

THE MESSENGER

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

General Conference President Resigns

by C. R. Perry, president, BUC

General Conference president, Robert S. Folkenberg, announced his decision to resign at a specially-called meeting at the world headquarters on 8 February. In his letter of resignation Folkenberg said that, in view of serious concerns over his business relationship with James Moore, he was taking the best course of action 'to avoid pain and conflict to my family and the Church I love.' Until the full executive meets on 1 March, G. Ralph Thompson, GC secretary, will serve as acting president.

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church grows, it becomes less immune to the investigative eyes of those who demand of it openness, and high ethical standards.

The standards by which those in leadership are judged are more and more mercilessly applied. The room for sympathy is becoming smaller and smaller.

In the past fifteen years the name Seventh-day Adventist has appeared more and more in international news under the eyes of a critical press. We have experienced a mixed press on matters of public interest.

Recently the Communication department of the General Conference brought to our notice the fact that a lawsuit had been taken out in August 1998 against Elder Robert Folkenberg, and the Church, alleging improper business transactions.

The *Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Post* carried the story that James E. Moore, a business entrepreneur with a conviction for grand theft, was the one who filed the lawsuit claiming that Robert Folkenberg reneged on a business transaction and that, as a consequence, a Catholic charity was adversely affected.

The Administrative Committee of the GC, in taking into account the gravity of the allegations, convened an ad hoc committee of the General Conference to investigate those allegations.

The Adventist News Network reports that:

'A special ad hoc group was appointed by the Administrative Committee of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when it met on Tuesday 13 January to consider documents and allegations that arose out of a relationship between Robert S. Folkenberg, the Church's

president, and James Moore, a business entrepreneur in Sacramento, California.

'The composition of the ad hoc group included a pastor, educator, lay members, officers of four world divisions of the Church and Church leaders from the world headquarters office. They were appointed by the Administrative Committee on 13 January 1999 and given four tasks:

- '1. Receive and evaluate information relating to issues that have come to light as a result of allegations made against Robert S. Folkenberg by James Moore.
- '2. Identify pertinent issues that potentially affect the world Church.
- '3. Determine if the issues are of such a nature as to warrant further consideration and/or action.
- '4. Prepare a report with any appropriate recommendations.'

After two days of intense investigation and deliberations (25, 26 January), and hearing reports from the Church's attorney, and Elder Folkenberg and his attorney, the ad hoc group forwarded its findings and recommendations back to the GC Administrative Committee (27 January) which spent another 7-10 hours studying the submissions.

As the Administrative Committee constitutionally has no authority to act decisively on cases affecting elected executive positions, it had no alternative but to pass on the recommendations to the full Executive Committee of the General Conference for final action. The committee convenes on 1 March and will meet for seven days.

The summary copy of the ad hoc committee report made it quite plain that there was no misuse of the Church's money. The charge James Moore brought against the Church was frivolous in that the Inter-American Division broke off dealings with

this man from 1989.

The committee affirmed the visionary, energetic and mission-focused leadership which Elder Folkenberg had given to the world Church since 1990.

However, it acknowledged that certain issues raised in the case gave reason for concern about the president's personal business activities in relation to the office of the presidency. These could be construed as of an ethical nature.

Dr Neils-Erik Andreason, chairperson of the twenty-member special ad hoc group, characterized their two days of deliberation as 'open, candid, amicable and respectful. The group spent twenty-five hours hearing statements, reviewing documents and preparing a report.'

Ray Dabrowski told the *LA Times* reporter afterwards that the recommendation to pass the report to the Executive Committee was not passing the buck; it was the process through which the Church handled such cases.

Contingent matters surrounding this case await the court hearing.

The final outcome of the recommendations of the ad hoc group will not be known until the Executive Committee has had time to discuss them. What is certain is that we are committed to openness, fairness and spiritual credibility.

We are disappointed when the Church or the leadership is brought into question, but we have no alternative other than to do the right thing, knowing that God cares for His Church and will work out everything for its good.

Let us therefore heed the words of the apostle Paul to Timothy: 'I urge then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.' 1 Timothy 2:1, 2, NIV.

Whenever we face fearful odds or difficult times, the Lord has promised to be with us. Whatever the outcome of the issues facing the Church, let us hope Elder Folkenberg and the General Conference will experience the outworking of God's will.

More detail has been given on the General Conference website.



A Picture of Health

by G. Martin Bell, Good Health Association Limited

By the time you read this article, the New Year's resolutions you might have made could well be forgotten or abandoned, just like those of several million other people in the British Isles who were determined to eat less chocolate, stop smoking or get more exercise. But the wonderful thing about being a Christian is that you don't have to wait for a new year to make a new start. Christians believe in a 'new every morning' experience.

Being a Seventh-day Adventist is not an insurance policy which will protect you from all ill health, but Adventists realize that their health is a gift from God – a precious gift – to be cherished and cared for. Not smoking, taking no alcohol and enjoying a good diet benefits our members enormously. This protective influence is passed on to our children at an early age. The results, statistics prove, are longer lives with less incidence of cancer, heart disease, etc. But we must ask the question, are the additional years happier, more fulfilled and more productive than those of the average person?

Your base line. Try a little exercise with me. Draw a triangle on a piece of paper, with all sides 10cm long. Now think of the base line as **PHYSICAL HEALTH**. That includes exercise, your diet and whether you can touch your toes. Now draw the base line of another triangle next to the first. This is the beginning of your own personal Health Triangle.

Most church members are knowledgeable about good nutrition and will avoid smoking and drugs. Provided you are eating a well-balanced diet which includes plenty of vegetables and fruit, and you drink several glasses of water a day, your base line can be at least 6cm long (shorter if you don't), and if you achieve something like twenty minutes a day of fairly vigorous exercise – that is a good, brisk walk, a cycle ride or swim – then you might achieve a **PHYSICAL HEALTH** base line of 10cm. Most people, including Adventists, will admit that there is room for improvement (so your personal base line may only be 5cm or 6cm long). Think

about it!

Of course, there are elderly or disabled people who can't achieve a high level of exercise, but even they can probably walk down the garden, round the block, or sometimes sit with a large tin of baked beans in each hand and pump their arms up and down to improve their circulation.

Most people who think about their health and lifestyle stop here. Most broken new year's resolutions are in these areas. But good health is far more.

The first side of the Triangle, on the left, is **MENTAL HEALTH**. Just as it is important to exercise the body, it is important to exercise the mind. The apostle Paul emphasized the importance of developing good mental health in Philippians 4:8.

Well, how do you do that?

Attitudes. All-round good health does not begin in the kitchen, or a gymnasium, but in the mind. It begins with your attitudes, the way you think and the way you look at life. Are you a happy, confident and contented person? A recent survey of 2,000 Americans approaching or over 100 years of age looked for the secret to longevity. It was discovered that there were great differences in the eating habits and exercise levels of those individuals throughout their long lives. Some even smoked, drank and enjoyed their meat pies. But the one factor common to them all was contentment – yes, believe it or not, contentment. They had learned not to fret, to be over-anxious, or want things they could never have. They had learned to be content with the blows life had dealt them as well as the joys. Again, the apostle Paul, just three verses later, in Philippians 4:11, having considered all the disasters and trials of his life, said, 'But I have learned to be content.'

Is this, perhaps, the real secret of health and happiness? You will never be content while your mind is battling stress, fuzzy from lack of sleep, dwelling on grievances, or just not stimulated.

But just as the body can be exercised, so can the mind. In fact, exercise itself improves the mind. A brisk walk, combined with

fresh air, will improve the circulation, oxygenate the brain, and clear away the cobwebs. Bible study, reading a worthwhile book, doing crossword puzzles or listening without distraction to some wonderful music are all forms of mental exercise. So if you are fulfilled in your job and spend some leisure time in self-improvement and extending your knowledge, if you take time to rest and smell the flowers, if you glory in all that is beautiful and can be moved by music, art and poetry, if you know how to give as well as receive kind and encouraging words and thoughts, and even know how to love and express love, then draw your **MENTAL HEALTH** line long, up to 10cm on your personal Health Triangle. But if you are honest, really honest, you will know that there is much more you could learn to improve your understanding of history, health, handicrafts, hospitality, or even the purposes of God for you, His child. You could develop even more positive thinking, trust, understanding of others and confidence in yourself and God's plan for your life.

The social side. Well, how does your **MENTAL HEALTH** side look? Is it 4cm, 5cm or 6cm long, or are you such an egotist that it's already 9cm or 10cm?

The third line is the **SOCIAL SIDE** of health, and this completes the Triangle. We have been created as social beings and our relationship with parents, spouse, brothers and sisters, friends and work colleagues is very important. Do you know how to develop, nurture and maintain friendships? Are you there when others need you?

Two little boys left their school late and missed the bus. Living in the countryside, this meant a six-mile walk home. The smallest boy, only six, began to cry. He couldn't walk six miles home, he was already tired. But his big friend said, 'Come on, Jimmy, it's only three miles each.' That's good mathematics. The journey through life is far easier and far more enjoyable with the support of friends and loved ones.

So, look honestly at your

SOCIAL HEALTH and, if it's not too good, think about ways to make other people's lives around you happier. You will find the Golden Rule Jesus taught His followers is true: the more you give, the more you will receive, love and you will be loved.

How does your Triangle look now? If it's a bit bent, if it's a bit like a crushed tin can – don't despair. The important thing is, what would you like it to be by the beginning of a new millennium? *Who* would you like to be by the new millennium?

Spiritual health. Now, someone is saying, what about **SPIRITUAL HEALTH**? Well, that's what fills the *inside* of the Triangle of Health. That's the core of your being, the meaning of your life. **SPIRITUAL HEALTH** includes your belief system, your faith, your motivation in life. The very purpose of your life. So many people have great physical and mental health and get on fine with others, but have little understanding of the purpose of their existence apart from keeping up appearances, advancing in a job, raising a family and paying the mortgage. Why are you here? You are God's child but also the 'instrument of His peace', His servant. Made to worship and adore Him, but also to show something of His love to others.

Now what do you think of health? As you've seen, a healthy lifestyle encompasses your whole being. It's far more than what you serve up for a meal, and has nothing to do with the car you drive or the house you live in. If you suffer angina, arthritis or acne, that's only a very small part of the total picture.

As we approach a new millennium, remember that we have 'new every morning' to make little changes which can help us to be stronger, fitter, happier, more talented, more understanding, kinder, more loving Christians. As human beings we will never be in perfect health, any more than we will be perfect in the spiritual sense, but we should certainly strive for improvement. In six months' time, why not get your ruler out of the drawer and see if you can detect any changes in the **TRIANGLE OF YOUR HEALTH**.

