always has your back – trust solely in Him.'
'Hold on, for God will turn things around.'

It is Friday morning at the South England Conference Camp Meeting, held as usual at Pontin's, Prestatyn, North Wales. There's no preaching during this hour, but discussion time for teens. Only one matter is to be addressed – the knife and gun crime epidemic. For the Friday 'Let's talk about it' discussion the teens were joined by special guests, Joden Joseph and Ambrose Dawson, who work and talk with young people caught up with gang culture and violence. Although not admitting direct involvement, many teens gave their insight, experience and concerns on a subject in which 80% of individuals killed are under 17. Following the discussion, Ambrose shared his experiences of growing up in a rough neighbourhood, the role of God in his life, and his current work in prison with young men and women. He asserted, 'God always has your back,' and made an impassioned plea for the group to put their trust 'solely in Him'. The morning session ended with a prayer for protection and safety.

It feels appropriate to invite MESSENGER readers to stop, pause and pray. Perhaps you are concerned about your own safety, a son or daughter, a teen/young adult in your church or neighbourhood. Lift him or her up before the Lord and pray that the teen you know will 'trust solely in Him'. Pray for the Government, the police, teachers, and youth specialists to work together to solve the problem. Pray for the peace that only the Lord can give in the middle of crisis. Sign up to be involved in 'Peace on Our Streets', a national prayer initiative – details on back page (Ed).

The style and format for the youth and teen programme this year was a little different. The aim was to blend spiritual emphasis with workshops and projects that 'scratch the itch' within youth culture. Under the theme, 'My Story', Pastor Dewaine Frasier, from New Jersey, brought a series of high-energy and dynamic messages each evening, charging up SEC youth in the process. He spoke of the need to transition from being a fan of Jesus to becoming a follower of Jesus. This message was taken to heart, and there were celebrations at the end of the week on 22 June as three individuals chose to be baptised.

Midway through the week, Pastors Matthew Herel and Lolly Fontaine organised two community projects, creating a platform for SEC youth to make a positive difference in

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Teens' discussion



Youth tidying the beach



Youth care packages for rough sleepers



Teens' Agape Feast



Chronobiology and human life – Part 5

Maintaining equilibrium and wellbeing

In this issue of the Chronobiology series, we examine what happens when we are out of sync with our natural body rhythms.

So how important is maintaining equilibrium? If I have erratic times for sleeping and eating, what level of impact does this have on my wellbeing? Research by Micó et al. gives the following explanation:

*'One of the major influencers of circadian rhythm is the light/dark cycle, followed by temperature, fasting/eating, and rest/activity. As expected, any mutation to the 'clock genes' or any changes to the body's natural rhythm can disturb its delicate balance and open the door to disease.'*¹

What happens when disruptions to natural rhythms occur with nocturnal shift work or jet lag? The following study reveals sobering outcomes:

- The *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health* (2014) published research by Neil-Sztramko et al., titled: 'Health-related interventions among night shift workers: a critical review of the literature'.²
- The study conclusion mirrors previous research, which shows that disruptions to our natural body rhythms can 'throw the body's rhythm out of balance and can increase the risk for disease'. The study authors further explain:

'For instance, night shift workers who veer from the normal physiological tendencies of the body (i.e., sleeping at night and being active during the day or eating at physiologically unsuitable times) have an increased risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high

triglycerides, atherosclerosis, and heart attack.'

The good news, however, is that research demonstrates the resilience of the body to adapt when positive changes are made. A study published by *PubMed.gov* revealed that once circadian rhythms are restored, risk factors are reduced.³

People who suffer sleep disorders from shift work or jet lag do so because of the 'dyssynchrony between the internal clock and the external light-dark cycle, brought on by rapid travel across time zones or by working a nonstandard schedule', according to research from the *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine*.⁴

Among the solutions offered to minimise the symptoms for chronic sufferers, Cleveland Clinic suggests:

- Optimising the sleep environment
- Adjusting light exposure to the natural light-dark cycle
- Light therapy
- Medication (melatonin supplementation) to help adjust the circadian rhythm
- Behaviour therapy to help adjust the sleep-wake cycle

Good health!

¹Micó, V., et al. (2016), 'Nutrigenetics and Nutrimomics of the Circadian System: The Time for Human Health', *International Journal of Molecular Science*, 17(3):299

²Neil-Sztramko, S. E., et al. (2014), 'Health-related interventions among night shift workers: a critical review of the literature', *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, 40(6):543-56.

³<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18728909>

⁴<https://www.mdedge.com/ccjm/article/95431/sleep-medicine/jet-lag-and-shift-work-sleep-disorders-how-help-reset-internal>



Denomination or movement?

Richard Daly's article 'Save Ulceby Church' in the previous edition of *MESSENGER* (vol. 134/13) has caught my imagination. What must it have been like to an Adventist evangelist in circa 1880s England? What emotions stirred the missionaries on arrival at Southampton, after being on a steamship (no luxury cruise liner) that had taken a week or more to cross the North Atlantic from America? Once again on dry land, what was the initial experience of connecting and understanding the local culture? Believing this journey to be one 'led by the Lord', how did they expect the English venture to go?

Historian Harry Leonard describes Adventist pioneer J. N. Loughborough's tent evangelism in England as an experience that 'could not have been exposed to a more severe trial'. First, his ministry coincided with 'two of the worst English summers of the century'. Second, while tent evangelism in the Midwest of America was a respectable activity, in England it attracted some of the very poorest and roughest people. Ellen White is said to have described many English converts of the time as 'unruly and undisciplined'. And, as if to sharpen our understanding of the challenge, Leonard poignantly notes that 'the early Adventist pioneers were not Wesleys or Booths'. 'The British', he reminds us, 'were a proud people . . . who did not readily take lessons from foreigners, especially in religion.'¹

Adventist pioneers without question saw themselves as part of a movement ordained by God. The movement mindset was the wind in their sails, and for it they would give, and gave, their all.

Are we a denomination or a movement? The question is critical because it determines not only how we see ourselves, but – just as significant – how we see others. We know the story well. Christianity started out as a movement: radical, alive, expectant. God was at work, doing something mighty through the apostles.

'When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.' (Acts 2:1-4, ESV)

The Day of Pentecost was the launch of the Risen Christ movement, followers 'all filled with the Holy Spirit'. But less than sixty years later (AD 90) John the apostle describes some Risen Christ followers in the region of Laodicea as 'lukewarm' – a far cry from their supernatural and sensational beginning. As early as AD 260, 'Risen Christ' followers were all but divorced from their beginnings. The 'gift of the Spirit' had become a tradition, and now the 'official possession of the clergy, especially of the bishops'.²

If I were to describe it as shifting from a movement to a denomination, would you get my drift? Likewise, could we be in danger of doing the same? It's been on my mind for quite a while now, and, to try and clarify the difference between those in the 'Risen Christ Movement' and the all-but-divorced 'denominational mindset', take a look at the table below, and tell me if you identify with what I see.

Confession & disclaimer: Is my mindset often conflicted? Yes, you can be sure it is, more often than I'd like to admit. Are there strengths and weaknesses in both when taken to extremes? Yes. Am I seeking to label people? No; I must not, and we must not! But what an unholy disaster it would be if Adventism in our lands were defined more by the mindset of the left-hand column, rather than the right-hand column.

