

# Messenger

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

Established 1902

29 September 2023 • Volume 128 • 9

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for a relevant future

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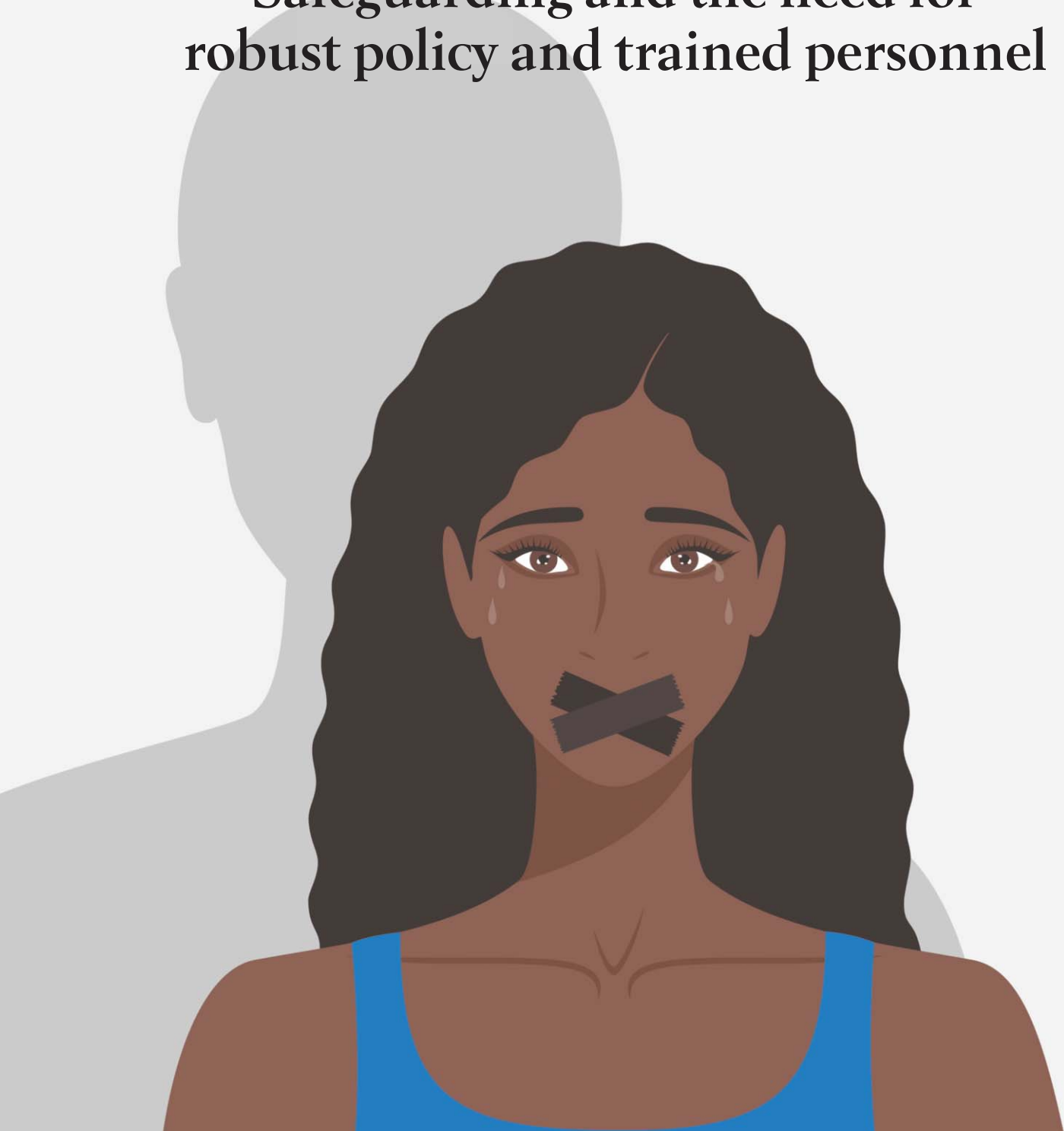
Fun Zone

News, notices & baptisms

+ *SEC Session report*

## Be quiet now . . .

Safeguarding and the need for  
robust policy and trained personnel



## Strategic Priority (9) – Safeguarding

### Aim:

- Evaluate our approach to the safeguarding of our children, young people, and vulnerable adults, including the elderly.

### Objectives:

- Create a safeguarding hub to support the work of the conferences, missions, educational and other institutions.
- Establish/review a safeguarding advisory committee to keep abreast with changing legislation.
- Develop digital media safeguarding strategies which address safeguarding and emerging technology.



## Be quiet now . . .

by Pastor Eglan Brooks,

President of the British Union Conference

One troubling story in the Bible is that of Tamar, raped by her half-brother, Amnon (2 Samuel 13). When her brother, Absalom, discovers the heinous deed, he says, 'Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart' (vs. 20). Subsequently, she became a 'desolate woman' (NKJV).

According to *The Oxford Languages Dictionary*, 'desolation' means 'complete emptiness or destruction', 'great unhappiness and loneliness'. Such is Tamar's existence after she has been manipulated, raped, discarded. She is silenced by those in authority, undefended by her so-called protectors, and left to suffer the pangs of 'outrageous fortune'. Safeguarding is absent.

Does this ancient story somehow sound familiar? Unfortunately so. Abuse exists in society, families, the Government, and even sometimes in faith spaces . . . our faith spaces.

### Safeguarding: a definition

Safeguarding is the preventive and precautionary approach to planning and procedures needed to protect individuals from any potential harm and deal with issues when they arise. All organisations owe a duty of care to employees,

volunteers, service users and others they come into contact with.

Safeguarding duties apply to both statutory and voluntary organisations, and come from legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance. They're outlined in the *Charity Commission's Strategy for Dealing with Safeguarding Issues*. Regarding children, the key statutory guidance is *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (updated in 2022). Regarding vulnerable adults, the key statutory guidance is *Care and Support Statutory Guidance* (updated in 2022).

The *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* (SVGA 2006) was introduced to prevent people who are deemed unsuitable to work with **children and vulnerable adults** from gaining access to them. Everyone has the right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. The SVGA 2006 places legal obligations on organisations to safeguard children and vulnerable adults; promote their welfare; conduct additional checks on employees and volunteers; and communicate concerns to relevant local agencies.<sup>1</sup> We are subject to this legislation.

### Safeguarding hub

Prevention is better than cure. We need to establish a safeguarding hub, **with trained personnel**, that will support all the conferences, missions, and institutions of the BUC, to keep abreast of the changes in safeguarding legislation and to provide guidance when incidents of abuse arise. In establishing this hub, we will consult with safeguarding specialists.

### Safeguarding Advisory Committee

The BUC has a standing Safeguarding Committee that looks at our policies around safeguarding and updates them when required. We will review this committee and its remit to ensure that our policies do more than meet the minimum requirements, and will communicate updates across the territory.

### Digital media safeguarding

According to an inquest, 'social media content played a part in the death of teenager, Molly Russell.'<sup>2</sup> The *Online Safety Bill* is intended to ensure that digital media providers are held responsible for the content shared on their platforms. Strategies and policies around online safety need to be created, especially with the rise of emerging technologies.

### Conclusion

Tamar, the desolate woman, represents all those who are abused in our world today. As a church, charity and corporation, let us tackle abuse through rigorous policies, appointing trained personnel and demonstrating a heart of compassion for those who are suffering.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/volunteers-and-the-law/safeguarding-vulnerable-clients/#> <sup>2</sup><https://news.sky.com/story/molly-russell-friend-of-14-year-old-who-died-from-self-harm-speaks-out-over-online-safety-bill-12758062>

# Editorial

by **Dusanka Rancic**,  
*Editor*



Dear reader,

What an amazing first day of work I had on 3 September. While some might prefer a quiet first day at the office in their new job, mine was filled with laughter and music. It was the Open Day at the Stanborough Press, and I not only received a warm welcome, but spent the whole day talking to kind and loving people. It was a real pleasure to the eyes to see so many friendly faces, and a blessing to my heart to listen to their stories.

Sunshine, smiles, inspiring speakers . . . I could not have wished for a better start. We were exchanging health tips, sharing uplifting experiences, and encouraging each other. And even though I was meeting some of the people for the first time, it felt as if we had been friends for a while. It is incredible how quickly we can establish a connection with somebody who was a complete stranger a few moments ago . . . but when you think about it, we should not be surprised by that, since we are a family. We have our heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, who unite us.

By the end of the week I was attending the South England Conference (SEC) 64<sup>th</sup> Session, held at the University of Essex, Colchester. There, I experienced another side of family life, as SEC delegates got together to make plans for the future, guided by the theme, 'Making Disciples, Building Communities'.

A long time ago, Jesus asked two blind men, 'What do you want Me to do for you?' (Matthew 20:32, NKJV), and they got their sight. Jesus is asking us the same question every morning. Let us pray each day for our spiritual sight so that we can see our Lord and His will for us more clearly, and also see the needs of our brothers and sisters, people around us, so that we can lead them towards the light. And people need God, and positivity, and smiles. We do live in a troublesome world; but, as Connor Franta said, 'Use your smile to change the world, but don't let the world change your smile.' And God will give us strength for each day.

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# Embracing big data for a relevant future

Dr Mandela Thyoka

Have you ever pondered the tremendous potential our church holds to make a significant difference in the United Kingdom and Ireland? While it's true that Christianity is now a minority religion in this region, with an increasing number of people identifying as having no particular faith, this presents us with a unique opportunity to step up and make a positive impact. The Adventist Church carries a unique message; and, by harnessing the power of big data and analytics, we can make informed decisions that will shape our evangelism efforts.