God is at the head of the work

‘God is at the head of the work, and He will set everything in order. If matters need adjusting at the head of the work, God will attend to that, and work to right every wrong. Let us have faith that God is going to carry the noble ship which bears the people of God safely into port.’ – *Selected Messages, book 2, page 390.*

Towards the end of His ministry, Jesus led twelve footsore disciples up the uneven mountain roads north from Galilee. In the course of their thirty-mile, up-mountain hike they must have wondered why. Ahead was the mighty mass of Mount Hermon and, just below the summit range, Caesarea Philippi.

Perhaps it was at the great waterfall that Jesus paused for a drink and confronted His disciples with His question: *‘Whom do men say that I am?’* After He had listened to the variety of theories as to His identity, He put the question He had brought them thirty miles up-country to ask: *‘But whom say ye that I am?’*¹

Jesus asked this question surrounded by reminders of the four great world religions of His day: • The waterfall was the source of the Jordan. Who could think of the Jordan without thinking of the religion and history of the Jews? • Caesarea Philippi was also called Baalinas, Baal’s city; ruined temples to baals littered the area. • Above Caesarea Philippi was a great cavern; the Greeks believed Pan had been born there. The gods of the Greeks were represented. • In Jesus’ day, no one could look at Caesarea Philippi without being dazzled by the glistening white marble temple built by the Herods to the godhead of Caesar.

Against a background of the world’s great religions, Jesus stood and invited comparison between Him and them.

He wanted one answer, one verdict.

He got it.

From Peter.

‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.’

Remember the response of Jesus?

‘Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ Matthew 16:17, 18.

Against the background of the best that the world can offer – its material rewards, the lure of the sensual, its ideologies – Jesus stands and invites comparison. *‘Whom do ye say that I am?’*

How do the members of God’s Church, ‘the object of God’s supreme regard’, respond?

- Some become Judaizers, shout down the objective Gospel, and preach that something more than ‘Christ, the Son of the living God’ is necessary for our salvation.
- Some chase after material goals and prioritize fast bucks, the loaves and fishes; the car, the house, whatever. Western

society squeezes them into its materialistic mould.

- Some become Pan’s people, led by the nose by their physical instincts. A disproportionate amount of church board time, these days, is spent endeavouring to untangle marital and family difficulties. As someone pointed out in Feedback, last issue, the least meaningful aspect in the marriage service these days appears to be ‘Till death us do part’. Serial monogamy is becoming a pattern in some districts.

- Some are very struck by caesars, very impressed by the hierarchical structure of the Church and by powerful, charismatic personalities. Some are *too* impressed by those who have climbed to a high rung on the ladder. A few who have achieved ‘high positions’ take themselves so very seriously. Servant leadership is the Jesus way. The Spirit gives different gifts. The gift of administration is not rated higher than any other. It is bad for church leaders to be flattered and lauded. It lays them open to temptation. And, should they abuse their power, the very people who have lauded them become bitter and disillusioned.

‘Then Jesus said unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.’ John 6:67, 68.

‘Upon this rock will I build my church,’ said Jesus. Which rock? ‘Peter’, say the Roman Catholics. ‘Christ Himself’, say the Adventists.

That’s what the Adventists say – that is without doubt their theology – but, *in practice*, many build too much of their faith on Peters. People have left the Church because they have lost confidence in a conference president. A whole family recently left the Church because the father had learned on the Internet that Ellen White borrowed material from other authors when writing her books. Into whom had they been baptized? Upon which rock had they built their faith? The president, Ellen White – or Christ, the Son of the Living God?

Upon which rock is your faith built? Peter or Christ? Man or God? The rock that crumbles or the Rock of our salvation?

Put not your faith in Peters, in politicians, in princes, in pastors, editors or in presidents. They are fallible, sinful and bound to disappoint and dismay.

Put your faith in Christ the Rock of Ages. He will never disappoint or dismay. Guaranteed. Absolute. Unfailing. For ever.

God is at the head of the work. If there are adjustments to be made, He will make them.

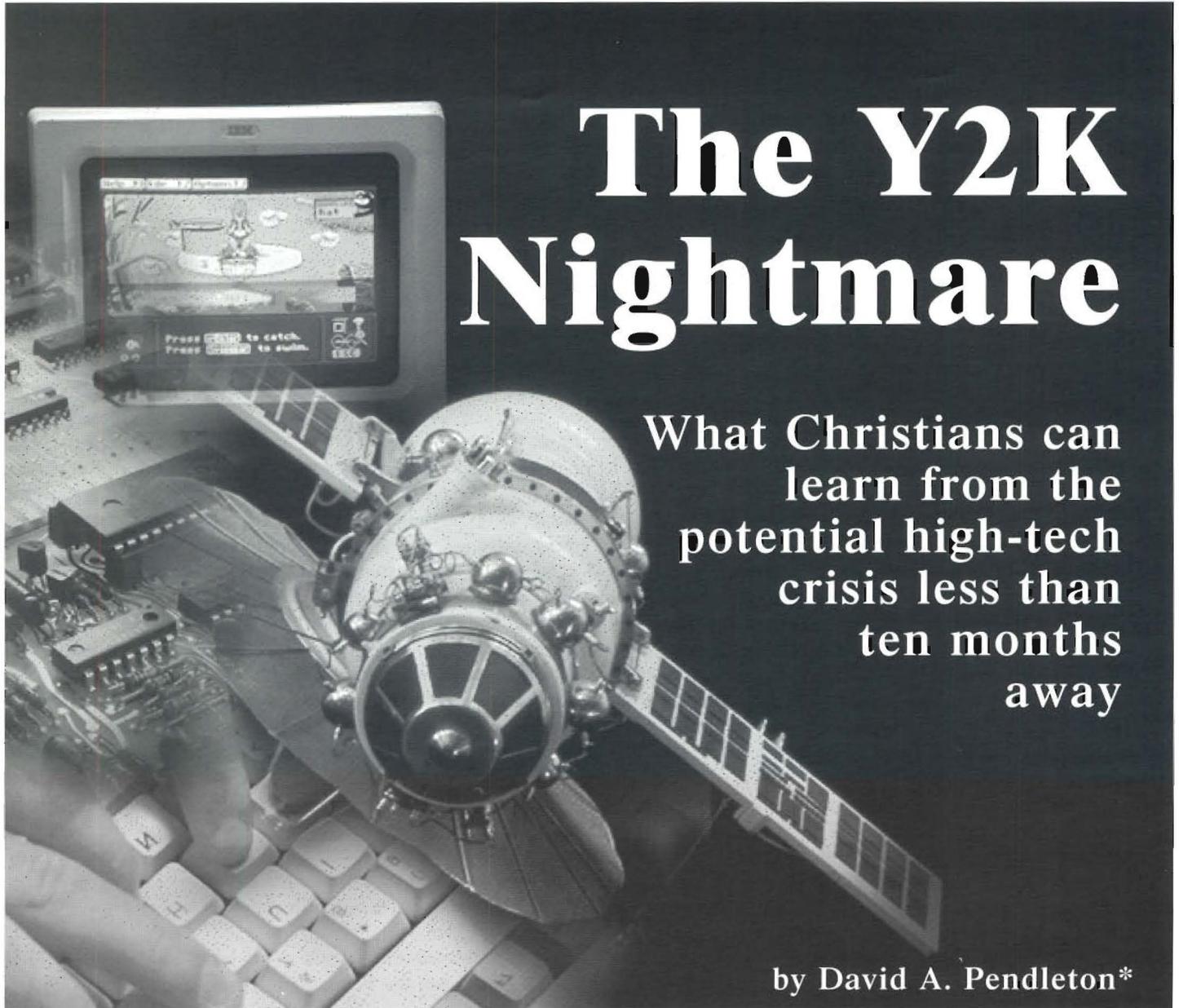
To whom shall we go?

To the legalists, the materialists, the sensualists, to Caesar, to Peter, to man or to God?

Thou hast the words of eternal life.

GOD IS AT THE HEAD OF THE WORK.

¹Read the story in Matthew 16:13-28.



The Y2K Nightmare

What Christians can
learn from the
potential high-tech
crisis less than
ten months
away

by David A. Pendleton*

'Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.'
Matthew 24:42-44, NIV.

You hear about it on the radio. You see stories about it on television and on the Internet. You read about it on the front pages of your newspapers. What is Y2K? And what does it have to do with you and me?

Y2K stands for 'year 2000', and the Y2K computer problem is the problem we could face on the year's first day. According to technology experts, significant computer and high-technology disasters will befall us if we do not prepare ourselves.

This sounds like something readers of Nostradamus might talk about. Or something a tabloid rag would foist on its readers. But it's not the case here. We're talking about a computer problem that could shut down power plants, ground aeroplanes, halt lifts, wreak havoc on banks, and impact high-tech hospital equipment around the country and across the globe. And this is just the beginning.

It occurred to me that there are spiritual lessons to be found in all of this frenzied and frantic preparation for the year 2000. I am reminded of at least three:

1. *As Christians we're called to live a life of action.* Yes, we're to be peaceful people, but we shouldn't be passive. God has plans for us, and those plans include doing things with our time, our talents, and our lives. God expects us to put feet, so to speak, on our Christian profession.

As James 2:26 puts it: 'Faith without works is dead.' We can believe all of Christian doctrine, we can affirm that Jesus is Lord, we can intellectually assent to the obligations of the Ten Commandments, but unless we act upon our beliefs, such faith is meaningless.

Today, thousands of computer programmers and highly-trained technicians are working overtime to avert disaster. Companies are spending millions, and governments are spending billions.

But how did this all start in the first place? We are struggling today with a problem that was set in motion by actions taken (or not taken) decades ago. In the early years of the development of the computer, limited memory space forced computer engineers and programmers to conserve in any way possible. One such way involved the recording of dates.

Take 1998, for example – a four-digit date. Computer designers decided that they could save precious memory space by representing it with its final two digits only – so that the year 1998 would appear as simply ‘98’. The year 1999 would be designated ‘99’, and so on. But what happens when the year 2000 commences and the computer registers 00? Will that be 1900 or 2000? That essentially is the problem.

Governments and businesses around the world understand that *immediate* action is required, and thousands of hours are being expended to ensure that computer systems become ‘year 2000-compliant’, as the jargon goes. If the deadline is not met, we can assume the worst. As one bureaucrat in the US indicated in near-apocalyptic terms: ‘We are talking about the high-tech equivalent of Armageddon. We are either ready on time or not. It’s too bad we didn’t start sooner. We can’t change the past. But we can begin now. Because, like it or not, there is nothing we can do to stop the clock or prevent the year 2000 from coming. It’s coming! The only question is: Will we be ready?’

His words in substance and tone are very much like those of Christian evangelists encouraging believers to put their spiritual lives in order for the Second Coming.

Computer programmers and information systems managers can believe that Y2K poses a threat, but such a belief is of little value unless they are willing to act upon it. As the bureaucrat said: ‘We can begin now.’ Indeed, we *must* begin now.

