



**Messenger**  
 Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church  
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# We're going collecting – *are you?*



**Annual Appeal 2020**

28 March to 12 April, UK  
 (19 April in Greater London).

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# How to power ADRA

by Bert Smit,  
CEO, ADRA-UK



back to 1980.

I always love these little machines – even repaired them for the local radio station when I was at Andrews University – but was never able to afford one.

It looked good, and according to the description it was in 'working condition'. Now soon I could teach my grandsons how to spool a tape, make real 'cuts and edits', and see the innards of a proper machine – not a digital app on an iPhone.

When it arrived I unpacked the Uher and plugged the machine into the mains: and, lo and behold, the lights came on! I found that the machine would wind and rewind; but, alas, it would not play. When I opened up the back, I discovered that the previous user, some decades ago, had left the big C zinc-carbon batteries in place, which by now had extremely corroded the interior of the poor machine. It could not survive without an in-depth rebuild.

When batteries go, everything stops: but when they corrode, things are more desperate. Leaking batteries can destroy good equipment, rendering perfect-looking apparatus useless.

We need power to use modern-day equipment. Batteries are the source that powers nearly everything from phones to radios to flashlights and cameras; and today even more: the source that powers electric cars.

Batteries work behind the scenes. You don't see them and hardly notice them. Only when the power stops do we check and replace or discard.

In many ways, ADRA's supporters are the power that drives the agency. We take your involvement in our work seriously, because without your help, your regular financial support and your donations, there would be no ADRA. Each year we refresh our batteries to prevent corrosion: we call it 'Ingathering' or the ADRA Appeal, an opportunity for you to help power ADRA.

Please help us to continue to impact people's lives: bring change where needed; bring hope where there is despair; feed where there is hunger; shelter where there is no roof; heal where there is pain.

Thank you for being the power that fires ADRA.

(Regarding the Uher, luckily the seller accepted a return for a full refund.)



'Kindness', an Adventist essential? Which fundamental belief is that? In reality, we don't have to dig far to find that value in each one. Let's try and explain once again, over a cuppa in a café . . .

It may be considered a strange Adventist essential, but I'd like to suggest that Adventists are kind people who care deeply about others and their well-being. Because of our trust and faith in Jesus Christ, deeply embedded in our cultural and spiritual DNA is the

value of kindness. We are kind, want to be kind, try to be kind – because the story of His life shows that that's who He is. We're honest enough to say that every one of us is on a journey, and are the first to admit that on some days we do better than on others: but, as His followers, we believe that His life of loving service and sacrifice is the life we copy.

The gospel records of Jesus' life and teaching show Him to be caring and compassionate, particularly to those who in His time and place were regarded as outcasts. There's one example of a Greek woman whose daughter had what could be described today as serious emotional health problems (Mark 7:24-30). The Bible record states that in this instance these problems were caused by demon possession. Jesus responded to her by healing her daughter.

Then there is the story of a fella called Bartimaeus, who was blind. While a crowd of people are demanding Jesus' attention, this beggar on the street shouts out, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' The crowd around him tell him to keep quiet, but he calls out all the more. Jesus notices and says, 'What do you want Me to do for you?' The man replies, 'Rabbi, I want to see!' Jesus responds by giving him his sight: no ifs, no buts, no sermon, no conditions.

What I like most about Jesus is that His kindness was never calculated. There was never a hint of, 'If you do this for me, I will do this for you.' All He expects in return is that we accept His invitation to trust Him.

At weddings we often read from the Bible's 1 Corinthians 13, the great first-century love poem written by Paul. He explains what true love looks like:

*'Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud, never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong. It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out.'* (1 Cor. 13:4-6, TLB.)

Christians often talk about the grace of God. Unpack that, and you will find that it's about God Himself, whose character is the best example of love; who stoops – and cares – and rescues. The kindness of Jesus is the grace of God. Whatever the problem, whatever the judgement, even – Jesus always seeks to sort it out by an action that rescues, restores and resolves, while at the same time sending the heartfelt message: 'I understand.' The problem could be physical. It could be emotional. It could be spiritual. Jesus not only *wants* to fix it, but has the *ability* to do so. Why wouldn't being kind, as an Adventist, be an essential for me?



Ian Sweeney,  
Pastor and President, British Union Conference

## It's not one or the other

On 26 December 2004, a large earthquake off the coast of Indonesia triggered a tsunami that killed 228,000 people across eight countries. Sri Lanka was one of the countries impacted by the tsunami, with over 35,000 deaths as a result of the giant waves that slammed into her coastline.<sup>1</sup>

Efforts to bring aid and relief to the stricken communities were soon put in place, and the *New York Times* focused upon one story of a group of Christians who went from the USA to Sri Lanka to assist in relief efforts.<sup>2</sup> It was reported that members from an evangelical church, the Waco Antioch Community Church, sent a team of volunteers to assist in the response. However, their relief efforts caused deep concern among Sri Lankan Christians and non-Christians alike because of their alleged aggressive proselytising of the country's Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists. The church's website at the time stated that a total of 75 people were dispatched to Sri Lanka and Indonesia, and that these volunteers had been successful in persuading dozens of people to 'come to Christ'.

In offering humanitarian aid, there has always been a tension when faith-based organisations engage in evangelism. The problem that was highlighted in the Sri Lanka relief response was that the goodwill spread by relief efforts could be undermined by resentment over missionary activity. ADRA has networks across the globe that have to respond extremely sensitively to this tension.

I suspect that there are those who hold the view that if you are not directly sharing the three angels' messages, you are not really doing God's work and have watered down what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist. Humanitarian aid may not be viewed as a worthy goal in and of itself; the word 'humanitarian' even sounds secular and pagan.

The question could be posed, 'Should we be involved with aid relief without pointing people to Christ?'

However, I do not believe it has to be one or the other.

James made the point to those whose Christianity was only about preaching: this 'useless' brand of Christianity, when it sees needs, simply resorts to spiritualising the issues.

James 2:14-18, GNT: 'My friends, what good is it for one of you to say that you have faith if your actions do not prove it? Can that faith save you? Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes and

don't have enough to eat. What good is there in your saying to them, "God bless you! Keep warm and eat well!" – if you don't give them the necessities of life? So it is with faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead. But someone will say, "One person has faith, another has actions." My answer is, "Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. I will show you my faith by my actions."'

James was saying that our Christianity needs to demonstrate a practical usefulness, because a hungry person has never had their stomach filled with a spiritual platitude.

So what is the difference between ADRA (the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church) and a non-faith-based NGO (non-governmental organisation)?

The difference is *you!*

You may not be able to preach Christ when you are collecting money, but, as you are an ambassador of Christ, your interaction with the public is very much their interaction with the Christ who lives in you.

The ADRA Annual Appeal is one of our demonstrations of the love of Jesus Christ for the people we are collecting for and the people we are collecting from. Ours is an act of compassion and giving that, as James said, shows the genuineness of our faith by something more than words.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-12-24/boxing-day-tsunami-how-the-disaster-unfolded/5977568>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/22/world/worldspecial4/mix-of-quake-aid-and-preaching-stirs-concern.html>

ADRA

# Help Someone...

- ...eat
- ...learn
- ...shelter
- ...live

ADRA APPEAL 2020  
28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH - 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL (19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL IN LONDON)

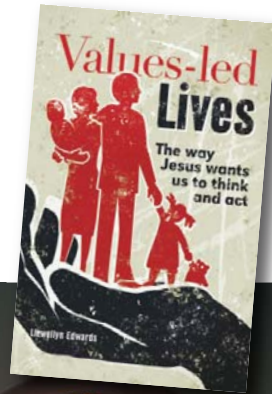
Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

IT'S OUR ADRA  
Volunteer - Connect - Donate

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REGISTERED CHARITY 1074837  
(SCOTLAND SC03726 - KM1101)



**In this excerpt of Values-led Lives, Pastor Llew Edwards continues to explain what it means to live, think and act the way Jesus did. He outlines some of the values that we once knew, which are now being displayed by secular organisations.**



**Part 6:**  
**Our secret that the world knows and we have forgotten**

Research by health scientists has, in recent years, caught up with something we have known for decades – that the eight principles of healthy living are the best formula for health and longevity. We are delighted that the world is cottoning on to one of our secrets. What took them so long!

But there is another church secret that we seem to have forgotten and that the world is ahead of us on. After all, didn't Jesus warn us that *'the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light'* (Lk 16:8, KJV)? Lovett Weems, in his book *Church Leadership*, writes that a 'great surprise for church leaders when they begin reading supposedly secular books about leadership is that the language used in the best of the books seems to come directly from the vocabulary of the church. They expect to find elaborate grids, schemes, and designs. Instead, they discover words that have to

do with values and character. It soon becomes quite evident that there is no way to talk about leadership without talking about values, meaning, and personhood. The character and values of the leader do matter.'

