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## Messenger

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

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# Lord, for the years

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,  
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,  
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:  
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,  
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,  
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:  
Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.

Lord, for our land in this our generation,  
spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:  
for young and old, for commonwealth and nation,  
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

Lord, for our world, where men disown and doubt you,  
loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain,  
hungry and helpless, lost indeed without you:  
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us —  
self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,  
past put behind us, for the future take us:  
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

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## If ever there was a need to be like the Bereans, it is now in 2020

by Pastor Ian Sweeney

It is a fascinating story which, at the time of writing, is still ongoing and is far from

conclusion. Sometime around 2012, a Bulgarian, Oxford-educated charismatic woman, Dr Ruja Ignatova, came to the world's attention with the promise of a revolution in banking with the launch of a new crypto currency called OneCoin. With exquisite, no-expense-spared rallies and conferences across the globe, investors were invited and drawn to the promise of financial security and untold riches. In a whirlwind of financial activity, it is estimated that over 5 billion US dollars has been invested.<sup>1</sup>

In 2017, following a flight to Greece, Dr Ruja Ignatova disappeared and has not been seen or heard from since.

While OneCoin denies it is a scam, the Chinese Government, along with the US Department of Justice, believes otherwise. Dr Ruja's brother Konstantin was arrested and put on trial in the United States, where he subsequently pleaded guilty to charges of money laundering and fraud.<sup>2</sup>

Many financial experts state that investors have no hope of ever seeing their money again.

Incredibly, although USA authorities have labelled OneCoin as a multi-level pyramid scheme, there are many adherents who believe that OneCoin will come good and deliver the promised riches. And so it is that willing investors are still being recruited by family and friends.

I suspect that many of us *MESSENGER* readers would scoff at the idea that we could be taken in by such a questionable business venture. However, the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church reveals that a number of our members have been taken in by beliefs, practices, theologies and charismatic preachers and teachers, more questionable and life-impacting than OneCoin. It is nothing new.

In Acts 17, Luke records the apostle Paul's efforts to convince his Jewish brethren that Jesus was the promised Messiah of the Old Testament Scriptures. In the city of Thessalonica, Paul made the case in the synagogue for 3 consecutive Sabbaths, and found a number of new believers. However, some of the Jews were violently hostile to Paul's teaching and organised a mob to attack the home of one of the new believers, as well as seeking the support of the authorities to silence Paul and his followers. Luke said that the basis for their opposition to what Paul was teaching was jealousy! (Acts 17:5.)

Being forced to flee Thessalonica, Paul continued his ministry in the city of Berea, where Luke described the Jewish believers as

being 'more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so' (Acts 17:11, NKJV).

The Bereans were open-minded enough to listen to the new truths that Paul was sharing, but in being open-minded and excited by what Paul was sharing, they also gave due diligence, and so they thoroughly examined Paul's teaching from the Scriptures every day, because they needed to be sure that Jesus was the Christ. If ever there was a need to be like the Bereans, it is now in 2020.

Social media platforms are effective ways to quickly share and promote the latest 'new light' or conspiracy. Sadly, too many Adventists do not follow the practice of the Berean believers and seemingly accept and share any news message without seeing the necessity of research or Bible study.

Paul was attacked because of his Christ-centred message. His ministry was focused on sharing Jesus Christ as the Saviour to a world in need of a Saviour. I doubt that Paul's approach would be any different if he were alive today; he would lift up Jesus, the Christ.

The Bereans studied the Scriptures and so accepted and lifted up Jesus. There is a

proliferation of ministries who diligently study the Scriptures so they can share conspiracy, accusations and fear.<sup>3</sup>

At the General Conference Session (25 June - 4 July 2020) the world church will ratify the latest strategic plan for the church under the banner: 'I Will Go!' This title accompanies the latest wording of our Mission statement, which states that as a church we seek to 'Make disciples of Jesus Christ who live as His loving witnesses and proclaim to all people the everlasting gospel of the Three Angels' Messages in preparation for His soon return (Matthew. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Revelation 14:6-12).'

The emphasis is for each church member to personally embrace their responsibility to go and share Jesus Christ, who is central to the 'everlasting gospel of the Three Angels' Messages'.

Whether we are going to make New Year's resolutions or not, I pray that you would join with me in making the resolution to be like the apostle Paul and the Bereans. Let us place Christ at the centre of our message and engage in Bible study and personal witnessing to lift Him up.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.express.co.uk/finance/city/1202006/money-laundering-OneCoin-scam-trial-criv>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-50417908>

<sup>3</sup>e.g. Pope Francis's brother is an Adventist:

<https://record.adventistchurch.com/2013/07/24/popes-brother-not-an-adventist/>

Pastor Ian Sweeney serves as the President of the British Union Conference.

**'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?'**



David Neal, Editor

Welcome to your new look *MESSENGER*, and a very happy new year to you. During 2019 we introduced some gradual changes to both style and content. In recent times, *MESSENGER* content has been around 65% news, and 35% for articles and features. With this edition we begin a journey to turn that around – 65% articles/features, 35% news.

News about church life in the UK and Ireland is so important. Not only does *MESSENGER* record the history of the British Union Conference, but, of more significance, it serves as 'the family album'. It is no less than our collective story of some twenty-first century disciples, to inspire and encourage our life and witness in Christ. Be assured, we still want your news, but we can report it better. Here's our thinking on how we will carry news reports in future.

- In general, news reports to be a maximum of 400 words, unless a major conference/mission event, or activity of national/regional significance.
- News reports that contain 'real news', fresh, dynamic, vibrant, and encouraging. For example, for a day of fellowship, we're looking for just the key points/highlights of the day, rather than a rolling narrative. The same goes for almost any event – *less about proceedings and more about people!*
- For services of baptism, we'd like to hear about the story of John or Mary Smith and how they met Christ – always a wonderful story to tell – and one we'll always find space for. What challenges did John or Mary face along the way? What does faith in Christ mean to them? How does prayer help? What is it like to experience the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? And why do they believe obedience to Christ and His Word is important to them?

As for articles and features, I'm particularly looking for articles of no more than 1,000 words on the following themes:

1. Growing in Christ
2. Leadership matters
3. This we believe
4. Reaching my neighbour for Christ
5. Turning a dead church into a living church

If you think you're up to this challenge, please let me know.

It's possible that by the time you read a *MESSENGER* story, you may have read it up to five times previously online. For the latest news about our church in the UK and Ireland, the first place to go is to the British Union Conference website: <https://adventist.uk/news/>.

I am thankful for the work of Pastor Richard Daly and his team, who every Thursday faithfully post online the latest fast-breaking news. That's an activity *MESSENGER* cannot do, and shouldn't try to compete with. Our role is to receive the news, take a step back, and provide a reflective angle of what's taken place. Perhaps it's best explained like this: BUC News – Gospel of Mark; *MESSENGER* – Gospel of John. Both equally important – but with distinct roles, and frequent collaboration.

One first act of collaboration has been the introduction of 'M<sub>E</sub>SS<sub>E</sub>NGER Extra', a series of video conversations expanding on the current *MESSENGER* editorial. You can find all nine 2019 recordings at:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-8capq8wh9FyfAhPua7zvI9iwFhb147>.

But 'M<sub>E</sub>SS<sub>E</sub>NGER Extra' is also a Facebook page where the *MESSENGER* story continues. Perhaps space in one particular edition simply does not permit the full story. If so, we may

## Welcome

publish a summary and direct you to 'M<sub>E</sub>SS<sub>E</sub>NGER Extra' to read the full version.

But if there's one vision I have for 'M<sub>E</sub>SS<sub>E</sub>NGER Extra', it is to provide a 'safe place' where we can dialogue together and encourage each other, a place to have mature Spirit-filled conversation, learn from each other, and to help keep us together. Perhaps there could be a discussion about an editorial or other feature article. Perhaps it can be a place where we can support one another in prayer. Just go to Facebook, type in 'M<sub>E</sub>SS<sub>E</sub>NGER Extra' and you'll find our digital presence.

As we think about what faces us in 2020, I hope and trust *MESSENGER* will be a good friend to help you on your journey of faith as we seek to inform, educate, and inspire.

### Whisper a prayer . . .

*Whisper a prayer in the morning,  
Whisper a prayer at noon,  
Whisper a prayer in the evening,  
To keep your heart in tune.<sup>1</sup>*

Sometimes, I wonder why I do pray. Even though I regard myself as a person of deep faith and trust in God, sometimes I have those moments when I wonder: 'Is He really there, really listening?' I respond to that thought very quickly with a smile and mutter, 'You'd better be there, or I'm in a heck of a lot of trouble.'

#### The ever-increasing need to pray

I'm not sure why this is so, but it's there. And the only tangible reason for it is circumstances, be they personal, corporate, spiritual, material, physical, emotional, relational or otherwise.

#### Prayer as enjoyment

I like talking with God. If I really believe the words of Galatians 2:19, 20, and allow Christ to live in me and control my life, why wouldn't I enjoy praying? 'I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' (ESV.)

#### Prayer and well-being

There are moments of challenge, when complex problems have little or no immediate solution. As I pray, I often experience an emotional, assuring lift, which provides a sense of 'all will be well'. Even if it's not, I'm promised the Lord's presence, working through the problem. It's called a peace that is beyond understanding. (Philippians 4:7.)

I believe this because I know what God has already done for me in Christ, assuring me of His personal presence now, and of what the ultimate future holds for me.

#### Prayer and spiritual growth

I need to change, Lord! I want to become like You – and *need* to become like You. Why is it taking so long? It is a personal and intense spiritual battle that never goes away, but one in which I am promised victory. When I'm not engaged in this battle, it is the most dangerous time.

#### Answered prayer

For me, this is simply looking back, with gratitude and amazement combined, at how the Lord has guided and directed my personal and family life.

#### Prayer and mission

Here's the big idea on this. Whenever I engage in making a friend for Christ, the Holy Spirit is already ahead of me. With a great sense of humility, our life and witness are key to our friend recognising the joy Christ offers.