Big data has a rich history spanning millennia, with countless examples of its use in making significant discoveries and informing decision-making. In today's digital world, data has become an integral part of everything we do. Organisations around the globe are leveraging data to transform themselves, enhance customer

service, and gain a competitive edge. Similarly, individuals rely on online and mobile channels to connect, access services, and navigate their lives.

So, what is big data? The term 'big data' refers to large and complex datasets that traditional analytical methods struggle to process. In the digital age, data is generated at an unprecedented pace, leaving a digital footprint in every aspect of our lives. Therefore, our church cannot escape the impact of big data. Rather, we must learn how to handle and utilise this data effectively. We now have the ability to collect vast volumes of data from various sources, including social media, transactions, and more. With the right tools and approaches, we can store and analyse this data to gain valuable insights. By understanding the quality and diversity of the data, we can link, match, and transform it to inform our decisions and strategies. And, yes, big data matters to our church! Just like any organisation, we can benefit immensely from analysing big data to gain insights that enhance decision-making and boost confidence in our strategic moves. We have access to a wealth of data about both members and non-members, which can be harnessed to drive our evangelism efforts. Data and analytics empower us to reach more people, increase engagement, foster generosity, activate leaders, and make informed decisions that align with our mission.

Many of us have witnessed a stark contrast between the churches of yesterday and the churches of today. The challenge we face now is how to remain relevant and attractive to an audience bombarded

by distractions. This is where big data becomes invaluable. By analysing data on interests, concerns, preferred literature, distribution sources, and message methods among millennials, we can adapt our approach to resonate with our target audience.

Embracing big data enables us to positively engage with our members and invest in advocating our unique message to the unchurched in our community. By examining successful outreach strategies employed by other Adventist churches, we can learn from their experiences and incorporate new approaches. Big-data analytics allow us to cut through the clutter and define our needs with precision, allowing us to promote church growth by connecting with our community in unprecedented ways. In this era, harnessing big data is vital for understanding our target audience and planning effective evangelism efforts. By utilising big data, we can make informed decisions for the present, try to predict the future and act accordingly, and benchmark our progress against other churches.

Now, you might have reservations or doubts about utilising data in a church setting. However, let us remember that our success is rooted in understanding and meeting the unique needs of our church members. Data has become integral to our lives, transforming how we interact and make decisions. Just as businesses leverage data to thrive, churches can also use data to make a significant difference in their core mission.

It is time for our church to wholeheartedly embrace big data and unlock its potential. Let's make a lasting impact, build a stronger, more relevant church for generations to come, and seize this opportunity to build a brighter future for Adventism in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

# Archaeopteryx: evolution or creation?

by Dr Jeff Couzins



Archaeopteryx fossil  
Image by fill from Pixabay

In terms of the evolution and creation debate, I was reflecting on the Archaeopteryx fossil, which is considered to be a genus of feathered dinosaur. While such a creature was thought to exist, the explanation for its existence was promoted by palaeontologists as evidence of the evolutionary process from dinosaur to bird. This argument is weak for a number of reasons.

We need to bear in mind that the evidence in the fossil record is superficial, in that all we have is an external impression of a fossil referred to as Archaeopteryx. It is an external imprint of what used to be. However, there is much that the fossil record cannot tell us. For instance, reptiles and birds have vastly different internal skeleton structures, organs, and respiratory systems. Reptiles have solid bones,

whereas bird bones are hollow. Unlike birds, most reptiles also have bladders (snakes do not, but no evolutionist is claiming birds evolved from snakes). Most lizards have what is termed a tidal respiratory system, in that air flows in and out. Birds, in contrast, have bellows-like air sacs scattered throughout the body. This ensures that birds can breathe when flying – it is completely different to reptile respiratory systems, and even to our respiratory system.

Instead of supposedly evolutionary processes, which cannot be explained by evolutionary scientists, a more credible explanation is that God created reptiles and birds as completely separate creatures. While species (different species of finch, for instance, and different species of lizards) have developed different characteristics, a reptile remains a reptile and a bird remains a bird.

This demonstrates that we can rely on God's Word when it records in Genesis 1:20, 21, 'Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, *according to their kind*, and every winged bird *according to its kind*. And God saw that it was good' (NKJV, emphasis supplied).



# Hanwell excels

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

*BUC Director for Health, Adventist Community Services & Women's Ministries*



Sarah Lubanga with Hanwell donations for Ukraine

**W**hat does a church caring for its community look like? Hanwell Seventh-day Adventist Church showcases diverse quality outreach initiatives that embrace community needs, offering timely and relevant support. I asked Sarah Lubanga, Area 6D President for the Community Ministry Federation and a Hanwell Church member, to tell us more:

**Sharon Platt-McDonald – Your church is currently involved in a number of community initiatives: please tell us about them.**

**Sarah Lubanga –** We run a wide variety of projects, including supporting refugees from Afghanistan, Ukraine and Germany; a holiday Bible school, resulting in the baptism of a mother and her two children; a regular community lunch, which resulted in two baptisms and a wedding; the foodbank/food hub; the Duke of Edinburgh volunteering section; the Senior Citizens Club; the Phlebotomy Project; the Duvet & Pillow & Bed Sheets Project; Food Grab and Go bags; the Christmas dinner and Christmas hampers initiatives; twice-yearly healthy cooking classes, resulting in a recipe book; a Father's Day dinner;

community chaplaincy; Community Champion Strategy engagement; community 'Big Sing' initiatives; visits to malls, nursing homes, and hospital dialysis wards in Ealing; and book distribution projects.

**SPM – I understand your outreach has extended to 35 other churches and entities over the years. What did that entail?**

**SL –** God blessed us to share our resources with Adventist churches across the North and South England Conferences, as well as with Pentecostal churches, hostels, homeless individuals, shelters, YMCAs, charities, youth-development centres, drop-in centres, foodbanks, and other agencies. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to minister with pastoral teams.

**SPM – Do you involve external agencies in your work?**

**SL –** Yes, including the Trussell Trust Ealing Foodbank, Neighbourly, the Pan Bake Shop, Hanwell2Hanwell (H2H), the Pentecostal Credit Union, St John Ambulance, British Red Cross, the police, the council, Henry Paul Funeral Directors, the Mela, Community Radio Hayes, Green Doctors, the NHS, Hanwell Methodist Church Homeless Soup Kitchen, Heinz Beans Hayes, the Homelessness Broadway Sixty-five Bunny Park Project, and Jesus House of All Nations.

**SPM – I understand that local dignitaries are aware of Hanwell Church's work.**

**SL –** Yes, our work has been recognised by the Mayor of Ealing, Councillor Dr Abdullah Gulaid, and Steve Pound MP. At the Mayor's Ealing Together Honours Party, held on 15 October 2022, we were among the service providers thanked for supporting the community

throughout the pandemic.

**SPM – How many volunteers do you have, and how are they organised?**

**SL –** We have approximately 36, which are a combination of Hanwell church members, H2H volunteers, and our immediate neighbours. The 36 volunteers divide themselves into groups of four each week, which prevents burnout.

**SPM – What is the inspiration behind your outreach to the community?**

**SL –** The love of Christ compels us (2 Corinthians 5:14).

**SPM – What advice would you give to other Community Ministries departments who wish to reach out to their communities?**

**SL –** First of all, work prayerfully and collaboratively with your pastors, church elders and other department leaders. This creates an environment for the church to be pulling in one direction. Collaborative work and reflection help the church meet our goals of building communities and making disciples.

**SPM – Tell us about your clientele and any testimonials they have shared with you.**

**SL –** We have a wide range of clients from various ethnicities. Numerous comments, cards and verbal expressions of gratitude have come from all the clientele of our foodbanks, health checks, and holiday Bible schools.

One person who had missed their plane was walking by, saw our church, entered and explained their situation. Accommodation was provided that night, and they caught their plane the next day.

Then a homeless man who had not slept properly for a week attended the church's Wednesday evening prayer meeting. He was supported and put into a bed & breakfast to rest for a week.

During our Community Grab & Go food bags on Sundays, our pastor, Steve Roberts, takes time to pray and counsel individuals. They express their sincere gratitude.

# Where are the men?

Andrew Rashford-Hewitt,  
North England Conference Men's Ministries Sponsor



As a visitor to a number of churches recently, just as the Lord searched for men to stand in the gap in Ezekiel 22:30, I have looked around and had to ask: 'Where are the men?' With the ratio of women to men approaching two to one, or in some cases three to one, the numbers of men in church have been low for a while. Some will say that in other denominations the ratio may be three or four to one. However, this does not bring me much comfort. Should we somehow be content with the present state of things, which seems to be getting worse? I think not! But in all fairness, in addition to asking, 'Where are the men?' I also have to ask, 'Where are the services, events, activities and programmes for men?'

## Football and rugby

On most weekends well over 400,000 men don certain colours, sing team songs, cheer their teams and travel miles to support their football/rugby team. In these acts men find camaraderie, maleness is reaffirmed, and values are shared when their team wins or loses, meeting the male need to bond around a shared value. Perhaps we can learn something from this and apply it to our church strategy and planning for men. Given the nature of our British post-modern society, the onus to do this is on us – we have to create programming, events, discussion groups and worship opportunities that are designed to meet the needs of men. We have to take the initiative. We have to create

programming, inspired by the Holy Spirit, that will encourage us men to become more like the Lord amid the cultural challenges of today. To achieve such Spirit-led planning and activities, Men's Ministries leadership posts need to be seen as a necessity in nominating committees.

## A mother's concern

In one church recently, a mother asked me, 'Pastor, where is my daughter to find a young Adventist man to marry? Please pray that my daughter will find such a faithful Adventist man.' This mother's concern is shared by many. We must mentor young men, retain young men, and provide positive male role models for teenage and younger boys. We must minister to, engage, train and develop the men presently attending church through mutually enriching male relationships and effective Men's Ministries groups within all of our churches.

