



Hot-button issues for the next Quinquennium

Pastor D. W. McFarlane, BUC president, introduces his priorities for 2006-2011

The next five years present a choice opportunity for further, exciting development of our Church in the British Isles. Progress will require considered and deliberate objectives and an action plan to achieve them.

We thank God for the achievements of the Adventist Church in the British Isles during the past one hundred and thirty years. However, every member of the Church who understands its mission knows that we have merely touched the tip in presenting the Gospel within the context of the Three Angels' Messages. We must stand upon the achievements of the past in order to reach where we know we ought to be as a Church today.

The values of the Adventist Church are values with which our society can identify. Our position on healthful living, civic responsibility, humanitarian service, weekly physical, mental and spiritual renewal as afforded by the Sabbath, having a positive perspective on the future, dealing with guilt, etc, are all matters of interest to our society. Our teachings, rightly understood, generate hope and optimism in an age of doubt, cynicism and despondency.

We have no reason to be fearful about presenting the Bible teachings on which our faith is founded. However, these teachings need to be presented as *present truth*. In other words, our teachings and the manner in which they are presented *must speak to the hopes, needs, fears and aspirations of today's generation*.

As we look to the future, there are certain emphases

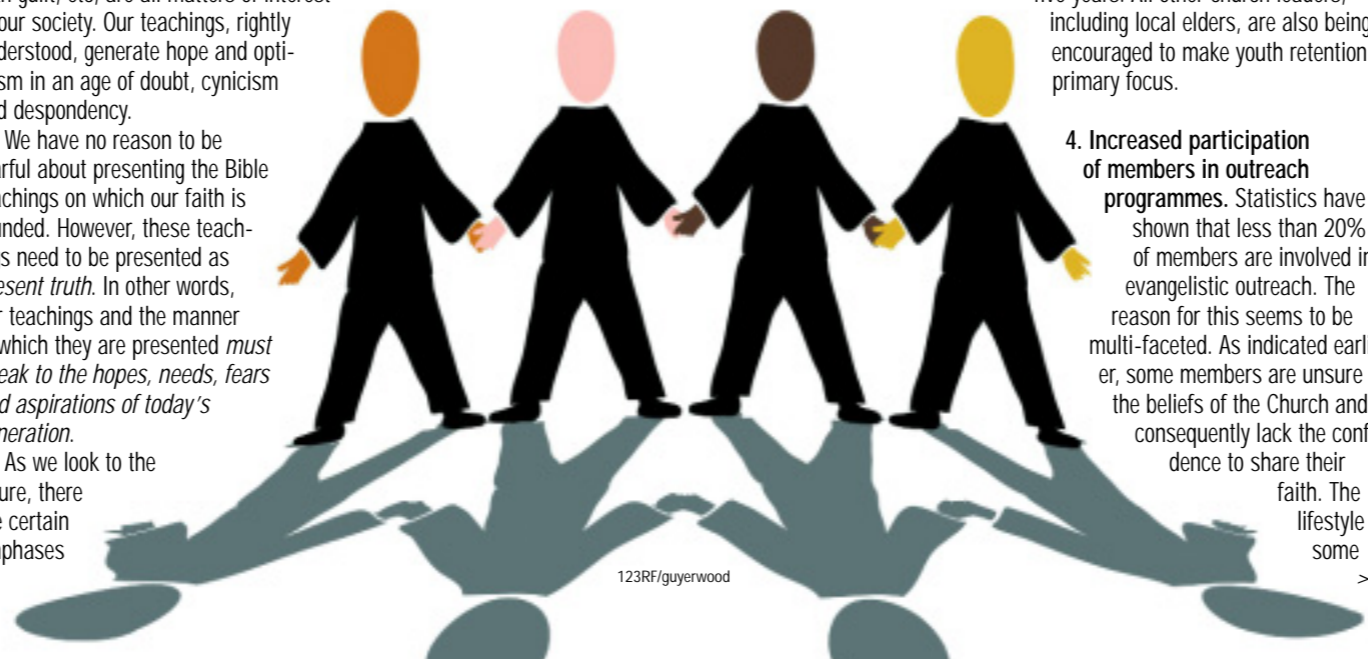
that are considered indispensable to the fulfilment of our mission as a Church:

1. Spiritual Growth. A rich, dynamic and satisfying relationship with Jesus and with one another is the overarching objective of the Church. Without it there will be an absence of meaning, joy and spirituality. Also, evangelistic activities will, at best, be a chore and, at worst, absent altogether. Consequently, spiritual nurture must be an integral part of the leadership objectives of the BUC for the next five years. Spiritual nurture is the responsibility of all leaders of the British Union and all leaders in the British Union. While it is not possible to measure the spiritual level of individual members, regular personal and corporate Bible study and prayer, witnessing and humanitarian service are activities that contribute to spiritual growth. These activities need to be promoted and encouraged

on an ongoing basis. Pastor Alan Hodges has been invited to serve as co-ordinator for Spiritual Nurture.

- 2. Knowledge and understanding of Scripture.** Many are of the view that knowledge and understanding of Scripture by Adventists has declined significantly. The eagerness with which we once studied the Bible needs to be recaptured. When members understand Scripture, the basis for our core beliefs, and the prophetic role of the Church, they are more likely to share their faith and contribute to the fulfilment of mission. The converse is also true. Leaders at all levels in the British Union are invited to give this focus the prominence it deserves. One effective way of ensuring that members grow in their knowledge and understanding of Scripture is to have a special Bible Study time, possibly on a Sabbath afternoon, when in-depth work can be done.
- 3. Retention of youth.** One of the major concerns of the Adventist Church, especially in developed countries, is the low youth retention rate. This has large implications for the salvation of our young people and for the future of the Church, which, from a human point of view, can be secured only as young people and children are nurtured to become active members of the Church. It is important that we create and maintain a climate in which our young people feel at home and valued. The Youth director and the Children's Ministries director of the Union have been invited to make this one of their primary objectives during the next five years. All other church leaders, including local elders, are also being encouraged to make youth retention a primary focus.

4. Increased participation of members in outreach programmes. Statistics have shown that less than 20% of members are involved in evangelistic outreach. The reason for this seems to be multi-faceted. As indicated earlier, some members are unsure of the beliefs of the Church and consequently lack the confidence to share their faith. The lifestyle of some



BUC president meets Conservative leader

Victor Hulbert,
Communication director, BUC

British Union Conference president Pastor Don McFarlane joined other church leaders in a meeting with Conservative Party leader Rt Hon David Cameron MP, and two of his parliamentary colleagues on Thursday 19 October. The meeting was seen as an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to discuss Conservative Party policies with certain church leaders. David Cameron shared with the group three key points that would be central to his government of the country should he become Prime Minister. First was the vital contribution of faith groups, faith schools and faith-based charities to the society. Then he spoke about the crucial role of the family in building society and maintaining values. Lastly he identified personal and social responsibility as being fundamental to the positive development of society, emphasising that government is limited in what it can do to solve certain problems in the society. Mr Cameron stressed that society desperately needs the church if it is to head in the right direction.

Pastor McFarlane stated that his major concern, along with that of most church leaders at the meeting, was the erosion of Christian freedom in a Christian country. The church leaders felt that political leaders take great care in ensuring that the views of minority groups are protected but that the same rights are being denied to Christians. Same sex relationships were seen as a case in point. Those in the society who support same sex relationships appear to be given free rein in expressing their views while those who take the

opposite view seem to have lost the right to express those views publicly. He followed up the meeting with a letter to David Cameron calling for greater freedom for Christians to express themselves publicly and speak in harmony with their values and convictions.

'You repeated to the church leaders present the point made in your recent [Conservative Party] Conference speech that marriage can be between people of the same sex as well as between a man and a woman.' Pastor McFarlane stressed his concern about that view, continuing, 'My Christian values do not extend to embracing same sex relationships. You will find that Seventh-day Adventists, whom I represent, do not support such relationships either. Nevertheless, I respect those who differ on this important subject. This would also be the position of Seventh-day Adventists in general. Where we take issue with our national leaders is that increasingly Christians like myself are being marginalised in a society that is said to be Christian.'

'It appears that in their effort to be tolerant of minorities our political leaders are prepared to ostracise the majority and those who hold to traditional Christian values. Many Christians feel that the freedom to express themselves on important issues is being gradually eroded. For example, members of society who speak against same sex relationships fear being physically attacked, discriminated against or deemed to be in breach of the law.'