Recently, the Gartner Group estimated that Y2K would cost the US federal government \$30 billion to fix, but that says nothing about what states, counties, municipalities, and the private sector will have to spend. Projections done by Lloyds of London of total worldwide expenditures on the Y2K problem indicate that the bill could amount to hundreds of billions of dollars. And one noted economist has estimated that there is a 35 per cent chance of a global recession resulting from failure to prepare properly for the year 2000. The message: now is the time for action; procrastinators will pay dearly.

Similarly, as followers of Christ we have been presented with the Gospel. We know what God requires of us, and we know that Jesus is coming soon. Accordingly, we are compelled to act, to respond affirmatively to or reject the call of the Gospel. Indifference, passivity, and neutrality are not options. In Revelation 3:15 we read: ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!’ (NIV.)

2. *The times suggest urgency, imminence.* We know that we have a very short time frame. Everything around us indicates that time is of the essence. Like computer experts wrestling with the Y2K problem, we know that there will be a final reckoning, a final accounting, and that it is not too far off. It is inevitable and imminent.

At that time either we will be ready or we will not. Christ is coming soon – and there is nothing humanity can do to forestall or prevent Him. We can only prepare.

One of the difficulties compounding the Y2K problem is based on a myth. Computer experts have complained that key decision-makers, whether in government or business, have permitted themselves to believe that there is still ‘plenty of time’. This myth mutes the impetus for quick, decisive action. In Hawaii, where I live, for example, decision-makers have stated that there is ‘more than ample time’ and that ‘there is no cause for alarm’.

At the US federal level, a congressional subcommittee on the Y2K problem has determined that fewer than half of twenty-four investigated federal departments are on schedule to be prepared for the year 2000. And another report indicates that the Federal Aviation Administration, at its current pace, will not be ready until the year 2001 or 2002.

In the spiritual realm we find many saying that there is plenty of time – or that we can somehow buy more time. For now they would rather eat, drink, and be merry. There will always be time to turn to the Lord, they claim.

It is at this point, however, that the analogy breaks down. For it is clear that, unlike our Y2K computer problem, the Lord could indeed return before the year 2000. In the Bible we read that ‘If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and not have let his house be broken into.’ Matthew 24:43, NIV. But, though we can suspect, there is no way to know

when the ‘thief’ will come. The coming of Jesus could be sooner than we think.

3. *We know how the crisis ends.* In stark contrast, computer experts and world leaders dealing with the Y2K computer problem do not really know what will happen or how the story will end. Computer experts around the world are wringing their hands. In addition to the potential problems mentioned above, private sector military analysts now wonder aloud whether an accidental Armageddon is just around the corner. The question is whether some mission-critical nuclear weapons systems in the US and Russia, which are essentially still on hair-trigger alert status, could be regarded as impervious to the Y2K problem. Will we be able to maintain control over our nuclear arsenals?

However, we as Christians know how the story ends. Jesus wins. Evil is overcome. We can therefore rest assured that God’s grace will be sufficient for us (2 Corinthians 12:9). For while we are called to action, while we know that time is short, we know who is in control. And we can have hope and peace amid the hustle and bustle of these last days.

That’s the good news. God is in control. And we know how the story ends.

*David Pendleton, an attorney and state legislator, attends Manoa Valley Seventh-day Adventist church in Honolulu, Hawaii, with his family. This article was first published in *Adventist Review*, 31 December 1998.

*‘We are talking
about the
high-tech
equivalent of
Armageddon’*



North England Conference Presents...
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1999

Camp Meeting

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Youth Speaker

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NEC YOUTH DEPARTMENT

Diary of Events 1999

- 12-14 February Youth Leaders' Training, Alton Castle, Staffordshire
- 7 March Big 7 Sports Day, Armitage Centre, Manchester
- 13-20 March Week of Prayer
- 20 March NEC Teens Day, Birmingham
- 28 March-11 April Ingathering
- 30 April-3 May Filey Youth Weekend
- 23 May NEC Track and Field Event, Sheffield
- 7-13 June Camp Meeting
- 20 June North vs South Sports Day
- 28-31 July BUC Youth Congress Newbold
- June-August *Aberdaron Summer Camp:*
- 21-28 June Advance Party
- 2-11 July 50 Plus Camp
- 11-18 July Special Needs Camp
- 23 July-1 August Family Camp
- 1-8 August Junior Camp
- 8-16 August Senior Camp
- 16-23 August Earliteen Camp
- 25-30 August Senior Camp
- 1-3 October NEC Student Weekend
- 15-17 October Youth Leadership
- 31 Dec-3 Jan Prayer Conference and Millennium Celebration

Contact NEC for more information.

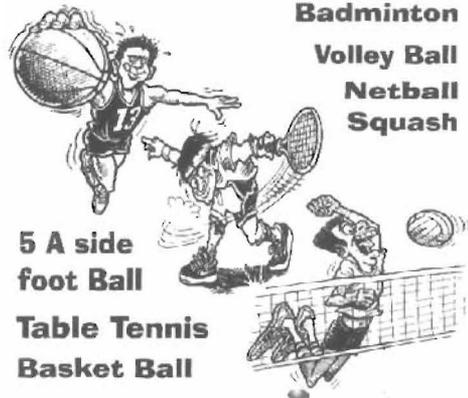
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Its back and it could happen to you



David Balderstone and Phil Amos drove the ADRA-UK 38-tonner in convoy with a smaller vehicle from SOS Bosnia to Kosovo in September. Here is part of David's report of the trip:

'It was with some trepidation that we headed off into yet another conflict area where people were dying in the fighting there. We were certain that we had the support and prayers of many people with us.

'A thirteen-hour delay on the Serbian border was followed by a long, two-day delay at the customs in Pristina, capital of Kosovo. Both seemed due to an unhappy combination of bureaucracy left over from the Communist era, innumerable restrictions, a refusal by local custom officials to accept official authorization from their superiors, and a total lack of understanding towards humanitarian aid, particularly if a large part of it was going to the ethnic Albanian community.

'We were pursuing our usual policy of taking aid to all sides, and it was always going to be difficult to get the necessary clearances. However, after much intense discussion, many prayers, and a chance showing on local television of us being welcomed by legal dignitaries, we were released from customs to start delivering our loads.

'We delivered some of our medicines to the Mother Teresa representatives who, in the main, look after the Albanian population. They were very pleased to see us and to receive the drugs. They had not received any since last February. There are ninety-two Mother Teresa Clinics in Kosovo. Treatment is free but they have little medicine to administer. Doctors and nurses work part-time and for nothing to help their countrymen. Most of the rural community fear going to the hos-

pitals because of having to pass through the militia who have checkpoints everywhere, including at the hospitals, but will come readily to the clinics. Most of the Serbs will go to the hospitals in the towns. Fear is everywhere. Aid is only allowed by special authorized convoys which are escorted through endless checkpoints.

'The Yugoslav Red Crescent made us welcome and were delighted to receive the drugs, dental chair, resuscitation units and other medical items we brought. They took us, somewhat nervously, on a tour through some of the damaged areas to a hospital in Pec. There we

patients were wearing thin, totally inadequate clothes, and eating a barely sufficient diet. There was only enough fuel to keep the heating going for another three days. Every time the electricity failed, as it did daily, both the lights and the heating went off as they had no generator of their own. During a recent particularly cold snap, two or three patients died each week from hypothermia. They were buried with the minimum of ceremony and expense in the rock-hard ground. Obviously, winter is far from over and such tragic deaths may be repeated.

'We slept fitfully, fully dressed

It simply is not possible to provide for all, and survival is difficult. The medical Director, appointed two years ago, has worked hard and planned well, and in the wards which have been upgraded the difference shows. New flooring, re-decoration and bright bedspreads have all helped, even though the wards were grossly overcrowded, with twenty-five beds almost touching each other and not even room for a chair or table. We, too, agonized. How many will survive the winter? How do they maintain the will to live? How would we or our relatives cope in similar circumstances? How soon could we return, with how much, and how big a team to do the work?

'It was a traumatic, tragic experience which moved us and was only just made bearable by the decision that we will take a convoy to Nis in March. As it will be a major undertaking, we shall leave on 19 March, taking joint Lifeline/ADRA/SOS Bosnia aid. Human beings should not have to live under the present conditions. Please help us to ensure that they do not. May we thank you in advance on

behalf of ourselves, and, more importantly, on behalf of these suffering, forsaken people.'

Much of the specialized equipment will have been collected by the time you read this. We still need funds for the project, some items can be purchased there more cheaply than we can get them here. There is a need for bedding. Sheets, blankets and pillow cases for single beds. They must be new or freshly laundered. Non-allergenic pillows are also needed. You need to be able to arrange delivery to us here at Stanborough Park. It is just too costly and time-consuming for us even to contemplate collection from various locations. We also need paintbrushes and rollers, new or in really good condition. Hand tools of all descriptions are very useful. Thank you for the good response that I know you will make.

The ADRA network responds wonderfully well to situations like this. Thanks to all volunteers, Community Services workers, and generous individuals who see the needs and help to find solutions. In comparison with the world's need, what we do may seem to be a drop in the ocean, but the ocean is made up of drops.

CONVOY to KOSOVO

*'Time is of the essence,' says ADRA director
DOUG SINCLAIR.*

'The convoy leaves on 19 March.'

found it to be dilapidated and dangerously lacking in basic equipment (by our standards) but the doctors and nurses do their best. We met a woman who had just been brought in with a bullet wound which had removed part of the muscle and bone in her arm. She was screaming as without anaesthetic they cleaned and bound it up again. When a patient is admitted into hospital, relatives have to go to a private pharmacy in town to obtain the drugs needed. Inevitably, patients die because of the delay.

'On our return journey from Kosovo we visited a large mental hospital near Nis, just across the border in Yugoslavia. What we saw there both shocked and saddened us, but made us promise ourselves that we would return to try to help as many of the patients as is humanly possible. There are no God-forsaken places - only people forsaken by others; and these are some of them.'

In early January, Dr Elaine Laycock from Lifeline and SOS Bosnia, and David Balderstone went on a flying fact-finding mission to this hospital. They report as follows: 'The weather was of the kind where one remains permanently cold. The

because of the cold, under a very thin duvet and two thin grey blankets. This, however, was luxury, as the patients had only one or two grey blankets each to keep out the all-pervading cold and damp. They also had one pale grey sheet, no pillows and a crumbling foam rubber mattress. The smell was an unavoidable combination of urine, faeces and unwashed bodies, which could be slightly diluted by opening the windows, but this in turn, of course, only dropped the temperature further. Conditions were so bad that we were forbidden to film, in order to maintain a shred of dignity for the patients. This was an easy decision to understand as some were not even fully clothed.

'The patients, who come from all ethnic groups (including about 200 Albanians from Kosovo), were all in dire need of something to do. The staff has remained remarkably cheerful, and has made considerable progress in providing some occupational therapy, but only for about one hundred out of the nine hundred, mostly psycho-geriatric patients. They agonize over whether to buy food, warmth, clothes or medicines out of the 5DM (roughly £1.80) daily budget for each patient.