In this coming year, whisper a prayer – and notice the difference.

<sup>1</sup>© 1963 by John W. Peterson Music Co. All rights reserved.



With this edition of *MESSENGER* we begin a new series about who we are and how we grow in Christ. What does it mean for Christ to be ‘formed in us’? (Galatians 4:19.) How does Jesus want us to think and act? Can values-led lives shape not just what we believe to be important, but – crucially for the Christ-follower – live out what is important? To help us on this journey, we’re sharing extracts from Pastor Lew Edwards’ book *Values-led Lives*.

## Introduction: my journey in becoming values-led

Some years ago I had the privilege of completing an MA in leadership, and as part of the course we were invited to create a personal value statement. At the time I did not realise the significance of what I was about to do. I thought I would simply list some Christian virtues that I hold as biblical and that conformed to the professional standards of being a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. I expected that they would act as a sort of fence within which I could perform my role as a pastor.

It took me six months of struggling to complete this task. It involved questioning my motives, journaling about how I had responded to various situations, and much prayer. There were also times when I offered strong resistance to the Spirit, who was calling me to honesty and accountability. Maybe the most powerful and ongoing part of this process was my effort to discern and contemplate with awe the personal values that inspired Jesus’ life and actions. This helped me see how far I fell short of being like Jesus – God’s living Value Statement. All this resulted in several re-rankings of my stated values, and in some cases certain of those values were deleted while new ones were added.

Over the years I’ve come to realise that a value statement is about you – who you are at your inner core. It is a statement of who you are, and not a statement of **what** you want to achieve (vision-goals), or of **how** to achieve your vision (strategy). It is a statement of who you want to be and of who God wants you to

be. In the end it is a statement of being, or at least a statement about the being I want to be.

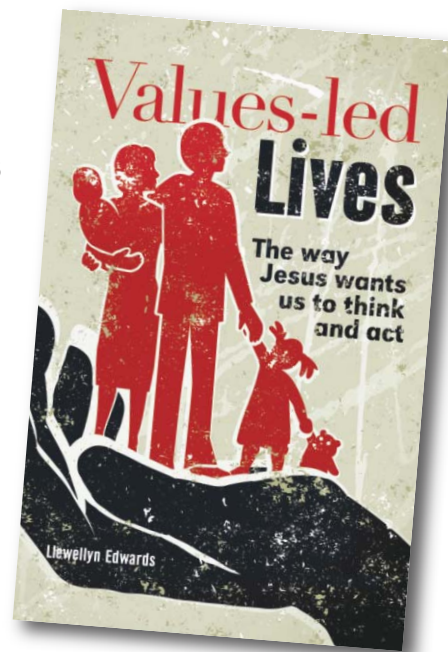
One of our problems is that we tend to define ourselves by the expectations of our role or job, or by the expectations of our employers, our parents or our church. But those expectations

**A value statement is a statement of who you are, and not a statement of what you want to achieve (vision-goals), or of how to achieve your vision (strategy). It is a statement of who you want to be and of who God wants you to be.**

are not necessarily who we are. I can fulfil all the outward expectations and get the job done, but be another person inside. Being a butcher, a baker or a candlestick maker, or even a minister, an elder or a long-time Adventist, doesn’t necessarily make me a nice person. What I do does not define me. Neither, necessarily, do my doctrinal beliefs. Who I am is my inner core values. And it is out of these, not any outward expectations, that what I do should flow. Values have to do with first cleaning the ‘inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean’ (Matthew 23:26, ESV) . . .

The significance of this struck me when I was working in Egypt with my value statement completed – or, more accurately, completed up to that stage. In

actual fact it keeps growing as my understanding of the character of God increases. I titled the page ‘Llew’s Constitution’, printed it off in large print and placed it centrally on my desk. It was in large print so that I could read it at a glance, but also because I wanted all who interacted with me to know that this is what they should expect of me. And if I did not meet those values they should call me to be accountable to them. Value



sides could not see each other, so I surmised that they had misunderstood the pastor’s translation of my question. He assured me that he had understood me and translated correctly. So, to make sure, I reversed the question by asking them to raise their hands if they wanted the wall to remain up. Every woman’s hand went up and all the men’s hands remained down.

I was nonplussed: so much so that I left the survey there, but later talked to the pastor and his wife about the vote. She told me that the women would like to have it down but feared the men’s gaze, whereas the men would be ‘happy’ to have lovely ladies to look at in church. It became a matter of protecting the women. Immediately I recognised a higher value than equality. It was not about doing what was right – it was about doing what was good. It also highlighted the need for educating hearts towards Kingdom values.

Occasionally I would find myself acting contrary to my values, mainly because it didn’t suit me or my wisdom at the time, and later, as I would journal on my decisions or actions, I always came to the conclusion that the values on my ‘constitution’ would have given me a truer guide to what my actions should have been. I had not followed the compass, and essentially lost my way.

I also became aware that there was a conflict between my own heart, my inner core, and the values that I knew belonged to the Kingdom of Heaven. I began to realise that one of my primary tasks was to move the values off

the page, for them not just to be moved into my head but to become embedded in my heart. The problem had to do with humanity’s ability, as Isaiah 29:13 puts it, to ‘honour me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me’. However, as I saw the beauty of Jesus’ heart and values, I wanted more and more to make my heart like His: not a simple task! A friend of mine told me recently, ‘Llew – it is not easy! It is a struggle.’ [However,]

grace is [Jesus’] core value, and each time we fall short He lovingly picks us up, forgives us and empowers us to try again.

Nevertheless, in my struggle with my value statement – a statement that continues to strangely evolve, becoming shorter in length yet wider in its implications – I began to think of the experience in terms of sanctification and soon saw sanctification not as *attainment*,

*If you can’t wait to read the next extract, Values-led Lives is available for purchase through the Stanborough Press @ £5.95 + £2.95p&p. The sales team on 01476-591700 or sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk will be delighted to serve you.*

but as *aspiration*. It was an aspiration to relate to those around me with the values of the Kingdom of Heaven. . . .

Then I began to see the church as the ideal place to grow in one’s values. Sanctification was beginning to make sense to me if it occurs in community. In Galatians 4:19, it is Paul’s wish that Christ be formed in that community. And this had to involve the discipline of the church becoming a values-led community. My reading also led me to see that most organisations that excel in what they do – be they secular or religious – have

clear value statements. In such organisations they have a duty to hold each other accountable to the values they all signed up to aspire to, because the group’s members are agreed about what they want to become. In this context criticism becomes a supportive and constructive discussion as together we work towards achieving the values that we aspire to. It becomes a privilege to excel, not a chore.

That’s how I became interested in being values-led and began longing for values-led leadership and church communities.

## Ken Burton to conduct Songs of Praise ‘Big Sing’ in Belfast

‘The Big Sing’ was conceived in 2001, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of BBC1’s *Songs of Praise*. The programme’s ethos remains the same, with congregational and performance items, but on a bigger scale, in a larger venue, with an orchestra, larger choirs, and an overall bigger production.

With the appointment of new production teams Avanti and Nine Lives Media, their task was to tour the event around the countries of the UK. Last year’s programme took place in Edinburgh; this year it will be in Belfast. As part of the set-up for 2020, there is a small team of three singers, as well as the choir and orchestra. Part of this line-up is South Croydon member and current soprano of the London Adventist Chorale, Michelle Toussaint-Bourne.

Ken Burton’s role as conductor requires him to direct the orchestra, congregation and stage singers. This year he will be joined by Simon Lole, another television and record conductor, arranger and producer, who will direct the orchestra when Burton is directing the congregation. In all other songs Ken will direct the orchestra.

As well as conducting, Ken is also responsible for arranging some of the music and the theme tune. This involves writing parts for orchestra, stage choir, solo singers and groups, and congregations. Burton feels this is a dream come true.

Indeed, 2019 has been a massive year on the programme for Ken Burton. In March he led twelve singers in two special programmes from the Holy Land. He arranged and recorded all the music for the choir, as well as guest singers. In May he arranged and conducted eleven songs for the programme in Coventry (for various broadcasts). In September he conducted *The UK’s Favourite Hymns*. Burton is also the overall musical director for the *Songs of Praise Gospel Choir of the Year*, where his role includes overall music advising, track production, a vocal training workshop with all choirs who enter, and arranging a joint piece for the choirs to sing.

BUC NEWS



**‘I sit at my keyboard and computer and arrange and record music, and as I see the deeper meaning in many of the songs which we have been singing for years, at times I cannot hold back the excitement, or the tears, as I reflect on the power of what God has done, and as my mind thinks about His glorious return. I then have to pinch myself and say, “This is work?” ’**

# Trans-European Division acknowledges mistakes of the past and seeks ways to move forward

Raafat Kamal, on behalf of the TED

This year marked the ninetieth anniversary of the formation of the Trans-European Division as one region of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Initially established as the Northern European Division, it has gone through several reconfigurations over the years. Starting as a predominantly Scandinavian and British Isles based unit, it has now grown to encompass countries in central and south-eastern Europe, and over the decades it has also had a specific mission impact in West Africa, Pakistan and the Middle East.

While the heritage of our Division was European, the gift of mission from our early pioneers until the present has led us to grow into a highly multicultural and diverse entity, comprised of 22 countries with an even greater multitude of cultures – each rich and to be valued and reflected in our worshipping congregations.

Yet, sadly and all too often, a breadth of diversity does not always lead to a richness of unity, or necessarily of understanding.

As we have celebrated the milestone of our 90-year history of mission and outreach, even through the difficulties of two World Wars, regional conflicts and persecution in the Communist era, we note other parts of our

history – parts for which we express sincere regret. We recognise that unconscious bias, ignorance, prejudice, human fears, resentments and suspicions have affected the Church, most specifically within the British Union Conference.