## What can be done?

- As nominating season is coming up, raise the priority of finding a Men's Ministries leader.
- Encourage Men's Ministries leaders to engage in training offered by the conferences.
- Embed men's events into the local church calendar.
- Recognise that investing in Men's Ministries is vital for the life, health and future of the church.

As a man, son, father, brother, pastor and current sponsor of Men's Ministries at the North England Conference, I dream to see all of our churches holding more events to which we can invite non-Adventist men, events where men can come together and encourage each other. This is not to ignore the needs of our women and children – no, not at all. All groups are important and need to be ministered to. However, we need to prioritise effective Men's Ministries efforts while we still have the opportunity. If our men are validated, ministered to, equipped, mentored, challenged and empowered by the Spirit, then Sister White's plea for men will be answered (*Education*, p. 57): 'The greatest want of the world is the want of men – men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.'

*The author is planning the NEC's first ever men's retreat, 'Created for Connection and Purpose', on 27-29 October with Pastor Leslie Ackie and other speakers in Kettering, Northamptonshire, as well as the NEC Men's Day of Fellowship on 18 November with Pastor Kirk Thomas in Birmingham. Men are encouraged to attend both of these, and also the SEC weekly Men Talk on Monday evenings hosted by Elder Devon Boyd. For more information, text Pastor Andrew Rashford-Hewitt on 07931 732490.*



# The three faces of Adventist identity: charity, church and corporation

by Wederly Aguiar, *BUC Treasurer*

Our last article addressed the transparency and accountability of the British Union Conference (BUC)'s finances, and how the BUC is accountable to its members, boards and committees, and to the Charities Commission and financial auditors. This article will discuss the many 'faces' of the BUC in its operations.

There is a Japanese proverb which states that we all have three faces: the first face that we show the world; the second face that we show our close friends and family; and the third face, which is the truest reflection of who we are. Similarly, the BUC has three faces. It has the face it shows the world, in the form of being a church; the second face is the one that reflects its purpose and values and gives back to the community, in the form of a charity; and, finally, it has a face that doesn't get spoken about much – the face of being a corporate entity.

Being a church is an important part of the BUC's identity; it can be regarded as the 'truest version' of what the BUC stands for. It is at the heart of our vision and mission of fostering spiritual growth and spreading the Gospel of faith, hope and love. It is the face we are proud to show the world.

This brings us to the second face of the BUC, the charity face. The church is well-known for its humanitarian work, both locally and on a global scale. As a charity, the BUC is accountable to the Charities Commission and has to operate in a

responsible manner and with integrity.

However, when a church becomes a sizeable global enterprise like the Adventist Church, with over 21 million members worldwide, structures are needed to ensure the smooth running of its daily operations. Local churches are led by pastors, elders and boards working cohesively to nurture their communities. Constituents from local churches form conferences with elected conference officers, departmental directors and trustees that provide administrative support. Conferences are overseen by the Union, which shares resources for mission objectives such as Adventist education. Moreover, the Union acts as a vital communication channel between the church and local authorities, enabling coordination across various levels of the organisation. All these entities are part of the General Conference, which plays a crucial role in harmonising ministries on a global scale. To facilitate worldwide outreach, the General Conference is divided into divisions, each responsible for coordinating and supporting a specific region.

With such a comprehensive structure, the church may be classified as both a charity and a corporation. It may sometimes feel as if the corporate face is in conflict with the other two faces, even though it is what allows the church to operate education systems and health systems globally to fulfil its mission.

Since its formation, the Adventist Church has been able to spread its mission through healthcare, education, publishing houses and media centres worldwide. Within the BUC, there are several Adventist

schools: Newbold College of Higher Education, Dudley House School, Newbold Primary School, Stanborough Primary and Secondary Schools, Hyland House School, Fletewood School, and Harper Bell School, all of which are independently inspected to ensure their adherence to national standards of education.

The BUC also has its own publishing house – The Stanborough Press – which distributes literature within the UK as well as overseas, with a physical shop within the BUC building that sells Christian literature and health foods.

In managing these corporations the BUC is subject to corporate Human Resources laws, employment laws and other governing rules of the UK to uphold business practices, and can thereby make a social impact and set an ethical example by conducting business with transparency, integrity and adherence to ethical principles. Managing these enterprises effectively can propel our beliefs and values into action, and the core services that these enterprises provide bolster ministerial support.

The corporate dimension of the church enhances and strengthens the church's various ministries, keeping it accountable to external regulatory bodies while fulfilling its spiritual mission and providing a balance between the spiritual and practical realities that allows the church to make an impact beyond its walls.

In conclusion, understanding the church structure and the faces that the BUC has to portray helps members understand nuances and complexities when it comes to big-picture decisions. These three faces each support the mission of the church.



# Cancer: reducing risks

## Part 1 – an overview

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

*BUC Director for Health, Adventist Community Services & Women's Ministries*

Cancer Research UK states that a person's risk of developing cancer depends on many factors, including age, genetics, and exposure to risk factors. This charity's Cancer Risk Statistics report<sup>1</sup> states that the lifetime risk of cancer in the UK is 50%. This means that 1 in 2 UK people will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. That's a startling statistic. The good news, however, is that 38% of cancers are preventable.

Outlining preventable factors that reduce cancer risks, the above stated report reveals the following statistics:

- Around 4 in 10 UK cancer cases annually (over 135,000 every year) could be prevented.
- Nearly 112,000 England cancer cases, around 13,000 Scotland cancer cases, around 7,200 Wales cancer cases, and around 3,500 Northern Ireland cancer cases every year could be prevented.
- Cancers of the lung, bowel, breast and melanoma skin cancer jointly account for almost two-thirds of all preventable cancer cases in the UK.
- More than 70% of UK cancer cases are attributable to known risk factors for 10 cancer types, including two of the five most common cancer types in the UK (lung cancer and melanoma skin cancer).
- Smoking is the leading cause of cancer in the UK.
- After smoking, being overweight or obese is the UK's second leading cause of cancer.
- Each of the following account for 3-4% of cancer cases in the UK: overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, exposure to some substances at work, exposure to certain types of infections, drinking alcohol, and eating insufficient fibre.
- Exposure to ionising radiation and eating processed meat each cause 1-2% of cancer cases in the UK.
- Exposure to outdoor air pollution and insufficient physical activity both cause 1% or less of cancer cases in the UK.

### Cancer and global impact

The World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies cancer as 'the second leading cause of death globally, accounting for an estimated 9.6 million deaths, or one in six deaths, in 2018'.<sup>2</sup> The WHO further highlights that 'lung, prostate, colorectal, stomach and liver cancer are the most common types of cancer in men, while breast, colorectal, lung, cervical and thyroid cancer are the most common among women'.

Indicating the extent of cancer impact, the WHO reports that 'the cancer burden continues to grow globally, exerting tremendous physical, emotional and financial strain on individuals, families, communities and health systems.'

### Ethnicity

Cancer Research UK findings indicated that some cultural groups are more at risk of certain types of cancers (<https://news.cancerresearchuk.org/2022/03/02/first-data-in-a-decade-highlights-ethnic-disparities-in-cancer/>). Similar findings have been highlighted in the US. In an article titled 'Cancer Statistics, 2023', Siegal et al write: '... although cancer mortality rates continue to decline, future progress may be attenuated by rising incidence for breast, prostate, and uterine corpus cancers, which also happen to have the largest racial disparities in mortality.'<sup>3</sup>

### Lifestyle factors

Macmillan Cancer Support outlines some general risk factors for cancer:<sup>4</sup>



- **Age** – the risk of developing cancer increases as you get older.
- **Lifestyle factors** – practices such as smoking, gaining weight, diet, activity level, sun exposure and sunbed use, and the amount of alcohol one drinks affect a person's risk of developing cancer.
- **Family history** – Some specific cancers are more common in some families. For more information, visit: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/worried-about-cancer/causes-and-risk-factors/family-history-genetics-and-cancer-risk>.

Exploring the scope of lifestyle factors that influence cancer risk, we will commence with dietary impact in the next issue.

### Resources

You can access more general information on cancer via the following: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/10-year-cancer-plan-call-for-evidence/10-year-cancer-plan-call-for-evidence> and <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/cancer-faith-facts-formulas/>.

### Good health!

<sup>1</sup><https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancerstatistics/risk>

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.who.int/health-topics/cancer#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/cancer#tab=tab_1)

<sup>3</sup><https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36633525/>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/worried-about-cancer/causes-and-risk-factors>



# Infected by happiness

by Pastor David Mano, *Welsh Mission*

There is always a conflict of emotions when we start a new project, especially when it pushes us forwards into something that we have never done before. And that was the position I found myself in: a mix of concern and excitement to participate in my first Special Needs Camp. What I discovered was a well-oiled machine that had been functioning for 44 years.

The Special Needs Camp is one of the longest-running camps within the BUC, providing campers with a nice week of holiday and respite for their families and friends. According to Andrew Agnew, the current camp director, this camp 'caters for the physical and mental needs of a variety of campers with varying requirements, such as Down syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy, and general mental health issues'.

I found myself enjoying participating with the campers over their week in Aberdaron, a place distinguished by its gorgeous location with breathtaking views and a sea that begs us to enter. Daily

activities include arts and crafts, singing, walks to the beach, and enjoying ice cream; a day trip to Piggery Pottery, where campers could choose from a variety of pottery items to paint and take home as a gift; and, of course, the must-go place, the dodgems in Pwllheli.

It was amazing to see the joy of every camper participating in the banquet concert, where they could go on stage and perform a series of special items, including singing, acting, dancing, and playing instruments. The mood in the hall was electrifying, and I was in awe of the contagious happiness.

