

# Messenger

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

Established 1902

27 October 2023 • Volume 128 • 10

My journey with the  
Lord and the church  
Adventists feature in the  
BBC's *Songs of Praise*  
Creative writing  
for evangelism  
Fun Zone  
'Count Me In'  
News, notices & baptisms

+ *SEC Camp Meeting*

## Red, amber and green

Laws ensure the balance between  
rights and responsibilities



## Strategic Priority (10) – Legal

### Aim:

- Reflect best practice based on sound business principles, compliance, and effective and timely reporting.

### Objectives:

- Ensure all staff and trustees know not only their rights, but also their obligations to the BUC.
- Ensure that all entities comply with legal, charitable and policy guidelines.
- Embrace structures that would ensure that we are legally compliant in how we operate.



## Red, amber and green

by Pastor Eglan Brooks,

*President of the British Union Conference*

In 1920 a Detroit traffic officer, William Potts, created the four-way, three-coloured traffic light system. Today these traffic lights are automated, often with cameras attached.

There are days when I really dislike traffic lights. It seems that they conspire to interrupt my journey. As I approach, they change from green to amber, and then immediately to red (or so it appears). It's often highly frustrating and annoying.

But the point of traffic lights is not to hinder the progress of drivers, but to ensure the rights and obligations of all traffic users – pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Traffic lights (most times) keep the flow of traffic fair. Traffic lights also help to **govern road safety**.

Employment law; charity law; business law – all these laws ensure that both individuals and the British Union Conference as a church, charity and corporation are fully aware not only of their rights, but also of their responsibilities.

Most people (and organisations) will fight for their rights, shout about their rights, and self-advocate (if able). However, many ignore

their responsibilities as irrelevant, as their needs or rights (in their eyes) trump their obligations.

Over the past 21 months, I have sat on a number of committees. The majority of these committees centre around the legal rights of the organisation and its obligations. The BUC Executive Committee has a responsibility to ensure that we adhere to the increasing number of legal commitments that we undertake as a church, charity and corporation.

### Conclusion

The Book of Leviticus is one of moral, legal, and ritualistic concerns. The 27 chapters are concerned with ethics, laws, and procedures. Underpinned in this third book of the Pentateuch is the theme of sanctification and the amazing sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Legal frameworks enable us to demonstrate that we are not only a spiritual organisation, but one that ensures adherence to the moral and legal traffic light system.



It seems that they conspire to interrupt my journey.

# Editorial

by Dusanka Rancic,  
Editor



Dear reader,

The article 'Red, amber and green' written by Pastor Eglan Brooks about laws and the balance between rights and responsibilities made me think of the importance of this concept. The Bible contains teachings and principles that touch on the idea of balancing rights and responsibilities.

Here are some biblical principles that relate to this balance:

- **Respect for authority:** The Bible teaches the importance of respecting authorities. This reflects our responsibility to adhere to laws and regulations established by our governing authorities.
- **Justice and fairness:** The concept of justice is central in the Bible, and it implies that laws should be just and fair, protecting the rights of all.
- **Love your neighbour:** Jesus taught us, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' This emphasises our responsibility to care for and consider the welfare of others, which can be seen as a counterbalance to individual rights.
- **Accountability:** The Bible also stresses accountability for one's actions, 'for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.' This suggests that individuals bear responsibility for the consequences of their actions.
- **Mercy and compassion:** While justice is important, the Bible also encourages mercy and compassion. Micah 6:8 (NKJV) says, 'He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?'

Rights and responsibilities are two concepts that are often considered opposite to each other, yet striking the balance between them is a reflection of biblical principles. Seeing how the Bible shows that God cares deeply about this concept, as Christians, it should be our privilege to achieve that balance and make our churches and organisations places where that harmony is seen.



## CONTENTS

4-5 – My journey with the Lord and the church



6-7 – Adventists feature in the BBC's *Songs of Praise*



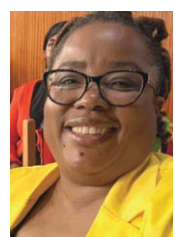
10 – Creative writing for evangelism



12-13 – Fun Zone



14-15 – 'Count Me In'



16-23 – News, notices & baptisms





# My journey with the Lord and the church

An interview with Dr Pardon Mwansa

by Pastor David Neal, TED Communication and Media Director

*At the 64th South England Conference Session, held in Colchester, England, 7-10 September, the devotional*

*speaker was Dr Pardon Mwansa. His life of service to the church is deep and wide. Currently serving as Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Administration at Andrews University and Vice Chancellor of Rusangu University, Zambia, he has also served as a general vice-president of the General Conference (from 2005 to 2015), president of the Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division (2003-2005), and president of the East Africa Division (2000-2002). As the Session ended, Dr Mwansa reflected on discipleship, the church and its multiple challenges, but also, best of all, his journey with the Lord.*



**David Neal:** Dr Pardon Mwansa, it is such a pleasure to talk with you here at the South England Conference Session in Colchester, England, and you have been the devotional speaker to help keep things spiritual. How do you feel it has gone?

**Pardon Mwansa:** I think the conference has gone well in the sense that the saints and the decision-makers have worked well together, and I believe they made the best decisions in the interest of the community of believers. There was very good engagement from the constituency, with very active participation. Coming to the end of it all, I see that the hand of the Lord was with us.

**DN:** You love the church, don't you? How many years have you served the church?

**PM:** For 43 years I have served this church and the Lord.

**DN:** Tell me about the joy of service.

**PM:** I could not have asked for any other path in my career, the path of being a minister and an educator. There is something about the Lord Jesus that nothing else can do. When I look at the fact that there's no permanency in life, it brings a craving in me of wanting somebody who can give me permanency of life. And that I only find in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**DN:** One of the values of the South England Conference is 'Growing Disciples'. Can we talk about discipleship in the context of learning?

**PM:** One of the interesting things about discipleship, particularly in the twenty-first century, is the ability to bring the mandate of our Lord, the intent of our Lord Jesus, into today's world. For example, I particularly love the words of the Lord when He said, 'I will not leave you as orphans' (John 14:18, NIV). He said, 'I will be with you.' The question is, what does it mean for the Lord to be with us?

He was with the apostles in the first century; but we live in a time of not only the internet, but also artificial intelligence, a totally new world. How does the Lord manifest His life through us today?

What I see is that the Lord can do that because He doesn't look for forms: He looks for values. He looks for kindness. He looks for love. He looks for meeting one another's needs. And, even in today's society, we have the opportunity to let Jesus reflect His image through us.

**DN:** The church is buffeted by one problem after another; another problem comes along like a bigger wave than the last one. How do we cope? How do we deal with it?

**PM:** The church exists in society. The church has always been. It anticipates going to live in the heavenly kingdom where there are only angels and righteous people, but the Lord chose that the church should exist in the society in which it is. The question is, can we escape the issues of the society?

No, we can't. We can't because we draw our membership from society and communities; so the issues that impact the communities – the rights

## Sometimes, when I respond to people, I ask myself, ‘Did I respond with enough grace?’

that the communities are advocating for, be they human rights, rights for women, rights for children – are the issues affecting people we invite to come to the Lord. And, as a church, we’ve got to know that Christ has outspread His hands with the message, ‘Come unto Me, all you that are heavily burdened – and you’ll find rest in Me.’

People need to find rest in the church. And that’s just how we will be. . . . And, until the Lord has come, the church has to learn to serve both as the salt and the light: the salt, in that we have to be part of society to impact society; and the light, in the sense that we’ve got to give the heavenly values to the world.

**DN: The Lord Jesus has been on your journey with you for many years. What’s it been like in a relationship with Him?**

**PM:** I have found Him to be a forgiving God! When I look at my life and how I have not always lived up to the ideal – the ideal is very difficult to define. Sometimes, I find a person on the streets who doesn’t have as much as I have, and I ask myself, ‘Lord, to what extent do You want me to get involved in this person’s life?’