PRESIDENT'S PRAYER BOOK

Pastor Perry is inviting MESSENGER readers to submit written prayers for publication, initially in the magazine and eventually, perhaps, in a book.

Theme: The Church on the verge of the new millennium. (See MESSENGER 20 November 1998 for further details.)

Certain ground rules must be observed: • The sender must include his or her name and address; • The prayer should not exceed 200 words; • The prayer should not be written in rhyme. Remember, 'Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.'

MILLENNIUM COMMITTEE

BAPTISMS

In January, Pastor Dalbert Elias estimated that there had been, on average, 7.5 baptisms for every NET '98 venue. With each issue of MESSENGER more baptismal reports come in. It is, of course, understood that many factors contribute to a baptism – and that the Holy Spirit has many ways and means at His disposal.

Christine Moses and Maroley Robinson report from Huddersfield

There have been two baptisms in Huddersfield, the first of which occurred before NET '98 began. June Donaldson, Pauline Welch, Nicola Phang, and Nicole and Lydia Rafferty were the candidates immersed by Pastor Desmond Rafferty. It was a special privilege for him to baptize his two daughters.

On Sabbath 16 January, 14-year-old Jonathan Njoku was baptized. Pastor Rafferty gave the address and the candidate's uncle, Pastor Roy Morgan, conducted the immersion.

High Wycombe Micklefield reports in

The High Wycombe Micklefield church warmed up for the NeXt Millennium seminar with a baptism. On Sabbath 3 October Jeffrey Bullock was baptized by Pastor N. Myrie. Jeffrey has attended church for the past three years and credits his recent success to his newfound faith in God.

Sands and Micklefield churches joined together for the NeXt Millennium seminar which was conducted in the Sands church. The evangelistic series resulted in a meaningful revival for both congregations. During the series more than fifty visitors attended, and most of them came several times. The seminar concluded on 14 November with a wonderful baptism. Paul Campbell, a former Jehovah's Witness, was baptized by Pastor Myrie. The day was blessed by the decision of Paul's parents – who have been connected with the Jehovah's Witnesses for fifteen years – to respond to the appeal. They are now receiving Bible studies.

The Micklefield baptismal pool was opened yet again on 28 November as two couples who have been connected with the church for many years were baptized. It was very moving to see Eileen and Sam Douglas, and Yvonne and Sheffield David seal their decision to follow Jesus in baptism.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

Wimbledon reports in

Nineteen-ninety-eight saw eight

people baptized at the Wimbledon church. On 1 August, Mrs Gloria Burrell, watched by her husband and two children, was the first new member. Gloria was brought up as a Muslim in Nigeria and, like all good Muslims, she learned Arabic in order to read the Koran. Now, instead of the Koran, Gloria reads the Bible to her children.

Following the NET '98 programme, seven souls committed their lives to Christ on 5 December. Paulette Bradshaw, Margaret Wright, Grace, Samuel and Joseph Togbor, Sergey Nor and Raymond Parr were baptized.

Paulette's daughter and friends sang a special song for her baptism. Margaret Wright has been attending Wimbledon for a long time but was initially contacted through the Ingathering campaign. Grace, Samuel and Joseph Togbor are siblings and of Ghanaian descent. Their parents watched as their children followed the example set by our Lord. Sergey is a native of the Ukraine and came into contact with Adventism when his job brought him to Britain. Raymond has attended Wimbledon church since he was a few weeks old. For all the candidates, NET '98 was a very special experience.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

E. L. Bell reports from Wolverhampton

NET '98 netted ten souls in two baptisms at the Wolverhampton Oxford Street church, proving beyond doubt that the Word of God is still quick, powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. Some of the candidates have, for a number of years, been wrestling with the thought of baptism but, after the Spirit-filled preaching of Dwight Nelson, on 15 November six souls were baptized. These were Selina Teague, Matthew Gordon, Stephen Bronk (whose membership will be at the Great Brick Kiln Street church) Charles Clarke and Leroy Clarke, brothers, and John Duross (whose membership will be at Wednesfield).

The immersions were conducted by Pastors Jude Jeanville and David Savalani.

As a result of the appeal made at the conclusion of this baptism,



Above: The candidates at the first Huddersfield baptism with Pastor Desmond Rafferty. Right: Gloria Burrell baptized at Wimbledon. Bottom: Eileen and Sam Douglas baptized by Pastor N. Myrie in High Wycombe.

a second took place on 20 December. Four candidates were baptized: Wayne Price, Elizabeth Dambrauskas, Racine Green, and Sarah Blake.

Sylvia Keshishian reports from Hanwell

The Hanwell church concluded 1998 with a special service of thanksgiving which focused on praise and gratitude to God for His leading during the year. As the music and personal testimonies progressed it became clear that Hanwell church had a lot to thank God for – not least for the six souls who committed their lives to Him through baptism and profession of faith on Sabbath 14 November.

Though the six came from very different backgrounds, each found a warm welcome at Hanwell. Angela Miskin works as a drama teacher in London; this lady has been an occasional visitor for a number of years but made her commitment as a result of Dwight Nelson's messages during NET '98. Cecil Barnett was brought up as an Adventist but, when he was old enough, chose his own path. A recent stroke led him to realize the emptiness of life without God. When the appeal for baptism was made he responded. Natalie St Lewis, 18, was the youngest of the candidates baptized. This pleasant young lady had been attending



Sabbath school for some time before the NET '98 experience. Bernard Woghiren is from a Nigerian background. For most of his life he has



his altar call, Bernard responded positively. The other candidate, also from Nigeria, was Beni O. Kansese. When Beni had completed the Discovery Bible course, Rudy Laurens visited him to present him with his certificate. He found him still struggling with the Sabbath message. Beni attended the NET '98 seminar and, after careful Bible study, was convicted of the validity of the Sabbath argument. Ion Buteanu is an electrician from Romania. This young man had many questions about life and a growing desire to meet God. In answer to his quest, God led him to the NET '98 seminar where he expressed his sincere desire to join God's family.

Lincoln reports in

Just before Christmas, Lincoln church saw the first fruits of its NET '98 programme. Carolyn Hundleby was baptized, her three children and several of her friends joining us to witness the stand she was taking. Carolyn's tenuous contact with the Church goes back several years. Her neighbour, Gladys, has a daughter, Rita. A Methodist, Rita lives in Zimbabwe – where her church joins the Adventist church in welfare work. When, after four years, Rita returned to Lincoln for a while in difficult circumstances, her Adventist friends in Zimbabwe contacted Pastor C. R. Perry at the BUC who, in turn, contacted the NEC who, in turn, contacted Pastor Bryan Webster of Lincoln. As a result, Rita became a part of the Lincoln church family – and got to know Carolyn. Rita shares her beliefs with everyone she knows, but Carolyn was not interested. However, because of the way she was helping Rita, the local pastor met Carolyn, visited her from time to time, and eventually put her on his own prayer list for NET '98.

The NET '98 series fell at a time in Carolyn's life when she was ready to listen and, from the second night, she attended every programme. The picture of God she saw was entirely new to her, and she found, at last, the Father of love. We have several more baptisms in preparation.

Derby Normanton reporting

Nineteen-ninety-eight was a joyful year for Derby Normanton and Burton district churches as they witnessed, on three occasions, baptisms in which ten candidates were immersed.

The first baptism was on 27 June. The candidates were Simon Taylor, and Tony and Thoko



been a devout Roman Catholic. His interest in the Advent message was kindled when he attended the NET '98 seminar and, when Dr Nelson made

APOLOGY. At present we are faced with the happy problem of receiving a vast number of baptismal reports. As a consequence, the reports are having to be condensed and the majority of photographs returned unused.

Many influences, not least the Holy Spirit, contribute towards a decision for baptism. One common denominator in most recent baptisms, however, has been the influence of the NeXt Millennium seminar. While acknowledging that we have been careful to indicate in each report – including the one from West Kilburn and Kingsbury-Wembley – when a baptism either pre-dated NET '98 or resulted from influences other than NET '98, some pastors feel that we have been guilty of misrepresentation by grouping most baptisms under the NeXt Millennium seminar logo. We especially apologize to Pastor S. Thomas and to the membership at West Kilburn and Kingsbury-Wembley (MESSENGER 22 January, page 4).

We ask the remainder of our membership to bear with us, and we request that our Communication secretaries, like Jo Francis of West Kilburn and Kingsbury-Wembley, take pains to describe, where possible, the influences which brought about the decision of each candidate. *Editor.*

Muowo-Dawef. On 5 September, Marjorie Thomas and William Brown were baptized. On 5 December, Michael Clayton, 14, and Veronica Fox were baptized. Also on that occasion, Ruth Richards and Karlina Ebanks were rebaptized, and Lilian Worrel, 92, was received on profession of faith.

Each baptismal service was enriched by Pastor Lorance Johnson's addresses and inspiring musical items of praise dedicated to the candidates. The immersions were conducted by Pastor Peter Sayers.

JACQUELINE McCALLA

Stanborough Park reporting

'What a fantastic start to the year, bringing joy to all of us!' These were the words of Pastor David Neal at Stanborough Park's first baptism of 1999, on 2 January.

Four were baptized. Keith and Judith Hughes are mature Christians who were searching for the right church. Some years ago one of their sons, Darren, made friends with an American work colleague, Timothy Calkins. When Timothy returned to the States, Darren went too. They stayed with Timothy's grandparents, Pastor

and Mrs Harold Calkins. Darren returned with a very favourable view of Seventh-day Adventists. In March 1998 his parents started worshipping at Stanborough Park and, when the NeXt Millennium seminar began in October, they attended and responded to Dr Dwight Nelson's appeal. In Keith's words, 'Jesus has become the King of my life.'

Hendrine Hawkins came, supported by her husband Russell, daughter Loretta, niece Natasha, and grandson Sheridan. Hendrine was born in Guyana, and her family are Seventh-day Adventists, but Hendrine attended a Roman Catholic school. She said her ideas were all confused, so early last year she enrolled for an ADC Bible course. Like Keith and Judith, she attended the NET '98 series and decided to be baptized.

Sheena Murphy, 12, has attended the Park church all her life. She answered the call from Dwight Nelson to follow the Lord in baptism.

During his sermon Pastor Patrick Boyle advised us, 'Security is not found in material things. . . . When we look at Christ and see him on the right hand of God *there* is security.'

BRONWEN ATKINSON

Left to right: Keith and Judith Hughes, Sheena Murphy, Hendrine Hawkins and Pastor David Neal. *Photo: Stanley Maxwell*





Pastor Odle with Christopher, Chantelle, Dawn, Tomasin and Josephine.

NET '98 baptism at Stoke Newington

At the end of NET '98, on 14 November, five precious souls gave their lives to Jesus in baptism. The candidates were Dawn Heartwell, Josephine Jeremy, Tomasin Murray and Christopher and Chantelle Foster.