Along with Pastor Jeremy Johnson, I was part of the pastoral team led by Pastor David Rancic. Worship is an integral part of the daily programme. However, 'This is just the surface work,' as Pastor David told me, and as I experienced for myself. During the week, the mission of the camp 'padres' ranges from helping with campers' and staff's spiritual needs to doing shopping and minibus runs.

All of this, of course, would not be possible without the support of volunteer caregivers who dedicate time to look after somebody else. Volker Herkner, the camp nurse and part of the Camp Leading Team, shares that the SNC leaders always need more carers with a caring, committed personality who can help those in need. He admits that 'it is very tiring and challenging', but also adds that while 'you will be tired by the end of the week, you will be

blessed in equal measure'.

Many of the carers, despite their obviously puffy and tired eyes, kept smiling and were happy. Olu and Pat were some of the most amazing people I had the privilege to meet. Olu said, 'This was my first time coming here, and I will come back again. . . . I will try to bring my daughter to participate as well.'

'This is the best camp,' as Andrew puts it, a feeling expressed by all the attendees, including Andy and Michael, a father and son who came for the first time. They said to me that this was 'an opportunity to be among very friendly people'. They plan to come back again.

The aim of the camp is to cater to the needs of people; but, to do so, Andrew recognises the very important help and support from the BUC and local entities. Many of the campers don't have the financial capability to attend the camp – so your contribution, dear reader, can make a massive difference in the quality of the programme. You can help either as a volunteer or financially by donating to the SNC in the tithe envelopes. Just contact the Special Needs Team (email [andrew@specialneedscamp.co.uk](mailto:andrew@specialneedscamp.co.uk) or telephone 07970623444).

At the end of the week, I was exhausted but extremely happy and willing to keep coming back to help every year. All my worries and concerns immediately disappeared as soon as I stepped into the camp and caught the happiness expressed on each camper's face.





# Overflowing blessings at Stanborough Press Open Day!

by Andrew Puckering



Sharon Platt-McDonald chatting with visitors



Bethany Baker



Melody Mason



Brenda Walsh

We thank God for the glorious sunshine, both in our hearts and in the sky, at Stanborough Press Open Day 2023 on 3 September. People came from across the country in a coach, two minibuses, and innumerable cars to hear guest speakers Melody Mason and Brenda Walsh bless eager listeners with their testimonies and encouragement – and what amazing messages they were! ‘I’m absolutely filled – I’m filled to overflowing with blessings,’ one gentleman gushed later at the tills. ‘I came here thinking I’d just sleep in the van, but I didn’t sleep one bit! I didn’t know much about the speakers before the event, but they turned out to be so inspiring, and I was simply blown away!’

Of course, as inspiring as the guest speakers were, they were only part of the attraction. What many people

came for were the books! There were Bibles, hymnals, tracts and other sharing literature, and bargains galore! Many new titles were available, including *The Difference a Day Makes*; Sharon Platt-McDonald’s new book, *Sacred Hours*; and the inspiring life story from Transylvania, *Neither Death Nor Life*. The children also had their own corner, where they could play on soft mats and read some of the many children’s Bible stories and other books available for them. And, of course, there were inspirational music CDs as well as DVDs to watch, along with the ever-popular range of soya foods, sparkling grape juice, tinned foods, health products and treats.

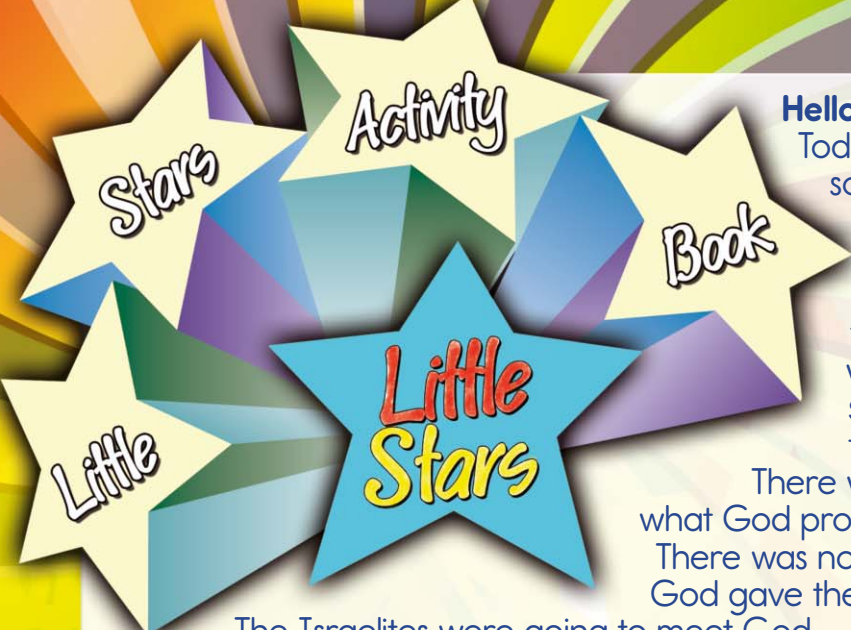


Great as these spiritual and material blessings were, though, what truly brought a smile to my face was the joy of fellowship. Everywhere one looked, there were joyful smiles of recognition, hugs, and enthusiastic chatting as Adventists from across the country caught up with each other and shared Christian fellowship together. Press Open Day has often been described as a kind of mini camp meeting, and it was easy to see why as the saints welcomed the sight of each other’s familiar faces.

One of the new faces this year was that of our new editor, Dusanka Rancic, whose first day of full-time work in the office started the very next day. Dusanka joins us from Wales, where her husband, David Rancic, has been serving as a pastor. Our previous editor, Julian Thompson, has now returned to teaching at Newbold College of Higher Education, and Press staff warmly wish both our outgoing and incoming editors well in their new roles.

All in all, it was a busy day, but a happy one! The tired Stanborough Press staff went home satisfied that the customers had been blessed and God’s name had been glorified at this sunny, joyful and vibrant event. And it’s possible that next year’s open day will be even busier and even more filled with blessings, as the guest speaker is rumoured to be none other than Pastor Pavel Goia. Watch this space – and see you next year at the Stanborough Press Open Day! May God keep you filled to overflowing with blessings until then!





### Hello Little Stars!

Today we're going to talk about something very special: the Ten Commandments.

God had freed His people from slavery in Egypt; He'd led them through the Red Sea, with the waters towering up on each side; and now He'd brought them into the wilderness.

There was no water, except for what God provided through a miracle. There was no food, except for what God gave them from above.

The Israelites were going to meet God.

God was going to give His people some very important rules to live by, so that they could be true to Him and kind to each other all their lives. We call these the Ten Commandments.



See if you can fill in the blanks in each of the following:

You shall have no other  
g   s before me.

You shall not make  
any graven  m  g .

You shall not take the  
n  m  of the Lord  
your God in vain.

Remember the s  b  a  h  
day, to keep it holy.

Honour your f  t   r  
and m   h  r...

You shall not k   .

You shall not commit  
 d   t  r .

You shall not st   l.

You shall not bear  
false w   t  e  s .

You shall not c   v  t.

You can find all of these in Exodus 20. You might want to ask your mummy and daddy what some of these mean.





The fifth commandment says to honour your father and mother. This, as the apostle Paul noticed, was the first commandment with a promise attached. Can you remember what the promise is? (Hint: you can find it in Ephesians 6:3!)

Mount Sinai was covered with smoke and fire, and there was thunder and lightning and a big earthquake. It must have been a magnificent sight! In the space below, draw a picture of how you think it looked.

Read Exodus 20:1-21 and see if you can complete this crossword.

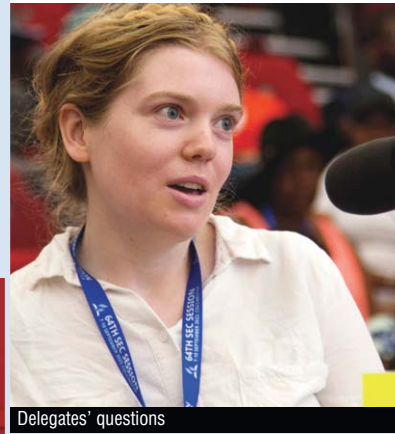
- Down**
1. Which day should be remembered and kept holy?
  2. What does it mean to 'bear false witness'?
  3. Another word for 'carved image' which we should not serve
  5. This instrument was heard on Mount Sinai
  7. God shows this to people who love Him and keep His commandments
- Across**
2. What light flashed across the sky?
  4. The land that God brought the people out of
  6. He spoke with God
  8. The word that means to want something which doesn't belong to you



# ‘We want accountability and change’

by Pastor David Neal, *TED*

The 64th South England Conference (SEC) Session at the University of Essex, Colchester (7-10 September) was the first SEC session since the COVID-19 pandemic. One delegate asked,



Delegates' questions



Pastor Eglan Brooks, BUC President

‘Should we have taken “Caesar’s money” (the Government’s Job Retention Scheme) to support the salary of pastors during furlough?’ Another asked the ‘Where were they?’ question. What lessons must we learn?

A first item of business was the ‘Acceptance of new churches into the sisterhood of churches’ (Oxford International, Watford Romanian, and Prince Emmanuel). Quickly following was an action to approve the recommended number of administrative and departmental budgets (14.75).

