

Riverway Church celebrates its twenty-first birthday

Read the full article on page 5



Above left: Pastors Israel Williams, Patrick Boyle, Jerry Smith, Alan Hart. Above right: Rachel and Katie Creer welcomed into fellowship by Riverway Church leaders and Pastor Boyle.



Stand up for health?

A recent BBC online news article published on 25 October 2019 carried the headline: 'Patients to stand up at GP appointments in Loughborough University trials.'¹ My interest was piqued as I eagerly read on to ascertain the rationale for the research. The study stated its twofold purpose as follows:

- To shorten consultations, and
- To see GPs act as 'role models' to be more active

As part of the university research trial, 500 GPs in the Midlands will be engaged from spring 2020 to test the method. Additionally, patients will be questioned about their experiences as they stand up at their GP surgery appointments.

The doctors will have standing desks, at which they will stand during the appointment, and wear trackers to monitor their level of activity as they do so. However, not everyone will stand for their appointment, as exceptions are being made for children, pregnant women, elderly patients and those with a disability. Also exempt would be those who are being given bad news.

There have been diverse debates and contrasting research over the years in relation to the health benefits of standing, particularly regarding the use of standing desks during the working day.

In an analysis of standing desks Robert H. Shmerling, MD, Faculty Editor for Harvard Health Publishing, states:

'Keep in mind that using a standing desk is like any other "intervention" – it can come with "side effects": Giving examples of risks, he states: 'For example, if you suddenly go from sitting all day to standing all day, you run the risk of developing back, leg, or foot pain. . . . Advising on reducing these risks, Dr Shmerling guides: 'It's better to ease into it by starting with 30 to 60 minutes a day and gradually increasing it.'²

In an article titled: 'Why we should sit less' posted on the NHS website, they explain: 'Sitting for long periods is thought to slow the metabolism, which affects the body's ability to regulate blood sugar [and] blood pressure and break down body fat.'³

The aim is to get us to be more active, whether we choose to use a standing desk for work, or, if sitting, get up and take regular breaks so our body is in motion more frequently.

The Public Health website, 'One You', has posted numerous tips for incorporating more movement into your daily routine, including your working environment. This can be found at 'Easy Ways to Move More' via: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/move-more/>.

The next issue examines more health hazards of a sedentary lifestyle, with additional solutions for increasing activity.

Good health!

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-50170687>

² <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/the-truth-behind-standing-desks-2016092310264>

³ <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/why-sitting-too-much-is-bad-for-us/>



Read the manifesto yet?

Sometimes there is a holy burning ambition on the part of a pastor/evangelist to want to be where the action is. As Christ's leading ambassador of the Gospel, Paul's travels around the Eastern Mediterranean had resulted in great success, raising up new churches. And yet he remained unsettled. If he spotted a ship in port, he wanted to get on board to take the Gospel beyond the horizon. Born a Jew, raised in Tarsus, educated in Jerusalem – all good, but, if there was a jewel in his citizenship crown, he was Roman by birth (Acts 22:27, 28). Everything Roman fascinated him – a part of his identity, and yet the secular polar opposite to everything he believed. Witnessing in parochial Jerusalem was one thing, but he had to get to the engine room of the empire – Rome! Not least, perhaps, because he was under divine instruction to do so (Acts 23:11). Before he got there, writing from Corinth in AD 58, he sent a 'letter' to explain the Gospel to believers in Rome (both Jewish and Christian).

The letter of Paul to the Romans is very much like a manifesto, but unlike any offered by a political party. It is the Christian manifesto – offering at its heart the guaranteed, rock-solid promise of freedom through Christ. I'm reminded of the shelf in the supermarket where all the 'Free From' foods are stacked. Follow Christ, says Paul, and we are free from the judgement of God's wrath (eternal death), hopelessness, and our egocentric self, to name but a few.

It is easy to say that we can trust Paul over Boris Johnson, Jeremy Corbyn and Jo Swinson, and that is true. And yet Paul's letter, interestingly enough, has some principles about political and civic life that we need to note in Romans 13.

'Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgement.' Romans 13:1, 2, ESV-UK.

On my way to visit a new church group recently, driving along an unfamiliar road, I felt I was running late when a speed camera flashed, and I was caught over the limit. Rather than pay the fine, I opted to attend a speed awareness course. Jimmy the motorcyclist sat at our table. This is a nonsense! This course is not about road safety; the police are just out to make money. If they really cared about safety, they'd repair all the potholes in the road! About the potholes he may have had a point, but it was his attitude that distressed me. Instead of a teachable spirit recognising that excessive speed can kill, he saw the authorities at fault, and out to get him. A different context from Paul's day, but the advice is clear. Authorities rule and judge on behalf of God, and deserve our respect.

Respect, says Paul, even when they pass laws the polar opposite of Christ's kingdom. That's not to say that we abandon critical thinking, nor dismiss engaging in civil disobedience when the law of God comes into conflict with laws of the land.

To cut to the chase – as I read Paul, the biblical wisdom is to respect civil authority, even when pagan. Combine Paul's wisdom with the Old Testament prophets, and there is a call to 'engage' in the civic discourse. It could be that our only current opportunity to 'speak truth to power' is through the ballot box – and, when it comes to it, it is an excellent way!

Right now we're in the middle of a General Election campaign, so three quick questions: **Should I vote?** Absolutely – even if it means having to hold your nose as you do so. Guard it; treasure it; not least because it is a freedom many in our world still do not have today. Inevitably we will not agree with every policy, and, of course, we also have the right not to vote.

What are the issues? Can't avoid it – the Brexit story. It could be the one issue that determines which way we vote, with the economy coming close behind. All the major parties are making massive spending pledges – many of them borrowed. All claim 'fiscal responsibility', but that value needs to be tested. At the same time, most parties give hope that taxes will reduce. By the way, taxes are good – something Jesus and Paul both affirm (Mark 12:17; Romans 13:7). What about the NHS, social care for the elderly, and environmental matters? – everyday matters affecting us all.

Whom should I trust? This is by far the most difficult and complex question. I think the character of a leader is as important as the policy he or she pursues. You may think differently about that. Does God use bad leaders for His purposes? And, if so, must it be OK to vote for them? That's a long discussion. What we see of a politician is through a small window – usually through a screen! It is not by any means a complete picture of who he or she is, and the media can easily magnify both



'If they really cared about safety, they'd repair all the potholes in the road!'

the good and bad in a person according to their agenda, overt or not. Without question, social media at this point in time cannot be a trusted source of information.

The core dilemma for us, even when we believe it is right to engage and make a difference now, is the philosophical disconnect between our hope, and the hope of Boris, Jeremy and Jo. They offer their secular version of 'unto the perfect day' (Proverbs 4:18, KJV). They offer economic prosperity, freedom, peace and happiness for all, a safer, healthier and more educated society – the brightest of futures, tempered with some environmental concerns.

Our hope, our dream, is based on the transforming power of Christ, described by Paul in Romans as offering lasting freedom and peace, to be experienced now in today's society and the next, through the dramatic and all-consuming coming of Christ. While it's a dilemma, there's nonetheless reason to vote – perhaps even a reason for prayer as we vote.

Prayer matters

- Lord, thank You for the Government and civic leadership: politicians, judges, police, and all civil servants. Give them wisdom to govern wisely and with justice.
- Influence our political leaders to work to bring people together. May they speak words that heal, particularly where and when there is brokenness in our society.
- Help them only to make promises they can keep.
- Help us ever to respect those who have different political views, ensuring that we disagree agreeably.
- Pray that our politicians will govern and lead by example.



Letters to the editor

Response to 'An all-embracing church?' (MESSENGER 19 July, p. 14)

Dear Editor

We can identify with much of Patricia Douglas's article as parents of a special-needs teen; but at the same time we would like to express how

many of God's people have been helpful and understanding. It is true that people may feel uncomfortable at times and have concerns, but we have also seen those who have tried to understand, and many have helped as best they can.

As parents we sometimes wonder what God is doing, but we know that many of His people have a heart for us and are doing their best to help us, and for that we are so grateful.

What helps us most at a time of need (for example, meltdown) is when people pray quietly; if someone asks us quietly what might help; if we are given space; and if people are willing to adapt their plans to accommodate our needs. All these have been done for us on occasion, and have been of great help to us and all those around us.

It is also good when people talk to the young person with the special needs. It makes that person feel valued and included in the church family.

Please pray for all parents of children with special needs, and for those with the special needs; and please talk to them and listen to them.

You don't know . . .

You don't know what it's like . . .

- ... when someone laughs at his idiosyncrasies, which are not 'normal' and cause us difficulties
- ... when someone says it's like any teenager – but this is not 'normal', even for that
- ... to watch him harm himself
- ... to see him feel down and talk of his failures
- ... to see him angry – really angry
- ... to hear him moaning and groaning
- ... to never hear him thank you or seem grateful

You don't know how much it means . . .

- ... when you hug me after a bad episode
- ... when you talk to me about it in an understanding way
- ... when you stand there and take the flack like me
- ... when you pray quietly for him during his meltdown
- ... when you change plans just for us

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Spiritual cement

Dear Editor

Many thanks to Karen Shelbourn for her article on 'The wise and foolish builders'.

I was once told by an engineer that cement in a brick wall has two main functions: not only to hold the bricks together, but also to keep the bricks apart!

The cement moulds perfectly to each individual brick's imperfections, maintaining its integrity, which would otherwise cause friction at best, or fracture and instability at worst.

The spiritual 'cement', God's love and His Holy Spirit, enables us to be a church together, absorbing all our differences, imperfections and idiosyncrasies.

As Karen said, we are bricks in a wall, thereby protecting others and being protected ourselves.