Secular studies have come to the conclusion that an organisation without values (particularly one that claims to be of service to others) has no future.

Robert Greenleaf in his *Servant Leadership* (Paulist Press, 1977) tells the tale of Leo, who is employed by a group of mythical explorers. Leo is the servant who takes care of all the menial tasks but who always does so with a cheerful spirit and encouraging songs. All goes well until Leo disappears. The party falls into disarray and eventually the expedition is abandoned. One of the group wanders about for some time and then discovers an order where the noble and great leader is none other than Leo.

The point of the story is that

organisations that do not embed servant leadership are doomed to failure.

Peter Block in his book *Stewardship*, written for the secular business world, says: 'Most businesses got the point in the 1970s and 1980s: if they did not find a way to serve their markets more quickly, with higher quality and lower costs, they would not endure.' Note the key word, 'serve'. No service – no future.

And they have recognised that those values must be intentionally internalised or embedded into all they do. Their stated values are what they do. It's not just a nice idea that is vaguely and occasionally done.

One company that posted superb values was Enron. It openly stated that *Communication, Respect, Integrity and Excellence* were what it stood for. Events subsequent to Enron's collapse revealed that these actually covered an embedded cultural

value of greed. Various books and numerous articles (easily accessed online) document this tragic betrayal of values.

A company that the 'children of light' would do well to consider is Southwest Airlines – an inspirational American business that demonstrates the effect of its values by being the company with the lowest number of complaints and the highest customer loyalty, and it has never recorded a loss in its history.

Ken Makovsky in a *Forbes.com* article<sup>1</sup> describes Southwest's three core values as follows: 'The values transcend the more typical ones, such as "Take the initiative" or "Care about your customers." **A warrior spirit**, according to Ms Hardage [Southwest Airlines' cultural executive and chief communications officer], means being fearless in terms of delivering the product. "We need to give our employees all the tools they need to support our customers. People travel for a

variety of reasons – business, funerals, vacations – and you need to be sensitive to their space and schedules."

'A servant's heart' also fits right in. Treat others with respect. Follow the Golden Rule. Put other people first. "We believe we need to connect people to what is important in their lives through friendly, reliable and low-cost air travel. If you respect their concerns and needs, and still provide low-cost and low-fare terms, then you do indeed have a servant's heart. The customer, hopefully, is getting more than he or she paid for."

'And, of course, a "fun-loving" attitude. "We want people who are proud to be here, people who have a fun and 'loving' attitude and don't take themselves too seriously. Our culture is defined by these three values, and they are used as the cardinal test for newly hired employees, who have to reflect those values."

I would recommend to all church leaders to take a little time reading about Southwest – in literature and online. Their

commitment to excellence, service and 'luv' (as they spell the word) is simply inspiring, and I would humbly submit that we as members, leaders and churches would not go far wrong in learning some of the wisdom of these 'children of this world'.

One of the stories that I liked that demonstrated Southwest's commitment to its values was one about a customer who wrote in to the company complaining about the levity (in Southwest's terms – 'fun-loving attitude') evidenced on the flight they had taken. The letter was passed on to the CEO. A usual reply might have been apologetic, but not Herb Kelleher's reply – he simply wrote back, 'We'll miss you.'

Kelleher is quoted as saying: *"You can't really be disciplined in what you do unless you are humble and open-minded. Humility breeds open-mindedness – and, really, what we try to do is establish a clear and simple set of values that we understand. That simplifies things; that expedites things. It enables the extreme discipline I mentioned in describing our*

*strategy. When an issue comes up, we don't say we're going to study it for two and a half years. We just say, "Southwest Airlines doesn't do that. Maybe somebody else does, but we don't." It greatly facilitates the operation of the company.*"<sup>2</sup>

What amazes me as I read such literature about secular companies are the words that they use to describe themselves. Words like 'service', 'servant', 'disciplined', 'humble', 'songs', 'spirit', 'excellence', 'commitment', 'care'. They are using our terminology – the words that describe our basis for Kingdom success. It comes across to me that they have

learned something that we have forgotten.

Be encouraged – if the world can excel, there is no reason why we can't do even better. What an amazing church that would be – we would fly!

In our next excerpt we will share a handful of stories from secular organisations, one of which is described as having 'exemplary corporate culture, exceptional staff empowerment, and extraordinary commitment' (watch out for the quote!). Could you use those same adjectives to describe yourself or the church you attend? If not, why not?

**Questions**

Here are some questions that this wisdom of the world raises for the children of light.

- Reader, what are your core values?
- What are the stated values of your church?
- Is there a disconnect between the values we espouse and the values that we act on?
- Do some of our actions betray the values of the Kingdom we claim?



**Ellen G White Symposium**  
Newbold College of Higher Education, Binfield, Berkshire  
1-3 May 2020

Ellen White and her God-given gifts were instrumental in the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This three-day symposium offers the opportunity to learn more about the Gift of Prophecy and explore the relevance of Ellen White today. It is a unique opportunity to listen to presenters from the Ellen White Estate, Biblical Research Institute and Newbold College.

Free entry including lunch and dinner but registration essential.

No on-location accommodation but hotels available locally.

Visit <https://ted.adventist.org/events> for registration and more details

**The symposium is open to everyone interested in learning more about the gift of prophecy and Ellen White. It is totally free of charge, and all are welcome, but all attendees must register by 20 April. To register, visit <https://ted.adventist.org/events>. The need for registration is due to limited space, and the necessary notice required for catering. We regret that without registration it will not be possible to attend the symposium.**

The Trans-European Division is sponsoring lunch and supper at the college for attendees, but there is no accommodation available at the college. People requiring accommodation will need to arrange it privately, at personal cost, in local hotels or B&Bs.

**Topics:**

- The Prophetic Voice in the Old Testament
- The Prophetic Voice in the New Testament
- The Spirit of Prophecy in the Revelation of John
- Ellen White's Use of Scripture
- Ellen G. White's Dedicated Hands
- A Unique Prophetic Movement
- The Reformers and the Gift of Prophecy
- Making Ellen G. White Relevant
- Ellen G. White and Creation
- *Sola Scriptura* and Ellen White: Historical Reflections

**Speakers:**

**James Nix**, Director, Ellen White Estate • **Alberto Timm**, Associate Director, Ellen White Estate • **Frank M. Hasel**, Associate Director, Biblical Research Institute • **Radisa Antic**, Director, Ellen G. White Research Centre, based at Newbold College of Higher Education • **Laszlo Gallusz**, Lecturer in New Testament Studies, Newbold College of Higher Education • **Ivan Milanov**, Head of the Department of Theological Studies, Newbold College of Higher Education • **Elliott Williams**, pastor, South England Conference.

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

# What's the evangelistic health of your church?

At least once a year we are encouraged to get a physical examination as a routine assessment of our overall health. The examination gives us a chance to talk to our doctor about any ongoing pain or symptoms that we are experiencing, or any other health concerns we might have. We should do something similar for our churches.

When was the last time your church conducted an audit of its evangelistic health?

When was the last time your local church's members stopped to assess whether or not they were doing what Jesus asked them to do? 'Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."' (Matthew 28:18-20, NIV.) This includes opening the eyes of the spiritually blind, pointing them to the One who can turn them from the darkness of sin to the light of righteousness, showing them the power of forgiveness, and helping to meet a need in a way that puts them on the road to better physical and spiritual health.

If your church has never carried out an evangelism audit, or maybe has not done one for a while, take a moment to respond to the following statements that could help to start discussions on how your church is doing with carrying out its mission.

## Evangelism Audit

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree  
3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

- My church's mission statement is still relevant to the life of my church. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- The leadership of my church is evangelistic. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- My church is concerned about its immediate community and not substituting a programme of foreign missions to the neglect of those who live within our local reach. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- My church is led to pray for lost people. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- We are active 'as a body' in local church evangelism. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- The members of my church are open to reaching people who don't look or act like them. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- The sermons regularly communicate the Gospel. (1) (2) (3) (4)

- My church is not substituting the 'church gathered' as the primary place to 'preach the Gospel', but sees it as a place to develop Christians and serve as a dynamic example of Christian love and unity to the world. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- My church is 'a bridge' to the world. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- We are reaching whole households with the Gospel, concentrating first on reaching parents and not substituting a programme of child and youth evangelism for adult evangelism. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- My church is discovering and recognising members in the church who feel especially called to evangelism, and is encouraging them in their community and worldwide witness. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- New believers are integrated into the life of the local church as soon as possible. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- My church does not allow conflicts and critics to sap the evangelistic energy of the church. (1) (2) (3) (4)
- My church is utilising contemporary strategies and approaches to community and worldwide evangelism that are distinctive and unique to our particular twenty-first-century problems in reaching people for Christ. (1) (2) (3) (4)

### Evangelism

'The spreading of the Christian Gospel by public preaching or personal witness' – *Lexico.com*.