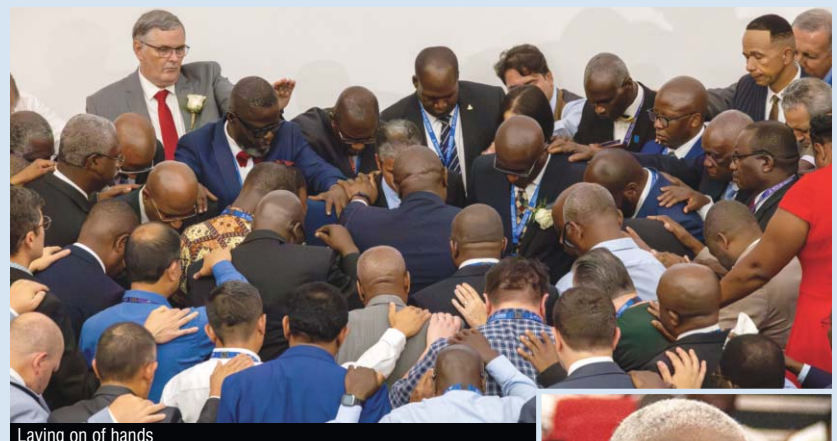
The mood of the delegation was ‘accountability’ – which came vividly to the fore during questions to the

Treasurer about financial decisions made since 2019. The first was about *Hay’s Wood Retreat*, concerning its development, operation, and legal relationship to

the Conference. Why was it so expensive? Why did the Conference raise a £100,000 bank loan to support its development? Since the incumbent treasurer came to office in January 2023, no one was available to give an answer, leaving delegates unsettled.

While membership growth has remained steady, Pastor Douglas McCormac (former executive secretary) reported that ‘the number of baptisms over the last ten years has been dropping quite rapidly’. Total membership at the end of 2022 was 26,651.

Election to office is the drama of any conference session, and this one was no exception. The results are reported elsewhere, but of note were two new words articulated by the British Union President and Chair of the Nominating Committee, Pastor Eglan Brooks: ‘I wish, when it comes to the election of administrators and directors, we could have “proportional representation”’. He did not go on to explain what he meant, but it is widely understood that he was referring to matters of inclusion and diversity in leadership. In addition, he was at pains to stress the inadequacy of the current election process, and how things need to change. He promised to work to bring such change about. It was a mood reflected by delegates.

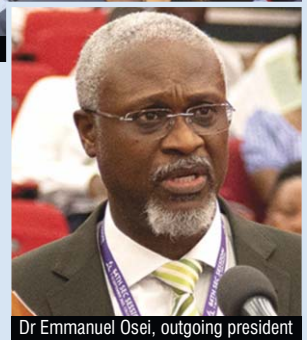


Laying on of hands

## Ordination service

by Don Roberts,  
*SEC Communications and Media Assistant*

The SEC celebrated an ordination and commissioning service on Sabbath 9 September during its 64th Session meeting.



Dr Emmanuel Osei, outgoing president





The candidates

The candidates were Seth Adjare (pastor at Brighton & Hove and Worthing Churches); Tremon Jackson (Chalford, Gloucester, and St Aldate Group); Lon Jones (Southampton and Lifelink); Sameer Khurwolah (Hutton and Harlow Central); Robis da Silva (Taunton Church and Yeovil International Company); and Gregory Wilson (Canterbury, Folkestone, Ashford

International, and Margate Group).

Each candidate's journey into ministry was shared by their mentors, who commended their faith and resilience, particularly in the face of various personal, economic, and cultural challenges.

Dr Emmanuel Osei, the outgoing SEC president, delivered a powerful homily emphasising the privilege and responsibility of shepherding a flock.

Osei also highlighted *ubuntu*, a philosophy based on solidarity and compassion, and urged the candidates to support each other, particularly their female colleague.

After the prayer of ordination and commissioning during the laying on of hands, led by the British Union Conference President, Pastor Eglan Brooks, the charge was delivered by the Trans-European Division President, Dr Daniel Duda.

The newly elected SEC president, Dr Kirk Thomas, then formally welcomed them into ministry in his first official duty as President.

The service concluded with a reflective response from Pastor Sameer Khurwolah on behalf of his colleagues. He spoke of their diverse struggles, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and solicited prayer from the congregation as they entered a new phase of their ministry.

## Politics and prayer

by Natasha Pujols (née Mirilov)

650 delegates to the 64th Session of the South England Conference congregated for prayer, daily



Pastor Pardon Mwansa

devotion, and, most importantly, to attend to the church's business. 'Church', 'charity' and 'corporation' were three words used to describe the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the Session. Many would disagree that those words go hand in hand, and struggle with the notion of business and politics having their place within the church concept. However, the daily devotional leader, former GC vice president Pastor Pardon Mwansa, reminded delegates of the story in Acts 1 where the disciples of Jesus were voting for a new disciple to take Judas's stead.

Being a Spirit-led delegate begins with divesting oneself of all preconceived ideas and agendas and 'asking God for His Holy Spirit to lead', former SEC president Pastor Emmanuel Osei stated. 'If we come with that, we may find that our own agendas might just vanish away. Or some of the decisions that will be taken that we didn't agree with, we will come to accept.' Pastor Eglan Brooks, the British Union President, seconded this statement as he claimed the aim of the Session was 'not to fulfil the plans that we made before we came here, but to fulfil what the Spirit guides'.

This was evident to first-time delegate 22-year-old Almasi Samuels from Lewisham Church. 'I saw a lot of the decisions that were being made were on behalf of looking out for all the churches worldwide. That made me appreciate the leaders and how much they rely on God and the strength of each other to run the church.'

With a new leadership team in place, newly elected SEC president Dr Kirk Thomas invites everyone to join him every Wednesday to fast and pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to be with the Conference, 'so the church will be a place where God's Spirit dwells'.



Photography: Courtesy of SEC Media



The new SEC team: Pastor Nathan Stickland (Executive Secretary), Pastor Kirk Thomas (President) and Ann Swaby (Treasurer)



Outgoing executive secretary, Pastor Douglas McCormac

# The Nominating Committee Report

by Pastor Sam Davies, *BUC Communications Director*

One of the most significant businesses of the 64<sup>th</sup> SEC Session was the election of officers for the next quadrennium. The Nominating Committee, which fulfils this task, is usually the first committee to be selected by the Recommendations Committee.

On Friday 8 September, the second day of the Session, the Nominating Committee announced the election of a new president, Dr Kirk Thomas, to lead the SEC, the largest conference within the British Union Conference (BUC).

Pastor Thomas has been the Director of Evangelism and Personal Ministries at the British Union Conference since 2016. He previously served at the SEC as Personal Ministries and Sabbath School Director.

He is an ordained minister with over twenty-eight years of ministerial experience. He holds degrees from the University of Southern Caribbean, Inter-American Theological Seminary and Andrews University.

Thomas says he lives to empower and mentor people for the Kingdom of God. He has been married to Carol, a radiographer, for over twenty-seven years, and they have four lovely children – Fonah, Tivonah, Daniel and Kassanah.

The second partial report of the Nominating Committee was for the post of Executive Secretary, which went to Pastor Nathan Stickland. He has been serving as Area 7 coordinator and pastor for the St Albans and Welling churches.

Mrs Ann Swaby retains the role of Treasurer, which she has held since January.

Other nominations are as follows:

## Directors

Children's Ministries & Safeguarding – Judy Clements  
 Church Growth & Global Mission – Pastor Wayne Erasmus  
 Communications & Media – Pastor Sorin Petrof



Dr Emmanuel Osei, outgoing president, and his wife

- Community Ministries – Pastor Nerine Barrett
- Family Ministries – Pastor Rio Espulgar
- Health Ministries – Edith Samambwa
- Ministerial Association Secretary – Pastor Kwesi Moore
- Personal Ministries & Literature Evangelism – Pastor Royston Smith
- Pathfinders – Pastor Clifford Herman
- PARL – Pastor Brighton Kavaloh
- Sabbath School – Pastor Kwadwo Kwarteng-Ampofo
- Stewardship & Trust Services – Pastor Augustus Lawrence
- Teens – Pastor JooJo Bonnie
- Women's Ministries – Jacqueline Otokpa
- Young Adults – Pastor Warren Gillin

## Executive Committee

- President (Chair) – Pastor Kirk Thomas
- Executive Secretary – Pastor Nathan Stickland
- Treasurer – Ann Swaby
- Pastor Kwesi Moore
- Pastor Royston Smith
- Pastor Warren Gillin
- Judy Clements
- Area 1 – Caleb Akinola
- Area 2 – Stefano Bertolini
- Area 3 – To be confirmed
- Area 4 – David Santineer
- Area 5 – Dr Paul Thompson
- Area 6A – Pastor Jude Jeanville, Miguelle Scantlebury
- Area 6B – Pastor Lewis Quaye, Dwane Lawson
- Area 6C – Pastor Harrison Mburani, Kwasi Ntiamoah Ampona
- Area 6D – Pastor Steve Roberts, Serene Allen
- Area 7 – Sandra Golding
- Area 8 – Natalie Henry
- Two additional lay people (to be confirmed)





## Prophecies of Hope 2023: Coventry and Nuneaton

April 2023 was rainy and stormy to say the least. However, by faith, 29 April was earmarked as the day when the Coventry district would hold the groundbreaking event in preparation for the Prophecies of Hope series, which was to take place a couple of weeks later.

On that Sabbath the sun shone for the first time in more than three weeks. Children gathered at the fountain close to the health expo venue, and many parents came to the health expo. The early teens gave out goody bags in the city centre, inviting the public to come. Before we knew it, more than 100 goody bags were gone, with many of the beneficiaries being escorted to the venue. In no time the venue was full of people queuing to go on the exercise bike, waiting to create their bike-powered smoothie. More than 30 people managed to go through all eight stations, and many left beaming with hope, talking about the eight principles of health and ready to make the necessary changes.

Miraculously, the weather continued to hold until the health expo was over, just as when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea or when Joshua fought the Amalekites and prayed for the sun to stand still. Miracles still happen!

The health theme continued into the following week at the local church, when a cooking demonstration was held under the topic, 'Cook and eat

well on a budget'. This was a hands-on activity, with members preparing a healthy soup in real time. On day two, Dr Beatrice Kastrati (NEC Health Ministries Director) talked about looking after the gut.