'I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.' (Philippians 1:3-6, ESV)

¹*The Story of Seventh-day Adventists in the British Isles: 1902-1992*, Special Souvenir *MESSENGER*; '1878-1902: Evangelising in Tough Territory', pp. 2 & 3

²*A History of the Christian Church*, Walker, p. 11



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SAVE THE DATE

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Guest Speaker:

Dr Ranko Stefanovic

Professor of New Testament, Theological Seminary, Andrews University



The Church

Denominational mindset

- A fortress
- Looks inward
- For the benefit of us
- High barriers to entry
- Pride in buildings and institutions
- Mission-passive
- Clergy-driven
- Members nominal
- Low commitment
- Low giving
- Highly organised structure
- Hierarchical structure (top-down)
- Group-speak
- Tradition rules
- Respectable
- Risk-averse
- Declining
- Ageing
- Supernatural-averse
- Head-leaning
- 'Can't-do' culture
- Fear and threats
- Later Church Model
- Dead

Movement mindset

- Open doors
- Looks outward
- For the benefit of others
- Low barriers to entry
- Relevance of buildings and institutions
- Mission-driven
- Member-driven
- Members active
- High commitment
- Sacrificial living (*not a typo – Ed!*)
- Loosely organised structure
- Brotherhood & sisterhood
- Imaginative, fearless thinking
- Tradition contextualised
- Extraordinary
- Risk-takers
- Growing
- Young
- Supernatural-expectant
- Heart-leaning
- 'Can-do' culture
- Opportunities
- Early Church Model
- Alive

The sermon: is it still central to worship?

When the preacher stands up to preach, what goes through your mind? This article by Pastor Patrick Boyle was recently published in the June issue of *Ministry* magazine to encourage pastors to keep the sermon as the high point of worship. Most *MESSENGER* readers are not responsible for sermon preparation and delivery; but, as 'the listener', do you ever wonder what it takes for the preacher to create the sermon? And is preaching still relevant in these times?

Strong biblical preaching is integral to the health of both the individual church and the world church. I would suggest that the current malaise among church members in Western society (though not confined to it) is due in no small way to the anaemic preaching in the pulpit. Any study of church history reveals that no reformation, revival, or progress happens apart from strong biblical preaching.

In the Protestant tradition, since the Reformation, the sermon has been understood as the central act of worship. This idea came about when the pulpit replaced the altar; the Bible replaced tradition; and the preacher replaced the priest.

Historically, the sermon in Protestant worship was clear and uncomplicated: the minister entered the pulpit, bowed in prayer, opened the Bible, announced the text or passage, and then presented it to the waiting congregation, all done with the intention of communicating God's message of salvation.

The modern sermon

In an age before computers, mobile phones, and the internet, this task was relatively straightforward. Modern technology has changed everything, including the Christian pulpit. The contemporary pastor, persecuted by information overload, can find it difficult to

escape the enticements of technology, some of which can have negative consequences for the sermon.

In many pulpits today, the sermon is degraded; some would say, destroyed. If we are to save our pulpit ministry, we must return the sermon – its message, content, structure, organisation, and delivery – to its primary place in worship. As when Peter stood up at Pentecost, every sermon has the potential to be a life-changing experience – for both the listeners and the preacher.

Sermon structure

The most useful way to create a sermon that will nourish and satisfy the preacher and congregation is by paying attention to structure. Whether expository, topical, evangelistic, biographical, or textual, all sermons benefit from a clear

structure. Structure allows the congregation to follow and understand the preacher's message. Lack of structure can confuse the hearers and the preacher.

One of the finest sermons I have heard, in more than 60 years of listening to and preaching sermons, was an exposition of 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. The preacher organised the passage under three heads: the Cross derided, the Cross dismissed, and the Cross depended upon.

The exposition was clear, introduced with interest, directed

to the head and the heart, and applied with power as befitted the passage. Structure held it together from start to finish. That is why it was memorable. Structure is beneficial; it provides hooks upon which truth can hang in the head and heart.

The introduction

Every sermon needs a good introduction. Contemporary homiletics likens the sermon introduction and conclusion to the takeoff and landing of an aeroplane. These are the two most dangerous moments in flying. Error or mistakes can be disastrous. The same danger is relevant to preaching.

Interest, interest, interest is the key that opens the hearers' minds and hearts and gets their attention. As a proverb says, 'Though the tongue never tires, the ear does.'¹

In this respect many preachers work against themselves. They begin without an awareness of the need to gain the interest and attention of the congregation. They stand in the pulpit without a wide-awake awareness of why they are there. Some tell a dramatic story that gets interest but is not connected to the sermon. Others recount their experience during the past week (a flat tyre, long queue at the shop, and so on). People come to church to hear a word from God, not to listen to what happened to the preacher or

his or her family. They come to be encouraged, learn, and be confirmed in their faith.

The introduction should do just that – introduce the sermon. It is unwise to begin by stating there are six points in the sermon. After three are presented, their eyes may start glazing over. Entice, grab their attention, but do not drag on and bore them right out of the gate.

The body of the sermon

What should we preach? This question has particular relevance for Seventh-day Adventist

preachers. 'There is in truth only one religious problem in the world – the existence of sin; and one religious solution of it – the Atonement, in which the love of God bears the sin, taking it, in all its terrible reality for us, upon itself.

And nothing can be central or fundamental either in Christian preaching or in Christian thinking which is not in direct and immediate relation to this problem and its solution.'² The Cross is central to all Christian preaching. Ellen White pointed out, 'Those who lift the cross will find that as they do this, the cross lifts them.'³ The only reason for preaching is to lift up Jesus before men and women so that they may be drawn to Him and be saved.

The core of all sermons worthy of the name will be composed of the great themes of Scripture: the atonement, righteousness by faith, God's grace, baptism, Christ's high priestly ministry, prophecy, our Saviour's return, forgiveness, the mercy of God, the efficacy of prayer, and the assisting and saving grace of the Holy Spirit. These and other wonderful themes of salvation compose the body of Christian sermons. No authentic sermons will neglect these teachings. That is why the sermon is the central act of worship.

Seventh-day Adventists have some distinctive biblical doctrines that are of the Gospel. They are not to be understood as denominational beliefs, but as

Patrick Boyle



biblical truths: the seventh-day Sabbath; Creation; the mortality of humankind; the immutability of God's holy law; the sanctuary; the pre-Advent judgement; and the millennium. These are biblical truths centred on Jesus. They are salvific, evangelical, and Cross-centred. These truths form the content of our sermons. They should not be neglected.

The purpose of sermons is not only to lead men and women to saving faith and church membership, but to guide them into the eternal kingdom of God. The majestic themes of Scripture are safe stepping stones to direct people on their pilgrimage to the New Jerusalem.

The conclusion

The sermon needs to finish with a safe landing and take the listeners to a definite destination. Conclusions should grow out of the body of the sermon and be related to it. It is not a simple or easy task to introduce or conclude sermons satisfactorily. It requires hard work, but it is a vital element. Only after the body of a sermon has been constructed should the introduction and conclusion be developed.

A sermon cannot be developed from an idea about how to introduce or end it. These are added after the body, the content, has been worked out. Three or four minutes are adequate for an introduction and for a conclusion. If there is no planned conclusion, there will be no application. Sermons have to take the congregation to a definite place.

The delivery of the sermon

Structure and content are vital, but so is the delivery of the sermon. Many a fine sermon founders on delivery.

Speaking too fast or too slow, shouting, dropping the voice, poor pronunciation, and long and involved sentences are the enemies of the preacher. Solomon's observation is more relevant for preachers than other mortals: 'Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof' (Prov. 18:21, KJV). Words, and how they are used, have great power to influence the mind and behaviour.

They can heal or hurt the soul, soothe and comfort the troubled minds; they can also wound and discourage. In the delivery of the sermon, the preacher's words and voice are important. An effective delivery connects the preacher's message and the congregation, and it should lead to a deeper, richer Christian experience for both.