'You will recall that in the latest national cen-

sus over 70% of people in this country declared themselves to be Christians. It is possible that the majority of such people do not share the views of our political leaders on same sex relationships. I strongly believe that the freedom enjoyed by the minority to speak publicly in favour of same sex relationships should be accorded to those who take the opposite view. Christians are by nature law-abiding people and our political leaders need to ensure that they are not forced to become lawbreakers by standing up for their Christian convictions in a Christian country.'

Newbold College is seeking to appoint a Senior Management Accountant

The successful applicant will combine professionalism and honesty while giving exceptional attention to detail; possess excellent accounting and computer skills; be a team player; provide good customer service.

Our senior management accountant will: keep proper financial accounts of all aspects of the operation of the college; produce financial and statistical reports required by the administration; provide monthly budget controls and quarterly statements of the college finances; prepare salaries and wages for college employees; perform other associated tasks such as the administration of taxes.

Salary according to the denominational scale. A letter of application together with a current CV and the names and addresses of two referees should be sent to:

The Bursar, Newbold College, Binfield, Berkshire, RG42 4AN, England.
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Fax: +44 (0)1344 407406;
Email: blisle@newbold.ac.uk.
For a fuller job description visit www.newbold.ac.uk or contact the Bursar.

Deadline for receipt of applications:
24 November 2006.

Healthwise

War on Cancer

Representatives from 139 countries met in July in Washington DC, to update the *Charter of Paris 2000*, among other things. During its assembly the World Cancer Congress issued a new *Declaration*.

In the preamble to the *World Cancer Declaration* it was noted that approximately 11 million people around the world are diagnosed with cancer each year, and that almost 7 million of them will die of their condition. However, more are surviving, some 25 million people have now survived for many years after being diagnosed with cancer.

It is estimated that by the year 2020 there will be, in spite of all

the best efforts, around 16 million new cancer cases and about 10 million cancer deaths annually. Much of the increase will be due to the population explosion worldwide and would be higher if preventive measures were not taken.

Missing from the latest *Declaration* is any sign of percentage targets in dealing with cancer. The nine-point action plan is thought to be achievable in 2-3 years. It is evidence-based and can be monitored. Plans include:

- *investing in health* – by showing that health policies and investment in health is related to cancer reduction; and the creation of compelling health messages across the spectrum of society
- *cancer control planning* –

countries to show there are plans for prevention, early detection, treatment, palliative care, and support for patients, families and caregivers with dedicated budgets for implementation

- *cancer surveillance/registries* – through the collection of epidemiological data from detection to all the areas listed in the above
- *tobacco control* – by tackling tobacco advertising, pricing and taxing, regulation, sponsorship, and cessation measures
- *vaccines* – for specific conditions such as human papilloma virus (HPV) where the incidence of cervical cancer is high; and integrated with Hepatitis B in routine infant vaccinations in countries with high rates of liver cancer

- *early detection* – through evidence-based guidelines
- *palliative care* – to be an essential part of all cancer treatment programmes
- *empowerment* – of patients and interested parties to engage in all aspects of cancer control
- *support of action steps* – by having a process of monitoring and evaluation of each stage of intervention.

These measures outline a vision to do as much as possible to eliminate cancer as a major threat to future generations. It is a Declaration that we can all assent to.



with Richard J. B. Willis



Ignition!

David Marshall

Daniel preferred to spend a night with the lions rather than a day without prayer.

One of the devil's topmost priorities is to keep Christians from prayer. C. S. Lewis made that crystal clear in *Screwtape Letters*. Nothing about prayerless lesson study, prayerless sermon preparation or any other form of prayerless religious activity worries Satan. He makes mock of them all – *but he trembles when we pray!*

Prayer is the means whereby the visible world can tap into God's invisible world. It enables weakness to tap into omnipotence. For Satan that prospect is petrifying.

I was raised in a farming community. A journey by water was needed to reach the nearest city. What first impressed this steerage class rustic about the city was the massive fretwork of bars and wires that covered every street. Below were the 'trolleybuses' that lurched and clanked their way from place to place inhaling and exhaling human cargo.

Above each trolleybus were long poles meant to conduct electricity down from the fretwork of bars and wires above each street to the engine of the trolley.