On day three, Team GB coach (Joseph Caines) and his wife led those present in different exercises. The session was filled with laughter, and he ensured that none was left behind in the exercises, because the exercises were tailor-made to individual needs.

The following week targeted our emotional and mental health, and Alfred Amphosa, a nursing professional, shared a powerful message on 'sleep, rest, and also basic life support'. Also, Lovemore and Tembie Masiane, both mental health professionals, delivered lessons on mental health well-being and empowered us with a mental health toolkit. Sessions are being planned for the future to tackle mental health issues that have taken the world by storm.

Saturday 13 May saw the igniting of the Prophecies of Hope evangelistic series fire, as the guest speaker was Dr Jim Howard from the General Conference. The sun was shining again, every day for the two weeks, and each night he jokingly told us that he had brought the sun to Coventry when the days leading to the campaign were dark and grey. Indeed, he had brought the Sun of Righteousness to Coventry (Malachi 4:2). The mysteries of Revelation and Daniel were explained in plain language under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Traditionally, we have always had the children's section, where the children demonstrate their knowledge of the Bible, and every child gets a gift every night for participating, but there is a champion for every night.

Sabbath 27 June was declared baptism Sabbath. There was joy in the Coventry and Nuneaton district as the Coventry Central church was full to capacity – in fact, it was over-full, as 12 candidates from the district entered the waters of baptism: two candidates from Coventry North, three sisters from Nuneaton, and seven young people from Coventry Central. In fact, all candidates except one were under the age of 25. Dr Jim Howard was in a celebratory mood as he pronounced each candidate baptised. Dr Patrick Herbert physically baptised each candidate. He also declared, 'This venture was enjoyable and memorable, and it was truly a blessing to see our district work together. We look forward to whatever God has in store for us next.'

You can see much more about this on the Coventry YouTube channel.

EDITH MOKADA





## Healthy, happy Lincoln

Sunday 25 June was the culmination of many months of planning for Lincoln's first health expo hosted by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We want to thank and praise God for being with us and inspiring us to reach out.

The groundwork had started earlier, as we managed to get the Mayor and Sheriff of Lincoln along with representatives from the police and fire brigade, as a result of Elder Horace Squire having been actively engaged in the community in Lincoln over many years.

On Sabbath morning the Mayor thanked us for our desire to see Lincoln become a healthier county. He, along with the Sheriff, stayed as our visiting speaker, Dr George Mabeza, a respiratory physician, reminded us of the dangers of unseen health traps, such as isolation, loneliness and poor mental health. We were also blessed with the presence of the NEC Health Director, Dr Beatrice Kastrati, and the incoming NEC Ministerial Director, Pastor Julian Kastrati, as well. The whole of Lincoln Church came together in support, along with supporters from Grantham.

The Mayor opened up on Sunday at the Arboretum Park at 12 noon, and we were blessed to have Pastor Solon and Dee Kyriacou, as this was their last official engagement before they moved to the Nottingham district. They ably managed the 'Trust in God' section, and we really appreciated their help, input and guidance. We were also privileged to have Hope UK, a local charity, join us. They equip children, young people and adults to make drugs-free choices.

So many people in Lincoln Church did an excellent job: Natalie, Addie, Elijah and Dujohn, Jean and Katya. Food always draws people to events, so we were happy to have Sister Dawn's catering expertise. Without these and many more, this expo would not have succeeded. I was very impressed with Kim, who recruited her non-Adventist nursing friends to come and help, staying all day with us and giving of their time.

There are so many memories to take away from a day like this – the camaraderie, the community spirit, the



Left to right: Neula Larajeira Poberenzny; Nigel Nicholls; the Mayor of Lincoln, Councillor Biff Bean; Horace Squire; and the Sheriff of Lincoln, Councillor Neil Murray

many stalls where we engaged with people from the community – but one abiding memory is the tug-of-war competitions we held with the fire brigade and the police, with lots of laughter ensuing. As they lost, they want to come again next year to secure a prize!

Please pray for us as we undertake the follow-up programmes to support the three people who have started coming to church, along with the eight who have requested to join our regular health walks and continuing health seminars. We see this becoming an annual event, with Lincoln Church serving the community and demonstrating the good news of health and God's love.

NIGEL NICHOLLS, HEALTH DEPARTMENT LEADER, LINCOLN

## Sydenham health expo

On Sabbath 12 August Sydenham Church launched their health expo under the leadership of the Health Ministries leader, Loris Douglas.

The day started with a vibrant panel discussion based on the eight laws of health, followed by an informative and riveting presentation by Dr Peter Roach, in which he highlighted that the consistent application of the eight principles of health will reward us with improved health and happiness.

Following the morning programme, the volunteers served a healthy lunch, after which we fellowshiped with one another.

In the afternoon, the various health checks were conducted by health professionals and volunteers from the community. We were also privileged to have with us Dr Rosemann Channer, who has been very faithful in supporting us each year. She conducted one-to-one consultations with members of the community, who were impressed with our efforts and community spirit.

Food parcels were distributed to the community, and we were confident that our NEWSTART message resonated with our visitors. We had a good turnout, and the day ended on a high note. To God be the glory!

LORIS DOUGLAS, HEALTH MINISTRIES LEADER, SYDENHAM





Pastor Dwayne Jones prays

## 'Praise Him in your season'

'Cling to Jesus, and in all things praise the Lord,' encouraged Patsy Reid, Hackney's praise leader, during the Hackney Church Praise Day held on Sabbath 24 June 2023. Among the special guests in the packed congregation were Pastor Dwayne Jones from Jamaica; Lydia Joseph from the US Virgin Islands; and local gospel choir maestro and recording artist Clive Brown.

The Sabbath School presented by First Elder John Mathieu was a real treat for all, followed by a praise break led by children from Hackney's Junior Sabbath School. Chris Brooks, gospel musical director and recording producer, welcomed everyone, and during Divine Service Hackney's praise team, led by Myrtle O'Keefe and Lloyd Reid, encouraged an atmosphere of worship and praise. Hackney's children, under the narration of Terval John and Azariah Thomas, acted out the stories of Joseph, Job and David to demonstrate how each character praised God. Elder John Locker spoke being comforted during bereavement, while Lydia Joseph thanked the church for donations towards the rebuilding of the Philadelphia Adventist Church in St Thomas, US Virgin Islands, which was devastated by hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. Eileen Philip shared an emotional account of her restoration from an eight-year battle with depression, while her son, Darell Philip, testified of a previous student of his who had turned his life around after being permanently excluded from school. Azariah Thomas and Neriah Adewuyi read scriptures before the preaching and singing of Hackney's pastor, Vaughn Thorpe, joined by the SEC Church Buildings and Property Development Director, Pastor Steve McKenzie. The *Seasons of Praise* podcast hosted by Lloyd Reid and David Mathieu during the afternoon featured further testimonies, praises and prayers, showing how to praise God through all seasons of our lives.

DARELL J. PHILIP, PR & COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

## 'Christ above all': Hackney's Men's Ministries Day

The Hackney Church Men's Ministries Department took centre stage on Sabbath 17 June, the day before Father's Day. Sabbath School Superintendent for the day, Elder Darell Philip, shared some *Minute Motivators for Men* (2014) by Stan Toler: 'Become a lifelong learner. . . . Your mind is one of the few things you can expand without breaking it,' followed by the adult lesson study, led by Clive Humphrey from the Tottenham Lighthouse Seventh-day Adventist church. A special song by Hackney's Male Voice Group thrilled all in the sanctuary and those watching online. Elder Philip closed Sabbath School by quoting Stoler again: 'In racing, the driver is in



Hackney's Male Voice Singing Group

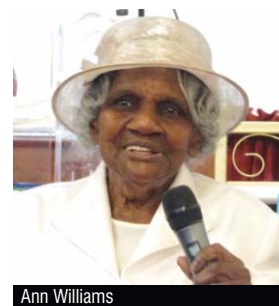
constant communication with someone who has a better view of the track – who knows the conditions of the car and the driver. You have a similar advantage. Your Heavenly Father sees everything. He knows the conditions and He knows you. Be an overcomer.'

During Divine Service, Elder Dominique Clem from the Balham church spoke on 'turning failure into achievement', noting that every man needs to have an encourager in his life. Elder Clem then left the men with 'Five steps for well-being' during his afternoon presentation: 'Connect with others; be physically active; learn a new skill; give to others; and pay attention to the present moment.'

DARELL J. PHILIP, PR & COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

## Hackney Church Day of Prayer

On Sabbath 3 June Hackney Seventh-day Adventist Church held a day of prayer under the theme, 'Are you ready?' relating to sharing the Gospel, which will precede the return of Christ. Sabbath School superintendents



Ann Williams

Vivian Nelson and Brenda Nelson welcomed the congregation, and children from the Junior Sabbath School also presented on the theme of readiness.

The guest speaker, Elder David Billet from Croydon Church, testified of the impact of his praying parents. His song, 'His eye is on the sparrow', was particularly moving.

A special prayer room was set aside, and members and visitors were also given opportunities to testify of God's goodness: 93-year-old founder member, Ann Williams, praised God for sparing her life during the pandemic, and another guest speaker, Elder Rohail John from the London Asian church, testified of a five-year battle with an issue of blood which God miraculously healed, to the amazement of the medical personnel. 'God is calling us to the *next level* in our prayer lives, but in order to receive the answers we need, we must make room for the Spirit to work within our lives to bring about repentance,' said the recently ordained 22-year-old elder.

Attendees were charged to be true ambassadors of Christ, and the Area 6C Prayer Ministries Coordinator, Alex Dhlakama, admonished members to feed on the word of God. Hackney's Prayer Ministries leader, Eileen Philip, commended the many members and visitors who had prayed and fasted throughout the day.