And sometimes, when I respond to people, I ask myself, ‘Did I respond with enough grace? Not that they necessarily agree with me, but grace enough for them to know that I respected them.’ And I find the Lord to be a forgiving Saviour. I also find Him to be One who is an ever-empowering God to do ministry.

I have found in ministry that the Lord Jesus Christ’s promise of the Holy Spirit is so essential, both to



Pardon Mwansa, Vice Chancellor, Rusangu University. Graduation Highlights, 2016 (10th), Rusangu University, Zambia  
*Elvis Sichiweza and Teddy Kakoma/Adventist Media Exchange (CC BY 4.0)*



Pardon Mwansa, former vice president of the Adventist world church  
*Vivienne Martinelli/Adventist Media Exchange (CC BY 4.0)*



G. Alexander Bryant, Secretary, North American Division, NAD and Pardon Mwansa, former general vice president, General Conference, TED Winter Meetings 2010 at Hotel Splendid, Becici, Montenegro  
*Finn F. Eckhoff/Adventist Media Exchange (CC BY 4.0)*

give the deepness of the impression of the Word of the Lord, and to keep heaven in my heart.

Jesus is a friend. When I get to heaven, I want to see the face of Jesus (and I know I will, because He loves me).

**DN: Pastor Mwansa, thank you for sharing with us. We are blessed.**

**PM:** Thank you.

*Note: this interview was first published in Trans-European Division News.*



# Adventists feature in the BBC's *Songs of Praise*

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

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

*'God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.'*

(1 Peter 4:10, NLT)

Fiona Pacquette, Director for the East London School of Music (ELSOM), is using her gifts to enhance the worship experience in our churches, but also to bless many in the community.

Appearing on the BBC's *Songs of Praise* broadcast on Sunday 24 September 2023, along with her ELSOM students, Fiona, a member of the Hampstead Seventh-day Adventist church, was interviewed by Pam Rhodes, TV and radio presenter and author of several books.

The programme also featured interviews with two brothers from Tottenham Lighthouse SDA Church. Fourteen-year-old Kena, studying grade 5 piano, pipe organ and violin along with grade 5 music theory, has aspirations of teaching music theory to beginner students. Also, 17-year-old Yeron, currently studying grade 5 violin, is very keen on becoming an organ builder like Martin Renshaw. The brothers spoke eloquently during their interviews.

Engaging Fiona in a subsequent interview, I was blessed to hear about the impact of her music ministry.

## **Sharon Platt-McDonald: What inspired your love for music?**

**Fiona Pacquette:** My inspiration for music comes from my late mother, Mrs Leone R. Pacquette (d. April 2021). She came from a musical family of 12 (she was number 11), and when I was about 7 or 8 she taught me how to play hymns on our little electric organ. Mum would play at every Friday evening worship to welcome the Sabbath. Mum also paid for me to have piano and music theory lessons with the late Elder John Prince at Hampstead SDA Church until he passed away. I then took over from Elder Prince and continued teaching at Hampstead SDA Church for about twenty years.

My late father was the exact opposite to Mum, musically. He preferred his soca music and wasn't into classical music at all, so there was a bit of conflict. In one part of the house you would hear Mum playing her Handel's *Messiah* vinyl records; in another part of the house Dad would play his soca and reggae music. I started taking piano lessons at 15 and joined the school choir at school. That is where I was exposed

to classical music, and my appreciation for it started to grow from there.

## **SPM: What are your aspirations as a musician?**

**FP:** My key aspirations are:

1. To continue to reach others through music ministry – that is, introducing the art of classical music, which is also a means of therapy. People who suffer from mental health issues actually benefit from listening to classical music. We have young students who are in this category. Learning how to play a classical instrument has given them something positive to focus on to take away the sadness of their situation.
2. To continue to make classical music training more accessible to those who cannot afford it. The mission of the school is mainly to reach out to these disadvantaged families and allow them that opportunity. We have been trying to raise funds by hosting classical concerts to help these families.
3. To train up more SDA musicians in order to support their

churches. There is a huge shortage at the moment; some churches do not have anyone to play for them. If each SDA church were to sponsor at least one person from their church to learn how to play the piano/organ, there would not be a shortage of musicians.

4. To continue to perform for God's glory and honour. I don't play as often as I used to due to the condition that I have called dystonia. However, I give thanks to God that I am still able to play the piano, organ and flute, but my focus is mainly on teaching, managing the school, conducting orchestras and composition.

## **SPM: The history of ELSOM is quite intriguing. Give us an overview of its development.**

**FP:** The East London School of Music project idea really came from Pastor David Burnett back in 2015. There were discussions within the Area 6C Committee about having centres of influence within the various communities, including a school of music. I was recommended by Pastor Burnett to run the school. I





**Fiona Pacquette**  
Director, East London School of Music



**Kena**



**Yeron**

accepted the position, and we opened our doors to the community at our Open Day, 5 April 2015, hosted by Mike Johnson.

At the start we had around ten students and four teaching staff. We offered voice training, piano, violin and music theory at that time.

Fast-forward to September 2023: we now have nine teaching staff and 108 students across three sites and nationally. The number of courses we now offer has expanded to teach instruments such as violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, piccolo, recorder, sax, brass, voice training, piano, pipe organ, and music theory (compulsory). We teach from age 5 and upwards.

We have several sites: Clapton

SDA Church (site 1), London Ghana SDA Church (site 2), Dagenham Heathway Library (site 3 – in progress), and Hyland House School (Site 4). We introduced online lessons during the pandemic, and therefore we also have students in Wales and Scotland. ELSOM is a registered Trinity College and ABRSM exam centre. It is one of the Trinity College Champion Centres for 2023/24, and is UK registered charity no. 119 6175. The motto for ELSOM is Philippians 4:13 (KJV): 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.'

#### **SPM: What are some of your memorable ELSOM performances?**

**FP:** There are so many to mention, but these are two of my favourites:

- His Majesty King Charles III's Coronation Bank Holiday, Monday 8 May 2023, Hackney Town Hall. The event was attended by councillors, dignitaries and mayors from two London boroughs: namely, Hackney Council and the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham Council. The finale piece, 'I Vow to Thee, My Country', arranged by the American composer Geoff Knorr, received a standing ovation

from the audience and dignitaries, despite the fact that we didn't get the time to rehearse it!

<https://youtu.be/HqNNJ2fZas8>

- Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations, 2 June 2022, in collaboration with Hackney Council. The students wrote an original orchestral piece called 'The Procession of a Triumphant Jubilee' and sent a copy to Buckingham Palace as a gift to the Queen. We received a 'thank you' response from the Queen via her lady in waiting. She continued: 'The Queen was interested to hear that you plan to perform the work over the weekend of celebrations.'

#### **SPM: How did you become involved with this episode of *Songs of Praise*?**

**FP:** During the summer, the BBC *Songs of Praise* team contacted our organ builder, Martin Renshaw, after viewing the documentary *Organ Stops – Saving the King of Instruments* (aired on 24 December 2022 on BBC4). The team were so inspired by the success stories of two pipe organs which were saved from being destroyed – our ELSOM school pipe organ is one of them. Martin forwarded my details to the *Songs of Praise* team, who contacted me and arranged to come and meet the staff and students of ELSOM at Clapton Seventh-day Adventist Church (our main site).

Fiona continues to thank God for the gift of music, then adds: 'We are so very grateful for the support from Clapton SDA Church leadership for allowing the school to use their church for lessons and community concerts; otherwise, we would not have had a building to use. Also, we are grateful to Area 6C and the LAAC for helping to sustain the school financially from 2015 until the present. This has allowed us to support around 20 students who are currently in hardship.'

The full version of this interview will appear in the *BUC Women's Ministries Newsletter* under the title: 'Women of Influence Impacting Our Churches and Communities'.