Avoid being condescending or patronising. Mind how you dress. Do not attempt to make a statement by your clothes. Avoid talking about yourself or your holiday, and do not give a long-winded greeting from a former member.

Do not forget to whom you are speaking. Youth, the elderly, children, singles, young married couples? Would your sermon to your audience.

Even the sermons of powerful preachers can benefit from pruning. For the pastor who has the task of a sermon week after week, the length of the sermon is important. Only exceptional speakers can hold a congregation's interest for extended periods of time. It is healthy to avoid falling in love with the sound of one's own voice.

A well-thought-out sermon presented week by week, within a time frame that befits the culture, will be well received by most congregations. A rehash of the message in place of a short benediction is not good and can be an irritation.

Define what you want to say – and say it

As preachers, we should write down in a sentence or two exactly what we want to say. If not, then our minds are filled with nothing more than a headful of possibilities.

Thomas Long makes a valuable point when he says that the aim of a sermon is its focus, what it attempts to achieve, its function.⁴ Sermons with clear aims satisfy congregations and those who deliver them.

Preaching is a privilege, not a right. This truth should inform and

The fire of God's love will be kindled within them.

Preaching is an essential part of training and growing the church, both spiritually and theologically.

inspire our sermons. Ellen White puts it this way: 'When we eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood, the element of eternal life will be found in the ministry. There will not be a fund of stale, oft-repeated ideas. The tame, dull sermonising will cease. The old truths will be presented, but they will be seen in a new light. There will be a new perception of truth, a clearness and a power that all will discern. Those who have the privilege of sitting under such a ministry will, if susceptible to the Holy Spirit's

influence, feel the energising power of a new life. The fire of God's love will be kindled within them.'⁵ Preaching is an essential part of training and growing the church, both

spiritually and theologically. It, along with prayer, has been crucial in church transformation and revival. Therefore, we need to pay attention to the sermon's structure,

preparation, and delivery. Moreover, we must immerse it all in prayer, to make sure the Holy Spirit touches and transforms the hearers, responding to their very needs. We, the preachers, will then be a valuable tool in God's hands to grow His church.

The sermon is the central act of worship: treat it that way.

'The sermon: Is it still central to worship?' by Patrick Boyle was first published in the June 2019 issue of *Ministry*,[©] international journal for pastors. Used by permission.

To read more about the role of preaching in today's world, the full June edition can be found at: www.MinistryMagazine.org.

¹Richard Littledale, *Preacher's A-Z* (Edinburgh, UK: Saint Andrew Press, 2008), p. 181 ²James Denney, *The Death of Christ: Its Place and Interpretation in the New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907), pp. 326, 327 ³Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1955), p. 247 ⁴Littledale, *Preacher's A-Z*, p. 101 ⁵Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1941), pp. 130, 131



'The most moving experience a preacher can ever have is when, in the middle of the sermon, a strange hush descends upon the congregation. The sleepers have woken up, the coughers have stopped coughing, and the fidgeters are sitting still. No eyes or minds are wandering. Everybody is listening, but not to the preacher. The preacher is forgotten, and the people are face-to-face with the living God, listening to His still, small voice.' (John Stott – *Between Two Worlds*, p. 97)

- Has this ever happened to you as a listener or a preacher?
- Finding it hard to connect with the preacher for the day?

Try one of these:

1. Open your Bible and follow the scripture under consideration.
2. Pray for the Holy Spirit to speak through the preacher.
3. Take down notes: just key points, or a memorable line.
4. Expect to be challenged to grow spiritually and mature (be disciplined).

- 'Every sermon has the potential to be a life-changing experience' – every worship, every sermon. Are you expecting that?

Continued from p. 1

Prestatyn and neighbouring Rhyl. In partnership with the local council, arrangements were made to clean up Barkby Beach, the site on which Pontin's is located. Armed with bins and litter pickers, dressed in high-visibility vests, they set to work, maintaining the pristine nature of the beach, and talking with local residents along the way – all of whom were encouraged to see young people volunteering their time to help the environment. The following day, people met up to create care bags – containing underwear, confectionery and a book on hope – for rough sleepers in the local area. The care bags were inscribed with messages of hope for the recipients and then taken to a local day centre for rough sleepers, where they were happily received.

Each Camp Meeting day began at 6am with a special session of prayer and praise that recognised all the blessings which had come as a result of being at this year's camp meeting. It truly lived up to its theme of 'Retention', as members testified not only of God keeping them in the spiritual race, but also, in one case, of the joy of making a friend for the Lord, helping a friend. While shopping at Tesco, a member told of sharing Jesus with local residents. The conversation led to those individuals accepting an invitation to join members at the camp meeting to experience a blessing for themselves.

In his final message to the SEC campers, Dr David McKenzie, who has become a much-loved son of the SEC community, concluded his well-crafted sermon series in his breathless and inimitable style. He told his audience to 'hold on, for God will turn things around'.

He preached through a lesser-known Old

Testament passage in narrative style, drawn from David's predicament in 1 Samuel 30:1-6: when David and his men returned to find their camp burnt and families taken captive by the Amalekites, he was broken. His men were about to stone him. But David 'encouraged himself in the Lord'.

Pastor McKenzie drew three major lessons from the story. 1. Fasten yourself to the Lord. 2. Remember the Lord. Remember when; remember how; remember why. 3. Make up your mind never to give up.

He ended his resounding sermon series with a graphic visualisation of the Second Coming of Jesus. Building up through one final crescendo, 'Hold on: God will turn things...' hundreds of voices responded, '... around!' Many came forward for the altar call.

SEC President Emmanuel Osei thanked Dr David McKenzie and singing evangelists The Chitans for their ministry during the week, while also making presentations to all other invited special guests who officiated in the children, teens and youth departments.

The meetings were also seasoned with timely Religious Liberty presentations by Dr Brighton Kavaloh. 'Drip, drip, drip' is how Kavaloh described the growing threat to religious liberty from various pieces of government legislation aimed at children's education. Kavaloh, however, focused on the proposed legislation on 'Children Not in School' and the 'Relationship and Sex Education' (RSE) in primary and secondary schools, which is already a law. He reminded all about the passage in Matthew 10:16: 'Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.' The final session concluded with the audience being

asked to fill in the online response form for the 'Children Not in School' proposed legislation, which ended on 24 June.

The health seminars were led by Pastor Christian Karlsson, who grew up in both Sweden and Uganda. Karlsson presented up-to-date research that shows that the original biblical diet is best for protecting our physical health as well as our brain health. In a similar way, our bodies suffer badly because we put the wrong things in our stomachs!

Further extensive reports about each day at Prestatyn 2019 can be found at <http://adventist.org.uk/sec/news>.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY JAMES SHEPLEY, MATTHEW HEREL, DON ROBERTS, DARELL PHILIP, MARK BORRETT AND BERNIE HOLFORD



Pastor Reyes



Dr McKenzie



Emmanuel Osei, SEC President

The future of Camp Meeting in the SEC

I will remember attending the first camp meeting held in Poole, Dorset, way back in 1982. I have continued to enjoy this holy convocation and spiritual retreat every year since that time. Most religions have their holy weeks where time is set aside for spiritual refreshing, and our history as the Seventh-day Adventist Church is inextricably linked to Camp Meeting. The purpose and benefits of Camp Meeting greatly outweigh the negatives, and in my estimation can be summarised as follows:

- Camp Meeting is the largest annual convocation in the South England Conference diary;
- Camp Meeting gives us an opportunity to recharge our spiritual batteries;
- Camp Meeting provides an opportunity for people to give their lives to Jesus Christ through baptism;
- Camp Meeting creates opportunities for training through the various workshops;
- Camp Meeting also creates an environment for the Lord to speak to us as a Conference;
- Camp Meeting gives us an opportunity to have fellowship.