Half a century ago one writer¹ used this arrangement as a metaphor for the church and prayer power. He pointed out that, if the pole was a foot, or even an inch, away from the wire, no power could pass. In that event the trolley would not move. Inside the trolley the people could stomp, shout, preach and sing, but if the pole was not in contact with the power source there would be no movement. The sparking point, where the pole made contact with the power source, represented prayer.

Did you ever hear of the Moravians? They were a people who prioritised prayer.

The young Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf was distressed when he heard of the sufferings of fellow Christians in Moravia and Bohemia. Because of his considerable personal landholding, he set up a community on his estate in Saxony and made it possible for Moravian Christians to move there. The community was called *Herrnhut*.

The Count discovered that the Moravian Christians had an astonishing belief in prayer power. On 27 August 1727 twenty-four men and twenty-four women in his Moravian community covenanted to spend a scheduled hour each day in prayer. The idea was that, at any given time, at least one person in the group would be engaged in prayer throughout the twenty-four-hour day. The 'intercessors' – those involved in the prayer chain experiment – met once a week to read incoming

letters, to discuss needs and to encourage one another.

How long do you think the Moravian prayer chain experiment lasted? A couple of days? A week? A year?

It lasted more than a hundred years!

What was achieved?

Six months into the experiment, Count Zinzendorf suggested that overseas missions were a priority. Initially it was decided to send twenty-six Moravian missionaries to win others for Christ in the West Indies, Europe and North America. The first Moravian missionaries landed in the West Indies in 1732. Soon seventy Moravian missionaries had left the *Herrnhut* community of 600.²

By the time English missionary William Carey – 'the Father of Modern Missions' – set out on his first voyage, he had been preceded by over 300 Moravian missionaries. All the time the prayer chain back home was operational.

On one transatlantic sailing a group of Moravians encountered a rather confused (and, by his own testimony, 'unconverted') young English clergyman en route to Georgia. What initially attracted the Englishman to the Moravians was the liveliness of their worship. The Englishman's trip to Georgia proved a disaster. Indeed, his encounter with the Moravians was one of the few positive aspects of it. It led to his conversion on his return to London.

The Englishman was John Wesley. He and his brother Charles kept up the contact with the Moravians. When the Holy Spirit used the Wesley brothers to ignite the Great Awakening that swept across Britain and America, the *Herrnhut* had been praying for them for years.

To sum up, then. The consequences of the Moravian prayer meeting included the overseas missionary movement and the Great Awakening of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Among the consequences of the Great Awakening was the Millerite, then the Advent Movements.

Scripture has no record of Jesus teaching his disciples how to *preach*. It does record that he taught them how to (and how *not*) *pray*. The major Bible figures in both Testaments were men and women of prayer. The Bible records 650 prayers, the most effective were also the shortest: one prayed by a tax collector, the other by a crucified thief. The Church of the Book of Acts ran on prayer. So does today's Church.



Remove prayer power and, like the trolleybus, the Church stops dead and becomes an obstruction to traffic.

In an age when people walk around with Bluetooth earpieces permanently attached to their heads and have access to satellite mobiles, text messaging, iPods and Blackberry Internet devices, prayer has lost some of its novelty. But it has lost none of its power. 'We need less travelling by jet plane from congress to congress,' wrote Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones, 'but more kneeling and praying and pleading with God.' As you read this, two Voyager spacecrafts are hurtling to the edge of the solar system at 100,000 miles an hour. When engineers beam a command to the spacecraft at the speed of light, it takes thirteen hours to arrive. Yet you can reach the ear of Omnipotence in a nanosecond. That is what impresses me. Why? Because it is the sparking point of real Power.

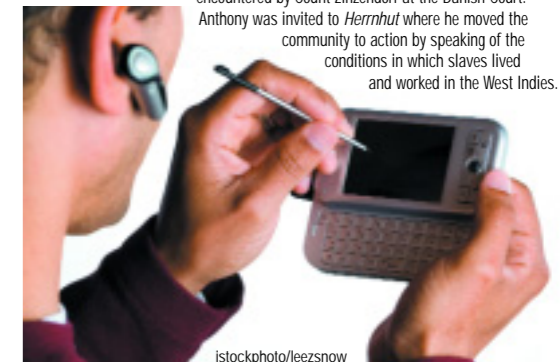
Prayer can change things. More importantly, it can change *people* who can change things. Has your experience or the progress of your church stalled? Make contact with the Power; don't be an obstruction to traffic.