How does your church approach evangelism? As we begin a new decade, and with so many tools available to us, here are a few possible ways that evangelism is taking place in many places around the world. How many of the evangelism ideas listed has your church tried? We are interested in finding out more!

- Open-air evangelism**  
Those who conduct open-air evangelism go into public places out in the open and spread the Gospel through preaching, singing, and more – generally to crowds of people at a time.
- Door-to-door evangelism**  
This involves knocking on doors from household to household and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, as well as passing out literature.
- Small group evangelism**  
These groups usually meet in private homes where people pray, sing, share testimonies, and hear the Word of God.
- Friendship evangelism (also known as lifestyle evangelism, servant evangelism, or relational evangelism)**  
Friendship evangelism involves Christians intentionally building relationships with people, including socialising with them, loving them, meeting their needs, and eventually talking with them about God.

evangelist who is prepared to minister to a diseased body is given the grandest opportunity of ministering to the sinsick soul. . . . Medical missionary work is the right, helping hand of the gospel, to open doors for the proclamation of the message.' – Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 513.

### Share with us

**Share a significant evangelism story from your church**  
Are there ways of sharing the Gospel, not included above, that your church has tried? Have you found success using one of the methods above? We invite you to share an evangelism idea/story from your church with us.

Email the editor at: [editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk).

SOURCE: Ednor A. P. Davison, writing in the *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, pp. 8 & 9 of the February 2020 edition (used with permission).

As we share ideas together, we are ever conscious that evangelism is much wider than an event; rather, it is a lifestyle.

We also recognise that, when it comes to evangelism, not one size fits all – and *context* is everything when considering what is the best way to communicate the Gospel to your community. Permission to contextualise – granted!

Our intent in sharing this article, along with previous articles on 'Making our church visitor-friendly' and '101 outreach ideas', is to enable the local church members to engage with each other on the mission. How best can we serve the Lord in connecting with people – for the sake of the Gospel?

(ED.)

- Radio evangelism**  
Radio evangelism is taking off in the UK. Have you tuned in yet to **Adventist Radio London** or **Hope FM**? More importantly, have you invited your friends to tune in?
- City-wide evangelism**  
Many churches in urban locations utilise this form of evangelism to draw large crowds of people. In preparation for the meetings, the churches invite people from a specific community with whom they may have visited or held outreach activities, such as health fairs, cooking classes, and more. However, the success of this approach is highly dependent on the level of preparation prior to the commencement of the meetings (two and a half to three years – Ed.).
- Online evangelism**  
This involves reaching people where they are through the use of technology, including websites, social media platforms, apps, mobile phones, and streaming, to name a few.
- Personal evangelism**  
Also referred to as 'one-to-one' evangelism, personal evangelism involves reaching out with the Gospel directly to one or a few people.
- Medical ministry evangelism**  
'Nothing will open doors for the truth like evangelistic medical missionary work. This will find access to hearts and minds, and will be a means of converting many to the truth. The

## DIVERSITY LECTURES

SPRING 2020

Tuesday 14 April  
Title: **Does poverty have a colour?**  
*How the Church can restore dignity, equality and justice for all*  
Speaker: Amanda Mukwashi, Chief Executive, Christian Aid

All lectures will be at 7.30pm in Salisbury Hall, Newbold College of Higher Education, RG42 4AN

## NEWBOLD SCHOOL

*A great start for a great future*

The Newbold School Board of Governors invites applications for the following post:

**Full-time, Permanent Class Teacher (Years 5-6)**  
for September 2020.

Experience of teaching Years 5 & 6 is preferred. We need a strong classroom teacher, preferably with experience of subject leadership in English. Newbold School is an independent, Christian primary school offering a happy, positive environment for both staff and pupils. Please contact Mrs J. Crissey, head teacher, for a school visit and an application package.

**The closing date for applications is 31 March 2020.**

The successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check and a medical.

School location: Popeswood Road, Binfield, Bracknell, RG42 4AH  
(tel: 01344 421088)

Email: [headteacher@newboldschool.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@newboldschool.co.uk)  
Website: [www.newboldschool.co.uk](http://www.newboldschool.co.uk)

Newbold School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The South England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is committed to data protection and data privacy.

**'When God Is Pleased'**

On Saturday evening, 8 February, the members of the Birmingham Aston-Newtown church came together along with family and friends to witness the baptism of Robert Ince, a young gentleman who regularly attends and participates in church with his mother, Beverley Bailey. His decision was made based on a series of Bible studies given at the Handsworth and Aston-Newtown churches. Officiating in the service were local elders who played a significant part in the candidate's life. The sermon for the occasion was preached by Pastor Jermaine Swaby, who currently serves as the associate pastor at the Aston-Newtown and Windsor Street churches, under the title, 'When God Is Pleased', reminding us that baptism should always be seen as a celebration, and that Robert pleased God by his decision to follow Christ through baptism. The message had a deep spiritual application to the congregation.



Robert Ince with pastors, elders, family and friends

ASTON-NEWTOWN COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

**Edmonton baptism**

It was a unique occasion to witness the baptism of three teenagers, along with their mother, on Sabbath 18 January. They were no strangers to Edmonton Church, where they have attended and participated in church activities for a number of years.

It was also a touching moment for Dr Boldeau, who studied with the boys. It was the first time in his ministry of 31 years that he had baptised a family unit.

Wayne, the husband and father of the boys, attended the service and was very impressed! Please pray for him and all the family on their spiritual journey.

MERLE ALEXIS



Left to right: Tahjae, Jayden, Jackie (mum) and Dontae Wright

**Membership report**

In the right-hand column of this page is the membership report for the British Union Conference and its constituent parts. It is a summary of membership activity for the fourth quarter of 2019. New lives in Christ totalled 314 (baptisms + profession of faith). Six former members returned to faith. Almost the same number of people transferred into the British Union as transferred out. Forty-seven members passed to their rest. There is also a 'Missing' column. The total number of members is tantalisingly close to a very significant figure. John Surridge, for sure, will update and expand on this story very soon.

BOOKSALES

**Adventist Book Center.com**

**March**  
22 Brixton  
29 Leytonstone

**April**  
4 High Wycombe  
5 Manchester South  
18 Holloway  
19 Croydon

Order on our Sales Hotline  
**01476 591700** sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk

10am-2pm  
10am-2pm

After Sabbath  
10am-2pm

After Sabbath  
10am-2pm

**ABC Shops**  
Watford, BUC, Monday-Thursday - 12.30-5pm, Friday - 10am-2pm. 01923 893461.

**Birmingham, Aston-Newtown**, Wednesday - 11am-4pm, Thursday - 4pm-8pm, Sunday - 11am-3pm. 0121 3286380.

**Advent Centre**, Mondays & Wednesdays - 6.30pm-8.30pm, Sundays - 11am-3pm, Saturdays - November, December, January, after sunset. 0207 7236849

Organization	Churches	Companies	Church Attendance Second Sabbath Count	Church Attendance Seventh Sabbath Count	Church Membership at Beginning of Period	Baptisms	Baptisms - Former Members'	Professions of Faith	Letters Received	Adjustments	Letters Granted	Deaths	Dropped	Missing	Adjustments	Church Membership at End of Period	Sabbath School Attendance Second Sabbath Count	Sabbath School Attendance Seventh Sabbath Count
IM Irish Mission	12	9	814	832	984	8	0	4	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	995	508	633
NEC North England Conference	100	37	3,209	2,567	11,349	93	0	12	65	11	32	21	5	0	8	11,469	2,249	1,995
SEM South England Conference	10	6	458	433	710	6	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	716	316	284
SEC South England Conference	161	60	4,500	4,744	25,754	145	3	43	205	28	210	25	2	191	18	25,732	2,365	2,507
WM Welsh Mission	13	6	330	304	681	1	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	681	235	225
<b>British Union Conference</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>9,311</b>	<b>8,880</b>	<b>39,478</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>39,593</b>	<b>5,673</b>	<b>5,644</b>

British Union Conference

**Secretary's Statistical Report - Fourth Quarter 2019**

05-Feb-20

**Halesowen Central gets crafty**

'Can we come tomorrow?' 'When is the next one gonna be?' Those were the cries of children who attended the 'Clever Craft Club' organised by the Halesowen Central church during February half-term. Doors opened at 10am and a total of 11 children piled in to enjoy two hours of arts and crafts. It was lovely to see children from the community attend every day and take an active part in all the activities, including games and snack times. Home-made play dough, paper crafts and candle making were just some of the crafts on offer. With sponsorship from ADRA, the members voted on a community project for children in the Halesowen area. Thus the Clever Craft Club was born. 'This is fantastic,' exclaimed one parent who joined us with her two children from the neighbouring community. 'My little boy loves things like this,' she continued. Volunteers, who were drafted from church members on a rota basis, came in to make sandwiches and provide snacks and drinks, as well as to supervise during the activities. 'Please don't forget to drop a flyer through my door so that I can bring my grandchildren to the next session,' pleaded a grandmother. We were delighted that the children, parents and guardians found the club beneficial. The Halesowen Central members are now eagerly planning for the next Clever Craft Club, which will be held during the Easter holidays. We pray that by God's grace we will be



able to make an impact in the community through projects such as the Clever Craft Club and show our neighbours a glimpse of Christ's character.