I am sure you can add many more benefits based on your own experience to the above list. It is my firm conviction that Camp Meeting must continue in the South England Conference, and therefore this holy convocation is here to stay!

Challenges with Camp Meeting as it currently exists:

- It's a long drive to get to the camp site;
- The cost of chalets can be a deterrent for many;
- The timing of Camp Meeting creates a challenge for parents with children of school age;
- Head teachers are not always willing to grant children leave during Camp Meeting;
- Cleanliness of the chalets is a major factor that deters some from attending;
- There is a demographic of our church family (people in their thirties) who feel that Camp Meeting is not currently meeting their needs;
- The numbers attending Camp Meeting have dropped considerably, resulting in a financial challenge for the Conference;
- The number of attendees in the youth and teens section has also dropped noticeably;
- Accessibility for the disabled and elderly proves to be very challenging;
- Bathing in the chalets proves difficult for some of the elderly, as they do not have rails to hold.

The way forward?

Two years ago, I met with the campers at Camp Meeting to discuss the challenges and possible solutions as we sought to go forwards together. We also invited those who do not attend Camp Meeting to complete a survey online to get their input. This year we met again to discuss the challenges and suggest some possible solutions.

- Camp Meeting can be held at Queen Ethelburga's College in York during the month of August, when we will have access to the entire site. This will enable parents with school-age children to attend, as well as those students doing exams to be free to attend. This venue also has the added benefit of meals (breakfast, lunch and supper) being served for everyone in the cafeteria as part of the cost of attending Camp Meeting. Please take time to visit <https://youtu.be/IFkurW1ouMw>.
- We could hire a venue such as Telford International Centre and allow members to book their accommodation from the hotels that are at walking distances from the main centre. This is similar to what happens when we go to a GC session. With this arrangement, breakfast will be served in the hotels and lunch and supper will be served at the centre. Please visit <https://youtu.be/L4BLNXyXjma>.
- Camp Meeting can be held regionally on a smaller scale. We could hold one in London and another in the provincial area.
- Camp Meeting could be held every other year as opposed to an annual event, thus saving on costs.
- Finally, we could explore the possibility of joining with the NEC, who are also experiencing similar challenges in terms of declining numbers, and hold a joint camp meeting annually.

My meeting with the young people gave an opportunity to hear how they see the future of Camp Meeting. About 82 millennials were in attendance as we discussed the way forward. The conclusions are summarised below:

- They wanted to see an increase in group activities during the break periods. These activities might mean finding an alternative camp site which offers a variety of different activities;
- They suggested we look into purchasing our own purpose-built camp site. This is a discussion I have been having with the NEC president. With the support of the BUC, a site could be acquired and made available



- for all the entities within the BUC;
- The programme content should be revisited and restructured to appeal to a wider audience;
- Focus on enterprise and career development for young people during the breaks;
- Research and study models of camp meetings from other organisations such as The Big Church Day Out and Spring Harvest;
- Outreach and evangelistic activities should be increased and targeted;
- Surveys should be conducted of those who no longer attend Camp Meeting;
- Adopt a more effective advertising strategy using more of the available technology;
- Host a youth camp meeting over a long weekend;
- Create a team of around 20 people outside of the SEC directorship to assist in planning Camp Meeting.

Where do we go from here?

We would like to call a meeting of those seriously interested parties who know they can make a contribution to solving our dilemma. They are members who have experience as event managers and planners or have great ideas and are prayerfully wanting to see Camp Meeting achieve its goals and become a blessing to our members. The South England Conference is your Conference. We would like you to offer your skills to come and make Camp Meeting 2020 and beyond holistically successful. Please send me an email registering your interest to be a part of this group that will plan Camp Meeting to: osei@secadventist.org.uk by 31 July.

Amazing Facts DVD leads to Stoke baptism

On 1 June, Stoke-on-Trent Church celebrated the baptism of Ruth Burton, who started her journey of faith by watching Pastor Doug Batchelor's *Amazing Facts* evangelistic series. Introduced during this special service by her friend Paul, she said:

'Paul was the one who set me on the road to faith by sharing the Final Events and Amazing Facts DVDs by Pastor Doug Batchelor. From this moment, I was inspired to learn more about the Lord Jesus and to worship with an Adventist church family within Stoke-on-Trent. One night, I visited the church, took down the contact telephone number and contacted Pastor Philpott, who encouraged me to start the Bible studies that have led to my baptism today. I have a great hunger to learn more and to tell the story of the Lord Jesus Christ, to share His love with whomever I meet. I also want to continue to have Bible studies with Paul (my friend from Nottingham), as there is so much to discover about Christ.'

Apart from these Bible studies, Ruth is also giving Bible studies to her son and his wife, and is further assisting her granddaughter Chelsea to



Ruth Burton being baptised by Pastor Ian Philpott of Stoke-on-Trent Church



Ruth Burton in the middle, with her new church family, and Pastor Ian Philpott at the far right

learn about the Lord. In addition, Ruth invites neighbourhood friends to join her for Bible study.

According to Pastor Ian Philpott, this was another special day for him, after a period of Bible studies; and to witness Ruth finally making a decision to be baptised was a wonderful experience. The Stoke-on-Trent church are very grateful for the great support of Pastor Philpott, who has motivated every department to work in support of the Lord's ministry. Let Ruth's story be an encouragement to all of us, to tell the story of the Lord Jesus and His ministry to family and friends.

HASTINGS KANDAYA
ELDER, STOKE-ON-TRENT CHURCH

'God is now the centre of my life'

On Sabbath 15 June, the Gloucester church welcomed into their membership, through baptism, two young people who have decided to commit their lives to Jesus.

Dragos Mihai Gradinaru and Denisa Alexandra Petre, two young Romanians now living in this country, spoke of their journey of finding Christ. Dragos had been brought up an Adventist, but strayed away from God and lost his way spiritually.

At 27 years old he met Denisa and started going to church occasionally with both her and his mother, who regularly attends the Gloucester church. After further Bible studies, he decided to commit his life to Jesus. He now says, 'God is the centre of my life, and I want to walk with Him and demonstrate my commitment through baptism.'

Denisa had been brought up in the Orthodox Church but felt that something was missing in her life. When she was 19 years old she met Dragos, started to attend the Gloucester church with him, and particularly enjoyed 'the fellowship and family feeling of the church'. Together with Dragos she began having Bible studies, and the many questions she had asked when younger began to be answered. She now has a new picture of God, saying, 'I now see God as my loving Heavenly Father, my Creator and the Leader of my life. I want to commit my life to Him eternally.'

Dragos and Denisa plan to get married in Romania before making their home here in the UK.

Pastor Namuchana baptised Dragos and Denisa, and in his message to them he reminded them of the three Ds they had gone through on their journey to this special day: desire; determination; and decision, each an important step, and ones they would need to keep in mind each day of their Christian journey. Pastor Jackson welcomed Dragos and Denisa into the membership and fellowship of the Gloucester church, who joyfully welcomed them into their midst.

R. HINDS (MEDIA DEPARTMENT)



Front row, left to right: Lidia, mother of Dragos; Dragos; Denisa; Mihaela, mother of Denisa
Back row, left to right: Pastor Namuchana; Elders Lutz Rentel and Errol Westcarr; Pastor Julian Cranfield



Cynthia Hamilton



Tatiana Concelcae



Pastor Murphy retires – and quickly returns to conduct baptism!