You've heard of 'You are what you eat'? Try this one, *You are what you pray*. Prayer is the central avenue God uses to transform us. 'Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.' Hebrews 4:16.

Someone said to John Bunyan: 'You can do more than pray!' He answered: 'You can do more than pray *after* you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray *until* you have prayed.'

¹Cameron V. Thompson in *Master Secrets of Prayer*.
²The Moravians were descendants of the Bohemian Brethren, bringing with them the heritage of the suppressed Hussite *Unitas Fratrum*.

The *Herrnhut* community prioritised the West Indies in their overseas outreach because of the influence of a former slave Anthony first encountered by Count Zinzendorf at the Danish Court. Anthony was invited to *Herrnhut* where he moved the community to action by speaking of the conditions in which slaves lived and worked in the West Indies.



istockphoto/leesznow

'Pastor, should I take the Church to court?'

by Pastor Sam Davis

You may well ask, 'Why on earth would anyone want to take the Church to court? Isn't that like taking God to court?' Working for the Church and its institutions is like working for God, but sadly God has no hands down here but our hands, eyes, feet, etc. Those who manage on God's behalf are humans who are prone to make mistakes.

Those who seek redress in the courts or tribunals as a result of these decisions, right or wrong, do so because they feel they have not had a fair hearing. However, I hear the apostle Paul saying, 'Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?' (1 Cor. 6:1-2, NKJV.)

Paul's starting premise is that we should not go to the courts and tribunals of the world against our brethren because we, the saints, will one day judge the world. The people that we run to, to secure a judgement, are the very people we will one day pass judgement on.

Paul goes on to say, 'Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?' (1 Cor. 6:3-4.) Seeing that the time is coming when we shall sit in judgement on angels, the apostle suggests that we are well capable of judging smaller matters here on earth. As he wrote to the Corinthian Christians, Paul no doubt had in mind the Jewish way of doing things by which they avoided using the Gentile courts.

'The Jews did not permit their disputes to go before Gentile courts. It was a law among them that differences between Jews should be referred to the consideration of approved men of their own faith and nation... Christians who took their differences to heathen tribunals thereby admitted that their communal loyalty to the church was inferior to that of the Jews.'¹

Jesus also suggests in Matthew 18 that we should keep our disputes within the church.

'Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear you, take with you one or two more, that "by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established". And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven'. (Matt. 18:15-19, NKJV.)

This is all well and good, but what happens when the 'brother' who has offended you is the Church or one of its institutions? Clearly, it would appear that the same approach would apply. There should be some internal mechanism whereby, from within its structure, disputes can be heard and resolved without recourse to law.

Jesus well knew the feelings of animosity and acrimony involved when we go to court against each other. The maxim of 'Do unto others as you would like them to do unto you' goes out of the window and in comes, 'Do others before they do you,' or 'Do others because they've done you.' This is not the Christian way.

In order to minimise the feelings of animosity and rancour evident between adversaries in a court of law Jesus said, 'If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.' (Matt. 5:40.) Can you imagine that! Brother has just sued you and won your jacket and Jesus says you should also let him have the waistcoat.

That's truly amazing! We're not like that. My natural inclination would be to go into the gents and put superglue in the pocket of the jacket, slash the lining, and stitch up the sleeves so that he will never really enjoy the jacket. But

love says give him the waistcoat and the jacket with a smile.

The reason Jesus and the apostle Paul admonish us not to go to court is because the very process is adversarial. When I take my brother to court my intention is not to lose. I go there to win in order to clear my name, or right the perceived wrong and exact a judgement in my favour. In order to do this I must paint my 'adversary' in the worst possible light while still telling the truth.

I may betray confidences and drag others who don't really want to be involved into the process. Bear in mind that the other side is also there intent on preserving *its* 'good name' and the rightness of *its* decision. They will therefore be 'dishing the dirt' on the claimant. A far cry from the reconciliatory, and brotherly way espoused by the One who knows best.