DARELL J. PHILIP, PR & COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT



## Golden wedding anniversary dedicatory service

Elder Orville and Sister Ruth Baxter were married in 1973; and exactly 50 years later, on 12 August 2023, family and friends gathered at Holloway Seventh-day Adventist Church, the venue of their wedding, to witness the couple rededicate themselves to God. Pastor K. Moore, Pastor B. Kavaloh and Pastor G. Baxter, the brother of Elder O. Baxter who came especially for the service from the USA, presided over the ceremony. Pastor Baxter in his sermonette reminded us that what we were witnessing is 'exceptional in today's culture', and commented that their marriage was still holding strong because they were 'pushing together in the same direction'. Pastor Kavaloh presented a revised version of the vows. The service ended with the couple being anointed by the pastors and a dedicatory prayer.

ELDER SONIA MUNROE



Left to right: Pastor Kwesi Moore, Pastor Brighton Kavaloh, Sister Ruth Baxter & her husband Elder Orville Baxter, Pastor Glen Baxter



## Newark Church Pathfinder investiture

It was joyous for the congregation and visitors of Newark Church to witness another special investiture of Newark and Grantham Pathfinders and Adventurers on 29 July 2023. Twenty children were fully invested following the completion of their respective coursework requirements and successfully passing the pre-investiture folder inspection by Area 4 coordinators Ruth Richards and Yvonne Weekes.

All children reflected on their favourite moments over the year: the Early Bird class enjoyed the Scavenger Hunt with Counsellor Esther Bernstein; the Sunbeam class learned good table manners with a mini banquet hosted by their counsellor and deputy club director, Rebecca Sammy; the Builders described how to make

wise choices and prioritise God, as taught by Counsellor Aaron Sammy; and the Friend class reflected on their camping and hiking experiences. Their counsellor and club director, Matthew Sammy, expressed what a delight it was to guide them.

Several area coordinators praised the club for working so hard, recognising that the Newark Pathfinder and Adventurer Club had the best-presented folders in the whole of Area 4, being one of the very few clubs to have a 100% pass rate in the pre-investiture inspection.

Senior Area Coordinator Levon Johns noted how much the club had grown, thanked all those who have invested their time and efforts to support the children, and reminded the children to stay true to God.

VANESSA GENT, COMMUNICATIONS STEWARD, NEWARK CHURCH

## Wolverhampton Central unlocks the secrets of prophecy

Having dedicated the first three months of 2023 to looking at the area of prophecy, Wolverhampton Central are now embarking on a twice-weekly Bible study on Zoom, focusing on 'the secrets of prophecy'.

The Bible studies have attracted regular members and visitors, and together we have begun to explore current and last-day events. Our skilled teachers, Pastor Jeff Nicholson, Elder Mark Palmer, Elder Paul Munroe and Elder Clive Palmer (Moss Side Community Seventh-day Adventist Church) allow the participants to ask questions and debate. The Bible studies are relaxed, but at the same time are the perfect learning environment. The participants use their teaching manual during and after the study.

Everyone can join the studies and share them with family members and friends.

The study takes place on Sundays and Thursdays at 7pm. The login details are 993 3983 6458 with the password 'SECRETS'.

DONNA PALMER



Elder Paul Munroe, Pastor Jeff Nicholson, and Elder Mark Palmer



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Pastor Chenjoral  
Friday evening speaker

Pastor Dr Leo Ackie  
BUC Family Life Director  
Sabbath AM speaker

Elder Edwin Abacon  
Sabbath school leader

Pastor A. Rashford-Hewitt  
NEC men's sponsor

Pastor Dan Duchin  
Sunday morning speaker

For more information text Pastor A.R.H on 07931 732490 Bookings close Sun Oct 22nd

North England Conference

## Treasurers, Elders & Diaconate Retreat

# CONNECTED

### Leadership

10-12 November 2023



**Dr Fredrick Russell**  
Guest Speaker

Address  
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Yarnfield - Spine  
Staffordshire  
ST15 0NL

**Cost Per Person**  
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Double £180  
Twin £180

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### Hope – The Gift of Heaven

A new sharing resource on the topic of hope has been produced by the Adventist Discovery Centre in partnership with Sharon Platt-McDonald, called *Hope – The Gift of Heaven*. You can read about it here: <https://adventistdiscoverycentre.org/hope-the-gift-of-heaven/>. This publication is born out of a sincere desire to share the power of hope – a hope that comes not from what we see around us, but from a God who is constant and trustworthy.

The booklet is available in print at the ADC office. Place your free orders by emailing [adc@adventist.uk](mailto:adc@adventist.uk) or phoning 01923 672606.

**Stanborough Secondary School: volunteers required**

Stanborough Secondary School is seeking volunteers who wish to give 12-24 months in missionary service. This is the only Seventh-day Adventist secondary school in the British Union Conference. Last year eight of our students were baptised, and we hope that you can join us on the journey of educating for eternity. Visit [www.spsch.org](http://www.spsch.org) for the job description and application form.

**Boarding School Assistant Dean (two positions)**  
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**Stanborough Secondary School** Stanborough Park, Watford, WD25 9JT  
Telephone: 01923 673268

**God is the Master of our school.**

DATE	VENUE	TIME
7 October	Hanwell Church	After sunset
14 October	Coventry Central	After sunset
14-15 October	Scottish Mission Day of Fellowship & Open Day	
28	Bristol Central	After sunset

## Messenger

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

To receive the *Messenger*, delivered free to your home along with *Focus* magazine and *Adventist World* magazine, scan the QR code or email: [msubs@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:msubs@stanboroughpress.org.uk)







## Bristol Central Church celebrates baptism of six young people

On 10 June six precious souls entered the baptismal pool at Bristol Central Seventh-day Adventist Church, which was packed as the service commenced, fittingly, with the hymn 'The cleansing wave'.

The officiating pastor, Curtis Samuel, presented a short sermonette from Romans 6:3-4 and Hebrews 13:5-6, filled with exhortation and positive affirmations for the candidates and the church at large,

stating that Jesus is not interested in your past, but in your future. 'You are on a journey,' he said, noting that Jesus will never leave us or forsake us, and encouraging those present not to give up.

Elder Patrick introduced the candidates, and the baptismal vows were read by Pastor Bismark Dwura before Pastor Curtis and Pastor Bismark took turns to baptise the candidates. The proud parents, families, friends and church members clapped and shouted loud amens throughout the ceremony.

The candidates were then greeted and accepted into the church family. Welcome packs containing spiritual books and a bouquet of flowers were handed out to each one of them. The closing hymn was 373, 'Seeking the lost'. Everyone echoed that it was a beautiful service and a high day in Zion. *MARY PHILIP, COMMUNICATION/COMMUNITY HEALTH MINISTRIES*

## A celebration of evangelistic success

The Reading Ghana church concluded a two-week evangelistic campaign with joy at the Grace Centre, Reading, as 23 souls were baptised in the presence of around 350 people, including nearly 100 visitors. This triumphant event, themed 'Reserved', was led by Pastor Anthony Melchizedeck from Accra, Ghana.

We enjoyed the support of Slough Ghana, and Bracknell and Wokingham Ghana Seventh-day Adventist churches. Six candidates from Slough Ghana Church, two from Bracknell and Wokingham, and fifteen from Reading Ghana joined in a triumphant celebration of baptism. Pastor George Boakyee Asiamah of Reading Ghana Church and Pastor Anthony Melchizedeck joined hands in the baptismal pool to baptise the candidates, with support from Pastor Amos Mitchell.



Several remarkable individual stories emerged from the series.

Robert, an indigenous British man, had been a Protestant but became a Bhuddist. Following the death of his wife, a friend invited him to the Reading Ghana church, where he found acceptance and comfort, leading to his baptism.

Pastor George was privileged to baptise his youngest son, Yaw, aged 14. Yaw kept his decision secret until late afternoon on Thursday to surprise his dad. After his baptism, his father gave him a warm embrace with tears of joy.

*PASTOR GEORGE ASIAMAH*

## Knowsley baptism

On Sabbath 8 July 2023 Lisa Jacobs, Michael Hopewell and Ashley Nyarashe publicly declared their commitment to Christ through baptism at Anglesey, North Wales. The occasion was presided over by Pastor Romel Ricarte of Knowsley Church Plant, who had led their unconventional but intensive Bible studies: 'We are sure to have Bible study, even before we play tennis,' said the candidates.

The candidates chose to have a public baptism on the idyllic beaches of Anglesey, supported by members of Knowsley Church Plant, Warrington, Liverpool and Manchester, and the candidates' non-church family members. Beach-users, ramblers, and the residents of nearby caravans stopped to witness the moment – a highly spiritual and emotional day for all attendees.

As 3 John 4 (NASB) states: 'I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.' May God's continuous leading and guidance be with the newly baptised members.

*ELDER EDWIN ABACAN*



**Celia Parker (1942-2023) d. 22 July.**

Celia Parker was born in Winchester on 14 August 1942; but, tragically, her mother, Betty, died from tuberculosis shortly after. Celia suffered from chronic asthma throughout her life, spending long periods in hospital. This greatly impacted her education, and she left school at 15 without any qualifications. Celia found employment in a local chemist shop and soon realised she was a 'people' person. In the early '60s she moved to London to work in Harrods as a sales manager with her own jewellery counter.



Around this time she became very interested in spiritualism and the New Age movement. Having been brought up in a home where Catholic and Anglican beliefs were practised by her father and stepmother respectively, she read the Bible and was convinced that neither of these religions was for her. Celia continued seeking for truth, and one day she picked up a pamphlet advertising a series of seminars claiming to foretell the future. Intrigued, and mistakenly thinking this would be a fortune-telling experience, she walked into the New Gallery in London, where George Knowles, a Seventh-day Adventist evangelist, was holding a seminar on prophecy! Celia was convicted by the Holy Spirit that finally she was hearing the truth for which she had been searching, and was baptised soon after. Celia also met her future husband, Denis Ternent, at the same seminar, and the couple were married in the Wimbledon church in 1970.