# Unlocking the potential of Gift Aid

by Wederly Aguiar,  
BUC Treasurer

October 5 2023 marked Gift Aid Awareness Day across the UK. While many of our members have been long-standing Gift-Aiders, not everyone may be aware of what Gift Aid is or how it helps make your hard-earned tithe donations go further. In August we looked at the four ways in which tithe can be used; however, there are many things that tithe cannot be used for (more on that in next month's article), so the British Union Conference (BUC) has to find other means of funding these activities. This is where ventures such as Gift Aid come in.

## What is Gift Aid?

Gift Aid is a government scheme that allows registered charities like the BUC to claim extra money from HMRC. For every £1 donation made, the BUC can claim a further 25p from HMRC at no extra cost to the member. As long as a member has paid enough income tax within a single tax year, which runs from 6 April to 5 April the following year, the BUC can claim Gift Aid on that donation. In essence, Gift Aid boosts the donations you make through tithe and other offerings by 25%.

## How does the BUC use Gift Aid?

Without Gift Aid, many organisations would struggle to maintain operations. In the BUC territories, Gift Aid income accounted for £4.5 million in 2022. Each conference and mission within the BUC splits its distribution to suit its needs:

- In the South England Conference, 45% of Gift Aid returns remain with the local church; 40% is used towards building projects within the Conference; and 15% is distributed to the area.
- In the North England Conference, 60% of Gift Aid returns remain with the local church; and 40% is used towards Conference building projects.
- In the Missions, currently 100% of Gift Aid returns remain with the local church; although, as they grow, and their needs change, they could implement a different distribution policy in the future.

With this extra income, conferences, missions and churches can support different fundraising activities, such as events and campaigns to assist with their building projects and more. It also frees up other sources of funding to enhance their services and launch new programmes that lead to long-term financial sustainability.

## How can I support the church through Gift Aid?

If you're already signed up to the Gift Aid scheme, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to you. Your long-standing and unwavering support is deeply valued and has been instrumental in making a difference to the lives of those we serve. If you're not yet signed up, now is the perfect time to do so. It's a simple and incredibly impactful way of maximising your support to your local mission or conference.

Ask your local treasurer for a Gift Aid form, or you can get it through the BUC website: <https://adventist.uk/contact-us/buc-gift-aid-registration/>. If you use the 7me app, you can simply tick the consent

**GIFT AID AWARENESS DAY 5 OCTOBER 2023**

£100 donation → +25% → £125 total value of donation

@BUC\_TREASURY

Donate with Gift Aid and the government will add 25% to your donation. It won't cost you an extra penny and all you have to do is #TickTheBox

ASK YOUR LOCAL CHURCH TREASURER FOR A GIFT AID FORM TO SIGN UP!

box when registering for an account. It's a hassle-free process that can increase the value of your donations.

Encourage your friends and family to sign up to Gift Aid if they are eligible, and don't forget that even one-off donations can be Gift Aided! The more people that sign up, the greater the impact will be for the conferences and missions.

Don't forget to follow @BUC\_Treasury on Instagram to keep up to date with news about Gift Aid, tithe and other important matters.

## Why Gift Aid matters more than ever

The last few years have been challenging for charities. The ripple effects of COVID-19 are still being felt as charities are slowly beginning to recover. However, the pandemic also highlighted the important role that charities play in supporting vulnerable individuals and communities. The ongoing faithful giving of our members throughout these difficult times has ensured that we can continue to serve, and Gift Aid has been a critical lifeline enabling us to continue this work.

We hope to spotlight the remarkable power of Gift Aid and the potential it unlocks when you sign up. Your involvement contributes to the positive impact we can make across the British Isles. Thank you for joining us to create positive change and a brighter future for the church.



# Cancer: reducing risks

## Part 2 – dietary impact

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

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

### Diet and cancer risk

In an article by the Mayo Clinic titled 'Cancer prevention: 7 tips to reduce your risk', the clinic staff outline the importance of diet. They advise us: 'People who eat a Mediterranean diet that includes extra virgin olive oil and mixed nuts might have a reduced risk of breast cancer. The Mediterranean diet focuses mostly on plant-based foods, such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts. People who follow the Mediterranean diet choose healthy fats, such as olive oil, over butter. They eat fish instead of red meat.'<sup>1</sup>

Answering the question: 'Does eating a healthy diet reduce my risk of cancer?' Cancer Research UK<sup>2</sup> give the following response: 'Yes, eating a healthy and balanced diet can reduce the risk of cancer. This is partly from the effect of the diet itself, but mostly by helping you keep a healthy weight or lose weight. Your overall diet (what you usually eat in a normal week) is more important than individual foods when it comes to cancer.'

### Foods that harm

Identifying specific cancer-causing foods, Cancer Research UK answer the question, 'Does eating processed and red meat cause cancer?'<sup>3</sup> by giving the following response: 'Eating lots of processed meat can cause bowel cancer. Eating lots of red meat may also increase the risk of bowel cancer. The less processed and red meat you eat, the lower your risk.'

Explaining how processed and red meat causes cancer, the researchers state: 'Chemicals that are found in the meat, added during processing or produced when cooking it, can increase the risk of cancer.' Included in their list of cancer-causing chemicals in meat, Cancer Research UK list the three main culprits, explaining the harm they cause:

- **Nitrates and nitrites.** 'These are used to keep processed meat fresher for longer. When we eat them, nitrates and nitrites can become N-nitroso chemicals (NOCs) that can damage the cells that line our bowel. This damage can lead to bowel cancer. Added nitrates may be the reason why processed meat increases the risk of bowel cancer more than red meat.'
- **Haem.** 'This is naturally found in red meat. When digested, haem also breaks down into the cancer-causing N-nitroso chemicals.'
- **Heterocyclic amines (HCAs) and polycyclic amines (PCAs).** 'These chemicals are produced when processed and red meat is cooked at high temperatures, which includes grilling or barbecuing. HCAs and PCAs can damage cells in the bowel.'

Another research group, Cancer.Net, state: 'Any amount of processed meat and more than around 18 ounces of fresh meat per week are most strongly linked with a higher risk of cancer.'<sup>4</sup>

### Foods that help

On their website, Cancer.Net list the following foods and their protective factors:

- **Plant-based foods.** Naturally occurring substances called phytonutrients are found in these types of food, which include carotenoids (carotenes), found in red, orange, yellow, and some dark-green vegetables; polyphenols, present in herbs, spices, vegetables, tea, coffee, chocolate, nuts, apples, onions, berries, and other plants; and allium compounds, found in chives, garlic, leeks, and onions.
- **Fibre-rich foods.** Fibre adds bulk to stools, enabling food to move more quickly through the digestive system. It enhances the microbiome environment in the gut, nourishing a healthy community of microbes



living in the digestive tract. A healthy microbiome has been linked with a lower cancer risk. Fibre-rich foods include whole grains and seeds, including barley, oats, kamut, spelt, bulgur, corn, psyllium, and rye; wholegrain bread and pasta; legumes and pulses, including beans, lentils, and split peas; and vegetables and fruits.

### Drinks that damage

In their infographic 'How does alcohol cause cancer?'<sup>5</sup> Cancer Research UK highlight three ways in which alcohol increases cancer risk:

- Alcohol can damage our cells and stop cells repairing the damage.
- Alcohol affects chemical signals which can make cells more likely to divide. This increases the chance that cancer can develop.
- Alcohol makes it easier for cells in our mouth and throat to absorb cancer-causing chemicals.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/diet-and-cancer>.