Readers will remember from a previous edition of *MESSENGER* that Pastor Curtis Murphy has retired. On 15 June he was 'back at work' presiding at the baptism of Tatiana Concelcae and Cynthia Hamilton.

Praise the Lord!

DENNIS TAYLOR

Untangling policies – understanding risk and liability

What better hymn for a day on risk management than 'Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine'? That was the apt hymn choice as Pastor Ian Sweeney, President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland, led worship for a group of Adventist leaders who came to understand a slew of insurance policies and risk-management advice from European and world church leaders of Adventist Risk Management (ARM).

Fifty-three leaders from various institutions around the UK met on the picturesque campus of Newbold College of Higher Education – though they did not have too much time to admire the campus on a gloomy, rainy day, as, on Wednesday, 12 June, they paid careful attention to Tim Northrop, President of ARM, along with Vice President for Client Care, David Fournier, as they delved into 'Untangling policies with ARM'.

Sweeney set the tone of the day with a thought-provoking and insightful worship focused on Mark 2 from a health-and-safety, insurance and risk-management perspective. The overriding message was that our churches should be accessible and safe for all, not only in their physical aspects but even more in a spiritual sense, where nothing can prevent us from meeting Jesus.

Northrop commenced the main proceedings by explaining liability issues that face our church in modern times and the measures ARM has in place to try and help to protect our members, the reputational image of our church, and how the legal structure of the church helps to manage some of those risks. Fournier then went on to discuss risk-management protocols and denominational property coverage, while Graham Barham, Diane Edwards, and Giles Barham from the ARM office in St Albans spoke on employee benefit policies and membership coverages.

During the interactive sessions the attendees were engaged and animated – answering policy-based questions which tested their learning during the sessions. They used their newly received knowledge to compete for ARM-branded giveaways for correctly answering questions based on practical scenarios. These sessions also allowed for question-and-answer periods where attendees could air their burning questions on issues that were important to their individual job roles or gain greater clarity about aspects that they did not perhaps fully understand.



Zina Tsvetanova and Judy Plaatjes, TED support staff, enjoying the ARM seminar



Graham Barham, ARM manager, European office

Graham Barham, Regional Manager for Europe and Africa, was delighted with the way that the attendees engaged and received the presentations, while acknowledging that this was long overdue: 'A while ago we had identified that there was an opportunity to connect with the UK leaders regarding the service ARM provides in the world church structure – and, further, how the insurance policies provided actually work,' he said. 'We often spend time travelling to other territories in the six Divisions of the Church that our St Albans office serves. We felt it important that appropriate attention also be given to our home Union so they can also benefit from greater understanding.'

Feedback from attendees was extremely positive. Audrey Andersson, Executive Secretary of the Trans-European Division, aptly summarised the event: 'Sometimes insurance can seem complicated and confusing, but the day really did untangle policies and was interesting and informative. It was inspiring to see the care that ARM has for church members and the organisation.'

GILES BARHAM



Adventist Risk Management, Inc.

Job vacancy

Account Executive position – excellent learning environment

Adventist Risk Management (St Albans office) is seeking a full-time **Account Executive**. The Account Executive will promote and sell the company's insurance products to existing and new clients in their assigned territory, while at the same time maintaining high-quality customer service.

About ARM: Adventist Risk Management, Inc. is the official insurance and risk-management company for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. ARM provides timely, real-world insurance products and innovative risk-management solutions for minimising risk within Adventist ministries at all levels.

Job duties (summary):

- Be responsible for leading in the identification, evaluation, mitigation and monitoring of the client's operational and strategic risk.
- Conduct regular risk-management assessments with each client to review their claim experience.
- Call on policyholders to deliver and explain policy, and suggest additions or changes as appropriate.
- Maintain current knowledge about global insurance matters.
- Deliver great customer service, including follow-up.
- Maintain regular contact with other ARM departments.
- Maintain professional and technical knowledge by participating in training.

Job requirements:

- A Bachelor's degree in a business-related field is required.
- A minimum of 2-5 years of successful general office experience is required.
- Experience in the insurance industry is preferred.
- The ability to work within a small team environment is required.
- The ideal candidate will be personable and dedicated to the mission and ethos of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Salary: Pay will be in line with the denominational pay scale, depending on skills and experience.

Contact information: A full outline of the job requirements and benefits can be found at: <https://ted.adventist.org/about-us/7-job-opportunities>
<http://adventist.org.uk/who-we-are/jobs-list/jobs/account-exec>

The successful candidate will need to have permission to work and live in the UK. Interested applicants should send a curriculum vitae to gbarham@adventistrisk.org.

Closing date for applications is 26 July 2019.



Winson Green changed lives

Another baptism took place at the Winson Green, Birmingham church on 15 June. As seven precious souls gave their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ, family and friends were joined by the members of the sister churches of Smethwick and Breath of Life, and visitors from Wales. The ministers presiding over the baptism were Pastors E. Lawrence and O. Iheoma. Elder W. Masih delivered the sermon, reminding everyone of the meaning of the Cross of Christ and its centrality to our faith. The newly baptised members are: Rio and Remario Gwayi, Shania Peters, Kadiyah Francis, Noel Booth, June O'Garro and Marlene Green. We praise God for the hearts and lives He is transforming.

WILFRED MASIH



Bristol grows with Life Colours and health fair

On Saturday 1 June the third annual Life Colours health event returned to Bristol, with over 200 people in attendance from the Bristol area. Held in the prestigious City Hall in a prime location, the event started in style with a welcome speech by the newly appointed Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Jos Clark, who commented on how important it was to encourage people to be more physically and mentally healthy, particularly in later life, as that was a particular interest of hers.

The keynote speaker, Dr Chidi Ngwaba, brought his unique perspective on a range of lifestyle diseases, and in his first presentation he focused on stress and its impact and role in many other lifestyle diseases, such as hypertension, heart disease, obesity and so on. In his afternoon session Dr Chidi focused on tips and guidance on prevention for a number of these diseases, including type 2 diabetes. Advice included what changes to diet and lifestyle to make, and useful tips on how to make the changes easier.

An interesting and important change this year was the introduction of separate seminar workshop sessions on women and men's health.

The women's session was led by Dr Viola Mathew, Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Weston General Hospital, a member of the Weston-super-Mare church. Dr Mathew explained the various elements which make up women's health, such as social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health, and how they affect physical health. She gave the example of how we influence others as we interact with people, and asked how we can cultivate that in a positive way. The workshop was very well received and generated some interesting discussion.

The men's session was led by Dr Peter Roach, who had also given a presentation on the power of positive thinking, and it was an eye-opener for the men, with full and frank and slightly embarrassing discussion on how men should look after their health, including tips on early diagnosis of things like prostate cancer for early intervention. The room was full to overflowing, with nearly 50 men present, ranging from teenagers to a gentleman in his eighties, but it was an excellent workshop addressing issues which a lot of men tend to ignore or avoid.

Towards the end of the day Joni Blackwood, a lifestyle and fitness coach from the South England Conference, led the audience, ably assisted by the Bristol district's Pastor Royston Smith, in an exercise warm-up and stretching session, with everyone taking part.

Also new this year was a second event on the Sunday, when a health fair was held at the Bristol Central church. Despite the wet weather, gazebos were put up in the church car park, with a number of visitors and passers-by dropping in. The event was supported by sponsoring organisations Avon and Somerset Police, Avon Fire and Rescue, Rethink Mental Health, Time to Change, and NHS Blood and Transplant.