Commenting on such issues, Ellen White was clear: 'This grieves the heart of Christ.' She counselled: 'We have the same heavenly Father and the same Redeemer, who loved us and gave Himself for us all, without any distinction.' She then urged: 'When the love of Christ is cherished in the heart as it should be . . . there will be no caste, no pride of nationality; no difference will be made because of the colour of the skin.' She concluded: 'The colour of the skin is no criterion as to the value of the soul . . . God has taken us, all classes, all nations, all languages . . . and brought us into His workshop, to be prepared for His temple.'

While we cannot re-write history, as leaders of the Trans-European Division we acknowledge that actions were taken that were not in harmony with God's ideal. We apologise for the failures of the Church in this regard.

As we focus on mission across the rich geographical, cultural, historical and

constantly changing diversity of our Division, we commit to providing a leadership model that will benefit all communities, regardless of background, in exactly the same way that Jesus modelled positive relationships, whether to high-ranking Nicodemus, the despised Samaritan woman, the outcast blind beggar, or Simon the Pharisee. These examples found in a series of Gospel stories lead towards Jesus' wonderful prayer of unity found in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of John – that we can be one, united together, just as Jesus and the Father are one. That is something that we want to take to heart, and seriously desire and strive for.

While our apology is from the heart, we recognise that an apology is not enough. We must work vigorously and intentionally to eradicate any traces of prejudice and intolerance that continue to exist. Together with our officers, field presidents and our Division Executive committee, we are reviewing policies, and focusing on our strategic framework for the next five years in order to enhance our leadership and decision-making processes.

Our prayer as the leadership of the Trans-European Division is that Seventh-day Adventists in this Division may indeed 'be one', embodying the union of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that we will 'put on love' and so be bound 'together in perfect unity'; as we allow God to mould us in His workshop, regardless of our class, race, gender, nationality or language; so that we may, together, achieve the mission that Christ has given to us.

<sup>1</sup>E. G. White to W. S. Hyatt, 15 February 1900, Lt. 26, 1900

# The British Union Conference Evangelism, Discipleship and Mission summit

Report by Divina Reynolds, edited for MESSENGER.

'God has called us to greater exploits for Him, bigger than we can dream or imagine.' These rousing words of Dr Kirk Thomas, BUC Evangelism and Sabbath School Director, began a new training event called 'BEAM' (the BUC Evangelism, Discipleship and Mission summit). This year's event, which took place from 8-10 November near Hinkley, Leicestershire, with over 400 participants, was entitled 'Going bigger'.

To provide a flavour of the inspiration and training received, we share with you the salient points of just a few of the keynote speakers.



Dr Kirk Thomas leads the Discipleship and Mission summit

## Where are we going?

In a sermon entitled, 'Where are we going?' Pastor Roger Hernandez, Ministerial and Evangelism Director for the Southern Union, shared points on interacting with the community, and building and maintaining a healthy church culture. For example, he said, 'Preach our struggles, as people are not looking for a "wow", they are looking for the "how".' To counter the way in which the vast majority of unchurched individuals have no believing friends, he encouraged members to 'walk alongside' people and be trustworthy so they can turn to you. 'Be upfront: we have a beautiful message,' he urged, yet 'God has called us to be different; He has not called us to be weird'. Pastor Hernandez explained that the vast majority of traffic to church websites comes from unchurched people browsing the internet, and that increasing numbers of people will look churches up online before visiting. He compared church websites to a 'church lobby' because of the potential for interfacing with people, pointing out that all the information about your church should be easy to find there. Church culture can be friendly to outsiders or damaging to their experiences. 'We can have the best music. . . . It is only "when God shows up" that things happen,' he added. 'If no people are coming, is God being lifted up? Nothing beats experiencing God.'

Discipleship and Mission summit participants from around the British Union



## Youth included!

The youth group, which included community friends, was led by Alina Dogaru and Clarence Jackson. Also taking the mantra 'Going bigger', they discussed addressing obstacles to following Christ, including a variety of themes, such as the dangers of drugs; relationships; gun and knife crime; mental health and depression; how the Church can make an impact; and anger management, praying for self-control together. The group presented content on David and Goliath for Adventist Radio London, who were present throughout the summit.

The youth particularly appreciated Dr Galina Stele's plenary, 'A church that attracts young people'. Dr Stele, who works as Research and Programme Evaluation Manager at the General Conference Office of Archives, spoke of the cruciality of relationships with newly baptised members and young people, saying, 'Know them; know their names.'

## Five foundational ministries for every local church

Pastor Jim Howard, the Associate Director of the General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, highlighted 5 foundational ministries for every local church. These were: 'churchwide community ministries' to prepare the ground; 'active literature and media ministries' to plant the seed of God's Word; 'vibrant Bible study ministry' to cultivate interest; 'regular public evangelism' as a means of harvesting; and 'systematic discipleship ministry' to preserve the precious fruit of new souls as a sequential, continuous cycle. Pastor Howard explained that the agricultural model was taught by Jesus, and that churches may assess if they provide a full range of outreach activities by whether they cover all of these areas.

## Who let the dogs out?

Dr Jeffrey Brown, Associate Secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association and Associate Editor of *Ministry* magazine, was the plenary speaker for the weekend. His first sermon on Saturday night was entitled, 'Who let the dogs out?' Based on Revelation 22:15, he spoke of the 'dogs' of depression, discouragement, destruction and divorce. He stated that the dogs are outside the church, blunting our evangelism; inside the church, stunting our witness; and inside of us, fronting our testimony. But, thank God, Jesus can let the dogs out.

Dr Brown's second sermon on Sunday morning was entitled, 'Don't miss your stop'. Based on 2 Timothy 4, Dr Brown encouraged us to follow Paul's example and take care of our social, physical, mental, and spiritual health, so that we too, as faithful disciples, will receive the crown of righteousness prepared not just for Paul, but for all those who love Christ's appearing.

## Seeking the lost

Pastor Audrey Andersson, Executive Secretary of the Trans-European Division, started the day with a reflective devotion entitled, 'Seeking the lost'. The 'blind panic' of the woman in the story of 'The lost coin' was connected to the issue of church retention and how 16% of baptised members leave. Pastor Andersson asked, 'How much passion or panic do we feel for the one out of every six who leave the Church? Delegates were encouraged to 'be the arms and love of Jesus'. In engaging in reclamation work, they were reminded of rejoicing not only in heaven but in our churches at the results. Stories of faith restored and individuals returning to the Church offered hope.

### Some of the BRITISH MISSIONARIES YOU ARE SUPPORTING


# ‘Conversation – Peace’

by Bert Smit

## ADRA-UK reflects on 2019 and looks forward to 2020

*All for one, one for all  
There's no way we'll reach our  
greatest heights  
Unless we heed the call  
Me for you, you for me  
There's no chance of world salvation  
'less the conversation's peace.*

(‘Conversation Peace’ – Stevie Wonder, 1995)

As I sit and write this article, NATO leaders are meeting in a luxury hotel here in Watford, less than 2 miles from our office. One of the key items on their agenda is the use of defence spending to secure world peace. It should be clear to us that a roomful of politicians, however gifted, cannot achieve this. Indeed, we know that some left the summit clearly disgruntled about the outcomes of the three-day meetings.

Peace is sometimes defined as the freedom from disturbance, or the freedom from the interruption of a settled condition or state of mind. Millions of people in the world today are living in poverty, suffering from exploitation, and experiencing gross inequalities: they are not living in peace. These are the people with whom ADRA has been working in 2019, both in the UK and overseas, and will continue to assist in 2020.

### Programmes

**Impact 2019:** ADRA-UK continued to have a significant impact on the lives of vulnerable communities around the world. The results of our work directly impacted 1.2 million people. We responded to urgent needs on the ground in humanitarian emergencies in 11 countries, while our long-term development programmes continued in Ghana, Zambia, Eswatini (Swaziland), Rwanda, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar and Thailand. Our strategy prioritises the most vulnerable communities and groups, with a major focus on the needs of women and girls, in conflict-affected and fragile states.

**Sectors we worked in:** Projects are categorised under the following thematic sectors such as: education, health and livelihoods. We often work across sectors in an integrated way in order to achieve well-being more comprehensively for the communities and groups that we support. For example, education programmes also include aspects of livelihoods for households, ensuring that limited household income does not create a barrier for children to attend school. Aspects of household resilience, such as agriculture, can also be a part of health projects.

**Impact 2020:** ADRA-UK will continue to respond to humanitarian emergencies when they occur, as well as implementing ongoing, long-term development projects in an integrated way to maximise impact. In South Sudan we will expand our education programme, providing improved access to quality education for over 68,000 girls and boys.

### Urban Ministries

**Impact 2019:** Under the Urban Ministries initiative, which was launched at the end of 2018, we sought to support local community outreach and social justice projects with Seventh-day Adventist congregations throughout the UK, and this continued throughout 2019. Between 2018 and 2019 we have provided over 70 grants to churches for their projects through our 10% reversion scheme. We also provided support and direct funding for three homeless shelters, in addition to partnering with other charitable organisations, and we have graduated 35 individuals through our Community Services and Urban Ministries certification programme.

### Sectors we worked in:

Projects are categorised under the following thematic sectors such as education, health, gender equality, reduced inequalities and livelihoods. We have worked with Mind (Tower Hamlets and Newham) on our PEDAL FORWARD: *build a life, build a bike* project. We have also supported the work of knife crime prevention with the Holloway and Willesden churches, and we have partnered with the Adventist Community Services to launch the BUC Urban Garden, and developed the ‘Beyond’ concept for several educational initiatives in partnership with local churches and community groups.