PHILIP EMM



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A church that's ready now

What does it take?



about not being ready for Christ's return' (35.8 percent definitely, 37.4 percent tend to). In oft-quoted words: 'Houston, we've got a problem.' We believe God's words, 'I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you' (John 14:18, NKJV). We all want to be ready and help not only our loved ones, but also the larger world, to be ready for Jesus' second coming: but, in the experience of too many, readiness is connected with the level of their sanctification.

On one of my visits to our paternal grandparents when I was about 6 or 7 years old, I heard my grandpa praying that he 'would be ready if Jesus came during the night when he was asleep'. I queried this strange prayer, and he explained to me that if he prays that prayer before going to bed, then it counts as if he were keeping watch during the night and Jesus would consider him ready, although he was asleep. That was his guileless understanding of the words of Jesus, 'Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming - in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning - lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!' (Mark 13:35-37, NKJV)*

As a teenager I considered it strange when I heard my fellow believers praying at the start of the divine service, 'And, dear Jesus, come soon; we have been waiting for You so long.' Yet, after a rather masochistic sermon hammering on our deficiencies in reaching sinless perfection, I heard (usually the same) people praying, 'Thank You, Jesus, that You have not come yet, because we are not ready.' The contradiction was not lost on me: but, instead of being funny, I found the conflicting perceptions between our desires and reality rather disturbing.

Disturbing data

As a pastor, I have witnessed many members struggling in the last hours of their lives with assurance of salvation. Somehow, in their minds, readiness for Jesus was measured in terms of personal sanctification. When the results of the European ValueGenesis survey came in some years ago, it was disturbing to see that so many of our young people had a great misunderstanding of the process of salvation and the role of God's grace and our works: 84.1 percent agreed with the statement, 'I know that to be saved I have to live by God's rules' (64.8 percent definitely, 19.3 percent tend to); and 73.2 percent agreed, 'I am worried

Pastor Daniel Duda



defines sanctification within the context of community. If we do not see the role of community, the pursuit of spiritual growth becomes distorted in a way that makes it all about the individual. We can get preoccupied with how we are performing spiritually, or how spiritually fulfilled we feel, and how ready we are for the second coming of Jesus. Meanwhile, we forget to live a life of servanthood and love. We become spiritually narcissistic.

Often when I talk to people who have stopped coming to church, I hear, 'I do not get much out of it lately.' But Christianity is not an individual sport! We are not Christians merely for self's sake, just for what we get out of it individually. Rather, as Jesus left heaven and lived His earthly ministry for our sake, so we reveal Him by lives lived in sacrifice for the sake of others.

Achieving the goal

The goal of sanctification is to be more loving, gracious, caring, and generous (John 13:34, 35; Galatians 5:22, 23). There is a huge difference between being sanctified and being sanctimonious: yet people get them mixed up. The goal of sanctification is being a community of loving people who love and serve other people.

Jesus must remain in heaven 'until the time comes for God to restore everything' (Acts 3:21, NIV). At His coming He will complete the restoration of relationships: my personal relationship with God and our relationships with one another in the type of community He wants to have on this planet.

Imagine, then, before the second coming of Jesus, the community of God in which He already works: a community of justice in a world of economic and ecological injustice; a community of generosity and simplicity (of being able to say 'enough') in a world of consumer saturation; a community of selfless giving in a world of selfishness; a community of truth, humility, and boldness in a world of relativism; a community of hope in a world of disillusionment; a community of joy and thanksgiving in a world of entitlement; a community that experiences God's supernatural presence in a secular world in which all days are the same and nothing is exceptional or supernatural.

A lot more could be said about the Holy Spirit's work *in* us (sanctification) and *through* us (mission); but we also need to pay attention to the work of the Holy Spirit *around* us. God has not given up on His people, or on His world. He is at work not only *in* and *through* us, but also *around* us: can we see Him?

We might be closer to the Second Coming than most of us realise!

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Daniel Duda serves as the Education and Mission Director for the Trans-European Division.

Riverway Church celebrates its twenty-first birthday

Sabbath 28 September was a high day for the church in Riverway, Bexley, Kent. The church began in Bromley in 1938, but it wasn't until 7 January 1967 that it was functioning as an official company. One year later it became a church proper.

Pastor Jerry gave a historical overview of the pastors as follows: Mark Leeds (1970-1972); John West (1972-1973); Michael Walker (1973-1977); Patrick Boyle (1977-1984); Philip Anderson (1984-1989); Robert Surridge (1989-1993); Zack Plantack (1993-1999); Alan Hart (1999-2005); Israel Williams (2005-2012); Jerry Smith (2012-present).

Until 1998 the members met in the Friends' Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley. In 1996 the church elder, Ralph Lombart, saw a 'for sale' sign on a Methodist church in Parsonage Lane, Sidcup. An expedition consisting of Ray Creer, Ben Bruneau, Ralph Lombart and Pastor Plantack visited the church. It was agreed that it was a possible home for the Bromley members, and it was purchased. Extension work began on upgrading the building under the professional supervision of Ray Creer. All was finished to a high standard and within budget.

The journey from Bromley to Riverway has been a story of faithfulness, dedication and commitment from so many that to mention all those involved would fill the *MESSENGER*. A host of names was projected onto the screen to honour those most involved. It was a moving moment, as a large number have fallen asleep. It was their financial contributions which made the purchase of the church possible. When a church has good leadership it can achieve great things for the Lord. Key families committed to owning the vision and working together in unity were the Lombarts, Carters, DeOliveiras, Murrays, Blooms, Renes and the Bruneaus, along with Len Jackson, Ray Creer, Peter Jackson, and Santineer.

We also note the significant contributions of Pam Lewis, Edith Noville, Ken Brown, Norma Turner, Michael Murray, Bill Bailey, Sam Thompson, and Cor De Vries.

In 1977 Bromley members started a building fund to have their own church. Families regularly donated a portion of their salary; others bequeathed money in their wills. Norma Turner (treasurer) saw to it that monies placed were increased by being given on what was then a 'deed of covenant', substantially increasing the value of all tithes/offering



Canterbury Church's charity walk

A way to help transform lives is to get involved! This year's 'Church Charity Walk' fundraising event was conducted in aid of the Royal Autistic Society. The society seeks to improve public understanding of autism and provide a more autism-friendly space, with better services for autistic people.

On Sunday 25 August, Canterbury church members walked approximately 6.5 miles following the George and Dragon Stour Valley and Canterbury Trail in Kent. Fifteen members and friends ventured throughout Stour Valley and the woodlands to the historical sites of Canterbury City Centre. Throughout the walk, we were blessed with beautiful dry and sunny weather. A total of £220 was raised by the walkers through online donations. It was a pleasant experience to walk in support of such a worthy cause.

LEONCIA-ROSANNA DUZANT

given. On one occasion, when the monthly sacrificial offering was to be collected, a cheque was found for £10,000, donated by Mary Williams from Canada. This was followed by many further gifts from her. The blessing of God on the members' faithfulness was clear for all to see during this time. The church was dedicated on 26 September 1998 by Pastor Don McFarlane, the President of South England Conference.

The 2019 celebrations were crowned and blessed by a baptismal service. Two young ladies from the family of Angela and Ross Creer, Rachel and Katie, were baptised. Rachel had studied with Pastor Jerry, and Katie with church elder Ashley Bloom.

Pastor Jerry Smith and Pastor Patrick Boyle shared in the baptism. Pastor Boyle was invited because of his long association with the Creer family. Les and Ray Creer were church elders in Croydon and Bromley respectively. He had baptised Angela and her sister Susan. Angela, Rachel and Katie's mother, gave a testimony to the influence of the Holy Spirit in her life and family, and in her daughters' lives. She quoted for her daughters advice which had been given to her by her grandfather, Les Creer. He advised, 'Angela, keep on the straight path. Do not leave it. If you do, and you find it again, it will be with much difficulty.' The baptism of Rachel and Katie made them the fourth generation of Seventh-day Adventist Creers.

The twenty-first birthday of Riverway Church was a day of blessing and joy to all who were present. Pastor Jerry's leading made it special. The church is active in supporting all the avenues of the church's service to the world: ADRA, Sabbath School, Personal Ministries and a variety of outreaches to the Sidcup community. Susan Creer summed up the anniversary by observing, 'For those of us who have taken this journey from the beginning and those who have just arrived, let us move forwards together, keeping our focus on Christ and working together, serving God as we serve others.'

CHURCH CLERK

PHOTOS: ASHLEY BLOOM



Gatwick Women of Virtue retreat 2019

Fifty-seven women had the opportunity to enrich their lives spiritually at the Gatwick Women of Virtue retreat, which was held at Horsley Park Hotel over 13-15 September 2019. The theme was 'He Knows My Name', based on Isaiah 43:1-3.

The retreat included sermons, prayer sessions, testimonies, and a prayer walk. We were blessed to have young women who had their own sessions and joined the adults during sermons and prayer sessions.

On Sabbath evening we had a special banquet treat. Women were dressed in their best, and the programme included gospel music, games and an educational session. One lady brought us a special cake with Isaiah 43:1-3 written on it.

The weekend was Spirit-filled and we were all blessed. The speakers were Sindi Mabena and Dr Gloria Mocha-Onchiri, and God used them in a mighty way.

The women came from different parts of the country, including Reading, Bristol, Stevenage, Wolverhampton, Gatwick and so on. The aim of the retreat was spiritual enrichment, reclamation and evangelism. With us were ten special friends from other denominations, who expressed tremendous blessing as a result of spending the weekend with us.

We are planning to repeat the treat next year, because, as one participant commented, 'I was blessed and will not miss the next one. The retreat was Spirit-filled and I plan to bring my friends next year.'