Dawn had been going to a Sunday church and was still searching for the truth when she came across Sister Ann-Marie Nelson, who studied with her and invited her to the seminar.

Chiswick reporting

Chiswick church was blessed with the witness of six souls who were baptized as a result of the NeXt Millennium seminar. The myth of age being a barrier to commitment with Christ was dismissed when Danielle Atkins, 11, who had recently returned to England from Jamaica, answered the altar call, and strengthened her resolve to follow Jesus with her baptism on 15 November, together with a couple, James and Charita Houlana, who were rebaptized.

Following the seminar, Enid Gentles and Patricia Simon were baptized on 26 December. And to round off the year, Roland Wright decided to see the New Year in with his baptism on 31 December at the Year End service.

MARIE DETERVILLE

Pastor K. C. Henry immerses Danielle Atkins.



Josephine heard of the Advent message from her sister who is an Adventist and who invited her to the seminar. Tomasin was brought up in an Adventist home. She studied with our head elder, L. Mackenzie, and also did a VOP course. Christopher and Chantelle were brought up in the Adventist Church, too. Christopher is one of our own, and Chantelle was brought up in the Chiswick church. This has been a big year for them because they were married in August.

The immersion of these candidates was performed by our minister, Pastor Wayne Odle.

Prior to this baptism, two other candidates were baptized into church membership in July by Pastor Odle - Elaine Malcolm and Darron Lee. Both these candidates were regular worshippers at our church, and Elaine joined her husband Sven, who was baptized in 1997. Darron has returned to the fold after many years in the wilderness. This has been a big year for Darron, too; in December he got married in the West Indies.

F. R. SUTHERLAND

1,000 youth at Newbold

History was made on 28 November when over 1,000 youth from around the United Kingdom congregated at Newbold for the BUC-wide Youth day of fellowship.

The event was named ACTS 98, ACTS being an acronym for Active Christians Together in Spirit, with youth coming from as far afield as Ireland and Scotland.

The organization of this event was to a high professional standard, with a lot of time, effort, energy and, above all, prayer going into its planning. The London Youth Federation was called in to assist with the advertising and organization, but the Holy Spirit worked to mobilize the youth to come and fellowship.

The programme for the day provided a delightful medley of worship services that proved to be

very popular. Each service had a different style: African, contemporary, creative arts, back to back preaching, and family worship. There was something for everyone. This was most appropriate because the event was attended by all cultural sections of the Adventist community: black, white and Asian, all fellowshiping side by side in the spiritual harmony that God intended for His children.

In the afternoon several workshops were run that covered a variety of topics including relationships and sexuality, missions, how to study the Bible, and street witnessing.

The evening concert was an interesting array of musical talent. Everyone got a glimpse of SDA performing arts from around the UK. Poetry and mime added to the variety of the evening.

SUSANNE KIRLEW

Memories of summer

A coach full of members and friends of the Central London church went for a day trip to Cheddar Gorge in Somerset on Sunday 30 August 1998. Blessed with an abundance of sunshine, and packed lunches that could have fed a multitude, it was a perfect day out.

The trip was organized by the Filipino members of the church as a means to raise funds for a student missionary. Prudemar Mopera Verzo, the student missionary, is a graduate of the Adventist University of the Philippines. He had worked in building small churches in the Philippines. His latest unofficial overseas ministerial involvement was in Belgium and he served as a leader/co-ordinator for the Filipinos. Prudemar hopes to be part of Pastor Phillip Leenhouders' ministerial team.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY



Memories of Christmas

The members of the Torquay church celebrated Christmas with the help of the Shipton Singers, a group of ladies from the village of Ipplepen, led by the church organist Margaret Shipton. Sabbath morning was enjoyed by all who attended in a church full of winter greenery, as the wonderful sound of music filled the air, and a variety of different readings were brought to us by members of the church.

The church offering was donated to the South West Children's Hospice, along with a collection of toys donated by church members. Representatives of the SW Hospice fund-raising committee attended the service and were presented with a cheque for £92 by the minister, Pastor Rick Slann.

JEN READ

Pastor Rick Slann presents the cheque to Mr and Mrs Dawes of the South West Children's Hospice fund-raising committee. The Shipton Singers are in the background, with Margaret Shipton, musical director, on the far right.



Police make arrest at Riverway church

Ten o'clock on Monday morning 17 August was the first time in the history of Bromley church (now Riverway, Sidcup) when children from the local community arrived for a Holiday Bible Club experience. With the help of Auntie Rose Brizan from Chatham church, who had just finished a two-week Holiday Bible Club herself, and the careful hand of our own Auntie Pam Lewis, and Ralph and Jeanne Lombart, Riverway opened its doors for another community outreach programme.

Using the Story Keepers programme, we showed the children the cartoons on a large screen followed by worksheets and singing and crafts. They came back every day, wanting to make more items to take home.

Ralph Lombart arranged for the local police to come by and visit on the fourth day. The children were amazed, and one of them asked to be arrested so that he could wear the handcuffs. PC Julie Hanton from Erith was kind enough to oblige the young boy's request and handcuffed him immediately. It took a lot of persuading to get her handcuffs back! PC Danny Beaven was kind enough to leave some workbooks for the children to take home and complete.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Milton Keynes baptisms

Two young people who grew up in the Church – Charlie Loftman and Davinia Gregory; one who returned home having left the Church earlier in life – Dorothy Maison-Harries; and two who came to the Adventist faith through Adventist Radio Milton Keynes – Michael and Nicky Arnold; have been baptized.

Pastor Juneroy Nugent challenged the members to fill the baptismal pool at least once a quarter; if not, he would be getting in the pool anyway! Not ones to refuse a challenge, and not wanting to see our pastor wrinkling in the pool on his own, four candidates took the plunge on 31 October for a unique baptismal experience by candlelight. The candidates were Roxanne Hudson, Kellie Williams, Keisha Williams and Earlin Baptiste. The service concluded with an altar call which resulted in ten candidates lined up for next quarter's baptism.

ANDREW ROCK



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A long hard look at the Church

We called it 'Culture Week', but in fact it was a long, searching look at the Church.

It was not until Dr Albert Waite had given the opening Sabbath presentation on the subject, The Church: Attraction or Distraction? that members figured out what they were getting into.

The week's theme was, The Church Stands Eternal. Several speakers challenged the Church with their respective presentations. Pastor Simeon Esson, of the Hackney and Clapton churches, presented the topic, The Church, Symbol of Stability. Monday's presentation was by June Gamble-Ashton from the Stratford church. She presented the topic, The

Church, Boon or Bane? On Tuesday, Ava Walters, a member of the Ilford church, addressed the question, Is the Church the Moral and Ethical Conscience of the Nation? The Wednesday night presentation was, The Church in Search of Identity, presented by Thelma Thorpe, Head of the Hyland House primary school. Thursday was spent listening to a taped presentation given by Dr Dick Winn, of Southern Adventist University, on the subject of Standards. On Friday, Keith Davidson, Education director, BUC, spoke on the topic, The Church Confronting Secularity. The SDA Church and the Eschaton, was the concluding sub-

ject presented by Pastor Horace Taffe, pastor of the Ilford church. Each presentation was followed by animated discussion.

Highlights of the week included competitions in prose writing, poetry, music, arts and crafts. Prizes were given to the following people: Matthew Herel, Aaron Brooks, Gladstone and Linettee Auston, Harold and Norma Buchanan, Constance and Jimmy Walters and Monica Rigsby.

The week's activities concluded with a banquet. Awards were handed out by Bridget Taffe, Ilford elders Ralph McIntosh and Thelma Vacciana (for long and distinguished service).

PASTOR H. A. TAFFE

NET '98 MATERIALS

Do you have any NET '98 materials left over? One pastor plans to run the series in March. If you can help please phone (01703) 733747.

NAMES WANTED

Please send the names of relatives, friends or non-attending Adventists whom you would like contacted, to Pastor R. E. Hulbert, Wellingborough church clerk, at 31 Grange Road, Little Cransley, Kettering, Northants, NN14 1PH.

FRIENDS OF STANBOROUGH SCHOOL

Were you a past pupil/teacher or in any other way connected to Stanborough School? If so, we would like to hear from you and include you in our plans for a new Friends of Stanborough School Association. Please contact: Pastor Paul Tompkins, PR Officer, Stanborough School, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts, WD2 6JT. Tel: (01923) 673268/Fax: (01923) 893943.

WE HAVE MOVED

Enfield SDA church has changed address to: St Helier Hall, 12 Eastfield Road, Enfield, Middx, EN3. (Adjacent to Albany swimming pool.)

Also, we desperately seek a pianist and/or musicians to play for each Sabbath morning.

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If you want to know how to deal with the negative attitudes that hinder your relationship with God, then this book is also for you! Thomas portrays some of the flaws of those who sought to serve God. We come face to face with inconsistent Peter, disillusioned Matthew, and discontented Onesimus, tempestuous James, cautious Joseph, timid Timothy and questioning Thomas. He describes how each triumphed over his limitations.

If you want to live a life that shares God, then buy this book! We encounter people who used their attributes to share God – the practical Philip, the encouraging Barnabas, the hospitable Lydia, the supporting Silas, and the faithful Mary Magdalene. Despite opposition and obstacles, these people were successful in leading others into a relationship with God. We, too, are encouraged to look at ways in which we can share God.

Men and Women of the New Testament is easy to read, warm and encouraging, inspiring and challenging. With each character vignette, Thomas makes applications to our lives which call for reflection. The book can easily be used as a basis for devotional talks, prayer meetings and resource material for presentations. More importantly, though, it is a book to read in times of quiet, when we zero in on the awesome power of God working in the lives of the men and women of the New Testament then, and focus on what that same power can do in the lives of men and women of the New Testament today!

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In Brief

Newport: lay preachers' seminar

Pastor Ken Clothier is conducting a lay preachers' seminar on alternate Sabbath afternoons at the Newport church. It is well attended by members from surrounding churches, as well as our own.

VERA MACHELL

Dublin: mid-week series

Pastor E. Shafer began a verse-by-verse study of the book of Revelation, following the conclusion of the NET '98 series. For the first 15-20 minutes those who attend are invited to share their problems and blessings. Then, after prayer, the study of Revelation is commenced.

CHURCH BEAT

Ystrad Mynach

The children – aged 2-11 – took the leading parts in the Christmas celebrations at Ystrad Mynach. Some appeared in costume, singing and reciting verses. In addition some adults were able to display musical talents. Among them were Olive Morgan, Peggy Mason and her son Ian, Pastor Richard Vine, and the youth group Tyburn.