**Impact 2020:** Under this initiative, ADRA-

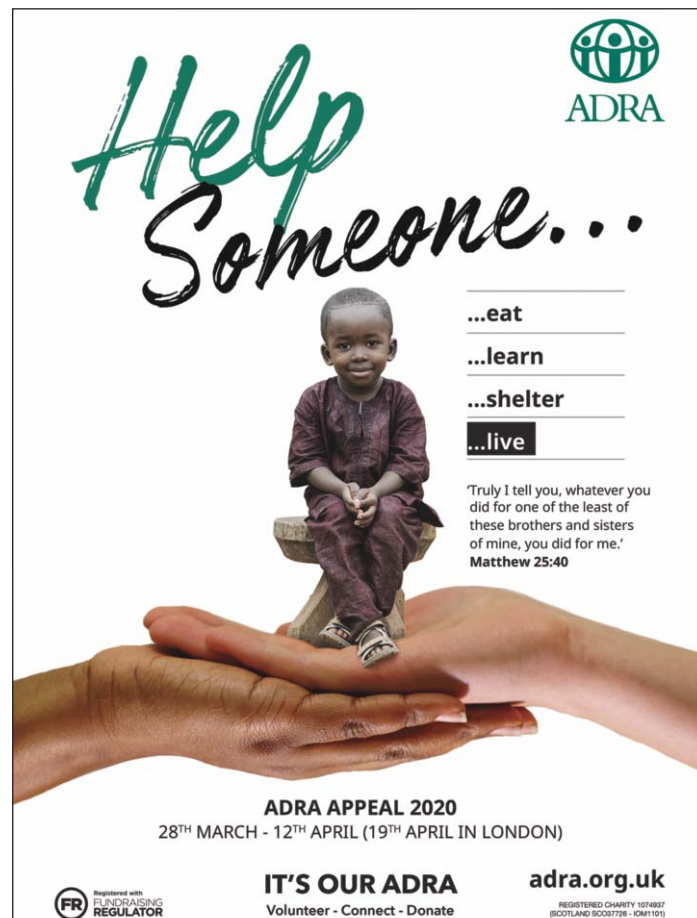
UK will continue to build its networks in the UK, encourage greater involvement of teens and young adults, and utilise new and emerging technologies to encourage wider participation in its projects.

By the time you read this article, the UK will have had a general election and will still be in the throes of our Brexit negotiations with Europe. The tumultuous time we have had over the past few years in the United Kingdom has divided families, spawned greater xenophobia and created feelings of disquiet in our homes and streets. The rise of knife crime on our streets has rocketed. It is estimated that around 14 million people in the UK live in poverty. The challenge of climate change impact is a seriously pressing matter.

As a pastor and church leader, I affirm and reaffirm my belief in the soon return of Jesus Christ, and I am looking forward to that day with anticipation and expectation. And while I wait, I believe that we as His followers are called to bring an active message of peace to the suffering people of the world. Jesus said, ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.’

In 2019, ADRA-UK worked to bring the ‘conversation peace’ to the table through International Development and Urban Outreach. Seems lost here. . . .

In part 2 of this article, read how our work with Connections, Development Education and Emergencies continued this conversation.



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# One Year in Mission project – underway

**Newbold College, the Welsh Mission, ADRA and Adventist Frontier Mission, in partnership with the TED, have run the Year in Mission and Service (YiMS) course for the second year. Students have completed the theoretical section of the course at Newbold, and now they are off on mission service in January 2020.**

### Naomi Lyn-Whyte

During the YiMS course we were based in Newbold College for one semester to learn more about the theory of mission and volunteering. We were able to learn about the practicalities of working in the mission field directly from missionaries, such as Pastor Sydney Gibbons. We had informative Apologetics lectures with Tihomir Lazi, an Oxford University graduate; we attended thought-provoking workshops on youth leadership facilitated by the Trans-European Division (TED); and we took part in interesting refugee simulations with ADRA. Through this experience I am better equipped to take on mission work and feel more able to discuss my faith with others in an informative yet sensitive way.

For the next 2 semesters I am excited to be doing an internship with ADRA. I will be working with the Welsh Mission and also spending time in Moldova, working with the Prison Ministries Department of the North England Conference.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Newbold College on the YiMS course. I was not expecting to learn about topics such as theodicy, and I was glad that I was able to meet many interesting people during my time here.

### Anna Sarna

The YiMS programme was a great opportunity to meet friendly people, get some useful knowledge and get practical skills.

My time was spent attending the four

modules, such as Pastoral Ministry in Context, Cultural Anthropology, Mission and Volunteerism, and Preparation for Mission. Work completed during class with regular students and experienced teachers helped me to get to know how to deal with people from different cultures and environments. Listening to personal stories and real situations was absolutely valuable.

The second important aspect of the course was the voluntary work. I chose to do farming at Jealotts Hill (near Newbold) and the toddler group in the Church Centre. People really appreciated the time I spent there, and I learnt new skills for use in my future life.

### Iona Rock

The YiMS course at Newbold is a very helpful, amazing course. With subjects ranging from ‘Cultural Anthropology’ to ‘Mission and Volunteerism’, the modules are very appropriate for preparing us for missionary work.

I met really great friends and made long-lasting relationships. It also helped me spiritually, developing my relationship with God, and understanding the importance of working with Him in the field.

For me it was a very practical, hands-on and knowledgeable course that culturally expanded my mind and drew me closer to God, with the overall goal of sharing the Gospel with others. I am really looking forward to putting these skills into practice next year, when I go to Serbia for 3 months to help in a refugee centre.



Left to right: Dr Sandra Rigby-Barrett, Jan Ahac, Jazzmine Phillip, Iona Rock, Johena Gau, Anna Sarna, Naomi Lyn-White, Sarah Shepley, Darren de Lima and Danilo Puskas

### Jazzmine Phillip

My experience at Newbold this past semester has been life-changing. I decided to take the YiMS course after a decision to take a gap year. I have particularly enjoyed learning how to create an effective community outreach programme, which I believe will be truly useful for the future. The course also gave me the opportunity to explore answers to challenging questions about faith in Christian Apologetics with Tihi Lazi. Furthermore, the course gave me the opportunity to volunteer and connect with different types of people volunteering in various places and groups such as the London Homeless Ministry, the toddlers’ group at Newbold Church and Jealotts Hill land share. In early 2020 my placement mission project is in Serbia. A bonus of this course is that I have made lifelong friends.

### Jan Ahac

The decision to take a gap year and attend the YiMS course was an excellent choice. During the course I attended 4 different modules, equipping me with a range of useful tools to help me with my practical part of the course. I was challenged intellectually, with lots of theoretical examples and group discussions. A great aspect of the course is that there are no exams, so there is lots of free time, and students can focus on the modules without any stress. I found Christian Apologetics particularly useful, as it taught me lots of different ways to justify my personal beliefs. Some of the modules were taken together with Theology students, while some were unique to this course. The teachers were all really helpful and inspiring, and showed great enthusiasm. I will be doing my practical part of the course in Serbia, where I will be volunteering with ADRA Serbia.

### Sarah Shepley

I think this course has exceeded all my expectations, not only mentally but also socially. Studying at Newbold has given me a sense of community and a sense of worth and purpose. It has also been a faith-affirming experience.

I feel like I have found some friends for life, with people from all over the world, as Newbold is very international.

I have felt empowered by getting involved in so many different activities from day one. For example, I have had various opportunities to sing, to pray and even to act.

Reflecting on this course, I think it has helped me to think about my life and has helped me to join many dots. The insightful and interesting lectures forced us to think deeper and to ask the difficult questions about life and the Gospel. I feel great to have had the opportunity to be part of a large group of believers.

Finally, I am so excited to end my Newbold experience with my mission trip to Ghana at the end of January. However, I am going to miss my friends.



Left to right: Willesden minister, Pastor Mario Phillip; guest preacher, Pastor Brent St Jean; Mayor of Brent, Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi; and Cheryl Allen.

## Willesden – ‘the place to be’!

‘Time for change: a change you can believe in’ was the theme for the evangelistic campaign hosted by Willesden Church, in partnership with Stonebridge Church, held during July and August 2019. The organising committee, chaired by Cheryl Allen, commissioned the theme song for the campaign, which was written, composed and arranged by Tina Brooks.

The main speaker was Pastor Brent St Jean from the St Vincent and the Grenadines Mission.

On the first day of the evangelistic series, Pastor Salmon of the Stonebridge church cheerfully opened with these words: ‘There is no place like this place, anywhere near this place. So this place must be the place to be.’ In his message entitled: ‘How to know if He loves you’, Pastor St Jean advised the church that Jesus is, indeed, the best person to love us.

The 14-day thought-provoking campaign was advertised on Adventist London Radio, and included a nightly health feature, covering topics ranging from stress and men’s health, to gun and knife crime, to peer pressure, and mental health. On the question of marriage, Pastor St Jean stated that ‘satisfaction in marriage is easier when there has



Ramona Gilbert (right) receiving the right hand of fellowship from Bible workers Brenda Rutherford and Linda Nyamhunga

## One Lord, one faith, one baptism

On 26 October Tottenham West Green Road Church committed another soul to the Lord. Ramona Latoya Gilbert was baptised after a term of Bible study. The divine service was led by the Early Teens class and was based on the theme ‘Love’, which fitted well alongside the baptism. Tottenham West Green Road

allows the children to lead a service once a month, so they can have an active role. It also allows their confidence in doing God’s work to grow and encourages them to carry on when they are older. The church rejoices over the new soul for the Lord and continues to do God’s work, as we all endeavour to bring many more to Jesus.

DREA RILEY,  
COMMUNICATION TEAM

not been anyone before’. When taking the congregation through the story of the crippled man at Bethesda Pool, he drew a parallel with us, since we too can be like that man who had been intensely looking at the water of the pool for a new life, but missed the Man standing before him who is the fountain of living water. Lastly, he encouraged us to continue in the revival and the reformation spirit until we see the face of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

On 3 August, the final day of the campaign, the Mayor of Brent, Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi, visited the church, taking the time to congratulate it on its work in the local community. He assured the congregation that not only were local church initiatives, such as the Centre for Health and Hope and the Winter Night Shelter for homeless men, greatly appreciated by his office, but that funding would be made available for such programmes to continue in the future.

The event culminated in the baptism of 16 new believers, with the youngest being age 9. In the weeks following the campaign, 7 more candidates were baptised in two ceremonies held on 24 August and 26 October.

As Pastor Salmon of the Stonebridge church had claimed it, Willesden Church certainly was ‘the place to be’.