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

Scottish Mission Day of Fellowship

Close to 500 members of the Scottish Mission gathered together at The Vine Conference Centre in Dunfermline for the 2019 Scottish Mission Day of Fellowship. This day is always filled with good preaching, music, food and fellowship. This occasion lived up to the expectations. With so many members in attendance it's becoming clear that something is being done right. With the Scottish Mission membership slowly rising, it is no coincidence that the Day of Fellowship this year saw the largest attendance in recent years. The rise of membership in the Scottish Mission is greatly valued by the members of the Mission. In 2019 the Scottish Mission celebrates the addition of several new members through baptism and profession of faith.

One highlight of the Day of Fellowship was when Pastor Ivana Mendez stood on the platform and started to call out names and invite these individuals to come forward. One by one, unsuspecting individuals started to line up on stage. Finally, the stage was filled with people from side to side. Pastor Ivana Mendez then explained why these people had been called forward. They make the list of all new members in the Scottish Mission this year. On stage were also those individuals who are currently preparing for baptism. A loud applause was followed by a prayer of dedication. **This is what it is all about – the message of the Gospel shared in our country to help people change their lives to be in harmony with God.**

Many musical items from individual artists like Hellevi Walker to group singing by the Crieff Ladies Choir, a children's mass choir, a group from Aberdeen, 'Testify' from Edinburgh, and the worship team by the host churches made the day a spectacle. The sermon was preceded by children's time, where Professor Noodlebrain (Cedrene Botha) spoke with the children about the shoes we wear. As she changed the shoes she had on for different pairs of shoes, she explained how we cannot always wear the same shoes for all occasions. Dr Cedric Vine also explained in high detail how following God through Bible times had different approaches.

The afternoon provided a variety of activities. In the main hall, Bert Smit presented an insightful lecture about the work of ADRA in the UK and around the world. Getting ADRA to work more closely with local churches is high on the ADRA agenda. ADRA is dependent on funding from our churches, but that is only a small portion of the working capital of ADRA. ADRA raises money from various other sources in government and elsewhere. A good practice for ADRA is to bring their mission to the local churches so that members can be more aware and take ownership of some of the issues ADRA deals with. Membership involvement is vital to certain projects.

At the same time, while the adults were listening to Bert Smit in the big hall, the children, teens and youth were all participating



Pastor Ivana Mendez



Scottish Mission President, Pastor Paul Tompkins

This is what it is all about - the message of the Gospel shared in our country to help people change their lives to be in harmony with God.

in their own various activities throughout the centre. Dr Anthony Bosman from Andrews University oversaw the teens and youth, while Cedrene Botha and her team led the younger generation in activities. It was amazing to see how easy it is to make a low-cost mobile phone stand using little more than a toilet roll and some tape!

At the end of the presentations, the whole group came together again for the finale of the day. It was time to recognise the good work many of the Scottish Mission children had put into studying the Word of God. A graduation took place for a large number of children from various churches in Scotland who had completed the 'Let's Explore' Bible study series, together with their leaders in local churches. It is important to recognise these accomplishments because doing so helps our children feel a sense of achievement and ownership within their local church and community. We believe that having that sense of ownership will also motivate them to make contributions to their own church services and to the work of the Gospel in their outreach.

As Pastor Maureen Rock handed out the certificates with Dr Paul Tompkins, she also congratulated Mrs Ifeoma Victor-Igwe on doing such an amazing job at motivating the participants and organising the graduation. What a worthwhile thing to do – energising and empowering our children to do greater



Some of the Scottish Mission's new family members in Christ



Pastor Cedric Vine



Dorothy Logan and choir



Professor Noodlebrain

things for God!

What a day! The Scottish Mission is indeed going in the right direction. A big thank-you to all the members of the Scottish Mission for attending and participating in this big day. The team are already looking forward to the next day of fellowship in 2020. See you there!

JIMMY BOTHA



Ghanaian congregations' Day of Fellowship

'I am tired of waiting' is the last thing you expect to hear at a gathering where the main theme is 'Growing in Christ'. Yet, in a heartfelt and emotional appeal to ignite a passion for spreading the Gospel in these tough times, Newbold College's Chief Financial Officer, Abigail Wright, uttered these bold words during her welcoming speech at this year's 'Ghanaian Adventist Congregations in the UK' (GAC-UK) event, which took place on Saturday 5 October at the Gymnasium of Newbold College of Higher Education.

Speaking to an audience of over a thousand people, mostly made up of Ghanaian Adventist congregations from across sixteen churches within the British Union Conference, Mrs Wright said, 'Are you not tired of waiting? Isn't it about time that Jesus came to take us home?' Mrs Wright spoke enthusiastically and urged GAC-UK to set up a foundation that will support student pastors of Ghanaian origin who need extra financial support during the course of their studies at Newbold.

The current chairperson of GAC-UK, Pastor



Kwadwo Kwarteng-Ampofo of the Lea Valley and Luganda churches based in London, is an alumnus of Newbold. Speaking on behalf of the GAC-UK executives, he stated, 'Maintaining the youth in the church is of utmost importance to us. We are always trying to find new and innovative ways of keeping the young people engaged and integrated.'

Daniel Yeboah, who travelled from Milton Keynes to witness the occasion, said, 'Dr Chidi Keynes to witness the occasion, said, 'Dr Chidi and Dr Raymond Arhin's presentations in the afternoon about longevity were a real eye-opener. I am definitely going to try to cut down the amount of meat I eat, and also try to change some bad habits, like eating at night-time.'

Fourteen-year-old Gloria Razak, a Pathfinder at the South-West Community church, beamed with excitement at the end of the programme. She stated, 'I just loved how we learnt about why it's important to come to church to grow, and not to show off!'

The occasion saw several persons receiving awards for their outstanding contributions to GAC-UK since its inception in 2005. When Derick Addai Snr of the London Ghana church, popularly known as 'Chancellor', received the posthumous award for his selfless dedication to the Treasury Department of

GAC-UK, it was a special moment. His only son, Derick Addai-Asiedu Jnr, spoke on behalf of his sisters Sabina and Christiana, as well as the entire Addai family. 'We feel very honoured that GAC-UK has recognised our dad's hard work over the years. Our father was a man of few words; but we know that he would have given glory to God for giving him the strength to carry on right to the very end.'

The SEC President, Dr Emmanuel Osei, had the following parting words for the audience: 'Life may seem unfair at times when we learn to grow in Christ; but we must feast on God's Word... and let us continue growing'... no matter how long the waiting is!

RUBINA FOSUJA ARTHUR

Devon and Cornwall Day of Fellowship

Everyone gathered on the fresh autumnal morning of 28 September in the grounds of St Jude's Church in Plymouth for the biannual Area 1 Day of Fellowship.

One of the first special moments of the day came when the Herman family were presented with a gift from the Area and sent on their way with a prayer of blessing. After six years in Area 1, Pastor Clifford Herman answered the call to serve as SEC Pathfinder Director, a position we believe he will thrive in. He has been a great support to everyone in the area, and he and his family will be greatly missed.

Pastor Jacques Venter was our guest speaker, who shared a message entitled 'While We Wait', which looked at the parable of the ten talents in Luke 19. He explained that Jesus is the King in the story, and urged us to make sure that our ledgers are not empty when Jesus returns. By aiding in spreading His Word, we show our association with Him. Christ wants to know that we are willing to be known as His, and not to hide our 'talents' or faith.

Pastor Venter again shared a few encouraging words in the afternoon. He reminded us that God feels like a frantic Father when His children wander away. Sometimes we can still feel lost when we are surrounded by lots of people; the world can be so loud that we can't hear God shouting out to us. Our lost places become significant when we turn to God, and occasionally He will bring us back to these

places to see if we will trust in Him to overcome.

For evening vespers the group was blessed by a performance from the London Adventist Chorale, who shared songs such as 'The Lord's Prayer', 'Hallelujah' and also a solo called 'Precious Little Child', a beautiful song about the singer's grandchild.

After a long day of fellowship and friendship, everyone left happy and refreshed for the coming week.

JENNIE HALL



London Adventist Chorale



Meghan and Evi singing 'My Life Is In Your Hands'



Celebrating a record breaker

On Sunday 20 October Desmond H. Clarke (popularly known as DH), the longest-serving first elder in the TED, celebrated his eightieth birthday at the Advent Centre with family, friends, past and present Conference presidents and a number of pastors who worked with him as pastors or interns at Brixton Church.

Pastor Keith Boldeau, current senior pastor for Brixton Church, started the proceedings with prayer before the host, past SEC president, Pastor Sam Davis, took charge and reminded those gathered of the significant contributions and commitment that Elder Clarke has made to Brixton (his home church) and the SEC as a whole. Pastor Cecil Perry, former president of the BUC, then gave a toast and shared how instrumental Elder DH was with the acquisition and renovation of the current Brixton church building.

As a man of faith who will always 'watch and pray', all the pastors present gathered around DH and his wife of fifty-four years, Joy, for a special prayer by our president, Dr Emmanuel Osei. There were special tributes in song from Everal and Yolanda, and toasts were given by family members who came from aboard, and by past and present members of Brixton Church. Those who were not able to attend sent their messages by video.

After a delicious three-course meal, DH was escorted by his wife and grandchildren to cut a lovely white two-storey cake decorated with his favourite quote, 'Watch and pray'. His granddaughter Elise beautifully gave the final tribute of the evening, which shared some of DH's life story, with photo highlights.



The curtains closed on a well-spent evening with prayers from past president, Pastor Humphrey Walters. We all wish DH many more happy birthdays.