TRACY EDINBOROUGH



Bibiana handing her donation to Elder Gordon

**East Kilbride Church encourages Women's Aid to dream big**

Finding the right place at the right time! That is how it felt to meet Loraine from Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire (WASLER), the manager of their CYP (children and young people) team.

Searching for a cause in our community that we could support, we first contacted WASLER in January 2020 by phone. As do their other branches, this office also supports and empowers women, children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse. Statistics are alarming: it is estimated that

over 100,000 children in Scotland experience domestic abuse; and, because domestic abuse is under-reported, these figures are likely to be much higher. Speaking to Loraine, the physical, social, emotional and behavioural impact on the affected children and young people soon became our main topic. The help offered outside of WASLER often approaches them as bad, mad or sad and provides behavioural therapy or anti-depressant medication as a remedy. Loraine's team, however, adopt a radically different approach! The starting point of their support is the acknowledgement of the experience of trauma, and the results of their work so far have proved them right; so we know that we came to offer our support to the right place.

**And why at the right time?**

Because we caught Loraine's team planning to turn their current children's room into a multipurpose space with sensory facilities. However, upon hearing, 'We intend to change the blinds in order to control the incoming light and to place in a few bubble tubes', we soon recognised that their plans are minimalistic due to lack of funds. When encouraged to dream big, Loraine spontaneously smiled, 'This room can easily use £10,000.'



Loraine and her team with the first cheque from East Kilbride Church

Despite being a small church of 15 members on the books, we want to dream big with WASLER! So we are putting £10,000 as our target figure in support of this project. We are not motivated by how amazing this room can be, but by the fact that 240 children, young people and by extension their mothers would benefit from the use of this room every nine months!

The board without hesitation voted £1,600 as our immediate donation, and Bibiana was the first who embarked on a further fundraising adventure. She made her appeal simple: 'I am going to turn 7 on 17 February. So, I would like to give you 7 days to give me £7 as a birthday gift' in support of WASLER. Thanks to generous people from near and far, even from abroad, she managed to meet her ambitious online target of £280, and altogether presented an envelope with £352 to Elder Gordon in church last Sabbath!

Encouraged by this wonderful start, we pray and further brainstorm how to get as close to the £10,000 mark as possible. May your church help others to dream big, too!

JIMMY BOTHA



# Ecology – Cinderella in Adventism?

by Dr Daniel Duda, Education Director, Trans-European Division

If we as Christians want to provide reasonable and adequate answers to the questions that people nowadays are asking, we need to know their questions. What people around us are concerned with is determined by them, not by us. If we do not listen carefully, we will not be able to give relevant answers to what is bothering people around us.

In the last forty years there has been a significant change in the approach to environmental problems, which in recent times have risen to the top of the scientific and political agendas. The world asks not only general questions regarding the future, but also about the future of our living environment. Being blind and deaf in these important areas can have far-reaching negative consequences for us if we want to be relevant.

As Christians, and especially as Adventists, what attitude should we have to these problems? Should we pay attention to them, or are they just a distraction from our important mission to proclaim the Gospel to every creature (Matt. 28:18-20)?

### Is it our responsibility?

As Adventists, we believe that Christ's coming is close. But many used to say that, because global changes are slow, we will escape dealing with environmental problems. Some even used to think (quietly, not saying it out loud) that the more we destroy our blue planet, the sooner Jesus will come; that we will actually 'force' Him to return sooner and thus save His children from the destruction in an ecological disaster.

Such reasoning is very irresponsible for several reasons. Firstly, we are responsible for being faithful stewards of God's creation (Gen. 1:26, 28; Rev. 11:18).

Secondly, these problems give us the opportunity to show our holistic philosophy of life practically and to a greater extent. Our holistic approach emphasises the interdependency between mind and body, and includes on a wider scale relationships between men and women, as well as people and animals. Thus, we cannot have a holistic approach to life while at the same time discriminating against women, or being indifferent to the senseless plundering of the environment or the extinction of certain animal species.

Third, these problems remind us in a real way that faith cannot

remain only on a theoretical level, but specifically shows us how much our faith in God responds to the practical problems of life around us.

### A short look into history

1. A certain unwillingness in our church to look at the current global challenges of our world is, to a large extent, caused by a kind of unresolved legacy of *Millerism*. Millerites expected that the coming of Christ would occur between 1843 and 1844. If Christ were to come in less than a year, building brick houses, planting fruit trees, or caring for one's teeth must necessarily have been seen as a betrayal of faith. Not bringing home the harvest from their fields, leaving secular jobs, selling all their assets and putting all their life savings and energy into preparing themselves and others for the coming of Christ were seen by these people in 1844 as a manifestation of a living faith. This was a natural consequence of their understanding of prophecies. To be interested in investing in pension benefits in this situation would be perceived as blasphemy.

However, after the Great Disappointment, people slowly began to realise that it would be necessary to take a different approach to life. It dawned on some that their belief in Christ's soon coming must be expressed in other ways. In the decades that followed, Adventists lived pragmatically as if Christ's coming would happen in a maximum of a ten-year timeframe (although we never said it out loud). This attitude influenced our planning, our construction of buildings, etc. It meant that nobody thought through the possibility that the coming of Christ might not happen for some decades. For this reason, society's (and hence the Church's) governance must be structured and guided differently. And it slowly dawned on us that such long-term thinking and planning does not mean a denial of faith.

On the other hand, it should be emphasised that whenever in history the Church has lost sight of Christ's second coming, it has adversely affected her spiritual condition (Matt. 24:45-51). It is not

easy to balance the two approaches. Throughout history, the Christian Church has often fallen into one or the other extreme, emphasising one side at the expense of the other.

2. Although we are believers, our normal way of thinking in relation to the world has been greatly influenced by the *philosophy of the Enlightenment*, which says that nature is here first of all to serve humanity and be exploited by it. But the Bible says, '*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it*' (Ps. 24:1, NIV). God has not abdicated His ownership rights. According to the biblical model, man is only an administrator, not an owner. '*For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the insects in the fields are mine*' (Ps. 50:10, 11, NIV).
3. In addition, our relationship towards ecology has been affected by the soteriology (doctrine of salvation) as understood by the *Protestant Reformation*. According to the reformers, Jesus came to the world primarily to die for people's sins. The essence of the Gospel was that He died for the forgiveness of our sins (so that we can go to heaven when we die). Thus we engage in evangelism, because it is about saving people from their sins. However, for many of us, it would seem strange to be involved in ecological initiatives, because they deal 'only' with saving blue whales, or gorillas. But the Bible shows that Jesus gave His life for the *cosmos* (cf. John 3:16; Eph. 1:10; 3:10; Col. 1:20). When Jesus died on the cross, He did not die just to save humanity, but His death was part of a great cosmic struggle that began long before our generation appeared on the scene, even before the first people were created.

On the cross, Jesus achieved victory over Satan and his powers. This victory means saving God's creation from the power of Satan and evil. Christ came to frustrate the work of the devil (1 John 3:8). Biblically speaking, to receive Jesus Christ, His death and His resurrection means to do everything in our power to save people and to improve the environment in which we live.

Of course, the full restoration of creation happens only when God creates new heavens and a new earth (Rev. 21). However, at His second coming Jesus will destroy those who destroy the earth (Rev. 11:18). Each one of us pollutes the planet and leaves an individual carbon dioxide footprint, so each of us individually should think about how we can and should commit to the rescue of the environment. The New Testament teaching about spiritual gifts leads us to ask how we can serve individually and collectively to help others by empowering and developing them. Likewise, our relationship to God's creation should cause us to ask what we can do for the preservation and enhancement of the planet's environment, both individually and as the church corporately.

We need to realise that the world we live in is changing incredibly fast. Seventy years ago, nobody talked about ecology, either in the world or in the church. People believed that the natural resources of our planet were inexhaustible. Only modern times and technology have brought the consumption of non-renewable natural resources at such an amazing rapidity that the need for new approaches has proved necessary.

### Adventism and ecology

As Adventists, we have been quite successful in emphasising the *interconnectedness* of the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of an individual. Therefore, the Gospel we preach is not only about saving the

'soul', but is also about restoring the physical, spiritual and mental aspects of every person. A healthy lifestyle, in which all three components are harmoniously balanced, is part of the biblical Adventist message. The time has come to include another aspect in this triangle – the relationship with the environment in which we live.