MARYANNE SMITH AND MICHELLE RONDOP



## Strength and power at Nottingham Central

Nottingham Central recently witnessed the baptism of Emerson Maloma and Imani Delain. ‘Emerson’ means ‘strength’ and ‘power’; ‘Imani’ means ‘faith’. Put the two meanings together, and we have power and faith from the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. May they stay constant to Him.

DENNIS TAYLOR, STEWARDSHIP LEADER

## ‘I prayed, “Lord, save my daughter!” ’

On Sabbath 16 November Bristol Central Church welcomed four new members into fellowship. Their stories are told by Ian Sabadin.

**Mark Colledge** is from a Protestant and Catholic family background, but feeling that something was missing, he secretly bought a Bible and decided to search for the truth for himself. Convicted by the Holy Spirit, he felt that he had to change. As a result of his personal studies, he recognised that Sabbath was the day of worship God required, not Sunday.

Eventually, he found the Bristol Central church and came down to the church on his motorbike, and the rest is history.

Mark said after the service that it had taken him five years to get to this point, but he was confident that ‘the Bible brought me to this church, and I’ve been coming ever since’.

**Shawn Hines** is blessed by how much support he’s received from the church. After losing touch with church life for quite a while, something made him come to his senses, and he decided that enough was enough. ‘I need to get back my walk with Christ, as I realised that there was nothing out there.’

Shawn paid particular tribute to the church: ‘I’ve met with some good people. There’s a really good support network here, especially the men, as they really look out for each other.’

Keen to use his spiritual gifts, Shawn expressed his desire to make a difference, especially with young people, as he is a lecturer by profession and has dedicated his life to young people. ‘I’m geared up and ready for work,’ he said.

**Andrea Griffiths** was raised an Adventist, but for a number of years decided to do her own thing. ‘I am ecstatic!’ she enthused. ‘It’s been a long time, but I felt a prompting which said, “It’s time to go back.” ’ Determined, and little by little, through helping teach the children, then coming more and more, the return resulted in renewed commitment.

Describing how it felt to be baptised again, she said, ‘When I came up from the water, I could hear people around me and feel the love that was coming from everybody. It just made my heart feel really fit to burst.’

Andrea’s mother, Beulah Garnett, over from America for the baptism, was delighted to see Andrea baptised. She said after the service, ‘I am so happy. I am rejoicing. I’ve been praying for so many years. I prayed, “Lord, save my daughter!” My prayer was answered.’

**Claudette Anderson**, who will be joining the South Bristol congregation, shared on her baptism: ‘I’m feeling really blessed and truly anointed. I’m really happy with the decision I’ve made. The Lord has brought me to this point.’

Having been brought up in a Pentecostal church, Claudette said she always wanted to study the Bible and allow God to use her, but there was a spiritual warfare going on in her life. Describing the journey she’d been on, she said, ‘God has brought me back, and to a church which will help me to grow. I love the people there, and I feel that the Lord has brought me there, and I feel that it’s a place where I can be used.’

Following the service there were big smiles all round, as the whole church gathered to greet and welcome the new members and encourage them to remain strong now they had made their decision for Christ.

COMMUNICATIONS, PHOTOS BY NELSON KHONJE & MICHAEL BROWN



‘When I came up from the water, I could hear people around me and feel the love that was coming from everybody. It just made my heart feel really fit to burst.’



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## Sleep: I'm sure we need more

A review of the book *Why We Sleep: The New Science of Sleep and Dreams* by Matthew Walker

(ISBN: 978-0-141-98376-9)



by Adam Keough, Dublin Ranelagh pastor

**S**leep. One of those things that we all need, but one of those things that we probably know we don't get enough of! While on holiday in the Peak District in July 2019, I went in search of a book to read. Little did I know how much that one book would change my life.

For most of my adult life I've got by with as little sleep as possible, so that I can get as much as possible packed into my waking hours; but at the same time with just enough sleep so that I'm not continually grumpy! Sleep, for me, was like eating – a necessity that was entertained, because without it, life wasn't that pleasant!

Three hundred and forty pages later, my life is now very, very different. This amazing book transformed my whole understanding of everything I ever thought I knew and valued about sleep and dreams.

Matthew Walker is a neuroscientist who knows his stuff. Having been involved in sleep research for many years, he brings a wealth of theory and practice, as well as a good dose of wit and easy-to-read writing!

From the simple idea of how melatonin and adenosine work together to bring sleep onset, why caffeine inhibits sleep, what sleep is, sleep cycles, and so on, to much deeper topics like the amazing difference between non-rapid eye movement sleep and rapid eye movement sleep and the amazing effects of each on your body. He also explores the fascinating area of dreams – what they are and why we dream what we dream – and there is a challenging section on sleeping pills. Each chapter left me astonished and viewing the world, and particularly sleep, in a new and ever-increasing important light.

Adventists often pride themselves on saying that the health message is the right arm of the Gospel. We are often heard speaking about the importance of diet, especially; but one of the most challenging aspects of the book in this context is that sleep is even more important than our diet. You don't believe me? Neither did I, until I read the book!

Although written by a devout atheist, who has no shame in writing from that perspective, I found myself looking at what he was saying about sleep and saying to myself, 'Wow! Isn't our God an amazing God? He knew exactly what He was doing when He gave me this under-utilised gift of being able to sleep!'

Life-changing. If there was one word that for me described this book, this would be it. There is only one other book which has a greater impact on my 42 years of life – the Bible.

So would I recommend it? Absolutely. Without a shadow of a doubt. Everyone should read it. I used to believe that sleep was a necessity; now I know how vitally important 8 hours of sleep is every night. I strive to get enough sleep, because I know that I will be a better person for God with it rather than without it! Sure, for me a work in progress.

So if you're a parent of a young baby; or a teen who loves to sleep and you find yourself often berating them to 'get up and stop being lazy'; or an adult who gets by on less than 7 hours sleep a night; in fact, if you can read (which you can do because you're reading this article) – I encourage you get this book and soak it up. I'm sure it will change your life, too, as much as it has changed mine!

**So, in consultation with MESSENGER, I would like to offer you, the reader, the chance to win one of Matthew Walker's three books for yourself. The three readers who send in the most innovative tip for falling asleep at the end of the day will win a book. All you have to do is email the editor ([editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk)). The closing date for entries is 31 January. Winners will be announced in the February issue.**

## Gospel Choir of the Year – Reading Community

The London Adventist Chorale would like to formally congratulate Gemma Cudjoe on her success in taking her choir – The Reading Community Gospel Choir (RCGC) – to victory on the 2019 BBC *Songs of Praise* 'Gospel Choir of the Year'. Gemma, we are proud of you!

Choirs came from across the country: Hull (northeast), Cambridge (east), Preston (northwest), and Coventry (Midlands), and victory went to the southwest.

The RCGC is not just a community choir, but an outreach ministry. 'Outreach' and 'ministry' are words we frequently use. However, these are more than words when members are so impacted that they say 'yes' to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and are buried with Christ through baptism!

A second member of the choir was baptised last weekend. The first is a member of our London Live church.

I recall hearing a story of how someone was at the end of their tether, and the Spirit led them to the choir.

We therefore give God thanks for the victory of salvation through the choir, as well as the recognition of the choir's musical impact, which moved the judges.

KEN BURTON

## 'Into the Time Machine' at Lowestoft Church

If you can remember a time when people packed into theatres to hear the Gospel, then maybe you come from Lowestoft, Britain's most easterly town and home to one of its earliest Adventist communities. In truth, you could be from any number of churches in any city across the country, grappling with the fallout of societal change. Compared to the somewhat religious-affiliated past, how people's interests and affinities have changed! Yet human need remains constant, and the Good News is still the best solution to today's problems. That is why, in Lowestoft, the church is exploring creative ways to boldly advance the Gospel into today's religion-averse consciousness: not by turning back the clock, but by re-envisioning the winning formulas of the past.

In June and July this year, Lowestoft opened its doors for a prophecy-focused outreach entitled, 'Into the Time Machine'. Now, if a prophecy seminar sounds boringly 'business-as-usual', prepare to be surprised, engaged and challenged by a guided tour through the book of Daniel, from ancient Babylon to our present geopolitical restlessness, and forwards to future hope and redemption.

For six consecutive Sabbaths, retired pastor Michael Walker presented a sneak peek into the future of the planet, blending biblical, historical and archaeological facts with current knowledge to reveal the truths that embody hope and strengthen our faith. Pastor Walker led an hour-long morning session during the revamped divine worship segment; and he continued with another hour-long session after lunch.

Twelve sessions in six weeks! Definitely ambitious and intense, but perfectly counterbalanced by the social fellowship that evolved around

the potlucks, bringing people together over a feast of healthful favourites. Add to that a concurrent children's programme featuring Babylonian and Daniel-themed arts and crafts – the seminar fulfilled in-reach and outreach goals, uniting members in a common purpose as volunteers and supporters, and welcoming the community in for days of learning, sharing and fellowship. If that family feeling was not present before, it fanned out gradually as the week progressed, connecting and affirming people in friendships old and new.

'Into the Time Machine' concluded with a Q&A session hosted by Pastor Mark Borrett, during which Michael Walker applied his extensive Bible knowledge and understanding of the book of Daniel to wide-ranging questions from the floor. 'It's the first time I have been able to hear these topics without distraction,' one grateful parent enthused; while another admitted, 'I realised how much I don't know!'

Most encouraging, though, is the fact that several community interests from the seminar have come back to visit Lowestoft Church for Sabbath services and midweek Bible studies. 'Into the Time Machine' is definitely a step in the right direction.

The 'Into the Time Machine' series is posted on the Lowestoft SDA Church website at: <https://greatyarmouth.adventistchurch.org.uk/>.

NORMA BORRETT, COMMUNICATIONS

## 'It's just life – and I got help'

One of the best New Testament paraphrase versions of Scripture written during the twentieth century was edited by J. B. Phillips. An Anglican priest during and immediately after World War 2, his vision was to take the words of the Bible and translate them into common English. To him, the pages of the New Testament are the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! Jesus is the Son of God!