ALETHEA CARTER

Dr Leonard meets the president

Dr Billy Leonard, pastor of Coleraine and Londonderry, along with his wife Valerie, met the president of the Irish Republic, Mary McAleese. The meeting took place on 2 December. The invitation came from President McAleese when she heard of the nature of Dr Leonard's PhD thesis. She is determined to keep up to date with peace and reconciliation studies, and had

been notified of Dr Leonard's study on the interface of religion, ethnicity and politics. The president has been involved with this type of work for many years and could readily identify with Dr Leonard's desire to carry out his study and with the general thrust of his doctoral dissertation. Dr Leonard was awarded a PhD some two-and-a-half years ago.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Oxford: Women's Ministries day

The sisters of the church organized the services. Peggy Vine led in the Sabbath school. Barbara Ramez-Alaneh guided our thoughts in a lively discussion of the Sabbath school lesson. Chara – a young lady from St Helena who is studying in Oxford at present – brought the mission story to life. Divine service speaker was a lady pastor from London, Annette Johnson. People from the community who came to the Women's Ministries outreach endeavour known as 'Healthy Living Supper Club' were invited to come to the Oxford church for this special day. A group of approximately twenty-five enthusiastic vegetarians meet once a month for health lectures followed by a hearty supper. This outreach is organized by Junko Nakai, our Women's Ministries leader. In the afternoon there was a dramatized version of the event when Jesus took note of His mother's request that He turn water into wine at the wedding in Cana.

PEGGY VINE

Camp Hill: Youth weekend

We didn't know what we were in for when we arrived at the Bilberry Hill training centre. Pathfinder director Mike Rossiter showed us to comfort-

able rooms. This course, 20-22 November, was the first of the new three-level youth leaders' courses. Twenty-four 'guinea pigs' were willing to try it out! There were five 'trainees' – and a cook! (With a tight schedule of work there was no time for trainees to wash up!)

The weekend proved to be rewarding and stimulating. It included, among other things, ideas and resources for creative worship, child and youth evangelism, leadership skills and youth work. A big thank you to Paul Tompkins, Mike Rossiter, Ken Burt, Steve Palmer, Lorraine Questel and Rose Miller (the cook).

MAISIE GABRIEL

St Albans: International Night

On 14 November, St Albans church hosted their International Night, which attracted members and visitors alike. The evening began with an opportunity to visit individual displays which included native food and costumes from ten different countries, all represented by individual members of the St Albans church. The displays were then followed by items of entertainment from each of the countries represented.

COLIN MANNERS-SMITH

St Albans: Lifeboat Number 14

To close the week of prayer, St Albans church members conducted a special programme entitled 'Lifeboat Number 14', the only lifeboat which returned to save people during the *Titanic* disaster. An almost life-size boat was constructed as the primary prop for the drama, and the main storyline of the recent film *Titanic* was acted and then adapted further during the sermon by

Miroslav Pujic, TED Communication director, to draw parallels to Jesus being Lifeboat Number 14 – who came to save us.

SARAH MANNERS-SMITH

Swansea: the children give

Every year the children of the Swansea church receive a gift for Christmas from the church. This year they decided to give their presents, and asked the church to donate money, to ADRA, to help the people in Honduras and Nicaragua following the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch.

MARY LATCHMAN

Milton Keynes

The people of Milton Keynes – and some surrounding areas – were able to hear the Gospel message brought to them on FM 107 ARMK (Adventist Radio Milton Keynes). This is the third time ARMK has been able to broadcast to the area in the last two years. The Advent message was supported by sweet gospel music which people found very hard to turn off. The Radio Licence Authority calculates that every call received represents 5,000 listeners. If that is so, then, excluding our own members, ARMK had in the region of 230,000 listeners.

ANDREW RDCK

Derby Chester Green: Farewell to the Bantons

The Bantons have returned to their homeland, having lived in Britain for forty-one years. They were associated with the Handsworth, Wolverhampton and Cambridge churches before they moved to Burton in Staffordshire in 1976. In 1982 Brother Octavius Banton took over as leader in the

Burton district. Sister Banton has supported her husband in his ministry and has, herself, led in the Sabbath school and Personal Ministries departments, as well as serving as local and conference treasurer, Sabbath school teacher and church organist.

Sadly, Brother and Sister Banton will be returning to their homeland, Jamaica. Pastor Lorance Johnson, on behalf of the local membership, presented the Bantons with farewell gifts.

O. M. MARR

The book for this quarter's Sabbath school lessons

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Women's Day of Prayer – 6 March

In 1995 the women in the Sudan decided they would celebrate the International Women's Day of Prayer. We would think they did not have much to celebrate but plenty to pray about. But these women carefully laid their plans and advertised their coming programme.

Youssef Andreas was the first Seventh-day Adventist baptized in the Sudan in the 1950s by an evangelist sent by Neal Wilson. Because of the war and political unrest, however, he and his family lost touch with the church and did not even know that the Adventist Church had been officially organized in Sudan in the early 1980s.

Then, one day as Yvonne Andreas, Youssef's wife, was going about her errands, she saw a poster which read: *International Women's*

Day of Prayer – Women's Ministries – Seventh-day Adventist Church. Yvonne was overjoyed and overwhelmed. Youssef and his family were reunited with fellow believers. They thanked God that the local church had encouraged the ladies to have a Women's Day of Prayer.*

The first Sabbath in March is the annual day for the Church to celebrate the Women's Day of Prayer. This year its topic is based on the General Conference theme for 1999 'Experience the Life of the Family'.

You may wonder if holding this day in your church will make a difference. There is only one way to find out, and that is to encourage your Women's Ministries department to lead out on 6 March. If you have no leader, then arrange with your pastor to apply to the BUC Women's

Ministries department for the Women's Day of Prayer materials.

Many churches in the BUC do celebrate this day. Some begin it early with a Prayer Breakfast; others make it a day to invite non-member friends and family together with lapsed members to church. While one leader may call for a day of prayer and fasting, another will have a special fellowship lunch. Even though this is a Women's Ministries event, all your church family can be enriched by this special day.

Little did the ladies in the Sudan know that their Day of Prayer would reunite the Andreas family with the church. It could be that as you plan to hold the event you, too, will be making a difference for eternity.

*News from the GC Women's Ministries Department, January 1997.

Profile

A great man of music

A Profile of Idris Owen by David Marshall

Idris Owen was the great man of music in the Church in the British Isles in my growing-up years. Whenever his name is spoken, my mind produces a picture of a man with a massive amount of hair that swayed back and forth as he put his heart and soul into conducting a large male choir.

Idris was born in the Land of Song – Mountain Ash, to be exact – in 1901. He took to the piano at an early age and, by the time he was in school, was winning competitions in eisteddfods all over South Wales. He has sixty prizes in all!

In September 1917 he went to study at Stanborough Park Missionary College, the Newbold of those days. He had not been a student long, before he was invited to join the faculty as music teacher. Among his more senior students in 1920 was a European union president come to improve his English and his organ playing. That president had much to say about a new college being established; Collonges, on the shores of Lake Geneva. Idris was offered, and accepted, the position of music teacher there.

The thunderheads of war loomed in August 1939. Idris was completing a course in French at the University of Paris. On the day when he and 359 others were scheduled to sit their final examination, Hitler's war machine

went into action, occupying Danzig in preparation for the invasion of Poland. Of the 360 students, 330 fled for home. Idris was one of the thirty who sat the examination and, as a consequence, became a qualified teacher of French. *Then* he returned to the UK.

At Stanborough Park he met and married Lillian. They had fifty golden years of marriage before she died, aged 80. They had four children. 'There was a period', recalls Idris, 'of one miracle after another . . . no job, no settled abode, no money. . . .' In the 1940s and 50s Idris was in charge of the famous Stanborough Male Choir that travelled the land singing for the evangelists of the day: George Hyde, George Bell and Tom Bradley. The choir participated in the weekly BBC programme, 'Let the People Sing'.

Idris and Lillian emigrated to New Zealand in 1957. There Idris taught French and music in Auckland High School for eighteen years, and became acquainted with the territories of what is now known as the South Pacific Division.

Following Lillian's death, Idris decided to travel and, at the same time, visit family members. In Denver, Colorado, he met Lillian's sister, Minetta, who had been a nurse in the Denver hospital, and were married.

In 1974 Idris was invited to return to Colonges to revive the music department. There was another period in New Zealand before Idris and Minetta retired to Grantham to be near Violette and Glynne Meredith and their family, Idris's daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren. When the Merediths retired to Carmarthen, Idris moved there too.

Of the four children of Idris and Lillian, Roland was killed while serving in the RAF; Emelyn, after serving in the Navy, became a dentist; Violette, with her husband Glynne, spent twelve years in Ghana and then she became the founding headmistress of the Grantham Adventist School; and John, having worked for Air New Zealand, went to work for ABTA and is based in Montreal. Idris has eighteen *great* grandchildren! Should anyone wish to make contact with Idris and Minetta they should phone (01267) 290 752 or write to 9 Llys y Ferin, Pontarogthi, Nant-

garedig, Carmarthen, SA32 7NE

Most Sabbaths Idris, now 98, can be seen on the organ at the Carmarthen church. Recently Idris and Minetta have celebrated their silver wedding. The local newspaper showcased the Welshman who had travelled the world with his music – and been married for a total of seventy-five years! Idris told the reporter, 'I have never tasted alcohol nor smoked cigarettes in my life. . . . When I'm a 100 and people ask me what my secret is I shall tell them it is my faith.'



Photo: Ralph Carpenter

IS THE ADVENTIST FAMILY IN CRISIS?

by Bernie and Karen Holford, SEC Family Ministries Department

What is happening to marriage, and to our families? What is marriage? And what is a family? These questions had relatively easy answers forty years ago. Today, marriage and the family – the basic building blocks of society – no longer have a regular pattern. To switch the metaphor, they seem to drift aimlessly, without moral direction.

A Midland radio station has fuelled the marriage debate by sponsoring a 'blind marriage'. Two people, found compatible by a computerized test, were married and sent on a honeymoon without even having met each other before! Most commentators do not expect the relationship to last very long. But with one in three marriages ending in divorce, what hope have the rest of us? Many pressure groups advocate alternative forms of family that would, for instance, allow homosexuals to marry. The family crisis in Britain has become so bad that our government is now leading the world in proposing measures to try to support marriage and the family.¹

Re-evaluating the family

As the world is said to be entering a new millennium, many people are re-evaluating their lives and values. How can we respond to these issues in a way that can make a *real* difference in the lives of those around us? How can we stand up for Christian family values, without alienating those whose relationships do not fit into the ideal pattern?

Seventh-day Adventists need to proclaim and *live* the good news that God has for their families. Whatever type of family we are in today, or may have experienced in the past, God loves us, accepts us and wants us to be part of His church family.² Whether we are single, married, divorced, separated, widowed, going out with, engaged to, or living with a partner, God's Word speaks to our needs and calls us to follow Him in our relationships so that we can find fulfilment, peace and joy.