### Good health!

<sup>1</sup><https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/cancer-prevention/art-20044816>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/diet-and-cancer/does-having-a-healthy-diet-reduce-my-risk-of-cancer> <sup>3</sup><https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/diet-and-cancer/does-eating-processed-and-red-meat-cause-cancer>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.cancer.net/navigating-cancer-care/prevention-and-healthy-living/food-and-cancer-risk>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/alcohol-and-cancer/how-does-alcohol-cause-cancer>



Darell Philip, Divinia Reynolds and Brenda Nelson (SEC Creative Writing for Evangelism tutors) at Battersea SDA Church

# Creative writing for evangelism

It was back in 2014 that Divinia Reynolds (a Bible worker, teacher and writer) and Dr Kirk Thomas (the South England Conference Personal Ministries Director at the time, now the newly elected South England Conference President) first discussed the idea of a Creative Writing for Evangelism course as one of the classes that should be included at the School of Evangelism. Before the start of the South England Conference School of Evangelism at the John Loughborough School site the following academic year, Divinia was told that her wish was granted and that she would be the teacher of the class.

Fast-forward to 2023 and the Creative Writing Class is still going strong, attracting an international mix of students both in person (pre-COVID-19) and now online. Since the launch of the class in 2015, many have gone on to graduate, with some having had their work published in various publications, including the *FOCUS* magazine, *MESSENGER*, and *Here and Now: Stories of Faith and Mission* (2016), a book of inspiring testimonies edited by Dr Kirk Thomas and Divinia Reynolds.

With a vast and broad spectrum of units covered within the course, including narrative (story writing), poetry, journalism, and radio and digital ministry, there is something to appeal to the interest of everyone, as expressed by this year's cohort graduates.

Born in Sheffield (a city in South Yorkshire), Elvina Lee, a

former church communications leader, recalls her first love affair with writing: 'During my teenage years I always had pen pals and loved to write to them, but what was more exciting was receiving the stamped envelope addressed to myself and wondering and reading about their adventures,' she said. With an interest in script writing, Elvina enrolled on the SEC Creative Writing for Evangelism course to encourage those with serious health challenges that through God anything is possible, which she hopes to demonstrate through her writing.

All the way from Ndola, Zambia, Precious Chitwa, a qualified economist, joined the course having contributed to an international book project for single Adventists that Divinia was working on in partnership with SNAGD – the international Singles Adventist Network Group. 'I intend to use my writing as a form of evangelism and witness to others through writing devotionals and articles that will encourage and inspire a desire to know God,' she said.

Another contributor to the international book project for single Adventists is Yanet Guarachi, a social worker from the South American country of Bolivia. With a love for education, evangelism and singing, Yanet would like to write on topics that encourage readers to develop a relationship with God. 'It's a great opportunity to participate in a course based in another country which equips me to contribute by writing about the love of God for humanity,' she said.

Born into an Adventist missionary

family in Angola, Fernando Franko, who is of Portuguese nationality, lives in London, where he is an active member in the Central London Seventh-day Adventist Church based at the Advent Centre. With a background in finance and also medical missionary work both in Brazil and the UK, Fernando hopes to draw upon these gifts in writing about local church history and culture as a means of edification and inspiration to those within and outside of the church respectively. 'Through my writing I want to reach others for Christ,' he said.

Inspired by God's message to the prophet Habakkuk to 'write the vision and make it plain' (see Habakkuk 2:2), Sanjo Jeffrey, who attends the Stoke Newington SDA Church in London and was born on the sunny Caribbean island of Jamaica, intends to do the same with her writing. 'Through the power of the pen, I desire to be a literary fisherwoman for God,' she said.

With the current cohort having graduated on Sabbath 5 August 2023 at Stanborough Park Church, it is clear that the SEC Creative Writing for Evangelism class are intentionally responding to the great commission of Christ to His disciples in spreading the Gospel to everyone who will listen.

*This article was produced by the SEC Creative Writing for Evangelism tutors, Darell Philip, Divinia Reynolds and Brenda Nelson, along with the 2023 cohort: Elvina Lee, Fernando Franko, Precious Chitwa, Sanjo Jeffrey and Yanet Guarachi.*



# Momentous moments

by Victor Mbvundula, Newport Seventh-day Adventist Church



It's Friday vespers. I'm sitting at the poolside, in the front row. Sixteen teens from across the Trans-European Division (TED) have come to the TED Pathfinders Camporee at Sopron, Hungary with a personal sacrament to seal. This is the day that the Lord has made. Their baptism is now underway. I watch in awe. *Somehow* God made sense to each of these youngsters. Is this not the subtitle of every baptism? That God *still* makes sense.

My daughter is one of them. 'I am Alma, and I come from Wales,' she had said, introducing herself to the open-air congregation a little earlier, just before the collective vows. Then she was first in the pool under this clear Hungarian summer sky. I know some of her story. She is a lot more than 'just' Alma from Wales. Her self-introduction did not even tangentially hint at any of her astonishing personal experiences of God in the two years preceding this evening. But, then again, perhaps on this day that goes without saying . . . for all sixteen.

Still I wonder, as each Pathfinder climbs into the reportedly very cold water: *How did she get here? What was he told, by whom? Was it the logic of prose or the rhythm of poetry that clinched it? A*

*moment of meditative silence, perhaps. Alone or in a crowd? How did the Father make Himself compellingly believable to this boy, irresistible indeed? When did Jesus touch this girl? Where on their individual persons did the Holy Spirit leave His indelible divine biometrics?*

I know that each has a unique testimony . . . even the cousins from Slovenia and the twin sisters from England. I also wonder what my younger daughter is thinking and feeling. She is leaning into me, tucked under my left arm; quietly weeping intermittently as each baptism happens . . . from the moment she glimpsed her sister in front of this pool, laughing briefly with their mother before stepping forward.

There is a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, so I dare not interrupt the private conversation He is having with my daughter. Once I ask, and she assures me that she is fine. I have no further questions, my Lord. My own emotions, swirling just under the surface, need managing too.

Behind us are the rest of the two thousand Pathfinders. They convey unbridled joy. Their partisan energy is palpable: rooting for their Conference candidate; trying to

outcheer all the other conferences. Each group has picked a trademark celebration: club neckerchiefs swirling in unison, bowing flags, standing ovations. Oh little town of Sopron, thanks for hosting our diversity!

Some of the teens come out of the baptistry smiling, others tearful. They are with Jesus now. Still I wonder: *What is his story? How did she get to this point?* In truth, I do not need to know. There is value in suspenseful mystery, and meaning in open-ended wonderment.

What I know for sure is that these youngsters ministered to me as I watched them die and instantly rise to new life in Christ. They made God that bit more real to me all over again. No, I have not believed in cunningly devised fables. God *still* makes sense.

I also know what heaven got up to that evening: not one, not two, but sixteen sinners saved! You were right to celebrate exuberantly, holy angels! Good on you.

Back on earth, I have played back the excellent videos more than a dozen times. I still haven't managed to get through them without welling up. What is it about a baptism? Whatever it is, may we have many more repeats please, O Lord!