We consider it our Christian duty to inform people about the advantages of a healthy lifestyle and the consequences of various harmful foods and drug substances on their overall health. Similarly, we should consider it part of our mission to provide people with information about the harmful environmental impact of waste which does not naturally decompose, and about lifestyles which cause deterioration of the environment and the impoverishment of other people (whether nearby or on the opposite side of the planet).

When it comes to education and schooling, we make it a priority. When it comes to taking care of our health – again, we make it a priority. We have built the largest Protestant health system in the world, even while believing in the soonness of Christ's Advent. It follows that it is necessary to engage in saving the environment.

Thinking through our *theology of creation*, if we are receptive to all parts of God's creation, it will bring us greater sensitivity and respect for those who are on the margins of society and the church (Matt. 10:29-31).

We can perceive the Sabbath too narrowly, just as the keeping of the *seventh day* in which we do not work. But then we do not appreciate the entire text of the fourth commandment, which includes other people and animals. If we realise the broader message of the Sabbath year and the year of jubilee (see Lev. 25), we will find that God is also concerned with the restoration of land, even of nature.

The use of CFCs in fridges and air conditioning, as well as phosphate detergents in households, has already been taken care of by the European Union (this will remain the case – even with Brexit). I hope that the day is coming when if our church members drain the oil from the car, or 'just' wash it in an unauthorised place, they get at least six months of church discipline (Rev. 11:18; 14:7, 12).

Why? Because if we believe that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water, and if someone is polluting sources of groundwater, thereby 'destroying the earth', they definitely should be under church discipline. This should be assessed at least as seriously as dealing with your own business interests and making money on Saturday. It is a violation of the same fourth commandment.

Maybe we should ask people before their baptism whether they have given up the use of PET bottles or whether they are sorting out household waste and do not throw away old paper, glass and plastic together with other waste into one garbage container. We must do this nowadays because the (so-often criticised) government has ordered it, but unfortunately not because of our Christian conscience and understanding.

Based on our belief in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (we have the word *Adventists* in the name of the Church), we know that our endeavours, efforts and actions will ultimately not save our planet. This should protect us from one-sided extremism, unhealthy fanaticism, or worshipping nature. The perfect and final solution is only the second coming of Jesus Christ, the setting up of the kingdom of God. The ecological movement does not need to be led by various extremist individuals and initiatives. Balanced and born-again followers of Jesus Christ who care about the environment in which they live can and need to do more, much more, than we do today (Rom. 8:19-21).

Never in the history of the world has the situation been as bad as it is today ecologically, and maybe morally and socially. But never in the history of the world have there been so many real children of God who are willing to be influenced by the Holy Spirit (even without knowing it) and change the way they live in this world.

Scripture reminds us that, at the end of the creation week, the Creator declared everything He had created '*very good*' (Gen. 1:31). God has called us to be stewards of the earth and of all creation. All who live in this world are precious in the eyes of God. If we take seriously the message that God has entrusted to us, then we will not only be faithful stewards of God's creation, but also protectors of the environment. Our attitude towards the environment and ecology reflects the depth (or superficiality) of our spirituality.

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### Medical missionary training in Battersea

Sometimes it's tempting to think small when you are literally small. This, however, is not the philosophy of Ebenezer Church in Battersea, South London. A very small group meet each Sabbath, but they took on a big venture with a fourteen-session medical missionary programme on Sundays. The presenters and students came from churches far and near, such as Battersea, Balham, Bethel, Basildon, Birmingham, Hackbridge, Lewisham, Wimbledon and West Croydon.

This church has an ongoing community programme. For example, on Sundays they run vegetarian cookery classes as well as giving health lectures. Every first Sunday they hold a community breakfast and sometimes take the breakfast to people who cannot come to them. They are also involved in door-to-door witnessing. As they meet people, they invite them to share in their vegetarian lunch on Sabbaths. They



### Susanne Kirlaw helps BBC's Songs of Praise viewers to go vegan

Millions of viewers of the long-running BBC series *Songs of Praise* tuned in on Sunday 1 March 2020 to see Susanne Kirlaw (aka Kirly-Sue) cooking vegan food with presenter Aled Jones.

The well-known author, vegan cook, and presenter shared with Aled her vegan cooking, and how her faith as an Adventist has played a part in her healthy food choices.

Reflecting on the experience, Susanne shared:

'I was so excited for veganism to be discussed on a mainstream TV show. Almost everyone has heard of veganism now; but far too few people know exactly what a vegan does and does not eat.'

'It was a real privilege to appear on this iconic BBC programme. I made vegan cupcakes and was able to get 8-year-old Abigail Adams to appear alongside me on the show. Abigail also appears in the promotional photos for my vegan cookbook for kids, and she was able to try the cupcakes on the show. I absolutely loved being on the show. Hopefully I'll get another phone call to appear on it again soon.'

*Songs of Praise* features inspiring hymns and songs, together with stories of faith from around the UK and beyond.

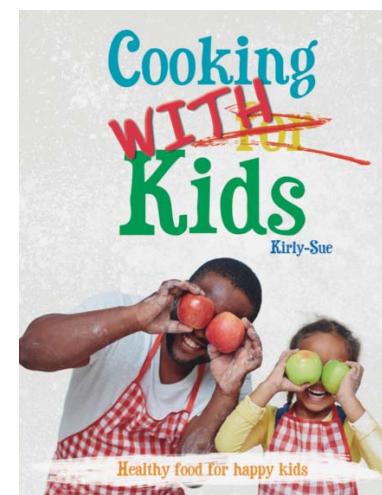
Copies of Susanne's book, *Cooking with Kids*, are available from the LifeSource Bookshop (£12.50 for the paperback and £15 for the hardback version).

To see the programme, go to: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000g08z>.

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also make sympathy cards for bereaved families, and for the sick in the community and hospitals.

With this mandate the Ebenezer members decided to move forwards in faith, knowing that the medical missionary work is of God and that He will provide. Normally such courses would be expensive, but, trusting that God will provide, they ran the medical missionary course for free. The Lord did provide, in that students made voluntary contributions, and others, including the church members, gave sacrificially to the project.

They were inspired by a quotation from Ellen White:

'The medical missionary work should be a part of the work of every church in our land. Disconnected from the church it would soon become a strange medley of disorganised atoms.' (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 289.)

Ten students were prepared for graduation. On Sunday 2 February, nine students gathered in the Balham Church hall where they graduated from the medical missionary course, supported by family, friends and other church members. (Savrina Joseph graduated in absentia.) The service included various special items, short talks, exhortations and testimonies. Pastor Bernard Akakpo (Balham's minister) presented the keynote message, in which he reminded us that God commissions us not only to preach, but also to heal and to encourage healthy living. He suggested that although the medical missionary work is often neglected, it should go hand in hand with the preaching of the Gospel and that the medical missionary work is of 'divine origin'.

After a well-prepared healthy meal and time for socialising, the group began to express their determination not only to practise what they had learnt on the course, but also to look for opportunities to share this with others. Ebenezer Church is planning to hold another series soon, as this small church continues to make health a big thing for their members and the surrounding community.

ERROL ANDERSON – COMMUNICATIONS LEADER AT BALHAM CHURCH

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*hallelujah*

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## Reading West Church – Choir Day

On Sabbath 15 February Reading West members experienced a worship service like none they'd experienced before. It was Choir Day.

The Reading West choir was originally founded in 1994 at the Reading Whitley church – where the current Reading West church formerly congregated until 2013. The 'Choir Day' theme was established from the outset, as Divine Service began, with members of the choir blending in with the regular congregation, only to start singing from their various positions while moving to the front of the choir to group around the pulpit, treating the church to a number of songs.

As the service progressed, the recurring theme of 'Choir' was reinforced, with each item in the bulletin being undertaken by either a member of the choir or a relative of a choir member. The choir blessed the congregation with many classic songs, such as 'Tell Me the Old, Old Story', 'The Lord Is My Shepherd', and 'Master, the Tempest Is Raging'.

Contrary to custom, a sermon was not necessary, with the choir utilising their gift of music as a means of ministering the Gospel to the church.

Notably, the choir used their day to proudly exhibit their newly acquired uniforms, donning kente cloth-style patterns, with smiles that matched the vibrancy of their new attire.

The choir also used a section of the programme to talk about their history, their successes, and the challenges they have faced over the years, but they were



able to praise God for their growing membership, and especially noted the presence of five members who were present in the choir's original establishment: Ruth Sentenga, Ellen Osei Domfeh, Margaret Aboagye, Janet Beccai, and Darlington Onditi – the latter two being integral to the choir's leadership. Darlington Onditi also invited members of the congregation to consider joining or, in some cases, rejoining the choir. Surely it's an invitation which will be considered, especially after seeing the choir's ability to influence even the youngest members of the church to praise through singing and the occasional dancing.