Over the two days, over 75 goodie bags were given to the attendees, which contained health literature and small leaflets and books. Presentations of flowers, cards and Adventist books were also given as

gifts to the keynote speakers and all the organisations represented. Bristol Central Community Ministries leader and local organiser, Mary Philip, had worked exceptionally hard in bringing the various parties together and organising the venue, which was provided by the city council, as well as arranging for all the speakers and participants.

All in all, it was an uplifting and worthwhile experience, with plans already underway for next year's event!

BRISTOL CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
PHOTOS BY NELSON KHONJE

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

Yes! Definitely not 'soup kitchen as usual'

Our services should be intensely interesting (Ellen White, *Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 9, p. 233), and Aston Community Church's soup kitchen definitely is. There is the pattern of splendidly cooked food prepared by the Community Services leader, Mrs Baker, and a team of kitchen volunteers who laugh and share the food for a couple of hours every Tuesday. How easy for those who attend to talk over a good meal – just a foretaste of the joys of heaven. On a weekly basis 12-18 persons attend, some regulars and others whom we see now and then, due possibly to their addictions, temporary housing (or lack of it) and poor health.

The soup kitchen prospers because of donation arrangements from Tesco, a local school, church members and the community.

A special activity bringing people together has been to get the Choir with No Name to deliver a one-hour workshop in singing. Choir with No Name is a renowned homeless charity that brings together the homeless community through singing and provides enjoyable and engaging sessions that encourage health and wellbeing. Foot tapping and smiles were the non-verbal 'Yes!' responses from the songs sung at our June 2019 session – 'This little light of mine' and 'You are my sunshine' –



despite the drenching rain on arrival! As one of the participants commented: 'I enjoy coming to this place and the staff are always welcoming. Are we going to have this again? Singing lifts your spirit and you forget about all worries.'

To make this happen was a team involving many church departments. The annual Christmas meal is now our 'can't wait for it to happen' event.

COMMUNITY SERVICES – ASTON NEWTOWN

Chatham – on the High Street again

Following the previous year's success story, Chatham Church was in the High Street once again for a worthy community cause on Sunday 9 June 2019, as the red-and-white gazebos were pitched once again for the free community health check.

The event was a blessing to both the public and the team running it. 'Everyone who used our services was grateful and impressed,' said Dr Rebecca Greco (one of the volunteer health professionals from Chatham Church). Dr Greco observed that many people were intrigued and wondered why other healthcare professionals did not work along the same lines. They were happy that our approach looks for a curable cause, rather than patching up the problem temporarily. They were inspired to live a healthier lifestyle, and left the tent more hopeful than they would have done if medications had been prescribed. One particular person was so impressed with the suggested management plan that he was determined to get the address and contact number to attend our church the following week. Prayers were offered for some of the patients, and the Holy Spirit was surely at work.

Many thanks go to all the volunteers, health professionals and everyone who came out to be a part of the programme. Plans are already underway for the health expo 2020.

CHATHAM COMMUNICATION TEAM



As supplied, errors and omissions excepted



Health expo in Potternewton Park, Leeds

The day started bright and clear on Sunday 5 May, and the health expo volunteers came out to begin setting up the Leeds Central health expo, organised by the Health Ministries team of the church.

The venue was a local park in North Leeds, Potternewton Park, Chapeltown, previous site of evangelistic campaigns held by Leeds Central Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The event was attended by around 50 local residents from different ethnic communities who live in the Chapeltown/Harehills area. Members of a local Baptist congregation attended and were impressed by the number of health professionals that attend our church.

A follow-up health programme is being planned post-health expo for the people who attended the event.

We thank the Lord for blessing us with a successful health expo, and for the people who attended.

V. MAYNARD, HEALTH MINISTRIES TEAM



Audrey wins another gold medal

Audrey Balderstone's floral artistry skills have won her yet another gold medal for one of her exhibits. This time it was for a joint effort with her friend Yolanda Campbell, who has been helping her organise recent flower festivals at Stanborough Park Church. Both are members of the Watford Floral Society. As former flower show gold medallists they were asked to represent the Home Counties area of the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (NAFAS) when it was invited to enter an exhibit at the Harrogate Agricultural Society's Annual Spring Show.

According to Audrey, 'As well as many individual competition pieces in the Floral Art section they invite four areas of NAFAS to compete. This year the Home Counties area was invited. Each area was given a space of 3m x 3m and a title and allocated a city, with the task of representing a street scene there in flowers. Having been given London, they decided to take the Notting Hill Carnival as their theme.'

Their exhibit, which took three days to prepare, is described by Audrey as 'four large metal circles – each slightly smaller than the other. Then came the task of covering the metal! We used hundreds of chrysanthemum heads to cover the crossbars and hundreds of succulents to decorate the circles. Through the centre we had a large floral display which used 100 stems of asparagus fern and 100 stems of gloriosa lilies, plus many other flowers.'

Audrey has used her talent for floral artistry in many positive ways and has raised money for many good causes with her flower festivals. Recently she ran a flower-arranging workshop for beginners at the church to share her knowledge and allow others to discover previously hidden artistic talents.

JUNE COOMBS

Reconnect – homecoming weekend at Brixton Church

Homecoming 25/26 May 2019 was more than just another church service for the members of Brixton Church. It was more than just the coming together of members past and present. Homecoming was the engagement of people from many countries around the world, people who had at some time in their lives worshipped with us and remembered the many campaigns, ministers and outreach programmes that brought us all into the church. It was the engagement of those who knew us and wanted to join us in celebration of the many years we have been a significant part of the community.

There was a time when the church rented out a room in the local town hall in Lambeth and then moved to the purpose-built building on Ferndale Road. As the membership grew, the church sent out roots that would form churches in different boroughs in South London.

However, the time came in 1979 when the building at Ferndale Road could no longer contain everyone, and it was by God's design that Pastor Cecil Perry saw an opportunity to negotiate with the leaders of the St Paul's church on Santley Street to swap their large community church for the building we could no longer support our membership in.

When we exchanged properties it was all hands to the plough as

members and friends cleaned, painted and restored the building to its former glory and place of praise to the Lord. This is why Homecoming was a mixture of historic storytelling of Adventism in South London: the remembrance of members who are sleeping in the Lord who had pioneered and forged their way into the neighbouring houses and estates. They planted the Bible and other printed material in the homes of those who would themselves accept the message in years to come and be a part of the membership that stands at Brixton Church today. That is why we could sing 'Marching to Zion' and 'I will Sing of Jesus' Love', as, when we look towards the place from which God has brought us, we know that we are truly blessed.

Pastor Ian Sweeney, the BUC president, gave the message for the hour that 'Homecoming' can mean so many things to so many people. However, for us, at Brixton, the day brought with it much nostalgia and reminded us, a little, of the time when we will experience the greatest homecoming ever seen when Jesus gathers His own.

The celebrations spilled over to Sunday 26 May when we socialised at Balham Church, took photos and spoke about many enjoyable times we had in service and while associating with the church.

We want to thank Pastor Keith Boldeau, the current pastor of Brixton Church, his pastoral team and all those who contributed to make Homecoming 2019 a weekend to remember.

VALERIE MOODIE, COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Keith Boldeau



Ian Sweeney

BRIXTON: OPENING SERVICE



Above: The exterior of the Brixton church. Below: The interior.

The minister, board and members of the Brixton SDA church are happy to announce that their new premises at Santley Street, Brixton, will be dedicated on Sabbath, 15 November, and that there will be an Open Day with a musical programme on Sunday, 16 November at 2 pm to which friends and fellow-members are cordially invited.