## JOHN 15

- |           |              |           |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| VINE      | LOVED        | CHOSEN    |
| FATHER    | COMMANDMENTS | HATED     |
| BRANCH    | SPOKEN       | WORLD     |
| FRUIT     | JOY          | REMEMBER  |
| ABIDE     | MAN          | PERSECUTE |
| BRINGETH  | LIFE         | FULFILLED |
| WITHERED  | FRIENDS      | COMFORTER |
| GLORIFIED | SERVANTS     | WITNESS   |

L O V E D M O C O P Y J O Y H C N A B M  
 I T I U R F W O R E O T A F A T H E R E  
 V I N F D E R M L R B H B R T L E T A M  
 R F E I N L E M D S E E I I H W P A N B  
 E O T G N O M A T E C R D E E O A H C H  
 M R H A D V I N H C A M O N R R S B H C  
 E T E V E D G D E U U S E D O L S O U N  
 M H R A T A H M R T S T N S A D H T O A  
 B C E H A L T E Z E E B S A D O E H C R  
 E A N F H E O N E K O D E I F I R O L G  
 R N I A M E R T N E M E A O U W M E I N  
 R N N E K O P S H A L R B R L E Y M N I  
 B O O K T R O F M O C E I A R I W E A B  
 A T S S E N T I W A E H T E G N I R B N  
 N C A L L E D B A R D T O J N G T O I E  
 C O M F O R T E R C O I H N I O W L D S  
 H M E N D E U N I T N W P T E R L D E O  
 F U L F I L L E D M E L L I F S Y L V H  
 I R I E N D S P E R C U E T I X O R O C  
 L E S E R V A N T S T N A V L E K O P S

Taken from *Hidden Words: Book 6*, by Helen Johnson. To purchase your copy, follow this link:  
<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/hidden-words/>



## Zacchaeus

<sup>2</sup>In Jericho there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a wealthy, very important tax collector. <sup>3</sup>He wanted to see who Jesus was. There were many others who wanted to see Jesus too. Zacchaeus was too short to see above the people. <sup>4</sup>So he ran to a place where he knew Jesus would come. Then he climbed a sycamore tree so he could see him. <sup>5</sup>When Jesus came to where Zacchaeus was, he looked up and saw him in the tree. Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, hurry! Come down! I must stay at your house today."



Luke 19:2-5

Taken from the book, *Colouring books for kids: The story of Jesus*.  
To purchase your copy, follow this link: <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/colouring-books-for-kids-story-of-jesus/>





# ‘Count Me In’

Trans-European Division  
Pathfinders Camporee  
Sopron, Hungary:  
25 July – 1 August 2023

by Dejan Stojkovic,  
*TED Youth Ministries Director*

Life is a tapestry woven with countless threads of moments that shape our existence. Some are fleeting, while others are etched into our souls forever. If I were to ask you to recall your five most extraordinary life-changing moments, what would they be? For many of us, they would include the moment we welcomed Jesus into our hearts, our baptism, the day we committed ourselves in matrimony, and perhaps, somewhere in that cherished top five, you’d find memories of summer camps, youth congresses, and camporees. These moments are like pillars holding up the cathedral of our faith, and today I want to share a new chapter in this incredible journey—a chapter written in the heart of Sopron, Hungary, at the Trans-European Division Camporee.

In the heart of Hungary’s most faithful city, a monumental event unfolded – the 13th Trans-European Division Camporee. More than 2,500 participants from around thirty nations converged on this sacred ground, coming together, as they do every four years, for a life-changing experience. This time, our Pathfinders embarked on a journey themed ‘Count Me In’. It was a clarion call, a declaration that we stand ready to serve God and our beautiful church in His mission. We long to be counted among those who await His second coming with eager hearts.

The stage was set, and, as we gathered, our hearts resonated with



the vibrant sermons of Adam Hazel, our camp’s main speaker. His words touched the deepest corners of our souls, sparking a fire of faith within our young hearts. The Netherlands team orchestrated the music, filling the air with melodies that soared to

the heavens. If you long to hear and see our worship team in action, just scan the QR code and immerse yourself in the divine symphony.

But this camporee was more than just words and music: it was a







tapestry of experiences. With more than sixty activities to choose from, our Pathfinders embarked on adventures that tested their mettle, from scaling rock walls to constructing pioneering structures. They delved into the heart of humanity, learning about ADRA and stepping into the shoes of spies in 'Spy Danger' by Adventist Risk Management. The days brimmed with opportunities, and the only



question that lingered was which path to tread (scan the QR code).

A new addition to our camporee was the Street Food Night, where clubs each proudly showcased their national cuisine, offering a taste of their culture to fellow Pathfinders. It wasn't just about savouring flavours, but about sharing stories, bridging gaps, and raising awareness about the rich diversity that defines our global community. Market Day, another beloved tradition, saw clubs offering services to raise funds for their chosen causes. Together, we raised over 12,000 Euros for Pathfinder work in Ukraine, with the Newbold



College club contributing over £800 (scan the QR code).

Among the vivid moments that painted the canvas of our camporee, the most radiant were the 16 baptisms. These sacred rituals serve as reminders of the essence of Pathfinding and our movement's purpose. We aim to equip our young men and women with outdoor skills, instil a spirit of service to communities and clubs, and, above all, nurture a deep relationship with Jesus. To those who made this

profound decision, we celebrate your faith journey and eagerly anticipate



the many more who will follow your example (scan the QR code).

Our presence in Sopron also left an indelible mark on the local community. As news of our camporee spread, the city awakened to the spirit of festivity. Locals encountered something different in our midst, something extraordinary. Even Tesco distribution drivers, while delivering supplies to our clubs, felt compelled to stay and join us in worship. A local boy, who had experienced loss and sought solace in our company, cycled from another part of Sopron daily to assist and provide security, proclaiming, 'You don't need security; you are such nice people.' Our lives and worship became a testament, drawing passers-by to pause and praise with us.

As we reflect on this remarkable journey, one question remains: was this one of those life-changing moments for me and many others? The answer is a resounding yes. I carry with me memories, photographs, and pins exchanged, a heart brimming with laughter, and newfound friendships spanning the globe. It's a foretaste of the beauty that awaits us in heaven, where we shall all gather as one. This camporee reaffirms the fact that in a post-Christian Europe the Adventist Church continues to shine its light and stand steadfastly for its values.

To all who attended and dedicated themselves to making this event extraordinary, thank you. Our heartfelt gratitude extends to the Hungarian Union and the

exceptional leadership of Pastor Tamás Ócsai (President), Kristóf Palotá, and János Mena, who spearheaded the Hungarian team of volunteers and administration. We also extend our appreciation to the volunteers who journeyed from afar, including New Zealand, the UK, and countless other places. Our Union Youth and Pathfinder directors, who tirelessly dedicated their efforts, deserve our utmost gratitude. And to Judy, who worked diligently from the TED side, we extend our thanks.

In conclusion, the Trans-European Division Camporee 2023 was an extraordinary event: a tapestry woven with love, faith, and the hope that our collective light will continue to shine, guiding future generations. As we part ways, let us carry in our hearts the profound impact of this experience. We celebrate the 133 Pathfinders who expressed their commitment to baptism this year, along with the more than 240 who chose to recommit their lives to Jesus. Their decisions exemplify the transformative power of faith, inspiring us to move forwards with renewed dedication. Together we bear the torch of our shared faith, eagerly anticipating the next chapter in our journey.



# SEC Camp Meeting

by Don Roberts,  
SEC Communications & Media Department

on-site attendees and thousands online under the theme, 'The Everlasting Gospel'.

The Camp Meeting began with opening remarks from the then SEC President, Dr Emmanuel Osei, emphasising the importance of embracing and sharing the eternal message of hope and salvation found in the everlasting Gospel. Osei also highlighted the historical significance of camp meetings in the SEC, stating that they have 'played a pivotal role in uniting the Conference over the years'.

Throughout the week, the Conference celebrated diversity, showcasing different world regions during the evening worship sessions. Attendees enjoyed sermons by specially chosen speakers, along with reports and presentations highlighting the significant impact various people groups have made on the SEC. Songs in native languages and the wearing of traditional dress and colours added to the cultural experience.

Each evening spotlighted a

different region, starting in Latin America on Monday, with Dr Vitor Carvalho preaching on the everlasting Gospel's power to unite believers across cultural barriers. Carvalho noted that 'the message of Jesus spread to diverse groups, breaking down boundaries and emphasising the grace of God available to all.'

The South England Conference (SEC) Camp Meeting 2023 took place from Monday 24 July to Sunday 30 July at Hay's Wood Retreat, King's Lynn. The annual spiritual convocation united 200



Dr Donnett Blake



Dr Emmanuel Osei



Dr Jude Jeanville





Tuesday focused on Asia and featured three speakers. Dr John Melki used the analogy of nature's 'Immortelle' or 'Everlasting Flower' to explain the Gospel's lasting impact on humanity. Pastor Connie Tsang spoke on God's unconditional love and encouraged sharing it. Dr Nixon De Vera gave personal testimonies of times when he took leaps of faith, and also his struggle with doubt – yet each time 'God provided and restored' him.