And yet, 'While he was ministering to others he was himself powerfully afflicted by dark thoughts and mental pains. He knew anxiety and depression from which there was only temporary release. And while he never lost his faith in God, he never ceased to struggle against mental pain.'<sup>1</sup>

Fast forward to December 2019, and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby shared on the BBC Radio 5 Live's *Emma Barnett Show* that he takes antidepressants. After a time of soul searching, he recognised the symptoms and the need for help. His solution is to lift the mood through antidepressants. In an earlier broadcast on Radio 4's *Thought for the Day* he shared, 'Last year, I realised I was depressed. I have a daughter who has been very open about her experiences of depression, and she helped me see that it wasn't something to be ashamed of. It's just life – and I got help.'<sup>2</sup>

They might be Anglicans, but suffering emotional health is no respecter of denominational allegiance! People of faith – Christ-followers – sometimes experience depression. Nor do you have to dig miles deep to discover that a number of 'godly' Bible characters suffered in the same way. During the coming year, *MESSENGER* will take a further look at emotional health and the Christian. For now, pray for those who may know all that is needed to know about God, who even trust in Him, but who cannot feel the loving and assuring presence of Him in their lives, because the troubles of the mind will not permit.

EDITOR

<sup>1</sup>Vera Phillips and Edwin H. Robertson, *J.B. Phillips, the Wounded Healer*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1984. <sup>2</sup><https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2019/25-october/news/uk/taking-antidepressants-no-big-deal-says-welby-as-he-hosts-mental-health-workshops>.

by Sharon Platt-McDonald

## Gratitude and well-being

Part 1 – An overview



**T**he New Year is a great time to pause for reflection as we put gratitude under the spotlight. I am sure that as you look back over 2019 you will find many things to complain about, but, equally, if you take time to think about it enough, there will be many things for which to give thanks.

The health impact of gratitude has been a subject of research for many years, and several studies point to its holistic health benefits.

In this series on gratitude, we look at some of the studies on well-being outcomes and how we can become more grateful in our daily life.

The *Greater Good* magazine (science-based insights for a meaningful life) published an article in March 2018 under the title: 'Is gratitude good for your health?'<sup>1</sup> Commenting on the psychological benefits, the research authors concluded:

'After 15 years of research, we know that gratitude is a key to psychological well-being. Gratitude can make people happier, improve their relationships, and potentially even counteract depression and suicidal thoughts.'

Outlining some broad well-being outcomes of gratitude, *PositivePsychology.com* published an article on 3 July 2019 which carried the headline: '14 health benefits of practising gratitude according to science'.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on several studies from science, scholars and religious entities, their report stated:

'We know that this virtue is more than just saying, "thank you". Numerous studies are demonstrating how gratitude journaling can increase one's happiness. Others show that inflammation in one's body can decrease.'

*PositivePsychology.com* highlights some benefits from research by The Greater Good Science Center's 'The Science of Gratitude' (2018), listing the following benefits:

### For the individual:

- increased happiness and positive mood;
- more satisfaction with life;
- less materialistic;
- less likely to experience burnout;
- better physical health;
- better sleep;
- less fatigue;
- lower levels of cellular inflammation;
- greater resiliency;
- encourages the development of patience, humility and wisdom.

### For groups:

- increases prosocial behaviours;
- strengthens relationships;
- may help employees' effectiveness;
- may increase job satisfaction.

### Now for some practical tips

In an article titled: 'Giving thanks can make you happy',<sup>3</sup> Harvard Health Publishing (Harvard Medical School) lists the following suggestions for cultivating more gratitude daily:

- send a thank-you note; • thank someone mentally; • keep a gratitude journal; • count your blessings; • pray; • meditate: as Christians we can meditate on God's Word as instructed in scriptures such as Joshua 1:8 and Psalm 119:15.

Take time to implement these suggestions over the next month and note the results.

### Good health!

<sup>1</sup>[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/is\\_gratitude\\_good\\_for\\_your\\_health](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/is_gratitude_good_for_your_health)

<sup>2</sup><https://positivepsychology.com/benefits-of-gratitude/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>



### Not all elections are contentious

One election in the autumn of 2020 that didn't cause any heated discussions was the appointment of Stanborough Park's own talented floral artist Audrey Balderstone to the role of Chairman of the Home Counties Branch of the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (NAFAS), an educational charity which is divided into 21 local branches.

Having been elected to the role of Vice Chair three years ago, Audrey assumed the role of Chairman (by default) for the next two years on Thursday 14 November, at the Home Counties Area Day at the Spotlight Theatre in Broxbourne.

Audrey has won many medals for her floral arrangements, including

two at the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show, and has organised many charitable floral events, including some for the society, so it was hardly surprising that she was selected for her new role.

Speaking of her new role, Audrey says, 'I feel very honoured to serve the Area, but it is not a position I sought. I have been asked a couple of times in the past 15 years but have always declined because a) I was too busy (still am!); b) I thought I was too old (am even older now!); and c) the Sabbath was a problem because I could not attend events on Friday night/Saturday.

'Three years ago, when I was even more busy and even older, I very, very reluctantly allowed myself to be persuaded to become Vice Chairman and later Chairman.

'They said Sabbath was no problem. It has meant that there have been a number of events I have not been able to attend, but everyone understands that and it has not been a problem.

'I have served as Vice Chair and Chair of the Judges, Demonstrators, Speakers and Education Committee for the past three years.

'2020 will be the diamond anniversary of the Home Counties Area, so a number of events are planned, including a trip to a garden in Cumbria, a visit to the Blackburn Cathedral Flower Festival, a Members' Day, an afternoon tea, a Chairman's lunch and special anniversary demonstration. We may also do a flower festival towards the end of the year. We also organise floral arranging competitions and supply arrangers for Westminster Abbey a couple of times a year.'

Audrey has just accepted the role of church elder and will certainly be kept busy during 2020.

JUNE COOMBS



### Adventist Radio London training day

On 12 October 2019, Adventist Radio London (ARL) welcomed twelve new members to the team. These volunteers came to the studio from all over London to learn about what it takes to produce and present radio content, and to find out how they could be a part of the process.

Director Mike Hamilton welcomed the volunteers as he shared the values and vision of the station. The presenters of the *Breakfast Show*, *On the Go*, and *Drivetime* then talked with the volunteers about how they could use their help, covering everything from research and writing to interviewing and editing. They shared specific ideas for content and interview topics around health, current events, Adventist beliefs, and personal stories. Some of the volunteers also shared their own ideas, such



as creating a women's show and more children's programming.

The volunteers then decided where they felt they could work best and were grouped into teams to start their first project. One team created a Christmas-themed health programme; another team focused on editing audio; and two more teams practised writing inspirational thought-pieces and produced a 'prayer bank'. These are 'powerful prayers for managing each and every emotion with the

help of God', as *On the Go* producer/presenter Vanesa Pizzuto explained.

In the afternoon, the volunteers were able to get some hands-on training as they practised recording, editing and interviewing. They also told their personal stories of experiencing God during a special live show, hosted by Vanesa Pizzuto and Nigel Maunganidze. Finally, Marketing Manager Dushane Morris shared how the volunteers could represent and promote the radio in their local communities and churches.

One of the new volunteers, Angela Robinson, shared her thoughts on the day: 'It was really informative, and we gained further insight about the station's aims and objectives and how we as volunteers will be contributing. It was great to hear more from the ARL team and meet the other volunteers again and hear their passion and ideas starting to form. The best part was exploring the studio, learning how to use the equipment, recording and editing segments and taking part in a live broadcast – definitely an achievement for the day! I left the session excited to have the opportunity to share my creativity and looking forward to getting started.'

Commenting on the success of the volunteer training day, Mike Hamilton said, 'It was exciting to see the volunteers so passionate about being part of what we do. They had a real sense of mission.' Vanesa agrees: 'I am inspired by the enthusiasm and commitment of this beautiful bunch of people! I am looking forward to working with them.'

Keep an eye on our website for more events at [www.adventistradio.london](http://www.adventistradio.london). If you would like to find out more about becoming a volunteer yourself, contact us at [info@adventistradio.london](mailto:info@adventistradio.london). We'd love to hear from you!

LYNETTE ALLCOCK

### Week of prayer live streamed for the first time from Newcastle Church

Every year the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists sets aside dates for a Week of Prayer for Adventist churches around the world. Some churches struggle to draw numbers together, and such has been the case for some years in the Newcastle church. Early in 2019 the church board decided to try a different tack and aimed to bring the Week of Prayer live to homes via their regular live-streaming facilities.

The Prayer Ministries department team and the Communication department worked together with the aim of getting messages to hundreds of viewers around our immediate community and our wider streamed interests. The services were live streamed for exactly an hour. The services included a children's reading, followed by the regular reading for each day, and a special item of music, before concluding with a prayer session. Prayers were delivered to the studio team from the people watching the stream on the dedicated Facebook page for the event.

The Week of Prayer ended with a half night of prayer meeting. Many people who tuned in online every evening for the live stream found the messages to be a blessing. One viewer on the East Coast of America said of the live stream, 'It was nice to worship with the rest of our Adventist brothers and sisters in the UK, regardless of the time difference.'

LYNNE SESINYE-SAMWINGA AND GERRY RAMOS



### End of year Women's Ministries appreciation banquet

Could there be a more stylish way to conclude a busy year than a colourful and emotional appreciation banquet? This year, the Newcastle Women's Ministries Department, under the leadership of Pamela Matsvimbo, brought together thirty-six women and six young women from the Newcastle and South Shields churches for an appreciation banquet to conclude the year.

The highlight of the evening was the recognition of women for the different roles they play in the church. The groups to be recognised were 'Emerging Stars' and 'Stellar Stars'. The Emerging Stars are the six youth who have been actively involved in Women's Ministries activities. They are growing in faith and courage and are set to take leadership roles soon. The Stellar Star honours went to the five ladies who demonstrated great motivation for the Lord.