CRAIGE YOUNG, COMMUNICATION LEADER



Care home marathon

Earlier this year the Palmers Green church family visited the Elizabeth Lodge care home in Enfield. It was coordinated by our joint youth leaders and our church clerk, Susan Craig.

In unusually summery weather, the message of Jesus' death and resurrection, punctuated with hymns such as 'Blessed Assurance', 'The Old Rugged Cross' and 'Because He Lives', proclaimed a message of hope to the staff and elderly residents.

What made this visit unusual was the fact that (at the request of the events organiser at the care home) our programme was repeated five times in different parts of the care home, each time for fifteen minutes: a marathon compared to other visits!

Each time it elicited a different response from those present. Some would listen passively; others, including staff, joined in the singing. In contrast, the last presentation was a new experience for the church family on such visits. They were heckled throughout by one resident who really did not want to hear anything. However, perseverance paid off, because near the end one resident holding his Zimmer frame shuffled in, swaying his hips, used his free arm to conduct, and allowed the music to penetrate his whole being. His enthusiasm infused everyone with sheer joy. Finally, the closing prayer reminded them that Jesus is still able to save, and that He is preparing a place where no one will ever grow old.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



'This is a very good idea'

On Saturday 15 June, the Sydenham Community Services Department, led by Joyan Johnson, in collaboration with the Health Ministries Department, participated in the Safer Neighbourhood team's first community day. The Community Services team included a group of nurses as well as a nutrition team.

The medical team did health checks, including blood pressure monitoring and blood sugar checks, as well as giving some basic tips for a healthier lifestyle. Under the leadership of Michael Graham, the nutrition team gave advice on the benefits of juicing, which was supported by practical demonstrations of making a variety of healthy juices and smoothies, providing samples for everyone. One guest remarked, 'This is a very good idea; we would like to see more of this.'

The occasion also provided opportunities for our church family to meet other community groups and to hear about some of the work that's being done to build a better community and better community relations, giving an opportunity for a sustained future networking.

JANET BUCHANAN, SYDENHAM SDA CHURCH

Croydon Church makes a big impact at fifth Annual Inter-Faith Bike Ride and Picnic

Sunday 9 June marked Croydon's fifth Annual Inter-Faith Bike Ride and Picnic in the Park. Croydon Church members were out in full force to show their support with representatives from the Health and Lifestyle team, the Social team, the Mental Health team, the Prayer Ministry team, and the Men's Ministry team.

Cyclists set off on the bike ride at 10am from Croydon Sports Arena, and the route was designed so that the cyclists would visit five places of worship before ending at Park Hill to participate in a picnic, as organised by *Faiths Together in Croydon*.

This event was a great opportunity to join forces with other faiths – not only to participate in the bike ride and picnic, but also to share God's health message with our community. We hosted a mini health fair, which included health counselling and a series of health-screening checks (such as blood pressure, body mass index, blood glucose tests, and so on) for anyone who wanted to take up the opportunity. The Mayor of Croydon was one such person who used our screening checks, and he took



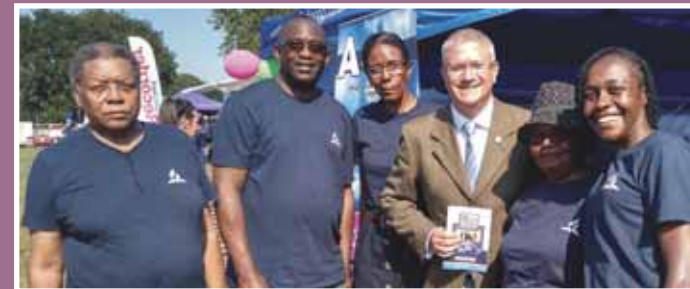
the opportunity to reminisce on his previous visit to Croydon Church. The mayor spoke positively about our community work, and, in particular, our annual 'Prayers for Croydon' initiative to specifically pray for individuals, groups, and professionals in our Croydon community for the whole month of December.

A wonderful day was truly had – not just by the team, but also, judging from the feedback

we received, by the general public, who commended us on the work we were doing. *Faiths Together in Croydon* have expressed a desire for Croydon Seventh-day Adventist Church to participate in the event next year, so look out for us. We hope to see you there too!

MARCIA LEWIS

Romford members connect with local MP and get a guided tour ...



Romford's health expo

For the fourth consecutive year the Romford church took part in the Havering Show. The church used its members, families and friends, consisting of health professionals, local health champions and volunteers, to man their stall.

Free health checks, free literature and free bottled water were offered to the general public in an effort to promote health and wellness. With the Bank Holiday weather reaching scorching temperatures, church members were able to carry out more than 180 health checks as well as distributing in excess of 200 pieces of literature, including DVDs. Literature given over the two-day period included *Health & Wellness*, *Hope for Today's Families*, *Steps to Christ* and *The Power of Hope*.

In addition, good links were established with local community groups, as well as health and family groups. We were pleased and privileged to be visited by Havering's deputy mayor, as well as Andrew Rosindell MP. Both expressed their appreciation of the work being carried out by the church at Romford in effectively supporting the borough's vision to help residents to be healthy and active.

We are looking forward to making 2020 an even greater success by the grace of God.

SHARON SEMPER, CHURCH CLERK



Romford on tour!

Thursday 11 July was a day to remember for nine individuals, including the pastor, of Romford Seventh-day Adventist Church as they embarked on a tour of the Houses of Parliament. The tour came about as a direct result of contact made with Romford Town's local ward councillor, Judith Holt, at the 2018 Havering Show.

Upon arrival at Parliament the church group were met by Andrew Rosindell, MP for the Romford constituency, who personally conducted the guided tour of the historic buildings. They were fascinated to learn some history pertaining to the UK Parliament, including how it works and what a typical day consists of. Some of the rooms viewed were the Commons' Chamber, the Lords' Chamber and the Queen's Robing Room.

While there, members of the group were able to speak to Mr Rosindell about who Seventh-day Adventists are and how they are making an impact within the borough of Havering. We thank God for paving the way for a little church to make a big difference in reaching those in positions of authority.

SHARON SEMPER, CHURCH CLERK



Photo quality as supplied

North and South unite

Willesden Community Choir visited Nottingham Central in the afternoon of 14 September for two hours of praise and worship with uplifting singing and music. It is rare for the North England Conference and South England Conference to get together, but both were represented in fellowship led by Pastor Mario N. Philip.

The Holy Spirit provided fellowship and unity, along with an opportunity for total praise and worship. The theme of Pastor Philip's address was a call to be ready for Judgement Day. Choose Jesus, and life is yours!

More joint Conference activities will continue in the future.

DENNIS TAYLOR, STEWARDSHIP LEADER



A Scarborough first

The Scarborough home group meets nearly every Sabbath in the home of John and Norma Kent; but, for the first time, we joined in with the local Seamer Gala just outside Scarborough. With the support of Pastor John Francis and his wife Delivon; some members from the Hull church; Doctor Erma and her husband, John; and also Grace Walsh from the North England Conference office, this project became a reality. We're also grateful to the two young men who

put up our tent. We are very thankful for the support from these beautiful Christian brothers and sisters. Our health expo had a footfall of over a thousand people. Doctors Erma took blood pressures with Grace, and we gave out healthy snacks and free bottles of water – very well received on a very hot day. We were blessed by this opportunity to lift the profile of the Adventist Church in our area.

JOHN AND NORMA KENT



Heaven came down

Chelmsley Wood was filled with joy and gladness as the Lord brought new members to join us, who openly confirmed their commitment to Christ in baptism. We have had three baptismal services within three months.

On Sabbath 24 August, Pastor Bruce baptised Ben and Reuben Stanley, Janelle Kayola, Calvin Kiboma, and Memento Makeleni. On 28 September, Neema Stanley was accepted by profession of faith, and Trudy Peters-Cardoza, Armani, and Remeeko Cardoza were baptised. On 12 October, Marcia Laidlaw was baptised at Handsworth Church.

The Lord is doing a mighty work in Chelmsley Wood, and we thank God for it.

SAMUEL AYEH

Justice. Compassion. Love.



IMPACTnews

www.adra.org.uk

2019 ADRA Winter Edition

The Gift of Water



Help transform lives!

Give a gift that lasts a lifetime this Christmas!

Climate change has led to a persistent drought in the dry Gwembe Valley region of southern Zambia.

Surface water sources have dried up and underground sources such as wells have equally dried up or water levels gone lower. Especially in rural communities, whose only water sources are unsafe, surface and shallow wells are the worst affected. The village of Kabanana, some 70-80 miles south-east of the capital, Lusaka, is among the worst-affected areas where livestock have been dying due to lack of pasture and water.

With your help this holiday season, ADRA will survey a potentially high-yielding water area, drill and install a solar-powered water point. This will provide clean and safe water for the 345 families (2,100 people) of Kabanana. The well will have a solar-powered submersible pump, a tank and pipework

to reduce hard labour in pumping, and to facilitate multiple stand taps to reduce crowding. The well will feature a livestock drinking trough to provide overflow water to goats, chickens and cattle.

We need £10,000 to do this.

We have stories to tell and pictures to show: please go to our Justgiving page to read more and donate now. Follow us on Facebook to hear more about this project.

If we raise more, we will target two additional villages in the area: Sitinkwi and Mulindi.

[justgiving.com/campaign/kabanana](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/kabanana) or scan this QR code:



'We get water from a small stream dripping from the mountains about 3-4 miles away. The source is unprotected, and we do our washing at the same place. We boil the water for drinking, but we do get sick often. We keep the girls at home to help with drawing water as it is hard for me to do it alone. They will go to school in future,' says Mrs Shumba.

Waiting...