God created us and intended that we should find friendship and intimacy in marriage – one man with one woman – *'as long as*

they both shall live'.³ God believes so strongly in the purity of a good marriage that He even talks about our commitment to Him as a marriage covenant and our idolatrous breaking of that relationship as adultery.⁴ Martin Luther goes further and claims that 'marriage is God's best way of explaining Himself.' Christians are called to show the world how God relates to us with kindness, commitment and forgiveness. In this way a healthy marriage is an attractive demonstration to the world of God's attitudes towards us.

Adventists living in the time of the end believe that the Elijah message of Malachi is for us. It calls us to work to restore family relationships. 'He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.'⁵ God's final warning to the world will be accompanied by a restoration of family relationships. Evangelism, through relationship building, is the mission of the last-day Church.

Ellen White writes that 'the greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family.'⁶

The turn of the millennium⁷ provides us with a special opportunity to put things right in our families before the year 2000. Here are some suggestions as to how this could apply for different groups of Christians.

Singles⁸

- To realize your high calling as singles, a calling shared with Jesus and Paul.
- To value the freedom you have in God to minister to others.
- To understand that your self-identity is rooted in the high value placed on you by God.
- To be content with singleness, before seeking other relationships.

Those going out together

- To realize that there is no feeling or experience on earth worth losing your virginity over. More and more research is demonstrating how destructive premarital sex is on physical, emotional and spiritual health. The pleasurable feeling may

last a moment, but the pain and havoc that can be wreaked in each other's lives, even if you marry each other, can be catastrophic to the relationship.

- To respect each other, and to keep secrets and confidences, even after the relationship has ended.
- To realize that God cares deeply about the friendships you have, and, above all, God desires that you make wise choices that will not damage your own happiness or that of others.

Engaged couples

- To pray more than ever before about the relationship.
- To understand the seriousness of the relationship into which you are entering.
- To be willing to break the engagement if there are any doubts about the relationship.
- To have thorough premarital counselling, no matter how well you think you know each other.
- To learn all you can about how to make your marriage the best it can be.

Married couples

- To find ways to help strengthen each other spiritually.
- To pray for your marriage with all your heart.
- To learn the power of forgiveness in a marriage.
- To be strong enough to put your partner's needs before your own.
- To understand what it means to be committed to one another in love.
- To be willing to seek counselling to mend a hurt relationship – a long time before seeing a solicitor to end a marriage.
- To learn how to love the differences you see in each other.
- To put back some fun into the relationship!

Separated and divorced

- To keep in touch with your children, because the greatest damage you can do to them is to let them feel you do not care for them any more.
- To get counselling to help restore your relationships, or to heal the pain of the past, and to help you make a fresh start, avoiding some of the many pitfalls of making new relationships while you still carry

pain from the past.

Parents and children

- To pray for your children. To pray for your parents.
- To learn how to listen to your children.
- To make special memories with your children.
- To laugh with your children.
- To make sure they never doubt your love for them.
- To lead them gently with love.
- To encourage your child's spiritual development. It is the most important task in your life.

Grandparents

- To pray for your grandchildren.
- To do all you can to make Christianity interesting, exciting and appealing to your grandchildren.
- To pass on your special skills to your grandchildren, and stories of God's power at work throughout your life.
- To be there to lighten the load on stressed and busy parents.

Everyone

- Whoever you are, even if you are all alone, you are part of a church family.
- Reach out to those around you and find ways to make their life a little easier or happier.
- Remember how much we need each other, to care for each other, or to show each other how to care, as Jesus cared.

Right now, make a list of those people you care about the most. For each of them, think of several ways you can strengthen your relationships and be a channel of God's love and forgiveness in this hurting world.

If you need help with any aspect of relationships, contact your local church or Conference Family Ministries leaders, your pastor, or the counselling helpline (0345) 413602.

¹'Supporting Families' is a government discussion document proposing legislation to support the family. Copies are available by calling the SEC Office.

²Jeremiah 31:3; 2 Corinthians 6:18.

³Genesis 3; the marriage service.

⁴Hosea.

⁵Malachi 4:6, NIV.

⁶*The Adventist Home*, page 32.

⁷As generally accepted.

⁸For more information on the SEC singles ministry, call SEC Family Ministries.

BECK, Arthur Herman – d. 19 June 1998. Arthur Herman Beck passed away after many years of suffering, although he was rarely heard to complain. He came to England from Guyana in the 1960s to follow a nursing career. He met and married a colleague, Maria, originally from Spain. Both Herman and Maria were faithful members of the Wimbledon church family for over thirty years. Maria now spends much of her time in Spain, and joins daughter Sarah and son Paul in thanking all those who were able to attend the funeral, and those people who have continued to send their love and support. Arthur loved his family and his God unconditionally and is much missed. We pray that we will be faithful to our God and that one day soon we will all be reunited.

P. HAUGH



PASTOR JOHN HANDYSIDES. d. 18 December. 'I am not without an understanding of what this world has to offer; I have tasted of it! But God in His love and mercy let

me taste things that are eternal. To be a minister of God is to share what God provides. God uses people and events to bring His love to our notice. He raises our sights and our desires and provides the way forward. God gives the vision.' This was the personal testimony of Pastor John R. Handysides, who died just one week before Christmas day. He had been ill for several weeks but the seriousness of his condition was not fully known until just a week or so before he died. To his family and those present at his anointing service, the words of his testimony held a special poignance, for it was evident that here was a man who, long ago, had decided without any conditions to share whatever God had provided. Now he was ready again for God's will to be accomplished, whatever that might be. Pastor Handysides was born on 26 January 1917 in Gateshead. The Handysides were a fine Adventist family. Two sons and a daughter – Daniel, John and Jennie – were directly involved in ministry. John graduated from Newbold College in May 1943. After working for a brief time in Grimsby, he joined an evangelistic team in Oldham led by the late W. R. A. Magdwick. He recalled how, on his last day before the Christmas break, he delivered from door to door 2,400 handbills, a duty he had to perform before taking the short holiday. After two years of ministry, on 19 June 1945, he married Leila Elias, a young lady with whom he had fallen in love while they were both students at Newbold College. Later he wrote, 'What a blessing and a help it was to have a wife to support and advise me and to do some of the polishing needed in my ministry.' This new family was to become a most effective ministerial team, for Leila was a trained Bible Instructor. John could not only remember the date and place when he was ordained but the exact time; Sheffield at 3pm on 16 July 1946. The couple worked in North England, Ireland, South England, Wales, then back again to North England. Wherever they were called to minister, fine work was accomplished and souls were won for Christ. Pastor Handysides' early training in the construction business was put to good use in the ministry, for he was able to advise and give practical assistance in the building and extension of various church properties. He found the land for the church in Grantham, where he was the pastor. He was responsible for finding and buying the churches in Chesterheld and Sheffield-Burgreave. These are just samples of the practical service he gave to the Adventist Church in Britain, but it was a service provided without a diminishing of his soul-winning endeavours, for this was the primary concern of his whole life. John Handysides loved the ministry and the members to whom he ministered. He will be missed in Grantham where the Handysides chose to retire. The churches in this district will miss his clear presentations of Bible truth. He will be missed for his counsel which was given with kindness but which never compromised the truth. His whole family was with him during his last hours. To have had Cynthia,

Roger (who came from California), Stewart and his dear wife by his bedside, must have provided great comfort. They, in turn, have been encouraged by the many messages of love and sympathy they have received. The funeral service took place on 22 December in the Grantham church. His nephew Pastor Dalbert Elias gave the tribute to his life of ministry, and several others of his fellow ministers took part. Two of the Handysides' grandchildren, accompanied by their mother, gave a moving musical tribute. John was laid to rest in the graveyard not very far from the Grantham church.

PASTOR RON SURRIDGE

The Handysides family wish to thank, most sincerely, the very many kind friends who have expressed love and sympathy at this sad time. God has blessed and sustained each one when His help was most needed and gratefully received.

DOWSON, John Wilfred – d. 30 December. In the passing of 'Uncle Wilf', Middlesbrough church has lost not only its oldest member but the last remaining founder member. He was baptized in August 1925 by the late Pastor Alfred Bacon and, for the greater part of his membership, was an active deacon. He was a faithful servant of the Lord, and loved the Word. In spite of his great age he could recite from memory many of the Psalms and whole chapters. Uncle Wilf had many talents, among which were painting, writing for church periodicals, and playing the mouth organ. In his younger days he had been a lay preacher. He composed poems and wrote the words of many hymns. Pastor Llew Edwards conducted the service, giving words of comfort and reminding us of the soon coming of the Saviour. We look forward also to that day when Uncle Wilf will rise with all the redeemed.

CHARLES COUPLAND

FOSTER, George – d. 4 January. George Foster was born into a mining community in Seaham, County Durham, in 1912. There were eight children, who showed strong musical talent. George could play the cornet and euphonium, and he sang tenor. His mother was a Methodist and the family's Christian anchor. At an early age George realized the bad effects of alcohol, gambling and tobacco on the community. He became a miner but an accident made him seek work elsewhere – eventually in Wandsworth. There he joined the Salvation Army and met his future wife Margaret Frankish. They had five children and settled in Lewisham. Then they attended a campaign run by Pastor Tom Bradley and Miss K. Mahon, and joined the Adventist Church. George was an elder in the Nottingham church for many years and a lay preacher. He worked with Granose as a sales representative. The funeral on 13 January was conducted by Pastor Curtis G. Murphy. George was laid to rest in Bulwell cemetery, at last joining his wife, where together they await the sound of the trumpet heralding the coming of our Lord. The children, Brian, Margaret, Hazel, Robin and Adrian and their families wish to thank everyone for their kind condolences.

BRIAN FOSTER

MINNS, Winifred May – d. 4 January. Sister Minns, or Winnie as she was known to her friends, was a member of the Norwich church for forty years. She was baptized in 1959 by Pastor Paul Cumings, and is remembered as a warm-hearted person who enjoyed happy fellowship with the members.

Until illness struck twenty years ago, she attended church faithfully, and often sang to the glory of God, both as a soloist and in the ladies' singing group. Life was not easy for Winnie. She raised her son and daughter by herself, working at the West Norwich Hospital for many years as kitchen supervisor. Singing was a great interest, but not only in the church, as Winnie was also a member of the amateur operatic society. For the last twenty years she was virtually house-bound. For most of this time she was able to stay in her own home, but the time came when she had to move to The Warren Residential Home in Norwich. During this time, contact with the church was maintained by the faithful visiting of deaconesses and a succession of ministers. In so many ways, Winnie brought encouragement and cheer to all with her ready smile and happy personality. She was very proud of her family, and many family members attended her funeral service, conducted by Pastor Ian Lorek, at the Norwich church on 15 January. Sister Minns was then laid to rest in Sprowston cemetery, where she now rests in peace, awaiting the resurrection call. May God comfort and bless her daughter and son, and their families.