The women had a fabulous evening, full of laughter, a three-course meal and an opportunity to reflect on the year which is fast drawing to a close. The women are bonding and getting to know each other even more, largely because of such events held outside of regular Sabbath hours. As a result of this success, the ladies can only look forward to more programmes like this in the new year.

LYNNE SESINYE-SAMWINGA



### Annual 'Bikers' Run'

It's customary for the Grantham church members to be involved in the annual Christmas 'Bikers' Run'. This year 301 bikers made their way from various parts of the East Midlands, bringing toys for less fortunate children.

As before, the toys were brought to the church from the local sports complex by church members, sorted into boy/girl preferences and age groups, and displayed in the church, ready to be chosen and collected.

Local charities were invited to come and choose what they considered to be appropriate for the needs of those they cared for.

This year's coordinator, Elizabeth Carnell, was pleased with the 830 toys that had been collected to give some children in the Grantham area a happier Christmas.

MIKE COWEN



### Nottingham Central's café for the hearing-impaired

On 1 December 2019 Nottingham Central saw the first day of the Deaf Café that is planned to take place every three months. The Deaf Café is a community outreach project to connect with people for the love of God's kingdom. It is made up of people who are hearing impaired and who have some knowledge of British Sign Language. The first Sunday morning started with games, using sign language as an icebreaker for making friends.

Tony Hawkins and Sherelle Ramus, trained signers, lead the café. On the Sabbath Tony teaches the congregation a new sign, so that members can communicate in British Sign Language. The cost of a deaf interpreter is expensive to hire, and the church is offering a Level One to Advanced Level sign language course.

DENNIS TAYLOR, STEWARDSHIP LEADER





# Story from a small island

by Peter Jeynes



sent literature to his sister who was residing on the island. As a result, she embraced the Sabbath truth, and her husband followed her in this step. Two of their sons are now at our college in England, the eldest, a young man of twenty-five, desiring to be a missionary in India.' *Australasian Record*, Sunday 17 March 1924.

Who could have been baptised, what was the name, and where did the event happen? Here's what I found.

The Isle of Man is set in the Irish Sea, halfway between Liverpool and Belfast. Known for the thick sea fog that occasionally smothers the island, we are about to discover an island with hidden Adventist secrets.

The note was read in a copy of the *Australasian Record* dating back to 1915 and concerned literature being sent from Australia to the Isle of Man in the hope of dropping a seed of Christian truth in the lives of an English family. A little extra research took the author to an article in the same periodical dated to 1924, which revealed the following wonderful snippet of news.

'Australia has the honour of winning the first Sabbath-keeper on the Isle of Man. From Wairoonga, N.S.W., Brother J. W. Thompson

In the early 1920s the North England Conference decided to follow their Constitution and really follow their mission to even the Isle of Man. Pastor A. S. Rodd headed off for the island, bought a house just outside the main town of the island, Douglas. Missionary work followed, with evangelistic meetings held in 'The Cabin Café' on the promenade of Douglas. Even the Deputy Mayor of the time attended the meetings. The summer season arrived; the meetings ended with possible signs of growth, and a female Bible worker arrived. Magazines were sold, Bible studies given, and home meetings continued.

It was the report given in *The Missionary Worker*, today's *MESSENGER*, which gave names

and details of that summer's work, and the literature sent from Australia. On 8 December 1923 Pastor A. E. Bacon, the North England Conference President, travelled by steamer to the island and joined Pastor Rodd at the Baptist Church on the Broadway in Douglas for the first Adventist baptism on the island. There were 8 new converts who helped form the first company of Seventh-day Adventists on the island, with a total membership of 16 members.

Included in that list of new members was Timms Ludgate, a former RAF pilot from the Great War. Now a young man of 26, he had been selling Adventist literature on the island and sharing a little time with the lady Bible instructor. In 1924 Ludgate and his brother headed to Newbold College in Watford. Destined for mission work, India was the first port of call with his new wife, the former Bible worker.

Timms himself was the son of Timmius Ludgate, whose wife has been sent wonderful truth-filled literature from Australia. The truth had borne fruit.

Years of service followed in India, South Africa and then in America.

Pastor Rodd, described by his son Pastor Bob Rodd as the most faithful man he ever met, went on to further service back on the mainland, while Pastor De'Ath took over as the new island pastor.

Current church members are heirs to a tradition of service and witness. They now meet in their own church, and are becoming well known on the island hidden by cloud in the middle of the Irish Sea.



Alex makes peanut butter energy bars



Ella blends cauliflower and oats for a pizza base



Shauna pours flour for falafels

## Young chefs wow Lowestoft cooking demo

Health & safety might place restrictions on under-12s in the kitchen, but, when it comes to creating the foods they love to eat, there's nothing stopping children from indulging maximum creativity whenever they get the opportunity. On Sunday 29 September it was the children's turn to share their favourite recipes in a vegetarian cooking demonstration at Lowestoft Church. A show-and-tell special that filled seats at this popular outreach event, the children, in their own unique ways, put good health centre-stage with a series of snack foods that were both fast and nutritious.

Twelve-year-old Shauna opened the show

with a recipe for savoury baked bean falafels and mildly spiced whipped batter biscuits, baked to perfection. Alex followed with peanut butter energy bars, the raw ingredients being mixed, scooped and rolled with all the energy a 5-year-old could muster. The last recipe, shared by 9-year-old Ella, featured everybody's favourite junk food but with a twist: cauliflower-and-oat-based pizza, topped with a medley of colourful vegetables.

The parents of these young chefs (themselves veteran presenters) were close at hand to encourage them along and to assist with any tricky practical steps, like assembling the electric blender or setting the oven

temperature. What really stood out, though, in addition to the children's cooking skills, was their 'food intelligence'. An explanation of the health benefits of cauliflower, or the effects of nuts and seeds on brain function, has a lot more impact – and is more impressive – coming from a 12-year-old as opposed to an adult dishing up scientific facts. The audience, including community guests, gave these recipes their stamp of approval, as everyone shared in the communal meal at the end of the demonstrations.

Teaching children about healthful eating is surely as vital as spiritual education; and what better way to convey this knowledge than to have them actually do it for themselves? Lowestoft hopes for an encore soon!

NORMA BORRETT, COMMUNICATIONS

## From MESSENGER Vol. 75, No. 1, 1970

### South England News

# "World Baptism Sabbath" in Chiswick

CHISWICK.—September 27th, will long be remembered for it was on this special World Baptismal Sabbath that eighteen new members were added to the Chiswick church by baptism. Among this number was 87-year-old Mrs. Rose Martin of East Acton. About two years ago this sister picked up an Adventist tract in a neighbour's house. On this tract which originated in America there was something which aroused her interest and she wrote to Washington asking for more literature. Her request was referred back to this country and Mrs. Martin soon realized that she had found what she had been looking for for many years. This sister had been connected with Jehovah's Witnesses for a long period, having been one of the "Russellites" of many years ago. The youngest member to be baptized was eleven-year-old Mary Pounder who, together with her two sisters, Diana and Grace, and their mother, Mrs. Carmen Pounder, demonstrated their intention to follow the Lord.

Mrs. Rose Martin, 87-year-old, is baptized by Pastor D. C. Clothier.



It was on this day too, that the church bade farewell to their minister, Watson Southcott. Following the service he was presented with a cheque as a token of esteem from the churchmembers for his ministry over the past three years. His wife, Cynthia was presented with a kitchen clock and pyrex dishes by the Sabbath school, of which she was Investment Secretary, and with stainless-steel ware by the M.V. Department.

ENID TOLMAN, P.R. Sec.



## Manchester Pathfinders achieve again!

Thirty-two children were invested this year at Manchester Southern Asia (CREW) Pathfinders and Adventurers club on 30 November 2019.

We were so privileged to have as our guest speaker Pastor Ikwise Mwasumbi, the North England Conference (NEC) Pathfinder Director, who spent the day with us. We also had a surprise visit in the evening, for our Investiture service, from the BUC Youth Director, Pastor Dejan Stojkovic. We thank both the directors for encouraging our children with



their presence and messages. We are so grateful to our Area Coordinator, Mgcini Mkwanzani, who has been a great support and an exemplary leader, working closely with our Pathfinder leaders through the year. We were also delighted to have our new minister, Pastor Blondel Campbell, supporting the event.

The NEC Pathfinder leadership and Southern Asia church leaders recognised Diamond Sathe for successfully completing the Master Guide course.

A high day for our church: the children, counsellors, parents, leaders and guests were all overjoyed and thank God for the all achievements, blessings and success through the year.

DIAMOND SATHE, COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

## Pray for the solution

**'Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.'**

Matthew 7:7, NRSV

Can you feel how the trust in God radiates from this verse? There is no 'Ask, and maybe it will be given you; search, and maybe you will find; knock, and maybe the door will be opened for you. . . .' On the contrary, Jesus says that it will happen. Matthew 7:8 (NRSV) continues, 'For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.'

That means that you do not actually have to pray problem-focused prayers: you can instead pray for the solution. Thus, you need not use your prayer to tell God how difficult it is; how impossible it is; how heavy it is; and how you cannot control the problem any more. Instead, you may thank God for having a solution for any difficulty. You praise Him, for everything is possible for Him. You thank Him for giving you strength to bear even the heaviest burdens, and that He never leaves you alone to handle things, but that His omnipotence will fill your powerlessness.



by Line Nielsen



Line Nielsen, writing from Denmark, is the author of *Loved by Him*, a book to be published by the Stanborough Press in the spring of 2020.

When you pray for the solution instead of praying about the problem, the burden is already eased in your mind, because you move your focus from the problem to Jesus. You see how much He loves you; He has given you this promise that when you pray to Him, He will answer you. Perhaps He does not give you the answer you've been able to imagine – but He will answer, and maybe even better than you could imagine. He wants to be

close to you with His love. He promised you that when you seek Him, you will find Him. He wants to find solutions with you. He will take care of the problem and equip you to be part of His solution. You will never be alone. He promised that when you knock on the door, He will open. He, the great solution for every problem, loves you – and He will be with you in all your life's challenges – so pray for the solutions!