It was one of those mornings. I wanted to make a cup of breakfast tea but discovered that we had forgotten to refill the water filter. So annoying, because now I had to wait at least 3 minutes before I could fill the kettle. While waiting, I reflected on the women in Kabanana village in Zambia who have to queue for hours to fill a measly bucket of filthy water... Suddenly things came back into perspective. Our lives, here in the UK, are comfortable. We enjoy all the advantages of modern living on a daily basis. How different things are for the families in the Gwembe Valley region of southern Zambia. They have barely enough water for themselves, and none to water their animals.

With your help, we can make a dramatic change there. Kennedy Habasimbi, a former ADRA-UK employee, is now the Country Director of ADRA Zambia. What could be a better Christmas gift than the gift of water for the thirsty people of Kabanana? Please help and give generously – YOU can help make a difference!

This special Christmas edition of Impact News is our third ADRA newsletter this year. You have told us how much you like to hear about what ADRA is doing and how your support is making a change, so we hope you enjoy reading it, and that it will inspire you to become a regular donor to ADRA.

May your holiday season be inspiring, and the New Year start with all God's blessings!

Bert Smit, CEO



The Adventist Development and Relief Agency – UK has been working to end extreme poverty in some of the poorest areas of our world since 1999. Here in the UK, we are empowering local churches to help those in need. To achieve these goals, we collaborate with governments, ADRA network offices, local churches and other organisations. Together, we are working to lift people out of poverty, establish hope, empower communities, and provide positive change. Your financial support is critical!



I AM URBAN
HUMANITY - JUSTICE - SERVICE

Angela Cassan and Maisie Fletcher serving food to the service-users of The Wellbeing Project

A little goes a long way

A report of The Wellbeing Project in Bedford

In 2019, ADRA-UK has supported nearly 40 Seventh-day Adventist congregations with their community outreach and social action projects under its 'I AM URBAN' initiative. The Wellbeing Project, run by the Bedford SDA Church, was originally established in October 2016 by Jaz Bartlette and Angela Cassan, two of the members. Their initial intention was to set up a soup kitchen for the homeless and rootless. However, they quickly changed their vision when they realised that the needs of the community were greater than just food.

The first meal served was Christmas dinner in December 2016, with over 40 people from the community in attendance, and they have consistently served meals twice-monthly on a Tuesday and every Christmas since. However, in going beyond the food provision, The Wellbeing Project has also donated clothing, bedding and toiletries for both the homeless and anyone else in need. And all this is done on an allocated yearly budget of £500, the goodwill of volunteers and any profits received from an annual summer fair.

Project leaders and volunteers also provide pastoral care, information and guidance

on welfare services, and form strategic alliances with other local voluntary services to strengthen their reach in the community. Early in the year, The Wellbeing Project was approached by the Homeless Coordinator from Bedford Council to undertake the housing of 10 emergency beds on the church premises. This initiative was run for a month from the 8th April until the 8th May, resumed on the 1st November and will continue until May 2020. The request by the local council came with a complete delivery team to support The Wellbeing Project.

'It is always gratifying to realise that the seed funding that we provide can assist projects to attract larger pots of funding and help to form strategic alliances with other organisations in order to provide services for local beneficiaries,' said Bert Smit, CEO of ADRA-UK. 'We salute the work of The Wellbeing Project as they seek to help the rootless and homeless in the Bedford area.'



Jaz Rodney-Bartlette engaging with one of the attendees of The Wellbeing Project.

Projects

Zambia: FARMS project started



With funding provided by the 2019 ADRA Appeal, a new pilot project was launched in Zambia on the 1st of October.

The 'Food Security through Agro-based and Resilience Market Solutions for smallholder farmers' (or simply FARMS) project will contribute to food security and peaceful co-existence of settled refugee host communities in Meheba, Kalumbila District, North Western Province. With a budget of £75,000, the 12-month project will assist 270 households (750 refugees and 600 host community members) to have improved food security and become self-reliant.

With the influx of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) into the North West Province of Zambia, the strain on natural resources such as land, energy sources and water has reached critical levels. The potential for inter-community conflict between refugee and host communities has increased. Already fragile livelihoods find it hard to cope.

With our funding, ADRA Zambia is establishing a Centre of Excellence (COE) where farmers can receive technical information and services on climate-smart farming, including value-chain training. Skills training provided by the COE will empower both settled refugees and host communities to learn smart farming skills, which can result in improved crops and income generation.

South Sudan: Girls' Education

ADRA is negotiating the contracts to implement two girls' education projects in South Sudan.

Educational indicators in South Sudan show that only one girl in ten completes primary education, and girls comprise just one-third of the secondary school population. There are many challenges that prevent girls from going to school, including cultural, financial

and quality barriers. The Department for International Development (DFID) GESS 2 programme aims to contribute to removing these barriers.

Its goal is to improve the enrolment, retention and completion rates, as well as levels of learning achievement, of girls in primary and secondary schools in South Sudan.



GESS 2's main objective is to ensure the provision of equitable, accessible and essential support to the Education Sector in South Sudan, with particular emphasis on girls.

The negotiations are for former Warrap State and former Eastern Equatoria, where ADRA will be providing improved access to quality education for over 68,000 girls and boys.

ADRA Connections Helps to Build a Sustainable World



15 volunteers travelled to the Philippines in May to participate in an ADRA Connections trip to work with the Mangyans. The Mangyans are an indigenous ethnic group who live in the mountainous areas of the Philippines. At one of their local public schools that struggles to find funding, teachers and families raised money to build a cafeteria for their children but did not have enough money to finish the structure with a roof. Banana leaves were used as a covering, which meant damage and flooding during the rainy season and risk of heat-stroke during the summer months.

With funds raised by the ADRA-UK volunteers, 15 individuals travelled thousands of miles to build the new roof and provide a safe and durable home to the pupils at meal-times. Our volunteers donated over 200 hours of their time to this trip!

This is just one of the ways ADRA volunteers have helped families around the world, and we have no plans to stop in 2020! We provide all of the training needed for you to go on one of our trips. We simply need your willingness to make a difference.

In 2020, ADRA Connections will visit four countries:

- Thailand - 1st - 16th February (building a shelter)
- Vietnam - 5th - 20th April (Easter Holidays - building a road)
- Zambia - 8th - 24th August (building a medical centre)
- Nepal - Dates to be confirmed (refurbishing five classrooms)

Take the leap and join us in 2020!

For more details email: volunteering@adra.org.uk

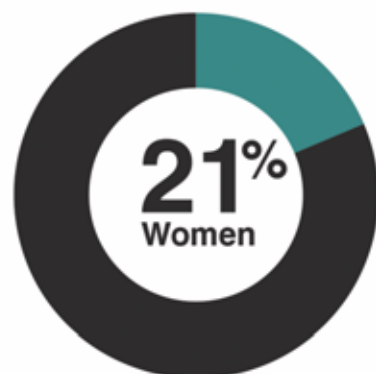


During 2019

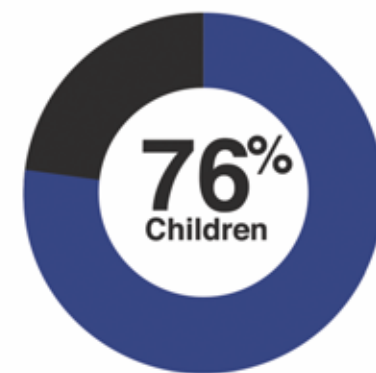
We have helped over
1.2 million people

1.2
million

of whom 266,000 are
women (21%)



and 950,000 are
children (76%)



The ADRA Appeal raised £433,000, with 76%
coming from donations and fundraising activities.

£433,000



Fifteen Connections
volunteers donated over
240 hours building the
cafeteria roof of an
indigenous primary school
in the Philippines;



In the UK we assisted
39 congregations,
supporting nearly
7,000 people with the
help of 567 volunteers;

We were active in 11
countries, both in
supporting development
projects that championed
7 Sustainable Develop-
ment Goals (SDGs), and
in responding to disasters
and emergencies through
the ADRA network;



IT'S OUR ADRA
Fundraise - Support - Give

New Chief Finance Officer



On the 1st of October, ADRA welcomed Brian Nsonga, FCCA, as our new Chief Finance Officer. Brian most recently worked as Senior Finance Officer at the European Bioinformatics Institute in Cambridge. Brian, a chartered accountant, brings a wealth of experience to ADRA, which should be extremely valuable.

Speak up for out-of-school children

**EVERY CHILD.
EVERYWHERE.
IN SCHOOL.**



Every child. Everywhere. In school. This is a global, Adventist-led movement to ensure that every child, everywhere, attends school and completes their education so they can fulfil their God-given potential. Sign the petition today! To learn more about this campaign and how you can make a difference, visit <https://inschool.adra.org/>



A testimony of healing

On becoming a trained and qualified flight hostess, I felt a great sense of excitement. However, things took a big U-turn in my life.

The past few years have been very challenging times due to various medical health conditions.

My first problem was damage to a disc in my neck from a bus accident. Then I experienced a broken bone in my left foot. Shortly after, a benign tumour was discovered in my head; and, to top it all, stage 4 endometriosis was discovered attached to the bowel and other organs in the pelvic area.

The consultant recommended a hysterectomy, seeing that it was at stage 4, including other life-changing surgery.

I was informed by the consultant that a hysterectomy was the only solution to cure the endometriosis. As she outlined everything, this was all too much, a lot of information for me in one day, but I knew the God I served would see me through. Finally, she said that a hysterectomy couldn't be performed without my consent.

God impressed upon my heart to say to the consultant that before she removed my organs I should be investigated again to determine the need for such procedures. As a result, I was placed on the waiting list for a diagnostic laparoscopy.