On Wednesday, the spotlight shifted to the West Indies, with Dr Jude Jeanville delivering a sermon drawing from personal experience of God's saving plan for all sinners, and exhorting hearers to let go of guilt and past mistakes. While celebrating cultural diversity, he also advocated that attendees should put Christ before culture and unite as one body, declaring: 'Our primary identity should be Christian.'

Europe took centre stage on Thursday, with Pastor James Shepley illustrating the universal nature of the everlasting Gospel through the biblical account of the feeding of the 5,000. The evening also featured a virtual online quiz on Adventism in Europe, with remote quizmaster Gervan Kelly.

On Friday, with all eyes on Africa, Pastor Mfakazi Ndebele reiterated the unchanging and inclusive nature of the everlasting Gospel. Acknowledging the church's failings surrounding inclusivity in the recent past, he urged for unity and the breaking down of barriers. 'God wants the walls of the partition to come down. We have many walls that separate us that need to be demolished so we can become one people,' stated Ndebele.

During the Sabbath service, Dr Gifford Rhamie delivered a sermon celebrating the diversity of the multicultural Adventist church in the UK. He also spoke of how Christians can sing the 'Lord's song' in a strange and hostile land or non-believing society. Rhamie asserted that 'power comes from the unity of different nationalities and ethnicities within the church.' The sermon also highlighted the historical struggles faced by various communities, including the *Windrush* generation, and how they drew strength and

resilience from the everlasting Gospel.

Throughout the week, attendees also heard daily inspiring morning devotional sermons by Dr Donnett Blake, Women's Ministries Director of the Northeastern Conference, USA. Bible study sessions on the three angels' messages were conducted by Pastor Mohan Abbaddasari. Other presentations included a health plenary by Pastor Bernie Holford on promoting mental and spiritual well-being. A family plenary was also held by Dr Augustus Lawrence, addressing how the everlasting Gospel can guide families through life's challenges. In his presentation, Lawrence paid special tribute to his late wife, Barbara, who passed away in November 2022.

Additionally, on-site attendees enjoyed periods of free time and relaxation within the natural surroundings of Hay's Wood. They had access to a Zoo Lab featuring touchable animals and reptiles, as well as a Birds of Prey exhibit, where skilled bird handlers showcased the hunting abilities and agility of

various species, such as owls and eagles. A day trip to visit local attractions in Norfolk, including Hunstanton Beach, was also arranged.



Pastor Connie Tsang



Dr Vitor Carvalho



Dr Augustus Lawrence







## ‘Women Together: Rebuilding the Ruins for the Mission’

After nearly four years of being apart, the SEC Area 5 Women’s Ministries Department reconnected at Newbold College thanks to Abigail Wright. Pastor Dee Edwards gave an encouraging message of being confident in the Lord, even when overwhelmed by the inevitable challenges of life. Ladies from our Area 5 churches spoke of the great women of the Bible from whom we continue to learn. It was good for the sisters to connect as we committed to rebuild the ruins for the mission together, as guided by Jeremiah 33 – a story of healing and restoration.

Our areas of focus and commitment are women building women; our well-being; and positively influencing our communities by maximising our gifting. This is to be achieved through exercising inclusion; educating ourselves more on emotional intelligence; and recognising and honing our giftings. That this is possible is affirmed by Philippians 4:13: we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

We were blessed by the beautiful singing of the Angaza Church ladies; our young girls from Reading West, supported by Angelina Mavanza; the Remnant Harmony & Ministries Choir; and Sister Annice Thomas, who read the poem ‘We are women’.

Testimonies in the afternoon brought us even closer as sisters. Veronica Kararwa encouraged us all by sharing her painful experience of losing her son when he was just 24, and how that led her to depression, despite being a mental health practitioner and a therapist – but, by God’s grace, she now supports others going through the same. She themed it ‘**Making Lemonade Out of Lemons**’ – indeed the story of rebuilding the ruins, healing, and restoration.

Thank you to the Area 5 Women’s Ministries leaders, who planned and prayed for God’s leading in making the day of fellowship a reality. Sister Violet and Elder Peter Mensah, our area treasurer and secretary, worked tirelessly in the background to bring it all together. Thanks to Pastor Dr Trevor Thomas, the Area 5 coordinator, for including the day in his calendar, and most of all for praying for us. It was a real team effort to God’s glory.

CECILY MWANIKI

## Bristol Central Church supporting Cancer Research UK initiative

It was a surprise for the community health team to be invited to have a stall at one of the largest annual initiatives in Bristol. ‘Race for Life’ is an annual Cancer Research UK event involving hundreds of people who have been adversely affected by cancer. The event usually comprises a 5k or 10k run, jog or walk and Pretty Muddy session. This year it took place on Sunday 25 June on the Clifton Downs.

The invitation came from the newly appointed organiser, Sophie Green, who had heard a lot about the church’s involvement over the years, and she was delighted that we could make it. From 7am the team erected the gazebo. Free fresh fruit juices and fruit bowls were offered to hundreds of participants throughout the day, who were very grateful.

Our newly graduated Pastor Bismark, his brother Mc Lean and a young brother took part in the 5k race, and Doctor Amanda Kutsawa from the South Bristol branch took part in the Pretty Muddy event. Most participants gave a donation, and £50 was received and given to ADRA-UK. The church also gave £100 towards Cancer Research UK.

MARY PHILIP, BRISTOL CENTRAL COMMUNICATION/  
COMMUNITY HEALTH MINISTRIES





## Earthquake in the High Atlas Mountains – the effect on one small village

Home Stays Morocco, a business situated in the beautiful Tighza Valley, high in the Atlas Mountains, is owned and operated by my daughter, son-in-law and family. On the night of 8 September that family business and the village houses, along with the livelihood of the people, were all destroyed when the earthquake struck, leaving them with nothing. Fortunately, in this area at least, no one was killed.

On the first night, everyone slept in the open. When daylight came, they were able to salvage the tents used for tourism from the small hotel and sleep in them.

Little three-year-old Saffa cried for most of the first two nights, seeing her home, but not being able to go there, for fear of collapsing walls.

Once, the people were happy to live with the huge rocks up on the mountainside above their houses. Now they are terrified, as during the quake they witnessed how dislodged rocks smashed through roofs and walls, destabilising many more on their way down the mountainside. The slightest earth movement or heavy rain could send them cascading down the mountain, creating more havoc.

It was four days before the big tents arrived with the military convoys, who started to deliver supplies to Animeter.

My-son-in-law and his brother have taken on the task to organise and coordinate the distribution of supplies to the fifteen villages in the area. The brothers carefully log where the aid is going, making sure that each family gets enough supplies for their basic needs.

These two young men are real heroes, putting everyone else's needs before their own. They are working tirelessly and are exhausted. Once things are settled and surveys by the Government are done, their aim is to rebuild the village, starting with the most needy.

CAROL LOGAN

NB: For more information, and if you wish to help by donating to rebuild the village, please check out the website Home Stays Morocco: [homestaysmorocco.net](http://homestaysmorocco.net).

## Jamaica independence weekend

A weekend of Jamaican independence celebration took place at Camp Hill Church over the weekend of 4 and 5 August 2023. The Caribbean island of Jamaica, although



Pastor Vince Goddard



The Jamaican flag colours of yellow, green and black were worn by members of Jamaican descent, and a tasty Sabbath lunch was enjoyed in the warm fellowship of church members, families and friends.

beautiful, contains 400,000 people who are food-insecure, and twelve percent of Jamaicans are Seventh-day Adventists . . . so some members of our church are suffering hunger.