Celia and Denis had two children: Fiona in 1971, and Benjamin in 1975. During the '70s and '80s Celia worked as a cleaner, a home help, and a colporteur for the church, something she particularly loved. She felt her experience in sales had trained her for that role in spreading the Gospel.

In 1989 the family emigrated to New Zealand, but the marriage broke down and they returned to the UK in 1991. Celia went to care for her ageing stepmother in Nottingham and worked part-time for the North England Conference, where she trained as a lay preacher. Having no official educational qualifications, she believed her new talent to write and preach came from God, and lay evangelism became her focus.

In 2009 Celia moved to Northern Ireland to be closer to her children and grandchildren, becoming a valued member of the Belfast church and her local community in Ballyclare. She continued lay preaching and made many new friends in Coleraine, Larne and Banbridge, where she loved to help out with the Sunday morning breakfast club.

Celia gave many things. She was a blood donor for 25 years; knitted teddies for children in Africa; volunteered in the Action Cancer charity shop in Ballyclare; and read to the residents in a home for young vulnerable adults. Celia was an avid ADRA supporter, participating in the annual collection, creating opportunities for local businesses to hear about the charity's work, and even holding Bible studies with her neighbours.

In 2019 Celia was diagnosed with vascular dementia, largely caused by asthma. Her daughter, Fiona, had the

honour to care for Celia during the pandemic, but increased isolation seemed to escalate her dementia. Despite this, Celia stayed positive and cheerful to the end, being gentle and thankful to all her carers. She was a woman of faith and hope in the resurrection at the Second Coming, and she shared the character of Jesus to her last conscious moment.

The Alzheimer's Society offered immense support to the family during her final months, and its symbol was worn by all who attended Celia's funeral at the Belfast church on 27 July. Her chosen hymn, 'Blessed assurance', aptly expressed her faith and hope in the Lord. We all, with the wider family, look forward to that glorious resurrection day.

F. MCKEE & C. SWAIN



**Roger Hamilton Hill (1941-2023) d. 26 July.**

Roger was born on 27 October 1941 in Grays, Essex. He was educated at Palmers Green Grammar School and Stanborough Park School, and then worked his way through Newbold College. He spent a number of years working at Granose and also drove one of the vans around London – he was proud to work for the church. Most of his working life, though, was spent as a sales rep for various companies, including Nestlé. This was an ideal occupation for Roger, who had a sociable, outgoing personality.

In 2001 he married Yvonne and they moved to Norfolk, where he served as an elder at the Yarmouth church. Roger and Yvonne helped run the Network Yarmouth ecumenical website and served on a number of committees, including Churches Together. He became known as 'Mr Snappy' for taking the official photos and was even invited to preach at the local Methodist church. The Port Chaplain was a good friend, and Roger worked with him on ships that came into dock and also the Seafarers Mission.

In 2014 they moved to Weston-super-Mare to be nearer to family, and Roger started to experience dementia symptoms. He was admitted to hospital in July with aspiration pneumonia due to a long-term swallowing condition, and passed away soon after.

The funeral service was held at Weston-super-Mare Church on Tuesday 15 August and was taken by a pastor and friend, Rio Espulgar. The service, a celebration of his life, was blessed by special musical items. The committal took place at Weston Crematorium.

Roger had a great zest for life; he loved talking to people and sharing his faith whenever he got the opportunity. He will be remembered for his great sense of humour and his smile. He will be greatly missed by Yvonne, his brother David, son Peter, granddaughter Francesca, and daughter Lisa, as well as friends in Weston and Norfolk.

LISA SABADIN

**Messenger**

Volume 128 • 9 – 29 September 2023

Editor: **Dusanka Rancic**

Design: **David Bell**

Proof reading: **Andrew Puckering**

Production and distribution: **Peter Oppong-Mensah**

COPY FOR No. 11 – 19 October 2023

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The Editor may alter, clarify, précis or expand articles sent to her if she thinks it necessary. Published monthly on Fridays by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. For general enquiries, email: [info@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:info@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

Printed in the UK.

Visit the **BUC website at:**

[www.adventist.org.uk](http://www.adventist.org.uk)

ISSN 0309-3654

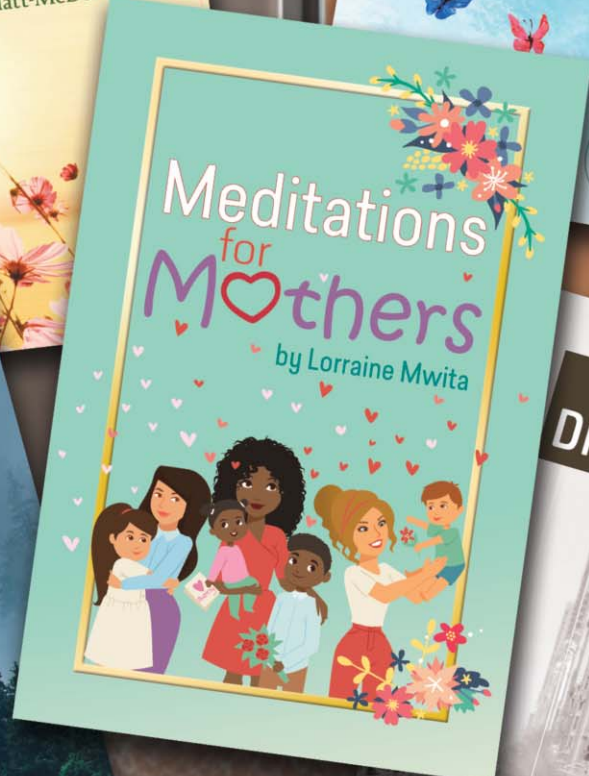
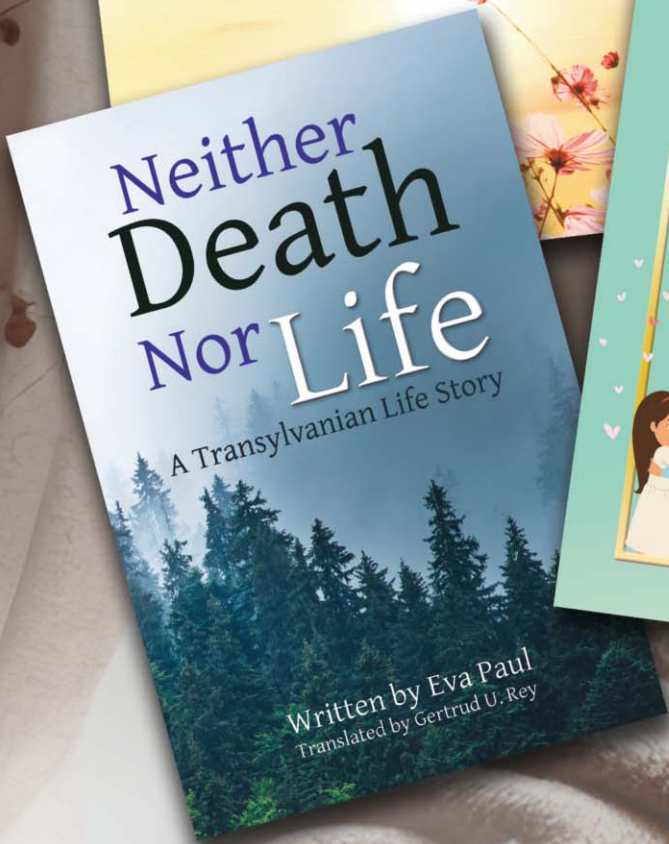
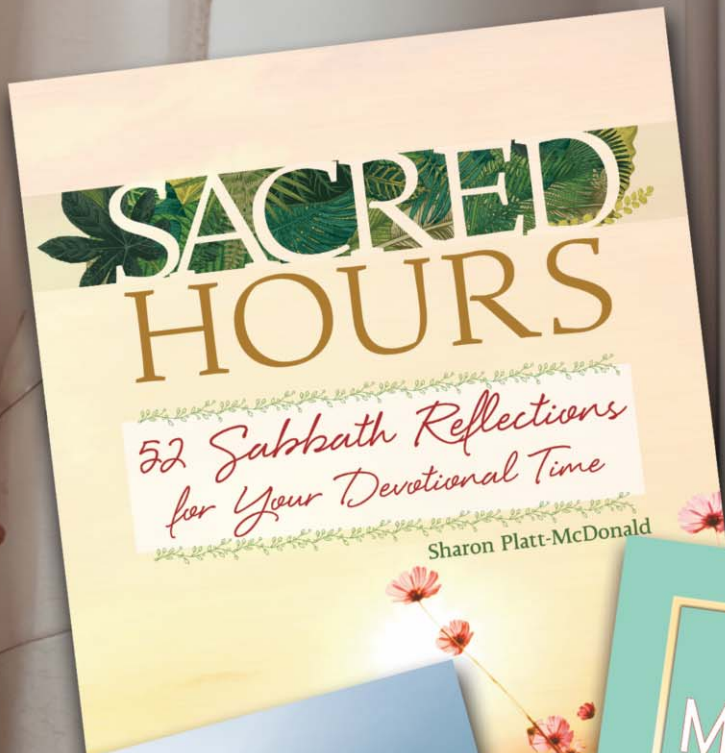
**Sunset**

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	Lord	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Sept 29	6.44	6.56	6.47	6.54	7.06
Oct 6	6.28	6.40	6.31	6.36	6.48
13	6.12	6.25	6.14	6.18	6.31
20	5.58	6.10	5.59	6.01	6.15
27	5.44	5.56	5.44	5.44	5.59



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