Prayer

I fell on my knees that day and called upon the God of heaven and earth, the God who created me. I began to pray the following words:

'Lord, I'm at the Red Sea; there is no way forward, no way behind. Lord, they said the endometriosis is attached to my bowel; I'm asking You, my Father, as You brought the

children of Israel through, separate my bowel from this tissue. Do not let a doctor put a knife on my bowel; let no doctor cut my bowel. **Lord, You created me, and at the end You said I was wonderfully and fearfully created in Your image.** You did it in the past, and You're the same God that is with me today. You said whatever I ask and believe by faith You will deliver. God, when You bring me through, **I make a promise to You that I am going to share my testimony because You are going to give me one at the end. I'm going to tell the world how good and powerful You are!**

I believe in James 5:14 (KJV): *'Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.'*

My anointing service was carried out by (my cousin) Pastor Richard Jackson, the North England Conference President; my church minister, Pastor Vili Costescu; and the elders of Hampstead Adventist Church.

Morning of the surgery

During my morning devotion that day, God impressed upon my heart to write the following hymns and Scripture readings:

'There is sunshine in my soul today', 'It is well with my soul', 'Jesus, keep me near the cross', 'Under His wings I am safely abiding' and 'To God be the glory'; Psalm 27; Psalm 91; Matthew 27; and Zephaniah chapters 1 and 2.

I meditated on these passages and prayed over the promises of God contained in the Scriptures.

The surgery

When I awoke in the recovery room from the surgery, which lasted several hours, I felt my stomach and, although there were several



plasters, there was no colostomy bag attached. I found out from the consultant that the endometriosis was not attached to my bowel, and all the organs in my pelvic area were normal. I did not need a second operation. They were all surprised, because they thought the endometriosis would be more than what they had seen.

During the surgery, however, I developed complications. I had a reduced airway entry and desaturations. A section of my right lung collapsed and I developed pneumothorax. I was in intensive care for three days; however, when I came through, my lungs were back to normal.

God is truly wonderful and amazing! Whatever you are going through, rest assured that God is in the midst of your situation.

DAHLIA ALLEN

Women's Empowerment Day of Praise, Prayer & Restoration

Women's Empowerment Day of Praise, Prayer & Restoration took place at the Hackney church on Sabbath 2 November 2019. Hackney's Prayer Ministries leader, Eileen Philip, covered the day with prayer, requesting of God 'an outpouring of His Holy Spirit as the church congregates together, seeking to be restored and empowered for His glory'. Hackney's Women's Ministries leader, Beverly Daley, gave a hearty welcome to everyone, thanking them for coming while also encouraging them to receive the manifold blessings in store for them throughout the day. The prayer room, which was set up for anyone needing prayers for themselves and/or family, friends and loved ones, was just one of those blessings on offer throughout the day.

Lillian Kabambe, from Willesden Church, gave a presentation on the importance and benefits of prayer and fasting. She spoke about the various prayer lines within the Conference which can encourage people in their spiritual lives. She also encouraged members to 'let go of past hurts and disappointments, and take hold of the Master's hand, trusting Him to lead us into a better future'. Those in attendance were blessed to hear messages from three speakers. Elder Shirley Grant from Lewisham Church spoke on *God turning sorrow into joy*. Focusing on the

transformation of Mary Magdalene after her encounter with Jesus, Grant said: 'Mary had a lot of love for God because of the depth of her deliverance. She was delivered from prostitution and insanity and given back her life. Like David and others in the Bible, the sorrows Mary endured were turned into joy. Tell Christ all your troubles and declare to yourself, *I shall not be moved*'.

The newly elected SEC Prayer Ministries Director, Linda Mukwada, spoke on the theme of *restoration*. She said: 'Sarah, Esther, Hannah – these workers of God were hurt in their service, but God recompensed them all for their injuries. There are unclaimed packages God has in reserve for those who have suffered loss. Reclaim what God has for you, and be restored.' The service was then concluded by the SEC Women's Ministries Director, Jacqueline Otokpa. Hackney's former elder and Women's Ministries leader told the congregation, *'It's not over until God says it's over'*. She said: 'God can take you from economy to first class, from nobody to VIP. God makes a way when there seems to be no way. With Christ as your Pilot, you will always touch down on time. So keep trusting, keep praying, keep believing and keep moving, for there is nothing too hard for God.'

Paulette Pendergrass then led the church into an atmosphere of worship with her Spirit-filled renditions of 'The Saviour's blood covered it all' and 'Grace will always be greater than sin'.

DARELL J. PHILIP

The 'Best Saturday Night in Town'

by Colin Stewart

The 'Best Saturday Night in Town' (BSNiT) is a programme that began soon after 1953 in Regent Street, W1, Central London as an outreach programme.

We are reliably told that 1,500 people, including many non-members, filled the auditorium at the New Gallery with an excited buzz and anticipation for the evening variety programme in the centre of London.

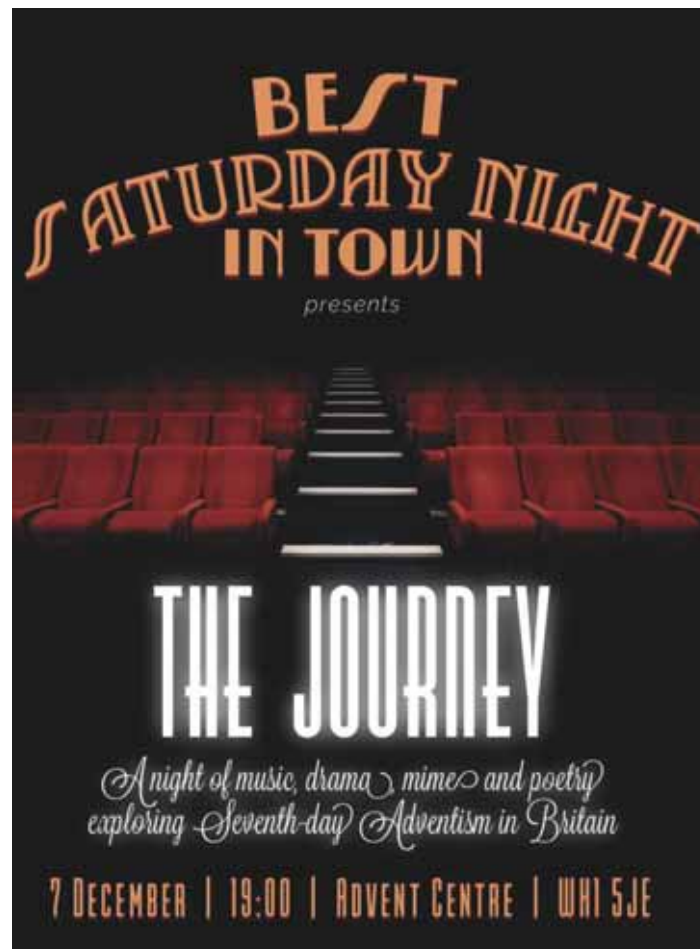
On 7 December at 6:15pm at the Advent Centre, Marylebone, London W1H 5JE we will re-introduce this programme as a seven-part series to members, non-members, and Londoners as an outreach, but also as a programme to introduce you to new friends.

The theme for the BSNiT for the first in this series of programmes will be 'The Journey', which will trace the message and journey of the advent movement and message in the UK. This will be reflected in narration, talented instrumentalists, and singers past and modern, interspersed with testimonies and stories relating to our unique journey. Choirs past and present will help relay this message, as will a health spot from a top medical doctor.

Modern forms of communication of the Gospel will be used, including mime, poetry and drama.

The tickets will be free and food will be available for free. We will ask for a very generous offering or gift for the help of homeless outreach in and around Central London.

So the message is – come and be blessed; come with your friends and neighbours; come to experience a fresh, honest and reflective presentation of the Gospel of hope to the people of London. But, most of all, come and make new friends and be introduced to the best friend of all: Jesus.



As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

Sounds of the Season
Sunday 15 December 2019

Felicia Fara Soprano
as seen on BBC Introducing

London Adventist Chorale
Award-Winning Choir, TV

Paul Lee Organist
as seen on BBC Introducing

Concert: 5:00pm-6:30pm
Refreshments: 6:30pm-7:30pm

THE ADVENT CENTRE
37-39 Brendon Street, off Edgware Road, London W1H 5JE
Email: concert@entrallondon@gmail.com

Free booking via Eventbrite Sounds of the Season
www.eventbrite.co.uk/sounds-of-the-season
tickets: 78793436289

Collection for homeless charity projects:
Shelter, Crisis, SJP

Various CDs, gifts and cards will be available to purchase at the ABC Bookstore.

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

ADRA CONNECTIONS
Let's go to Vietnam
5th - 20th April 2020
EASTER HOLIDAYS

Join a team of volunteers in Vietnam!
We will be building a road to connect rural communities
No experience needed, all training is provided!