One of the elders, Peter Mensah, commented, 'We experienced such a blessed Sabbath. The choir lifted our spirits.'

Thank God for His continued blessings in Reading! *ELLIOTT ABOAGYE*

attendees of various factors that contribute to the development of type 2 diabetes and how this can be reversed. The participation has been lively and the discussion detailed. All of the participants have shown a strong desire to know more about how to improve their health.

Essentially, the course teaches that the reversal of type 2 diabetes can progress from sufferers and potential 'pre-diabetic' cases having awareness of the contributing factors, including epigenetics, weight management, the impact of various elements of our diet, and oxidative stress. At most sessions there were also opportunities for vegan food tasting and exercise.

Each participant had their initial height, weight, blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol checked. These parameters were checked periodically during the course, and encouraging results highlighting improvements towards reversing diabetes were found.

Although the majority of the group have suffered with strokes and a number of them have hypertension and diabetes, it was evident that they had not received some of the advice offered by the Adventist group as part of their previous interactions with health professionals.

The group graduated in mid-February, so it is hoped that many will continue to adopt healthy living, reflect on the learning points, and experience the impact of local Adventist health evangelists.

Hopefully they will share their learning with their friends and family on how to reduce the risk of what is an epidemic condition in the UK, with significant associated morbidity and mounting costs to the health service.

If you would like more information about how the diabetes reversal course can be delivered to people in your community, please contact your Conference Health Ministries director. *JACQUIE HALLIDAY-BELL*



Grace Walsh and Pastor Paul Haworth with participants

## Diabetes reversal at Newtown, B'ham

Grace Walsh, Pastor Paul Haworth, Vinette Baker, Dr Toyin Oyelakin and Dr J. Halliday-Bell (MD) have been working alongside a stroke rehabilitation group at the Pannel Croft retirement village in Newtown, Birmingham, delivering a diabetes reversal programme since November 2019. The sessions have been running for several years, in a room at the village under the supervision of a volunteer, Leona Bramble. Other volunteers including Daniel, a Chinese student, have made a significant contribution to the success of the course.

The number of attendees has been around the mid-twenties. Each presentation includes the delivery of high-quality slides informing the

## Golden couple

When many of the West Bletchley congregation were just born or of toddler age, Margaret and Patrick Dick were already on the road to beginning their married life together.

Both have shown great commitment in their regular attendance and participation in church life over the years in different roles, Patrick being the current treasurer and primary liaison in partnering with the council to support the community.

Their calming and supportive nature and their wise and humorous characteristics make them popular individuals with both young and old alike.

For those coming behind them – at whatever stage of their marital journey – the bar has been set high! Of course, none is so naive as to think that such a relationship comes without its 'growth pains', but Patrick and Margaret demonstrate that success is possible through Christ who strengthens them.

On Sabbath 8 February, a special re-dedicatory prayer was offered by Dr Augustus Lawrence, former Milton Keynes minister. A presentation of an engraved vase and flowers was made to the golden couple in recognition of this outstanding landmark of 50 years of marriage. Their 'secret' is nothing new, but is applied with diligence: 'patience and understanding . . . but above all – trust in God'.

*SYLVONIE NOEL, COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT*



Left to right: Pastor Michael Anim (current minister) and Dr Augustus Lawrence (former minister) with Margaret and Patrick Dick

PHOTO BY: SYLVONIE NOEL

**BUC HEALTH MINISTRIES CONFERENCE**

**SURVIVING AND THRIVING THROUGH TRAUMATIC LIFE EVENTS**

**Date: Sunday 26th April, 2020 Time: 9:15am - 5pm**  
**Venue: Park Inn by Radisson Hotel, Silver Street, Northampton, NN1 2TA** **Cost: £40 - Payment via phone or BACS**

**Malaina Joseph – Trauma Intervention Specialist, Art and Counselling Psychotherapist**  
**Thembie Masingire – Cornerstone Counselling Co-Ordinator**  
**Sharon Platt-McDonald – BUC Director for Health, Women's Ministries and Adventist Community Services**  
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**Speaker: Zlatko Musija**  
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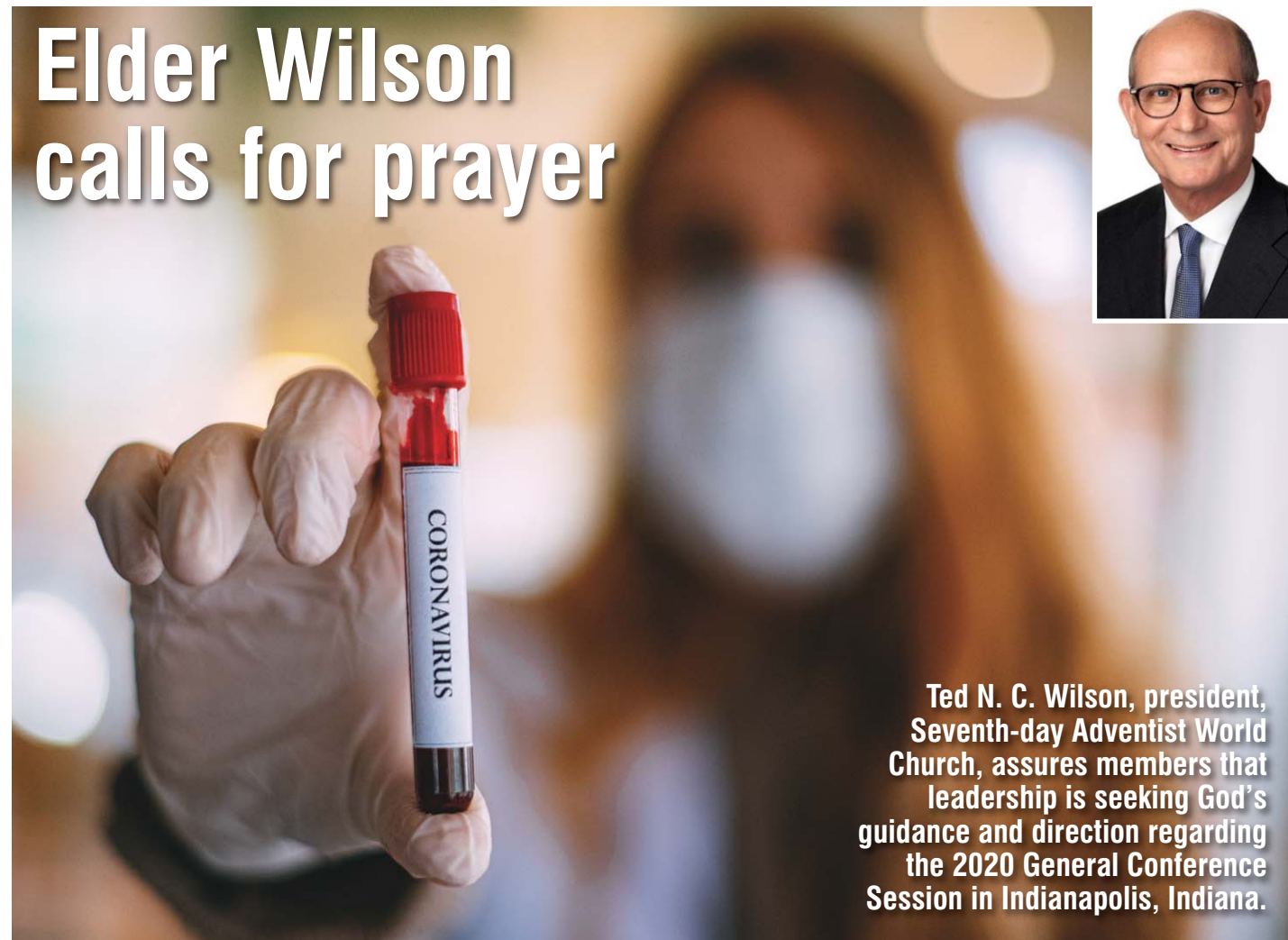
## The 61st General Conference Session

The 2020 General Conference Session will take place in a few months' time (25 June – 4 July 2020) at the Indiana Convention Centre & Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. Current president, Elder Ted Wilson, describes and explains the theme for this session – 'Jesus Is Coming! Get Involved!' – as 'reflecting the advent hope of a soon-returning Saviour, the urgency of Total Member Involvement (TMI), and everyone doing something for Jesus in winning souls for Him!'

It will be a time of praise, a turning to Him for strength and guidance, and a reminder of our mission. Details can be found at: <https://session.adventist.org/>.