Pastor Vince Goddard, a retired pastor from Jamaica who still represents the Jamaica Union Food Bank, preached during Sabbath's divine service, highlighting the work his team has been undertaking to provide food to underprivileged families. Every three months since September 2021, \$35,000 worth of parcels have been distributed, supporting 100,000 people.

The Sabbath lunch, which included Jamaican culinary favourites, was prepared by the catering team led by Andrew Jordan, who celebrated a special birthday that weekend too.

On Sunday, the church hosted a well-attended Jamaican Independence Day social, including sales of Jamaican food and drink, the screening of a world netball final, a quiz, children's career books, a bouncy castle on the lawn, and dominoes in the basement. Members and friends had time to mingle, relax and welcome new visitors, and funds were raised to further God's work.

JACQUIE HALLIDAY-BELL





## Street fair attracts more than 100

Ahead of their upcoming evangelistic campaign, 'Peace Restored', members of the Hackney church put on a street fair which attracted over 100 people on Sunday 10 September 2023. The fair had something on offer for everyone – from the bouncy castle and racing for children, to the Zumba and karate Fit-to-Fite sessions for the adults. The sessions were led by fitness instructors, Daniel Mathieu-Marius and Ross Mathieu, respectively. There were also stalls containing free Caribbean-style food, fruit and drink, as well as opportunities for members of the public to sign up to free health checks and a massage. One young person from the community said that he 'enjoyed everything that was offered on the day, from the bouncy castle to the free food'.

A Hackney Church founding member, Ann Williams, aged 93, said: 'The day was well supported by the community. More than 100 turned up, and none of the food or drink was wasted.' Many members of the community were eager to know when the next street fair would take place. Michael, a member of the community, said, 'I found out about the street fair while passing the church one day, decided to check it out, and have found it to be a good experience and atmosphere.' Also in attendance were regular visitors to the church food bank, who took time out to mix and mingle with church members and other participants.

Senior Hackney members Edith Omolu, 80, and Ruby Merchant, 82, who defied their years as active participants in both the Zumba and karate Fit-to-Fite sessions, agreed that 'it was a great day for all the family



and community, in which the weather, though overcast at times, held up.'

DARELL J. PHILIP

## Tottenham Lighthouse: sharing the love of Jesus with the grieving

Solomon wisely wrote, 'To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die' (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2, NKJV). Death seems so final to those who do not have a relationship with God and are unaware of His many wonderful promises of eternal life. However, out of the tragedy of death, grieving relatives and friends can be introduced to the hope we have in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Dr Jude Jeanville, when conducting a funeral service, extends a special invitation to attendees to visit the Tottenham Lighthouse church for a special event. The invitation is usually accepted. On Sabbath 12 August the Greenaways and Sempers came to church as the result of such an invitation at the funeral service of David Greenaway.

The bereaved families and their friends were given a special welcome and gifts. Trevor Semper, the son of the deceased and a former West Indian cricketer, whose mother attends our church, received a plaque with Joshua 1:9, and family members and visitors were presented with specially designed bookmarks with Romans 12:9.

In response to the warm welcome, Trevor thanked Pastor Jeanville for being tremendous at both the funeral and the church. Also, he was grateful for the plaque he'd been given and thanked the church for being thoughtful. His daughter Bevinicia gave a beautiful rendition of the song 'Hills & Valleys' by Tauren Wells.

On this occasion the Family Life Department acknowledged two of our members, Dian Chambers and Jacqui Harris, who were grieving the loss of their mothers. Tears flowed as they were presented with beautiful orchids and words of encouragement and prayer.

In today's secular society, God's children must think 'outside the box' when witnessing to their communities. Reaching out to the grieving in their hour of need is worthwhile for its own sake, but it also allows us to present the good news of Jesus Christ as we make disciples and build communities.

MAXINE DONOVAN, COMMUNICATIONS & PRAYER MINISTRIES



Pastor Jude, Trevor and Cheryl



Roxanne, Valerie, Miranda and Maureen

All adverts as supplied, errors and omissions excepted

**HAY'S WOOD RETREAT**  
STEP INTO NATURE  
WHIST SLEEPING IN LUXURY

## CARERS - BOOK YOUR DISCOUNTED BREAK

To help bring awareness to Carers Rights Day on the 23rd November, we're offering discounted\* stays for all carers between 20th - 24th November 2023

<b>4- Night break</b> (20th - 24th November 2023)	£360 (2-bedroom cabin)	£540 (3-bedroom cabin)	£720 (4-bedroom cabin)
<b>2/3- Night break</b> (20th - 24th November 2023)	£320 (2-bedroom cabin)	£480 (3-bedroom cabin)	£600 (4-bedroom cabin)

\*Discount is only available for carers only and will require a carer's badge to be shown.  
Discount is only available during the week dated 20th - 24th November 2023

01553 606000 bookings@hayswoodretreat.com

BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE

REFLECTING HOPE

# TRAINING RETREAT

A special training programme for Pastors and Church Leaders

DATE: 3-5 November 2023  
PLACE: LEONARDO HOTEL, Leicester, LE10 3JA

BOOKINGS: Contact [kguthrie@adventist.uk](mailto:kguthrie@adventist.uk) or scan the QR code above

## ASNA FUNDRAISING GOSPEL CONCERT

02.12.23

Artists include:  
Reading Community Gospel Choir  
Inclusive Ministry  
Croydon Praise Team  
CJ Nicholls  
and much more

6.00-8.30pm  
Newbold College, Salisbury Hall  
St Mark's Rd,  
Bracknell RG42 4AN

Stalls, music, spoken word and more!

FREE ENTRY  
DONATIONS WILL BE COLLECTED

RSVP : [WWW.ASNA.INFO/EVENTS](http://WWW.ASNA.INFO/EVENTS)

North England Conference

## Treasurers, Elders & Diaconate Retreat

# CONNECTED Leadership

10-12 November 2023

Pr Fredrick Russell  
Guest Speaker

Address: Yarnfield Park Conference Centre, Yarnfield - Sarnia, Staffordshire, ST15 0NL

Cost Per Person: Single £230, Double £180, Twin £180

For more information, please contact Yvonne Chambers on 0115 960 6312 or email [admin@necadventist.org.uk](mailto:admin@necadventist.org.uk)

FORWARD We Go! [necadventist.org.uk/events](http://necadventist.org.uk/events)

### 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.

Contact [pokelo@stanboroughpark.herts.sch.uk](mailto:pokelo@stanboroughpark.herts.sch.uk) for more details.

Librarians 12-24 months, volunteer, full-time or part-time  
Admin Assistants 12-24 months, volunteer, full-time or part-time  
Garden and Maintenance Assistants 12-24 months, volunteer, full-time or part-time  
Cleaner full-time or part-time

Stanborough Secondary School Stanborough Park, Watford, WD25 9JT  
Telephone: 01923 673268

God is the Master of our school.

### 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.

### LifeSource book sales

DATE	VENUE	TIME
28 Oct	Bristol Central	After sunset
29 Oct	West Croydon	10am-2pm
11-12 Nov	Dublin Day of Fellowship	
18 Nov	Southampton	After sunset
19 Nov	Manchester South	10am-2pm
25 Nov	Wolverhampton 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)



## Irish Mission Summer Camp 2023

This year's summer camp exceeded all of our expectations. Youth have experienced an emotional and spiritual journey. After we thought it could not get any better, more than fifteen young people came forward and asked to give their hearts



to Jesus. Casiana Stan and Kiril Klemanskas requested to be baptised, and we ended summer camp with two beautiful baptisms by the lake at Portlick Scout Campsite by Pastor Jeff Melki. Throughout the week, the youth spent their days interacting and socialising during activities such as kayaking, crate stacking, water sliding, ziplining, archery tag, singing at the bonfire together, and taking a Viking boat trip down in Athlone, as well as participating in go-karting and mini golf.