For pricing and more details
volunteering@adra.org.uk or 030 30 40 1017

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Adventist Book Center.com



Christmas and New Year Specials 2019

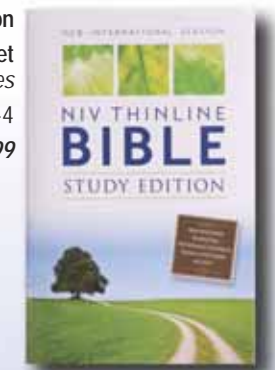


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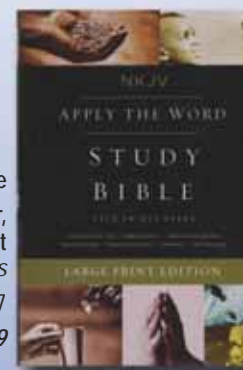


Thinline Bible Study Edition
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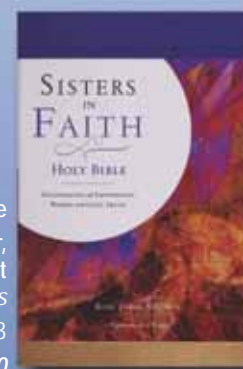


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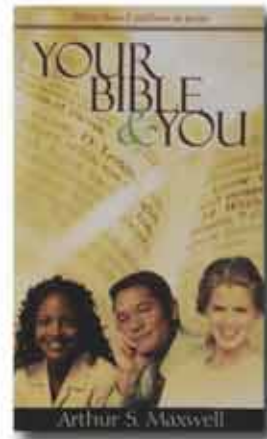
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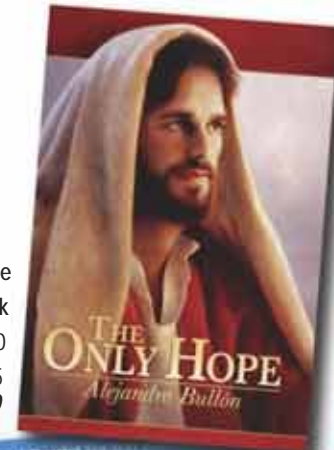
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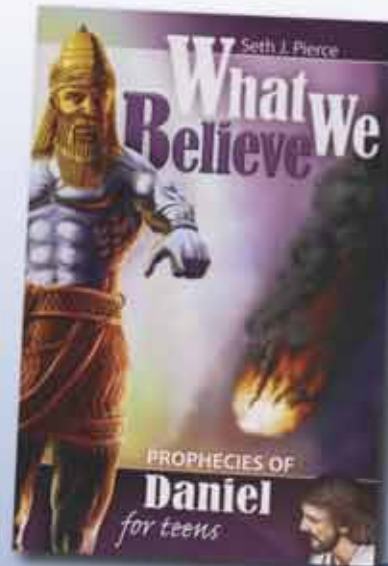
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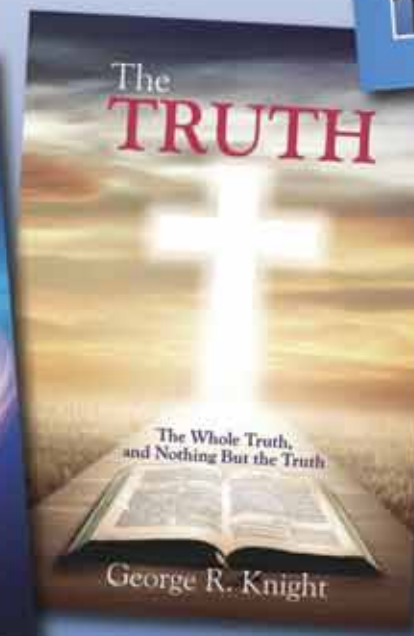
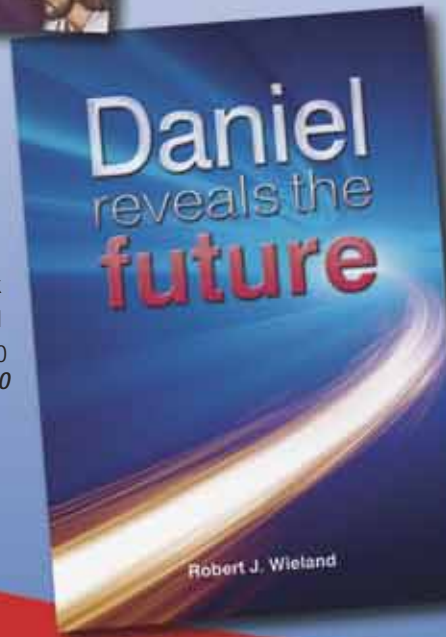


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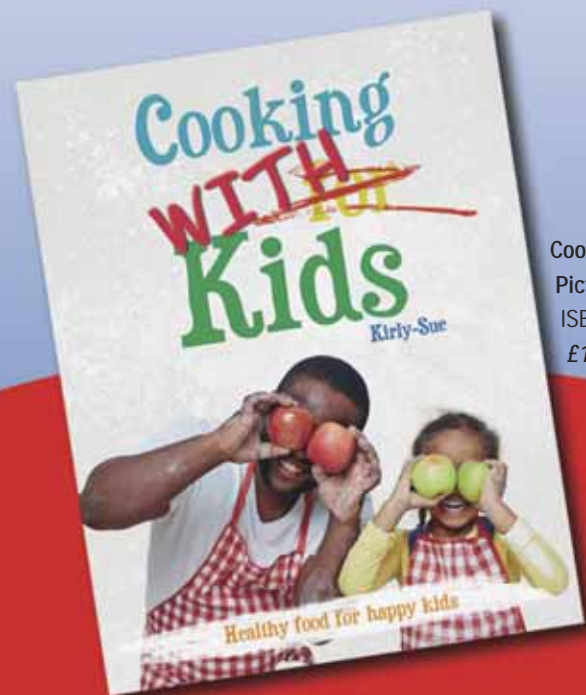


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Mentorship programmes in Newcastle

The Newcastle church has embarked on mentorship programmes for its young people. The Men's Ministry Department (led by Mpumelelo Sibanda) and the Women's Ministry Department (led by Pamela Matsvimbo) have both made it their mission to mentor young men and women.

On Sunday 13 October 2019 seventeen men (including seven youth and teens) gathered at the church to discuss issues affecting young people. As a first Men's Ministry event, it was a success. Topics like delayed gratification, careers, courtship and marriage, and others were discussed. Everyone was welcomed to this event, including community friends. The topics were chosen for their relevance in today's society.

Earlier in the year, on Wednesday 21 August, the Women's Ministry Department put together a meeting for the teens, which was strictly girls-only. Four girls turned up for the meeting with the Women's Ministry organising team, and two youths were asked to be mentors to the

teen girls. At Saltwell Park in Gateshead the girls shared about themselves and also talked about their aspirations for the future.

Commenting on this new initiative, Liseli Samwinga said, 'This was easy for some and not so easy for others. We also listened to advice from two of the older youth, Mercy and Simina, who had come to help out, and heard their advice on careers, friends and a lot more. It was very insightful! The girls were given a lot of advice on how to get through life, and were inspired to reach their full potential as women. The girls told each other funny stories, which they could relate to, but also learn from. They talked freely and shared their hopes and dreams together as God's children. Overall it was a very safe space which the girls enjoyed thoroughly, and they would like to see more meetings like this again.'

Pastor Peter Jaynes said of the mentorship programmes: 'Our world is in turmoil; God's laws and God's guidance seem to account for little. It is good to see the Newcastle church proactively



responding by modelling a biblical culture of strong family and gender values. I found it interesting to sit in with the men

as they mentored each other and began to explore ways of growing closer to God as a group.'
LEANO SAMWINGA AND LISELI SAMWINGA

Newcastle Dutch visit

Early in the year the young people's leaders from the Voorburg International Seventh-day Adventist church decided on a time of spiritual renewal for the church and youth. The plan centred on a short ferry cruise to Newcastle. An email to the Newcastle youth met with an encouraging response. The trip was on for late October.

Early on a late October Monday morning Claytina Webster and twenty-eight young and slightly older charges stepped off the DFDS ferry, hopped onto a bus and soon entered the Central Newcastle Youth Hostel prior to a short trip to the Newcastle church for the first part of their 'A Deeper Experience' venture.

Pastor Richard Jackson, the local Conference president, took time out of his busy schedule to lead out in the first seminar, where he showed, very effectively, that God equips people to do God's will. The Stanborough Press, in the shape of Andrew Sewell, set up a small book display which soon attracted a good number of customers. Later, orders of food not only boosted income for the Press, but boosted the health and spiritual welfare of the Dutch visitors. The second seminar, on how to have a deeper experience with the Holy Spirit, was presented by local church pastor, Peter Jaynes. A wonderful evening meal followed. The local Health Ministry leader, Audrey Muchenagumbo, and her team ensured that the Dutch young people were well fed.

The Tuesday element of the tour aimed to apply the theory learned on the Monday with practical efforts. Street witnessing in Newcastle's main shopping centre took the form of singing and giving out good quantities of Christian literature. Thankfully, the excellent English of the visitors allowed for meaningful and excellent communication with the many people they and the young people from Newcastle Church met. The evening brought an excellent social and goodbyes to the local members and Dutch visitors.

Seeking a deeper experience also brought opportunities to visit local shops, local museums and local technological institutions, including the well-known 'Life Centre'. Elders and youth leaders from the north-east



Left to right: Claytina Webster, Pastor Peter Jaynes, Pastor Richard Jackson and Pastor Stennett Ross



Dutch group in Newcastle Life Centre

were soon found talking with the pastor about a return visit to the Dutch church, seeking a 'Deeper Experience' of their own.

PETER JAYNES



Transformation and renewal

'And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God' (Romans 12:2, NKJV).

The most important thing we can do every day is to renew our minds with God's Word. When we get that right, everything else will begin to fall into place. We'll think and act differently; we'll get different results. We are a 'living sacrifice' to God by not conforming to this world, but being



transformed by the renewal of our minds. Our thinking must be changed (transformed) from old, ungodly ways of thinking into new, godly ways of thinking. What we know in our minds to be true forms a conviction in our hearts of that truth, and that conviction in our hearts translates into action.