## Letter to the editor

Dear Editor,  
The solution to Pastor Martin Anthony's letter of 25 October is very simple, but may perhaps require a

little background information, more from an historian than a theologian!

In ancient times chronology depended on a king's reign. If, to use our modern January–December year as an example, King A died on 31 December and his son, King B, began to reign on 1 January, everything was fine. Unfortunately, kings have the inconvenient habit of dying on awkward dates, such as 27 July or 3 September – which posed a problem.

Obviously, the year from 1 January to 27 July was the last year of the dead king, but what about the rest of the year from 27 July to 31 December? If you counted it as the first year of the new king, in effect you were counting the year twice: you had two years in one – the last year and the first year. The solution to the problem was to call the period from 28 July to 31 December the 'accession year' of the new king, and his first year only began on 1 January of the year following his father's death.

You can find an illustration of this in Bible chronology, for if you add up the years between the accessions of Rehoboam and Jeroboam (which happened more or less simultaneously) and the deaths of Joram and Ahaziah (which happened on the same day), you find that every time there is a new king in Israel, the count goes up by one. By the time you get to Ahab, Israel has

four more years than Judah! The conclusion is that Judah was using the accession-year method of calculating reigns, while Israel was using a non-accession-year method.

One last fact: most ancient cultures considered the year to begin in spring. The first month of the Jewish year was Nisan, which corresponds roughly to a period of four weeks beginning about the middle of March. This means that any Jewish year runs from March in our terms to February of the following year. The Persians appear to have followed this chronology as well.

As Martin Anthony points out – and Wikipedia confirms – Artaxerxes I began to reign in 465 BC, and the simplistic calculation of adding seven (or subtracting it, seeing as we are talking about years BC) would mean that his seventh year is 458 BC. However, his father, Xerxes I, was assassinated by Artabanus, the commander of his bodyguard, in August of 465 BC. That means that the period August 465 to the end of February 464 was Artaxerxes' accession year, and his first counted year began in March 464. His seventh year, therefore, began in March 457 BC and ended in February 456 BC.

God bless,

KENDALL K. DOWN

This submission ends this conversation. Thanks to all who contributed. For a lighter look at the matter, the *MESSENGER* Extra Facebook page includes one further graphical contribution.

## A challenging life lived with cheerfulness

Anita Marshall (1943-2019) d. 9 October.



Anita's was an extrovert, cheerful, sociable, courageous personality. She made multitudes of friends around the British Union and in our local community. The church was crammed full for her funeral. Every home in the street in which we live was represented. Adventists had travelled from all parts of the British Isles (including the southwest of Ireland) to be present.

Anita was born near Leeds, but raised in Hull. Her parents split when she was 13. Florence, her mother, took on sole responsibility for the upbringing of her family of four. The family had been entirely secular in their life-view. In her late teens Anita became aware that something was missing. In 1961 the Voice of Prophecy Bible School (VOP) spent a great deal of money on an advertisement in the big-circulation *Reader's Digest* magazine. Anita enrolled in the 'Take His Word' VOP correspondence course. Through it she encountered the Person of Jesus Christ, and He became her Forever Friend. Her family believed that it was a passing enthusiasm (there had been many) that 'wouldn't last'. It did last. Her life and personality were transformed. In 1963 Anita was baptised by Pastor George Bell.

As a member of the Hull congregation Anita discovered a large community of warm folk whose friendship was to last for the rest of her life. Francis and Margaret Robertson took Anita home for Sabbath lunch, as they did other young people, including at least one university undergraduate.

Having raised funds for her fees, Pastor Bell persuaded Anita to enrol at Newbold College. She spent academic year 1965-66 there and made more lifelong friends.

After Newbold, Anita was employed by the North England Conference Treasury Department. However, she spent her weekends at Hull and continued her friendships there. At the time of our marriage in 1970 she was employed at the Book and Bible House in Grantham marketplace. Pastor Bell conducted our wedding.

Throughout our courtship Anita suffered a major health challenge: *ulcerative colitis*. This intensified in the first year of our marriage. I was a teacher at Stanborough Secondary School, and we were living in Holy Row (houses built for church employees overlooking the Park). From the summer and throughout the autumn of 1971 Anita was in the Peace Memorial Hospital. In late November her colon atrophied, and she nearly died. What saved her life was a radical seven-hour operation which entirely removed her colon and left her with an ileostomy. It took her many months to recover. When by the grace of God she *did* recover, we were so grateful that the life-complications the ileostomy introduced and the news that we were unlikely to have children seemed like prices worth paying.

Anita began life afresh in the spring of 1972 when she became secretary to Colin Wilson at the British Advent Missions, then Pastor James Ginby at the VOP. She helped on the technical side, recording the weekly VOP radio broadcast, then a major evangelistic outlet for the Church.

When we moved from Watford to The Stanborough Press, Grantham, in early 1979, we were sorry to leave behind many good friends. Among them were those which we had made at the Hemel Hempstead church, of which we had been founder members. But Grantham was a welcome new start. The Press was involved in the computer revolution. 'Hot metal' typesetting was replaced by computer typesetting. The person appointed computer typesetter was Anita. Every book, magazine, tract and leaflet for years to come, came through her fingers.

Anita loved to travel. This was fortunate. My work as Editor involved preaching in all parts of the British Union. Members assumed that she

came along with me to tell the children's story. Little did they know that that was the easy part of her assignment. In the days before satnav she had the more exacting task of helping me to *find* a different Adventist church every Sabbath. . . . But travel also involved overseas trips to the Middle and Near East to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and the apostle Paul. These visits appealed to and inspired her.

She has left behind scores, perhaps hundreds, of scrapbooks/albums which covered our Bible lands tours. These are among the encouraging reading I have set myself since she died.

Anita retired from the Press in 2006. For the last decade of her working life she had been Proof Reader, an important position in any publishing company. She experienced health challenges from the mid-1990s. However, it was in the year she retired that she was diagnosed with malignant breast cancer. She had a major operation in the same year and began a long period of radiotherapy. In 2009 she had a further operation. However, continuing full of faith and hope, she continued to enjoy life. We shared many happy years of retirement in which her strong, outgoing personality found fulfilment. There were many interests, including writing for publication and lots of gardening. Among her writing output, aptly, was *God's Little Book of Cheerfulness*. Last summer she concluded a series of three articles in *MESSENGER* to encourage those faced with chemotherapy. From 20 December 2017, when the cancer was found to have spread to her liver and bones, our lives seemed to centre around her trips to Lincoln Hospital for chemotherapy and to consult with her oncologist. The last time we saw him, 28 August, I heard a valedictory tone in what he had to say. Anita did not hear it, and I did not tell her that I had. She fastened on one positive phrase he had used and, typically, repeated it to all her friends. She did not tell them that a metastasis had been located on her spine. Spinal pain robbed her of her quality of life and failed to respond to the pain medicine she was given at home. One memorable Sabbath she was admitted to St Barnabas Hospice. When they succeeded in managing her pain she recovered her customary good humour. Pastor Ferguson, Pete and Audrey Howard and Tony and Olive Crouch were among the most regular of her many visitors. Even in the final days before she lost consciousness, she exercised her choice of attitude. She chose gratitude. She died on 9 October. Her funeral on 23 October was conducted by Pastor John Ferguson, assisted by Pastor Solon Kyriacou. She had fought the good fight, finished the race and kept the faith. Now she waits in sleep for the Lord, the righteous Judge, and the sound of trumpets.

May I take this opportunity to thank those who made contribution of several hundred pounds in Anita's name to St Barnabas Hospice, and the more-than-a-hundred readers of this magazine who sent me sympathy cards, and those who emailed me.

DAVID MARSHALL

## Messenger

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Editor: David Neal  
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Sunset

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

	London	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Jan 10	4.13	4.25	4.10	4.02	4.20
17	4.23	4.35	4.21	4.14	4.32
24	4.35	4.47	4.33	4.28	4.45
31	4.47	5.00	4.46	4.43	4.59



## West Midlands Smart Love seminar

by Pastor Patricia Douglas

**B**irmingham Camphill Church was a hive of activity for two weekends in November as it hosted the Area 5 Smart Love seminar, sponsored by the North England Conference Children's Ministries Department. Pastor Joseph Philpott, a charismatic speaker, and his wife Nordia were guest presenters, with the Children's Ministries core team on hand to support. For two weekends the youth hall



was transformed into something of a cosy living room, where easy conversation could take place. Frequently, spontaneous laughter could be heard emanating from the room. This was a safe space, where straight talk was required and, indeed, expected. Among the many topics discussed was 'How to make friends with yourself', tackling issues of self-esteem and the importance of loving yourself. Accepting ourselves is so much easier when we embrace God's transforming love. The basics of dating were explored at length, with the spotlight also placed on spotting the signs that it's time to break up. All in all, there was so much to consider, not to mention difficult situations, including the very real threat of sexually-transmitted diseases. This was, indeed, a most comprehensive course on dating God's way!

Commenting on his impression of the seminar, one teen observed: 'It was really good, and I learnt a lot about how to date and still be faithful to God. Thank you.'

Another shared: 'Smart Love was an amazing experience to learn about love in a more Christlike setting, and it taught me that you should love yourself first before you can love someone else.'

A parent reflected: 'After the first session of Smart Love my daughter said she had really enjoyed it. She continued to talk about how good it was and appreciated not having to disclose what had been discussed. I think Smart Love has given her a lot to think about concerning her decision-making.'

The seminar culminated in a graduation ceremony and banquet. Pastor Cyril Sweeney and Pastor Gina Miller gave the prayers of consecration, as this was a time to celebrate and affirm our children and teens and hold them up in prayer as they determine His will in such a crucial area of their lives.

Pastor Cyril Sweeney and Pastor Gina Miller gave the prayers of consecration, as this was a time to celebrate and affirm our children and teens and hold them up in prayer as they determine His will in such a crucial area of their lives.

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