It was amazing to have Mikael Takamaa and his wife Emilija join us at Summer Camp this year. Mikael blessed our youth with testimonies and stories that impacted the youth in such a beautiful way. Emilija showed so much care and kindness towards our youth.

All the staff were blessed to be able to spend time with the youth and enjoyed every moment that we shared together. We shared lovely meals, worships, games and prayer times, which brought us all closer together.

We are looking forward to Summer Camp 2024 and cannot wait to see all the youth again in our next youth event this year. We are grateful to Pastor Jeff, who organised every detail and supported all the staff and youth, and made sure the camp was the highlight of our young people's year.

A big thank-you goes to the Irish Mission pastors for their prayers, and to parents who brought their children to participate.

See you next year!

JAZMIN ANDRASI

## Torquay joy

Sabbath 9 September was special as Torquay Church witnessed 22-year-old Corina Felea from Romania seal her decision to be a disciple of Jesus through baptism.

At the beginning of the year Corina had expressed her wish to be baptised and to understand the Bible better. Pastor Florin Orasanu, an intern pastor, studied with her online on a regular basis, and in September her baptismal service was led by Pastor Florin, supported by a retired pastor, Allan Hart.

The Bible message reminded Corina and everyone present that we have been 'saved to save others' on the side of the greatest power in the universe – the Heavenly Trio.

More than sixty people were present to witness this public confession of faith, including non-Adventist friends of Corina and of the church. The joy and celebration continued with a fellowship lunch for everyone. We are grateful to God for impressing Corina to make this decision for Him.

PASTOR FLORIN ORASANU



Khayaletu Volo-Sibanda, Methembeni Ncube, David Kanyaru, Yaw Osei-Asabere, Nathaniel Davidson and Ntando Mlotshwa

## Wolverhampton Central's men of standards

Wolverhampton Central baptised six men for Christ on 5 August: Khayaletu Volo-Sibanda, Methembeni Ncube, David Kanyaru, Yaw Osei-Asabere, Nathaniel Davidson and Ntando Mlotshwa. These six young people include Pathfinders, PBE winners, and one who has converted to Adventism.

During the baptismal service, these young men were commended by their family, peers, and the wider church family. They had received Bible studies from Elder Mark Palmer and Elder Juma Ncube over several months. Pastor Jeff Nicholson provided the candidates with guidance as they started their new journey, and Pastor Bruce from the GBK church baptised the candidates.

This was an emotional day, and we are excited about how God is going to use these men in the future.

DONNA PALMER

**Obert Kimberly Sibanda (1947-2022) d. 19 September.**



Obert was born on 20 June 1947 to Solomon and Ruth Sibanda in Filabusi, Zimbabwe. He was the third son of a large family. He was educated at Glassblock Number 3 School, then at Cyrene Boarding School, then at Solusi Mission. He completed his further education with a scholarship that sent him to Gloag Range School of Agriculture on the island of Fiji.

Returning to Zimbabwe, he worked for the Ministry of Housing in Harare. Later, he joined Harare City Council and became a public speaker.

Obert was baptised in Zimbabwe and married Jeritha in 1973. Together they had three sons and three daughters, and eventually thirteen grandchildren.

In 2001, Obert and his family came to England and worked for Bournemouth

Borough Council. He was deeply involved in the life and ministry of Bournemouth Seventh-day Adventist Church. A kind and dignified man, he was widely respected and loved. He was a profound Bible student. At home he was known for his love of cooking, skilful car repairing, and his practical joking. He enjoyed watching football on the television, and favoured Arsenal.

Sadly, after a serious illness, Obert passed away on 19 September 2022 in the Forest Homes Hospice in Poole, Dorset. The funeral service was held in Elim Church in Boscombe, Bournemouth, on 10 October 2022. We were welcomed by the Elim pastor. The large congregation came from near and far. Words of comfort, solo songs, and memories of Obert's life story were shared with the mourners by family members, friends, and pastoral colleagues. We sang his favourite hymn, 'Glory to His Name'. We read his favourite

scriptures: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, and Paul's triumphant words from 2 Timothy 4:7: 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith' (NIV).

The burial and committal took place in Bournemouth North Cemetery. Pastor Laszlo Liebhardt offered the prayer of committal at the graveside.

To Obert's wife, Jeritha; his three daughters: Samkele, Sinokuthula, and Similo; his three sons: Lindani, Khonzani and Mlindeli; and to their families, we offer our sincere condolences. We all look forward to the day of Christ's return, the day of resurrection and reunion. 'Wherefore comfort one another with these words' (1 Thessalonians 4:18, KJV).

PASTOR RICHARD L. VINE

## Messenger

Volume 128 • 10 – 27 October 2023

Editor: *Dusanka Rancic*

Design: *David Bell*

Proof reading: *Andrew Puckering*

Production and distribution: *Peter Oppong-Mensah*

COPY FOR No. 12 – 16 October 2023

**Note to potential advertisers**

It is important that those who submit adverts for display in *MESSANGER* ensure that they have **permission** (and a **paid licence** where required) to use any downloaded photographs or artwork that they incorporate into their adverts. It is also important that credit be given to the individual, organisation or company from which these have been obtained. For example, something like the following should appear within the advert: *©Joe Bloggs/iStockPhoto.com*. Please be aware that images downloaded from **Google** may also be subject to permission and licensing.

The Stanborough Press Ltd takes no responsibility for any downloaded images submitted to *MESSANGER* by contributors and reserves the right to decline adverts about which we have copyright concerns.

**Permission relating to photography**

Those who submit photographs of minors (persons under the age of 18) for publication must ensure that they have permission to do so from their parents, guardians or carers. We would like these submissions to be accompanied by the following statement: 'I have the permission of the parents, guardian or carer of the minors who appear in this/these photograph/s to submit them for publication in the *MESSANGER*.'

Copy should be sent to the Editor, *MESSANGER*, The Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL. Tel: (01476) 591700. Fax No: (01476) 577144. Email: [Editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:Editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

Send high-resolution pictures to: [dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

ABC Sales line: (01476) 591700 Mon-Thurs only, 8am-5.30pm.

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

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

### Visit to Pastor Cecil and Emma Perry



I was pleased to visit Pastor Cecil Perry and his wife Emma on 3 September. After his recent second fall, when he sustained two broken ribs and had to stay in hospital for a month, the pastor is in good spirits and recovering well. He had received many visits, including one from his fellow former BUC president, Pastor Don McFarlane. It was also good to see Emma recovering at home. We wish them both a speedy and full recovery, and look forward to their next visit to the Park church.

JOHNSON WONG



### Celebrating 90 years!

Pastor Philip Anderson was 90 years old on 14 September 2023. At Lodge Causeway in Bristol we were very happy to celebrate this occasion with the oldest member in our congregation.

We thank Pastor Anderson for his 60 years of faithful service to our church here in England. He served for forty-one years as a full-time pastor, then for a further nineteen years in a part-time capacity. During these years he has worked in many departments of our church and served in a wide variety of different roles. His faith and trust in the Lord continue to be an inspiration for all of us. Thanks be to God for all he has given to our church.

RUTH OHMAN, CHURCH ELDER

### Sunset

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

	London	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Oct 27	5.44	5.56	5.44	5.44	5.59
Nov 3	4.31	4.43	4.30	4.29	4.44
10	4.19	4.31	4.18	4.15	4.31
17	4.09	4.21	4.07	4.02	4.19
24	4.01	4.13	3.59	3.52	4.10



# The Stanborough Press has some special titles for **Black History Month**



For more information or to purchase, please contact us on our sales hotline (first come, first served) to secure your selection. Products are subject to availability and may not be in all ABC shops.  
 Telephone (01476) 591700 • Email [sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk) • [www.LifeSourceBookshop.co.uk](http://www.LifeSourceBookshop.co.uk)