## Elder Wilson calls for prayer



**Ted N. C. Wilson, president, Seventh-day Adventist World Church, assures members that leadership is seeking God's guidance and direction regarding the 2020 General Conference Session in Indianapolis, Indiana.**

As many people are fully aware, there is a very serious health situation affecting various parts of the globe in relation to the coronavirus COVID-19 illness. About 90,000 people have been diagnosed in about 65 countries worldwide, with over 3,000 deaths attributed to COVID-19. This has caused increasing apprehension in travel, business and healthcare, in scheduling of meetings, and in general daily life. As many of you know, recently I requested prayer for this unusual illness, and am now reiterating a special call for prayer regarding the coronavirus COVID-19 worldwide developments. Continue to pray for our church members and the population of many countries around the world, and especially for those who have contracted this illness and those who have lost loved ones. Let us be strong witnesses in Total Member Involvement, sharing Christ's love and care to those in need in a very helpful and appropriately health-conscious manner.

Some people have been asking about plans for the 2020 General Conference Session to be held in Indianapolis, Indiana, 25 June – 4 July 2020. Please be assured that the General Conference executive officers and other officers and leaders are reviewing the situation and

possible scenarios. Every effort will be made to provide for the best approaches to be taken in case of a continued unfolding of challenging circumstances in health protection and travel. However, at this point in time, the current and long-standing plans for the 2020 General Conference Session are still in place. Please pray for God's guidance and direction in all that is done.

Let us take comfort and rely completely on the Lord as we claim Psalm 37:3-5 in challenging times: *'Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass'* (NKJV). As the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, we are in His hands in whatever difficulties we face for the great mission to proclaim Christ, His three angels' messages, and His soon second coming. Thank you for praying for God's church and its work.

(Since this message was submitted for publication, circumstances may have changed – we hope and pray, for the better – **but we need to inform you that the BUC Treasurers' Retreat is cancelled due to our duty of care towards our members and the wider community.** – Ed.)

## For 'at-risk' youth leadership: South England Conference Youth Leadership Conference

'Epic!' 'Refreshing' and 'Just what we needed' were some of the comments used to describe the SEC Youth Leadership Conference 2020 (YLC), which was held at the Crowne Plaza in East Grinstead from 24 to 26 January. The theme for this year was *'Rebuilding the Walls'*, with over 90 youth leaders from across the SEC in attendance. YLC focused on creating dialogue on the realities of youth ministry and dying youth leadership in the local churches, while challenging the status quo with Spirit-led innovation. YLC successfully met the objectives for attendees to realise the need of change and innovation; to create an intimate platform to discuss best YM practices with leading experts; and to ensure that relevant specialist training and resources birth real solutions and new leaders.

Attending YLC as specially invited keynote speakers were Naomi Burgess, Development and Leadership Coach for Team GB; Pastor Laurent Grosvenor, the senior pastor of the Alpha Seventh-day Adventist Church in the US; Fabian Thorpe, Business Director and Entrepreneur; Jennie Hall, Senior Youth Leader Award Assistant; and Pastor Tihomir Lazic, TED Student Ministries Director – with special contributions from BUC Youth Director, Dejan Stojkovic; Pastor Nathan Stickland; and Pastor Lon Jones.

Workshops throughout the weekend included the introduction of specialist youth training in the form of the GC *'Senior Youth Leadership Award'*, 'Values and Conflict Resolution', 'AY and Strategic Planning', 'Youth Leadership and the Holy Spirit', and 'Youth and Innovation'. Each presentation was thought-provoking as well as relevant, which allowed young people and leaders to adapt information to their respective areas, churches and individual lives. The youth leaders in attendance took opportunities to network and



Photo: Aaron Fenton-Hewitt

share youth leadership challenges and success stories.

In one of the interactive sessions, called 'The Youth Leader's Challenge', youth leaders were invited to split into four groups, each of which was tasked to come up with a youth project from a business perspective with a budget of £100, £1,000, and £1,000,000. The ideas and creativity that were birthed as a result were amazing. One idea proposed was to set up an allotment and health store which would be run by young entrepreneurs in growing and selling organic and healthy food products.

One of the major problems highlighted by youth leaders is that they don't understand how the church works at Conference, Union and Division level. The call is a request to engage more, and to work more closely together.

SEC Youth Director, Anthony Fuller, closed the conference by sharing plans he has for the coming years. He was encouraged that over 60 youth leaders had committed to the Senior Youth Leadership Award specialist programme, and he assured attendees that the South England Conference leadership team would be doing more to collaborate with youth leaders and youth in the local churches, and are committed to improving the quality and professionalism of youth work.

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# 'Believe His prophets'

by Pastor Leslie Hill

One hundred years have now passed since Professor William Whittla retired from his university chair in 1919 at the close of an eminently distinguished medical career. His reputation as a generous benefactor to his adopted city of Belfast is comprehensively documented.

A deeply devout man, Whittla was convinced of the importance of biblical prophecy: in particular, the book of Daniel. Those who knew this invited him to share his diligent research through public lectures. It was a time of nationalistic ferment in Ireland; and, as we approach the centenary of his talks, not only is the Irish question still alive, but Scottish aspirations are also running high. Yet, whichever flag you fly, Daniel's message invites us to consider the overarching story of God's ultimate purposes.

Among his many skills, Whittla's understanding of literary criticism enabled his analytical and incisive mind to recognise specious reasoning. He was profoundly aware of the so-called 'higher critics' and found Sir Isaac Newton's work on 'The Babylonian Prophet' a helpful resource in combating their arguments. John Murray later published this, together with Whittla's

talks on Daniel, in 1922.<sup>1</sup>

Does any of this have any relevance to our own study of the book of Daniel today?

I find the following salient points worthy of our reflection.

- The concerted efforts to undermine Daniel's prophetic power have silenced its preaching in the churches.
- We dare not neglect the Messianic prophecies in Scripture.
- To limit the range of prophetic provision is unhelpful.
- First go to the biblical text to understand its divine intentions, before looking at past history or present conditions: not vice versa.
- Daniel chapter 2 is 'priceless' in its importance.
- '... In Daniel's prophecies days are put for years.'
- The 'seventy weeks' (Daniel 9) should be 'regarded as the keystone of the edifice of the Christian religion'.
- The 'little horn' (Daniel 8:9) 'does not stand for Antiochus Epiphanes'.
- The believer should be open to the possibility of a greater clarity and 'fuller knowledge' and understanding.



- 'Giving ear to the prophets is a fundamental character of the true church.'

Why is Whittla's work on Daniel worth recalling? It would not be because he saw everything perfectly clearly: he was the first to acknowledge that. Rather, it is his conviction of the importance and relevance of the message of Daniel that resonates with us today. He rejected the interpretations of those who, through design or ignorance, would neutralise its impact. He refused to let its wings be clipped.

Daniel's witness to his God in the university and government of Babylon would not be silenced. His words give us backbone to face secular and religious pressures to conform to political correctness and so privatise our faith.

<sup>1</sup>Sir William Whittla, *Sir Isaac Newton's Daniel and the Apocalypse: with an introductory study of the cause of unbelief, of miracles and prophecy* (London: John Murray, 1922).

## Andrew Samuel Davis (1981-2019) d. 16 December.

Andrew Samuel Davis was born at Newham Maternity Hospital on 27 September 1981, the second and youngest child of Samuel and Rowena Davis. His sister, Anthea, was born 15 months earlier. At the time of his birth, his father had just begun studying for the ministry at Newbold College. Soon after his birth, the family moved to Newbold for several years.

Those who knew Andrew in his childhood may remember him for his cheeky grin, ultra-thick glasses and mischievous ways, and yet the young Andrew was quite introverted. Yet a flare for the theatrical was spotted by his primary school teachers, and he was cast in the leading role in the school production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. At school he excelled in mathematics, IT, art and sports.

Perhaps unconsciously, as Andrew entered his later teen years he played up to the reputation of a 'wild' pastor's child. Ironically, Andrew's troubled years brought many people closer to Christ: firstly his parents, who were kept on their knees during 'the struggle', and also those who later heard his sermons in years to come, with the many memorable illustrations that these years provided. His strong-willed nature was a source of strength when he applied it well.

After leaving school, although first wanting to go into fashion design, Andrew chose to work in IT. By 2005, at the age of 24, he was already commanding salaries that people twice his age would have been jealous of. His career gave him the opportunity to work for high-profile companies in England and internationally, such as Barclay's Bank, Expedia and the European Central Bank, including a time working in Dubai. On returning home to England, Andrew finally accepted the call of God to pastoral ministry.

Andrew's ministry started before he officially became a pastor, an example being his work in Lavender Hill. He was most comfortable with community-based ministries, which gave him the freedom to trailblaze. However, this did not diminish his willingness or effectiveness to work in more traditional church settings.

Following Andrew's internship at the Brixton church, Andrew and Natasha were called to minister in Colchester, Ipswich and Clacton, followed by Newbold College and,



finally, the Parkside and Reading Central churches.

Andrew was also passionate about youth ministries, and completed his Master Guide training earlier in 2019. At Newbold he was an inspirational leader to the Pathfinder club, was an accomplished preacher, and was frequently called to speak to youth around the BUC and also internationally. Although passionate about youth, Andrew refused to be pigeonholed and insisted that his ministry was to the entire church family.