The original MESSENGER article reporting on Brixton's opening service (MESSENGER 20, 24 October, 1980)



Wezley Bishop

Author and poet Thembe Mvula

'On Purpose'

Hackney drew a huge crowd of youth at their youth day on Sabbath 8 June 2019. The theme – 'On Purpose' – reminded those present that God has a good plan and purpose for their lives. 'You are special because you are created in the image of God, and He has a purpose for all of your lives,' said assistant youth leader, Freda Ojo.

Michaela Mathieu-Marius, another assistant youth leader, shared a presentation on a planned trip to Rwanda this coming August, after a mass funeral of 21 individuals was held due to a lightning strike on a Seventh-day Adventist church there last year: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-43362508>.

'While on a mission trip to Rwanda, I lost one of my Year 5 students in the lightning strike. Sixteen young people from Hackney and other churches will be travelling out there to rebuild the church and a playground. It costs just £3 to give an individual health insurance for a year,' said Michaela.

The Hackney Mime Group held the audience's attention with their captivating performance to the gospel song, 'Open my eyes'. Prayer

leader, Eileen Philip, prayed for all the youth present.

Guest speaker for the day was Wezley Bishop from Birmingham. Wezley encouraged the gathering to dream big, no matter how people try to limit them. He continued, 'God will always have the final say, as in the case of Joseph. When God has given you a purpose you must share it with others, as it makes them accountable for reminding you of it, while God releases the power needed in your life to fulfil that purpose.' Using the example of the apostle Paul, Wezley reminded his listeners that Paul was able to share Jesus with customers while making tents. He concluded his message by saying: 'There should be no ineffective participants in church, because both young and old have been given a plan and purpose of good from God to fulfil and live up to. God calls us to minister beyond the four walls of the church. We must learn to show our Christianity rather than our Adventism and live a life of purpose and purpose.'

DARELL J. PHILIP
PHOTOS BY THEMBE MVULA AND DARELL J. PHILIP



Queen's Jubilee celebrated with Ealing Mayor

London Area 6D Community Services celebrated the Queen's Jubilee on 8 June 2019 at the Hanwell church. The Mayor of Ealing, Councillor Dr Abdullah Gulaid, thoroughly enjoyed the visit.

Willesden Pathfinders' drum corps crowned the occasion, along with the Hanwell Pathfinders and Adventurers, as they confidently marched on the highways and streets of Ealing, admired by the spectators from the starting point at Uxbridge Road, to the end at the Hanwell church. Pastor Berhanu Tsehaye (of Hanwell, Southall and Central London Ethiopian Seventh-day Adventist Churches) took the front line in the march.

Willesden Pathfinders' drum corps made history due to their excellent performance. Due to the overall safety and orderly manner of the event, Pastor Berhanu received a Permanent Card and Permanent Reference Number by Ealing Acton Police, who were very pleased. Police joined us in the picture soon after the march in front of the Hanwell church.

The Mayor, Councillor Dr Abdullah Gulaid, soon joined the celebration over at the Hanwell church. Pastor Berhanu offered a special prayer for the life and service of Her Majesty, the Queen of England.

The Mayor's message to the church was an emphasis that the church should create an environment where young people (primarily but not exclusively) of African and Caribbean descent appreciate each other's culture and tradition and develop a true sense of pride in themselves.

The Mayor, impressed by the health expo, encouraged such practical ministry to the community. Pastor Berhanu presented the church's building plans and the pressing need for building better facilities to meet the needs of our community.

SARAH LUBANGA, COMMUNITY MINISTRIES COORDINATOR, AREA 6D

LADC LONDON AREA ADVISORY COUNCIL
YOUTH DAY OF FELLOWSHIP

OUR FAITH OUR CHURCH

OUR GENERATION

20 JULY 2019 | 10AM
LIGHTHOUSE THEATRE, 262-274 CAMBERWELL ROAD, SE5 0DP
CONCERT 5PM | DOORS OPEN 4.30PM

ASHER MCKENZIE | PASTOR WARREN GILLIN | SHEREEN RODNEY | CLARENCE JACKSON
FOR MORE INFO: KBOLDEAU@SECADVENTIST.ORG.UK | AFULLER@SECADVENTIST.ORG.UK
THIS IS A TICKETED EVENT | VISIT WWW.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK | PLEASE BRING A PACKED LUNCH

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted



An all-embracing church?

While it is disconcerting to imagine that there could ever be a child that everybody fears, Pastor Patricia Douglas, NEC Children's Ministries Director, felt inspired to write this emotive piece as a means of generating discussion on the plight of special needs children and their families within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Many of our churches are fully embracing in nature, engaging in intergenerational worship that seeks to encompass all who attend. However, the reality is that, on the other hand, a number of families feel marginalised within our church, due to an air of uncertainty in what it means to engage meaningfully with disabled children. Parents of children with special needs have shared their frustrations of being between a rock and a hard place in seeking to meet the needs of their children while dealing with certain negative attitudes towards disability which surface within their church.

For a number of years disability and its perceived challenges have been a central feature within the debate on the educational exclusionary practices of schools, which has served to bring the plight of disabled children and their families to the scrutiny of the public eye, leading to a national outcry of social injustice. It is evident that the education system has struggled to find an appropriate response. In this respect our church may on some level be reflecting societal norms. Nevertheless, the reality is that it's time to stop burying our heads in the sand; it's time to grapple with the real issues, highlighting best practice, while on the other hand grappling with underlying issues which tend to surface as negativity.

My illustration for The Child that Everybody Fears is not fictitious, but real life.

The Child that Everybody Fears

There's a child that everybody fears. The parents are consumed with anxiety most of the time, but especially when Sabbath comes round. Sabbath is far from being a day of rest and gladness; it has become a day filled with the gloom of fretful thoughts. They live on tenterhooks, filled with the trepidation of attending church; they live in dread of the unknown, for they are parents of the child that everybody fears.

The members pour into church on Sabbath morning with smiles, love and the warmth of an embrace. Fellowship is sweet – until they hear the footsteps of the child that everybody fears. They seem paralysed; the smiles dissolve from their faces, replaced by scowls, fear and anxiety, not knowing what to expect. Will the child be calm today? Or will it be more of the same: always fidgeting, fiddling with this and that, pulling, pushing, shouting, fighting, and, in the process, robbing the church of joy? There's often sighing and crying as the church cries out, 'How long? How long must we suffer? How long? How long?' For this is the church of the child that everybody fears.

If only the child weren't present, then it seems that heaven would ensue. The parents hang their heads in shame; they really don't know what to do. They feel the guilt of disrupting the service, the guilt of robbing the saints; but, as they look into the eyes of the child that everybody fears, they simply see a child – their child – a precious child, in need of love!

In the context of the local church, what are we doing to engage children with special needs? What are we doing to embrace them? What are we doing to mobilise them? What are we doing to ensure that their voices



may be heard? In John 13:34, 35 Jesus states: 'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another' (NIV). The response of fear, annoyance, anxiety, frustration or plain indifference simply isn't good enough! Please respond and have your say.

'Utopia' – can the world be better?

As Christians we have a concept of utopia – of something better, more perfect, more wonderful; where everything that is currently wrong with the world will cease. The world at this time is also yearning for utopia. In the realisation of climate emergency, further economic inequality and angry political dialogue, artists around the world are engaging with the idea of utopia. This utopia is something that we, as humans, know we can't reach (proved by our constant failure to do so), but which is worth striving for anyway – because we still hope and need to move towards making things better.

What is the Christian perspective of utopia with ideas about God's perfect goodness, God's Kingdom, Heaven and the new earth? How does it shape our idea of reality?