PASTOR IAN LOREK

TAYLOR, Eunice – d. 4 January. Eunice was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and grew up in a family of six children – three boys and three girls. As a young woman she began a career in nursing. She first met Ken, her future husband, at a ticket office on an English railway station. As well as her Welsh charm, Eunice had a particular skill which endeared her to Ken; she enjoyed cycling. They married in 1937. The outbreak of war meant Ken was away from home a great deal during the early years of their marriage, and the responsibility for looking after their two young sons, Michael and Colin, rested on Eunice. She was essentially a very practical lady, an excellent cook, and believed that the boys should know their way around the kitchen! Her nursing skills often proved useful within the family when medical help was needed. After the war, Eunice, a proficient nurse, was asked to serve as matron of a hospital for the war-wounded. At this time she attended evangelistic meetings held locally. With her strong Christian background, her baptism into the Adventist Church seemed a natural progression in her understanding of discipleship. Eunice was methodical in organizing her time to include a nursing career and regular attendance at church on Sabbaths with the two boys. The journey to church involved a three-and-a-half-mile walk each way! Eunice was no mere spectator of church life. She held a variety of offices in the local church, and was a particularly active and caring deaconess. She was also a much-loved Grandma, knowing how to dispense fun and, when necessary, gentle correction. She was a thoughtful lady never lost for an appropriate word. The family homes were in Wells, Frome, Gloucester and, latterly, Weymouth. Four years prior to her death, Eunice contracted Parkinson's Disease, and she was cared for at home by Ken, until requiring residential care. The funeral service was held at the Weymouth crematorium, and was taken by Pastor Leslie Hill, who assured friends and family of the certainties of our faith in the Lord Jesus. Eunice is survived by her husband Ken, a brother and sister, and sons Michael and Colin.

JILL HILL

PASTOR PATRICK J. BOYLE

International News

Colombian earthquake victims: ADRA assists. Following the earthquake that flattened twenty towns and villages in five provinces in western Colombia, ADRA is collecting and delivering relief materials in-country and assisting in damage assessments. The day after the earthquake, ADRA-Columbia staff and volunteers delivered more than a hundred baskets of food to families in Calarca. Each basket contained enough food to feed a six-member family for one week. ADRA-International has made an initial commitment of \$10,000 (US), and ADRA-Canada of \$5,000 (US) for additional relief efforts. Carlos Pinto, Youth leader and the person in charge of ADRA rescue teams, says of the damage, 'No one can imagine the sadness we are seeing here. Radio and television stations cannot depict the reality of the devastation.' The earthquake, measuring six in the Richter scale, is reportedly the worst natural disaster to hit Colombia since 1985 when an avalanche and mud slide buried 25,000 people. ANN

ADRA evacuate staff in Angola. ADRA was forced to evacuate staff from various development projects in Angola after fighting and bombings resumed. Although bombings in Angola began in early December, ADRA continued operations until the end of January when they were forced to put their projects on hold. ADRA's projects in Malanje include milk and food distribution,

hospitals and health post-rehabilitation and supervision, and medical aid.

'At the moment there are no casualties among our workers in affected areas,' reports Mario Oliveira, ADRA-Angola director. However, shells have struck the central Angolan cities of Huambo and Bie, one exploding near and killing Mateus, a nurse, who was running home to his wife and one-month-old son. ANN

Honduras hurricane victims receive ADRA aid. Victims of Hurricane Mitch in Honduras began receiving more than \$126,000-worth (US) of food and hygiene kits from ADRA with the help of the German government.

Andreas Kuligk, German ambassador in Honduras, began assisting ADRA with the distribution of food and hygiene kits in mid-January. With the assistance of twenty ADRA volunteers, the 5,121 kits of food and 6,850 hygiene kits have been distributed among ADRA's temporary shelters in the country. ANN

South Sudan: ADRA compound burns down. The ADRA-South Sudan compound in Chukudum was looted and burned down on Friday 15 January. Englishman Robin Willison, programme director for ADRA-South Sudan, reports that the compound was the boundary between warring forces. It took three days before the UN considered the situation serious enough to

evacuate our staff, during which time they were hiding in the roofed bomb shelter with bullets whizzing over their heads as the battle took place. The staff had no food or water except when someone was brave enough to venture out at peril to their lives for a few minutes. They are traumatized by finding themselves in the midst of a battle that took place around and within our compound for three days.

Robin goes on to report that the action of Colin Connor, head of Operation Lifeline Sudan, to evacuate the staff, probably saved their lives. 'I have told the staff to go home and come to terms with their ordeal, then to call in for further news. I expect it will be a few weeks before the UN goes in to check out the situation and give the all-clear.' ROBIN WILLISON

Reconciliation project continues in Croatia. The Dutch Embassy in Zagreb granted the sum of \$7,500 (US) to ADRA-Croatia in the spring of 1998 to facilitate a series of stress seminars in Otacac, Croatia, to help people cope after the terrible experience of war, as part of ADRA's ongoing project of reconciliation.

Harry Wilby, a retired nurse and former health educator, delivering humanitarian aid on behalf of ADRA-UK to Osijek, Croatia, agreed to return to run the stress seminars in Otacac, a town of 5,500 residents.

'One week was spent advertising and

promoting the seminars, visiting schools and dignitaries. A meeting hall with all the facilities was provided free of charge,' comments Harry. 'Between twenty and forty people attended three nights a week for a month, and in a follow-up survey they expressed appreciation for the helpful information presented which covered all aspects of healthful living,' he continued. ANN

New Adventist radio stations in Caribbean and Africa. The Seventh-day Adventist Church's radio outreach organization Adventist World Radio (AWR) has announced that several new stations will be broadcasting soon.

'The Caribbean islands of Curacao and Bonair will soon be able to tune in to the Voice of Hope on a local station,' says Greg Scott, AWR-Pan America region director. The new FM station, to be known locally as Alfa 92, will be located at 92 megahertz and will have a power of 1 kilowatt to reach both islands, which have a population of 160,000.

Two new studios in Africa will soon become AWR programme partners to add several more languages to the worldwide programme schedule, according to AWR's region director for Africa, Samuel Misiani. 'I have received reports from both Lagos and Addis Ababa that the studios have been constructed and are ready to install equipment so they can begin programme production,' says Misiani. ANN

Feedback

RE: J. A. HALL ON 2,300-DAY PROPHECY

Dear Editor,

The major prophecies of Daniel – in chapters 2, 7, 8 and 9 – are interlinked.

Daniel 7 introduces us to a little horn power who will seek to wear out the saints of the Most High, think to change the time in God's law, and speak great things against the Most High.

The power will reign unchallenged for 1,260 years. Jesus refers to that time in Matthew 24:22 saying for the elect's sake, the days of persecution will be shortened. He fears that if the 1,260 years' power trip of the little horn runs unchallenged, there should be no faith left when He comes. Such is the determined, thorough work of the little horn to wipe out God's elect and to dispossess the faithful of their chance to inherit the kingdom.

Daniel 7 ends with the assurance of God that the heavenly judgement will sit, and it will take away the power of the persecuting little horn. The saints will possess the kingdom.

No date is given for the heavenly judgement in Daniel 7, but it clearly follows quickly upon the heels of the demise of the little horn.

The 1,260-year prophetic reign was fulfilled between AD538 and 1798. During this period countless Christians were butchered, tortured and worn out as the prophecy says. They were judged by earthly courts as not worthy of life and martyred as cruelly as possible.

In Daniel 8 the saints are referred to as stars cast to the ground and trampled as muck in the streets. Aghast at such treatment, one saint turns to the other and says, 'How long before these saints are declared not guilty, judged worthy and given a proper place in heaven's order?'

Then the swift reply: 'Unto 2,300 days. . . .'

Is J. A. Hall serious in putting the date at 2,334! Can he be serious? Daniel 7 puts it as the next immediate event. Immediately after the fall of the little horn, that is, which occurred in 1798.

Such prophecies as 2 Timothy 3:1-5 clearly show that we are living in the last days. God's court is now in session, declaring innocent every person accused, and treating as anathema the devil and his cohorts. When the work is finished, Jesus will come. Maranatha!

PASTOR B. K. ROBINSON, Leicester

DEALING WITH DIVORCE

Dear Editor,

Those with concerns similar to that expressed in the Feedback section of the last MESSENGER will be interested in a Dealing-with-Divorce seminar for divorced and separated people. It will be a full-day seminar – 10.30-4.30 – Sunday 28 February at the Advent Centre, 29 Brendon Street, London W1.

Please come and bring your own packed lunch. Limited child care will be provided for those who cannot find alternative arrangements and *who book*

in advance.

For more information or to book child care, contact: Family Ministries, SEC, 25 St John's Road, Watford, WD1 1PY. Phone: (01923) 232728. E-mail: Bernie_Holford@compuserve.com

PASTOR BERNIE HOLFORD, Family Life director, SEC

PAID SABBATH WORK

Dear Editor,

Though we have been Adventists for a good number of years and the message of the soon-coming Saviour is as fresh as when we first heard it, we still have some questions about Sabbath observance. Doctors, nurses and those who work in nursing homes work regularly on Sabbath and are paid for their day's work. It seems they suffer no financial loss and have no stand to take; unlike those who have been impoverished and lost their jobs.

What guiding principles does the Bible give with regard to paid Sabbath work, if any? How is the Sabbath hallowed by those who are permitted to work on that day? What should be done with the money earned on Sabbath? Jesus healed on the Sabbath and made no charge.

Our eldest daughter has stopped

coming to church and quotes examples of those who work on Sabbaths as the reason why.

DAVID AND JOAN MULDREW, Co. Armagh

Response:

The example and compassion of Jesus in His healing ministry is the motivation for the health-care ministry of the Church.

Whether denominationally employed or otherwise, the guidelines for health-care personnel recognize that 'involvement in an emergency situation where life and safety are at stake is justifiable from a biblical point of view'. However, arrangements for regular weekend work requiring the use of Sabbath hours is still discouraged.

Where this cannot be avoided by, say, pre-employment negotiation, it is recommended that personnel refrain from all routine and non-essential duties. In fact, the model of Sabbath-keeping is enjoined upon those who have to work on Sabbaths.

Many who work the Sabbath hours, even earning extra money, feel uncomfortable about the use of the remuneration they receive for their work. Some have donated that money to worthy causes or have specific projects of their own which they finance. Care needs to be taken that the projects do not take over, thus necessitating further Sabbath employment.

A full copy of the guidelines may be obtained from the BUC Health department.

R. J. B. WILLIS, Health director, BUC

MESSENGER

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EDITOR: D. N. MARSHALL

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SUNSET

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	Lond	Card	Nott	Edin	Bell
Feb 19	5.22	5.34	5.23	5.25	5.39
	26	5.35	5.47	5.37	5.40 5.53
Mar 5	5.47	5.59	5.50	5.55	6.07
	12	5.59	6.11	6.03	6.09 6.21

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