Above all else, Andrew's first ministry was in his home. Family life was everything to Andrew, and in 2011 he started his own family when he married his soulmate, Natasha.

Together they had three beautiful children – Leila, Malachi and Zoe – with fun and laughter a hallmark of their home. Andrew's exuberant and flamboyant personality was evident in boisterous playing and raucous laughter.

Andrew loved surprising his wife and children, whether that was a helicopter ride for his bride at their wedding, a new car, or even a new house! He took great delight in buying presents for his children, and some wondered who enjoyed them more – he or the kids!

At home, Andrew was known for his mega-munch sandwiches and love of grape juice. The family mealtime, with delicious vegan, homecooked food, was something Andrew looked forward to. Despite how busy ministry was, Andrew still made time for spontaneity with the family and had a cherished place for date nights with his 'Tash'.

Home life was truly a piece of heaven on earth.

After a sudden illness, Andrew entered his rest on Monday 16 December 2019. Andrew is survived by his wife and their three young children, parents and sister. We also recognise the deluge of grief from the wider family. The loss of Andrew to his family and community is colossal, and he is most desperately missed. We eagerly await the return of the Lord, to be reunited with this man of God.

ANTHEA DAVIS BARCLAY

## George Davis (1932-2020) d. 10 January.

George Augustus Davis was born on 25 November 1932. Like many others of his generation, he also answered to another name: Welward. George's first home was in St Andrew Parish, Jamaica, where he lived with his



parents, Noel and Verona Davis. He was the eldest of eight siblings.

As a teenager his family moved to the parish of St Thomas, and it was there, in church, that he met and was attracted to the sweet singing of a young lady called Mabel Golding. They later married and had six children, one of whom was sadly lost to cot death.

George was keen to make a better life for his family. He was a farmer and had a lifelong love for the land. However, in 1962 he left that behind in Jamaica, along with his wife and four children, and came to seek his fortune in Britain, where he worked as a labourer and later had a long career as a painter and decorator.

George was very focused on providing for his family and worked hard to bring them to join him. First he was joined by Mabel in 1964, and then the children in March 1965. In doing so, for a while he lost sight of his spiritual goals and stopped attending church. His health also suffered and he was hospitalised for a peptic ulcer, followed by weeks of convalescence. Mabel was a faithful and determined wife and persisted in holding prayer meetings in the family home, much to his frustration. George's resistance was no match for his wife's determination, and in 1968 he was re-baptised at the Brixton Ferndale Road church along with his eldest son, Samuel.

After his baptism George never wavered from his commitment to the church and being a spiritual leader in his family. He went on to become a founding member of the Peckham Seventh-day Adventist church in the late sixties, which initially started as a small group meeting in homes, and then in rented accommodation, before its current position in Ivydale Road, Peckham. George spent four decades in the Peckham church and carried out many roles.

As a father George was always present. He often came home with chocolates hidden in his newspaper, and would wrestle, chase, run, tease and crack jokes. He wanted the best for all his children and always gave good counsel, whether it was wanted or not. His spiritual legacy as a spiritual leader cannot be underestimated. His contribution to the church in Britain will not be easily forgotten, with two pastors emanating from the Davis family.

In 2002, after retirement, ever practical and up for a challenge, George and Mabel decided to downsize and relocated to Luton. Key criteria included the right home and a warm, welcoming church.

In his later years he returned to

farming the land that he loved. He had two large allotment plots and spent many happy hours there.

George's relationship with Mabel spanned 65 years. He was never one to wear his heart on his sleeve; however, he was a faithful, committed husband who showed his love by working and providing a home. George demonstrated his love by bringing home dresses, and later learned to bring Mabel the flowers that she loved so much.

The church was his passion, and Christ the centre of his life. George leaves behind many family members who continue to be committed to Christ and who are looking forward to that great getting-up morning when the dead in Christ shall rise.

PASTOR SAM DAVIS

## Messenger

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Mar 20	6.14	6.27	6.19	6.27	6.38
27	6.26	6.38	6.31	6.42	6.51
Apr 3	7.38	7.50	7.44	7.56	8.05
10	7.50	8.02	7.56	8.10	8.18

## Letters to the editor

Dear Editor

Further to our chance meeting in the Lancaster church on Sabbath, I have committed some of my thoughts to paper as follows:

I am an avid reader of *Messenger*, even though I am not a Seventh-day Adventist and do not even possess the faith or commitment to attend a church of any denomination. The articles themselves are often original and thought-provoking, and other news gives some idea of what it is like to be part of a church community. The latest edition was exceptional in the relevance of several articles. David Neal's comparison of the Church to a cruise ship or lifeboat was particularly poignant, as 'cruise ship mode' lists reasons I can't bring myself to attend church, and it is refreshing to find that at least some people may understand why. I am looking forward to part 2.

An article by Dan Serb gave me the weird feeling of finding my own words in print, written by someone else. He fully understands that God could be portrayed as repulsive, to the extent that so many are not willing to serve Him. It would be easy to assume that this is purely down to an evil intent to discredit God, but I find that some Christian teachings and beliefs also contribute to this feeling. For example, obsessing about minor sin, or refusing to believe that such a category even exists (because 'sin is sin'), creates the impression that God Himself is obsessive. In addition, the fact that we are expected to blindly obey Him, absolutely in all respects, suggests that God is also extremist. 'Rethinking the approach' is an interesting idea, which deserves to be developed. It certainly struck a chord with me, and I probably represent the very people the Church is trying to reach.

During my forty years of exposure to the Adventist Church, through my wife Cynthia, I have met wonderful people whom I now count as friends. It's just that the spiritual side of things has not developed in the way that most would imagine.

IAN HARTLEY

Dear Editor

Having read Pastor Edwards' article on 'Values-led Lives' (*Messenger* 21 February, p. 4), I hope the behaviour of the deacons in question is decidedly unrepresentative!

Although the instances I am about to cite come from a different context, they (like the examples Pastor Edwards has cited) show the wisdom of a proverb I remember being taught back in the 1950s at primary school: 'Don't judge a book by its cover.' During the late 1970s and 1980s I often went hill-walking in the Scottish hills, and north of the Great Glen there was no Seventh-day Adventist church for miles. In 1977 I stayed in Kintail, and on Sunday I made my way to the local Free Church. My attire was typical of a hosteller, but the folk there made me welcome – it was only unaccompanied psalm-singing I had to get used to! Afterwards, one of the elders simply said, 'Well, we differ about the Sabbath!'

In the late 1980s I had to walk 8 miles along the loch-side into Shildaig, and the first place I encountered was the local Free Presbyterian Church. As in Kintail, I was made welcome, despite my hostelling gear – I even adjusted to their singing at a third of the speed I was used to!

In short, Pastor Edwards has done us a great service by his article!

BARRY GOWLAND

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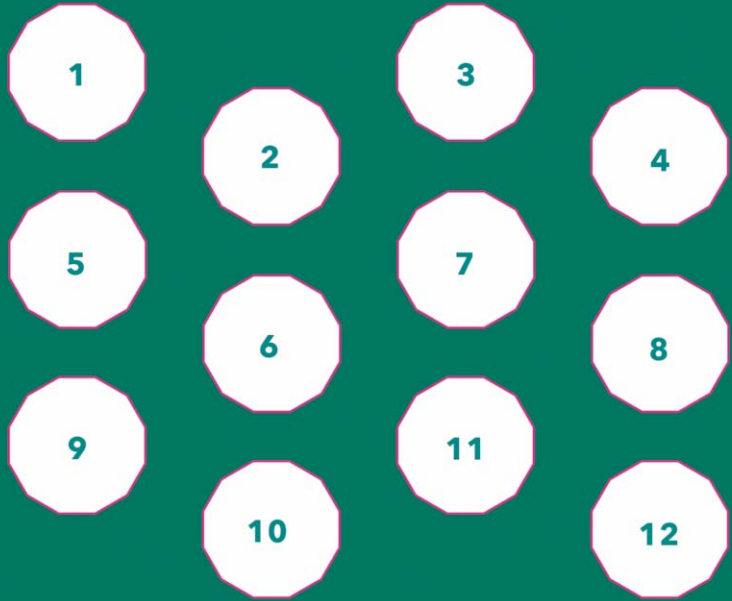
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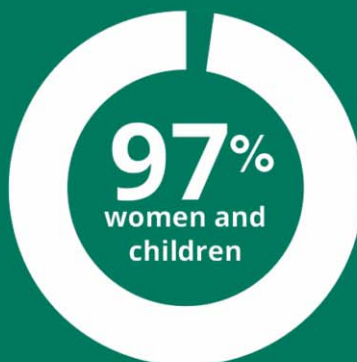
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