REBEKAH BLYTH

CENTRAL LONDON CHURCH PRESENTS:

UTOPIA: AN ART EXHIBITION

Can the world be better?

Come and see the work of local artists and join us in imagining a better world with LEGO.

CRAWFORD PLACE, MARYLEBONE LONDON, W1H 5JE
JULY 21 – 27 2019
11:00 – 20:30
FREE ENTRY

Evening talks (15-20 min):

Sun: Exhibition opening, 4-5pm
Mon: Art & Theology, 7pm
Tue: Art & Therapy, 7pm
Wed: Art & Hope, 7pm
Thu: Art & Ministry, 7pm
Fri: Open mic/Performance night, 7pm
Sat: Utopia & Heaven, 10:30 am- 12:30pm + discussion and creative response, 12:45 - 2pm



As supplied, errors and omissions excepted



Dear Editor, May I respond to the thought-provoking statement the co-authors made in the article 'Historic Adventist village visit' (MESSENGER, 7 June issue)? It would be interesting to know if Sojourner Truth and Ellen G. White ever crossed paths in Battle Creek.'

It may surprise the majority of Seventh-day Adventists to learn that Sojourner Truth was a Seventh-day Adventist. She was baptised into the Church by Uriah Smith, who also conducted her 1883 funeral service.

Truth (or her legal surname, Van Wagener) was also a friend of a number of our pioneers, such as Dr John H. Kellogg and John Byington, first president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Sojourner Truth was not the only noted person of black abolitionist history acquainted with the Advent message. Frederick Douglass was a similar personage, but he did not become an Adventist. However, Mrs Rosetta Douglass Sprague, his daughter, did. These and other interesting facts can be gleaned from Louis B. Reynolds' book, *We Have Tomorrow*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1984.

As to Ellen G. White and Sojourner Truth crossing paths, perhaps they did – or perhaps not. To date, I cannot find any evidence confirming one way or another.

I hope the authors of the article, MESSENGER readers and yourself find the aforementioned bits of news very interesting.

ERVIN HERBERT

Dear Editor, You have kindly asked us, the readers, to express our views on what we would like to see more or less of in MESSENGER going forward. My view is that change is good sometimes, but change for the sake of change is not necessarily a good idea.

The old adage, 'If it isn't broken, don't mend it' still applies, and more so in regard to the MESSENGER's role and function in the twenty-first century. In my view, we have had some very capable editors in the past, and I



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continue to trust the judgement of the Press in continuing to make the contents of MESSENGER relevant.

I joined the Church when David Marshall was the editor – a man well versed in the Scriptures and in the art of storytelling – and the trend continued with his successor, Pastor Hibbert. Long may it continue!

STANLEY FARRELL



For the Least of These

by Victor Hulbert

For the next couple of months Seventh-day Adventists around the world will be studying issues of social justice in Sabbath School lessons entitled, *For the Least of These: Ministering to those in need*. ADRA leaders from across Europe have recorded short video clips

as a refreshing introduction to each lesson.

A European country director for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) will introduce the topic for each week and link it to some of the ADRA projects and activities that are generated by their office.

'I believe that it will be motivating for church members not only to study the lessons, but to be sensitive to the work of ADRA and its biblical foundation,' states Joao Martins, CEO of ADRA Europe. Over the quarter, church members will discover a rich diversity of projects and ideas represented by the different country offices – as well as discovering compassion in action.

The videos, complete with transcripts, have been provided to all ADRA country offices and Union offices for use in local churches. They will also be released on social media weekly each Wednesday on YouTube.

'I really like this concept for a practical addition to Sabbath School,' states Pastor Patrick Johnson, Sabbath School and Special Needs Ministries Coordinator for the Trans-European Division. His hope is that as many churches as possible will share this innovative resource. 'Using these as a discussion starter not only raises awareness of the important work of ADRA, but also gives us a practical theme to add to the biblical concepts in the lesson.'

The first video, by Siri Bjerkan Karlsson of ADRA Sweden, is available at: <https://ted.adventist.org/news/1457-the-best-for-the-least-of-these>.

The Sabbath School lesson companion book can be purchased from the Adventist Book Centre on 01476 591700, price £3.75 + p & p.

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Sunset

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

	London	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Jul 19	9.08	9.20	9.19	9.44	9.46
26	8.58	9.11	9.09	9.32	9.36
Aug 2	8.48	9.00	8.57	9.19	9.23
9	8.35	8.47	8.44	9.04	9.09

Clean Air Day in North Tyneside borough

‘Walking to school is fun. I get to meet up with my friends and I find that I am happier and calmer in school...’

Thursday 20 June was Clean Air Day across Great Britain. The North Tyneside borough of Tyne and Wear, in the North East of England, took part in this campaign. Neighbouring boroughs in the region such as Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Northumberland also took part in the campaign.

Norma Redfearn CBE, Mayor of North Tyneside Borough, had been promoting the event throughout the borough by posting videos on the council's website. A week before the event she said: ‘We are supporting Clean Air Day on Thursday 20 June 2019. It's a chance for everyone to play their part in improving air quality. Travelling sustainably even just one day a week will help reduce poor air quality on our busiest roads, improve health (mental and physical) through increased physical activity, and also reduce congestion at peak times.’ She encouraged schools in the borough to participate in the car-free day event.

Glenn Ncube and Levi Samwanga from Newcastle Seventh-day Adventist Church, who live in the borough, took up this challenge and walked to school. Children from the schools across

the borough also walked, cycled or rode a scooter to school. Of this awareness event, Glenn Ncube said, ‘Walking to school is fun. I get to meet up with my friends and I find that I am happier and calmer in school. Walking is a good form of exercise and therefore good for my health. I am independent too, and walking to school means my mother does not have to drive me to school. Walking regularly instead of driving means there are fewer cars on the road, and this is good for the environment as there is less pollution.’

Levi Samwanga told of how at his school, during assembly, the head teacher had delivered a presentation on air pollution. He told the children that two diffusion tubes from the council were placed in the school – one at the front of the school gates and one at the back of the school field. After two weeks they were to be taken to the laboratory for analysis to get an indication of air pollution levels across the North Tyneside borough. It was a fun and educational week for Levi, whose school also engaged in



Sports Week to raise the profile of sport that same week.

North Tyneside has established a holistic approach to carbon management and reduction, and has developed a number of plans and strategies to deliver its commitment to tackling climate change and carbon reduction across the borough.

Air pollution is real and harms the health of millions of people, but there are lots of simple things that can be done to improve air quality and look after our own and other people's health. Clean Air Day was also a chance to learn more about air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from cars. The children are now motivated to walk more to school in order to do their bit for the environment by reducing poor air quality.

LYNNE SESINYE-SAMWINGA



Prayer for knife crime – peace on our streets

Recently Ruth Jackson, the editor of ‘Youthwork’, interviewed Guvna B – multi-award-winning rapper and youth worker. Here's his wisdom:

‘I've lost friends personally to this and I can see the effects that this has on the young people that I work with, and I don't think there is enough value placed on the lives of young people.’

Advice to young people thinking of joining a gang and engaging in knife crime:

‘Build relationships and speak to people who want better for you. Look in the mirror and realise that you're not just here to make up the numbers or to be a name on a register. And I know how it feels to feel that you have no purpose in life and you're not worth anything. Of course, you're going to get up to no good. But now, through my relationship with Jesus, I wake up and I know that I'm here for a reason and that He wants me here at this specific moment in time to bring light to whatever situation I can.’

Why not join this nationwide prayer initiative and sign up today to pray for peace on our streets: peaceonourstreets.org.uk?

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