Therefore, we must first renew our minds. In renewing our minds, there is no shortcut! We must fill our minds with God's Word. As Jesus prayed to the Father, *'Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth'* (John 17:17, NKJV). God brought Israel out of Egypt, but they still had that slavery mentality. Even though they were free and God provided for their every need, the minute a problem came up, they wanted to return to Egypt. They couldn't enter tomorrow, because they were still carrying the baggage of yesterday. Are you still carrying your baggage of yesterday? We need to make an honest assessment of our innermost attitudes and feelings, our goals, and our values. Such things may be hidden from public view. Others may tell us that we are doing well; yet we alone know if we have really allowed what we have learned from the Bible to transform us in these critical areas. The transformation involves who we are inside. When we learn what God requires of us in harmony with His purpose as stated in the Bible, our response to what we read reveals what is in our heart and what adjustments we need to make in order to act in accordance with the perfect will of God. Remember, we only prove what it is that is 'good and acceptable' by continually renewing our minds! I invite you to renew your

Press production manager retires

It was in 1992 that Steve Holden joined the Stanborough Press – 'because he wanted to serve'. His previous employment, immediately prior to joining the Press as the photo-litho foreman, was as a manager for Lonrho Textiles, based in Newcastle. By 2002 Steve moved to Pre-Press, which at the turn of the century was a little different from what Pre-Press is now. As work colleague Abigail Murphy remembers, 'Film was still being "developed", with cupboards full of "stock photography"', and the idea of design by 'PDF' was still a work in progress. Abigail was sharing her memories of Steve at a recent gathering of Stanborough Press staff to recognise his years of service, and to wish him and his wife Liz all the very best for their retirement.

From 2009 onwards Steve took on the demanding role of production manager, overseeing the production of all printed material from inception to the finished product. The intensity of the role cannot be overstated – but he managed it very well. Sarah Jarvis, who worked with Steve for seven years, agrees. 'He was an exemplary boss, and one of the kindest, most patient men it has been my privilege to know – and a sincere Christian too.'

Taking over from Steve is Peter Oppong-Mensah. Peter comes to the Press from Icardoworld Media and Promotional Sources. Peter is well-known to the South England Conference and British Union Conference for his work. Married to Patricia, a pharmacist, they are blessed with a daughter, Margaret. In local church life, Peter is an elder of the Reading West church and has been the secretary of Area 5 in the South England Conference for the last eight years. Peter, like Steve Holden, now serves the church full-time, 'because he wants to serve'.

Elisabeth Sangüesa, Press manager, in bidding Steve farewell and welcoming Peter to his new appointment, commented, 'it was a pleasure and a blessing to work with Steve throughout the years, and when he told us that he was planning to retire, we knew we would have a very hard time trying to find a replacement. But I believe that with the arrival of Peter Mensah we will have continuity not only in quality control, but in the professionalism and the commitment we had with Steve. We welcome Peter to the Stanborough Press family and look forward to having many happy years working together.'

As Steve and Elizabeth Holden begin retirement, and Peter and Patricia embark on a new adventure, we very much wish both families every blessing of the Lord.



Pre-Press team, past and present – back row, left to right: Lee Gallaher, David Bell and Steve Holden; front row: Barry Allen, Abigail Murphy and Annette Agard-Vernon



Elizabeth and Steve Holden



Steve gives his speech to the Press family



Steve welcomes Peter Oppong-Mensah

Messenger

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13	3.52	4.04	3.48	3.38	3.58
20	3.53	4.05	3.49	3.39	3.59



Letters to the editor

Dear Editor
May I respond to 'Letters to the Editor' in the latest *Messenger*,

25 October 2019?

I wish to respond to the article written by Pastor Martin Anthony.

Pastor Anthony mentions: 'In lesson 1 we read that King Artaxerxes began his reign in 465 BC.' Pastor Anthony then goes on by saying that the seventh year of Artaxerxes cannot be 457 BC, but has to be one year earlier, 458 BC.

This is not a problem when one understands how the ancient Persians counted the years of their kings.

They had the year of accession, followed by the full regnal year. In the case of Artaxerxes, he ascended the throne in 465 BC, but his first regnal year was 464 BC.

Let me illustrate this further. I will keep it simple by looking at it from our calendar. Our year starts on 1 January and finishes on 31 December. During the period of the Persian Empire this would be reckoned as a regnal year. But if a king ascended the throne in February, for example, He would not have completed a full year by 31 December; so that first 10 months would be reckoned as his accession year. The full regnal year would follow the next year.

The accession year of King Artaxerxes in 465 BC and the year of his death, 424 BC, are the most documented and accurate dates in all ancient history. This does not surprise me. God wants us to be assured of His prophecy of the coming Messiah, which culminated in the

baptism of Jesus by John in the fifteenth year of Tiberius (see Luke 3:1). Jesus became Messiah at His baptism, which we know occurred in the autumn of 27 AD (exactly 69 'weeks' of years after the decree was given to restore Jerusalem and its autonomy – see Daniel 9).

I don't believe the Sabbath School lesson to be wrong, neither the year 457 BC.

If you wish to study this further, compare Daniel 1:1 and Jeremiah 25:1.

SVEN OHMAN

Messenger response to questions concerning the chronology of Artaxerxes

On 25 October we published a letter concerning apparent inconsistencies in the chronology of King Artaxerxes, in which amazement was expressed that 457 BC might be considered the seventh year of his reign, given that he began his reign in 465 BC. While we appreciate that there might be some confusion, we are happy to note that the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* addresses this very issue at some length.¹

Summarising and quoting briefly from the above source,² we may note that, while Artaxerxes came to the throne on about 17 December 465 BC, 'by the Babylonian-Persian method the remainder of the current year was called the "beginning of reign" (today often translated "accession year"), and the year 1 began at the next New Year's Day, in the spring of 464. . . . The Jews used a similar system . . . therefore the 1st [regnal] year of Artaxerxes did not begin in the Jewish fall-to-fall civil calendar

until Tishri 1 in the autumn of 464.'

Noting that the Persian (spring-spring) calendar and the Jewish (autumn-autumn) civil calendar both place the first and seventh years of Artaxerxes' reign in 464/463 BC and 458/457 BC respectively, we further read, 'The BC dating of the journeys of Ezra and Nehemiah to Jerusalem hinges, then, on whether the biblical reckoning of Artaxerxes' 7th and 20th years was that of the spring-to-spring year, beginning with the 1st month, or the fall-to-fall year, beginning with the 7th month, six months later. . . . If [Ezra] arrived in the summer of the Jewish fall-to-fall 7th year, which did not end until the autumn of 457, he travelled in 457.' Such usage seems to be confirmed when 'the two dates of Neh. 1:1 and 2:1 show that Kislev (the 9th month) preceded Nisan (the 1st month) in the same 20th year. Since regnal years were then customarily calendar years, and since that year could not have begun with the 1st month, the obvious and inescapable inference is that it was a Jewish calendar year beginning with the 7th month, that is, in the autumn. Therefore it would seem logical that Ezra went to Jerusalem in 457 . . . in the 7th [regnal year of Artaxerxes] as reckoned by the Jewish civil calendar.'

We trust that this helps to clear up the confusion.

ANDREW PUCKERING, EDITORIAL TEAM

¹See vol. 3, pages 85-110 of the 1954 edition, for a treatise on the chronology of the Hebrews' exile and restoration, and particularly pages 100 and onwards for the chronology of Ezra and Nehemiah. ²Vol. 3, pp. 101, 102 of the 1954 edition

North England Conference Campus Ministries and ASC Training Camp and Students' Day

by Adam Ramdin

Public Campus Ministries remains an integral part of the vision of the NEC Youth Department. Each year we hold two key events – the Adventist Students on Campus Student Training Retreat, and the NEC Students' Day. Both serve a key purpose. The cyclical nature of student ministries, with student leaders coming and going on a three-year cycle, leads to a need to have constant training events for the new leaders.

Each year we hold a training event at Aberdaron that aims to equip and train the student leaders in how to effectively run a campus society. Workshops are given on how to give Bible studies to students, how to get Bible study interests, how to be a president/secretary/treasurer of a society, what is the history of campus ministries in the church, science and the Bible, and how to lead when no one wants to. Training is also given on how to use the FAST Bible study resources, which are an excellent tool for small-group ministry.

We were blessed this year to have Jermaine Gayle with us, who serves as the programme director for the campus programme in the Michigan Conference, as well as the pastor of the campus church. He shared with us some excellent personal stories of how God has worked on the campus where he ministers, as well as some effective advice on how to be a missionary student on campus.

It is our vision to see an active and healthy ASC society on every campus within the NEC, to give Adventist students a place they can identify with and call home. It's often lonely living away from home, and, however large or small the society may be, having a presence at the freshers' fair can make a big difference in the life of somebody who leaves home for the first time. We look forward to hearing the stories of how God has blessed the campuses that were represented at the retreat.

The second event we held in September was the NEC Students' Day at Leicester Central Church. Pastor Israel Ramos, who has been involved in campus ministry for 20 years, was our preacher for the day. He is also one of the founders of GYC and has a real passion to see young people involved and active in ministry. The theme of the day was 'A Higher Calling', with the students challenged to seek a calling in God that is 'higher than the highest human thought'. We held workshops in the afternoon by Sam Walters that looked at 'Your Calling and Your Peers'; Ricky Morgan and Laura Jeffers looked at 'Your Calling and Your Profession'; and Israel Ramos looked at 'Your Calling and Your Personality'.

Many of the 200 students present were first-time students who have started university this year. Leicester Central Church once again were the perfect hosts, and we would like to thank them for their hospitality.

Remember in your prayers all university students this academic year. A public university is not an easy place to live and practise one's faith, and our students need all the support, encouragement and love that they can get.

Photos of the day can be found on the Adventist Students on Campus Facebook and Instagram pages ([@adventistsc](#)) and also on the NEC Youth pages ([@necyouth](#)).



Pastor Israel Ramos



Pastor Raafat Kamal



Pastor Adam Ramdin