There is of course a fall-out to all of this. Irrespective of the outcome, plaintiff and defendant do not leave court suggesting that they meet for lunch on Sabbath. The defendant may now be the aggrieved party because of the judgement, while the plaintiff rejoices 'The Lord is good.' The truth is there are *no* winners. Both parties are still at daggers drawn. Should the plaintiff be the loser then he or she sees the Church as unjust and may well feel that he or she can no longer fellowship within its communion. So, Pastor, should I take the Church to court?

'Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be defrauded?' (1 Cor 6:7,8, NKJV.) Why not indeed? Those who feel that they have been defrauded will no doubt say that unless they take a stand the Church or institution will 'never learn'. They are doing it to prepare the way for others.

Ellen White is very clear on this matter.

'If a Christian is wronged by his brother, let him not appeal to unbelievers in a court of justice. Let him



follow out the instruction Christ has given. Instead of trying to avenge himself, let him seek to save his brother. God will guard the interests of those who love and fear Him, and with confidence we may commit our case to Him who judges righteously.' (Christ's Object Lessons, p249.)

The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy could not be clearer. We should not seek redress in the secular courts. The human heart, however, cries out for justice, it cries out for a fair and impartial hearing. I believe that it should be heard.

As a responsible employer, I believe that the Church should set up a panel of independent persons. Could this not include some who have a legal or HR training, as well as pastors (from another Conference) and other professionals? Could both parties in disputes be bound to accept the verdict handed down by such a panel?

Could such a panel, were it set up, be obliged to conform to the biblical directive, and meet in an atmosphere of prayer? Could it be healing and redemptive, and reconciliatory in its judgement? Have too many of us ignored the Scriptures in our desire for justice? Could those who need to be heard, be heard within the biblical framework?

Brother seeking justice against brother in the civil courts dishonours the name of Christ, and brings reproach on the Church. It flies in the face of Scripture and is just as wrong as breaking any other biblical principle. Those who take that route do so, it is hoped, as a last resort. All internal avenues for conflict resolution and arbitration have been explored and they perceive that an injustice has been perpetrated. They feel frustrated and unheard, and cry out for justice. It is incumbent on those in leadership to ensure that the clear and unequivocal biblical directive is followed in the settlement of disputes so that we do not dishonour our Lord before the 'ungodly' and continue to waste the Lord's money in the process.

¹SDABC 6 (p.695)

My Testimony

by Maria Hoza

'I joined a church where children are appreciated.'



My name is Maria, and I'm from Romania, a Communist country until 1989.

My family used to be Catholic; my dad still is. Romania was a country where religion was forbidden for many years. Even now I'm amazed how God can work in a young girl's life. I was 11 years old when I realised that the Catholic Church was boring and that they didn't do anything with children.

My uncle, who used to work for the Communist Party, told me that there are different religions in Romania, and some of them have activities for children. He told me that his work for the Communist regime involved pressuring and persuading Christians to give up their beliefs. He said that the most stubborn were Seventh-day Adventists. Later that day I had a conversation with my mum. She told me that she used to attend an Adventist church before she was married.

I wanted to find out more about Adventist beliefs, so the next Saturday, instead of going to my basketball practice, I went to church. From the minute I stepped into that church I felt different. I just loved the programme, the Sabbath School and the fact that children were appreciated. I decided to go the next Saturday, and so for three months I attended the church on Sabbath instead of basketball.

I learned that God doesn't like lies, so I told my parents what I had been doing. At first they were shocked, but they said that they had noticed a change in me. I was free to go to church on Sabbath. But when my uncle found out he smacked me so hard that for two days I had headaches.

I didn't give up. I knew that God is merciful and that Jesus died on the cross for my family as well. I prayed for them for a year and then one Sabbath my mum and my three brothers came to see me in my first Pathfinder programme. I think they felt Jesus' love there as well because the next Sabbath they came again.

I thank God for his patience and grace. I was baptised on 2 November 1996 and my mum and two older brothers in 1997. I still pray every day for my dad and uncle. It's not an easy path, being a Seventh-day Adventist in Romania, but I know that Jesus has been on my side all the way. I give him praise and thank him for the gift of eternal life for me and my family.

[Maria is a student currently attending Manchester South church.]

Submitted by JAMES SAWIZON

Supper Club Tenth Anniversary

Junko Murayama believes that it was God's will for her to start the Healthy Living Supper Club (HLSC) in Oxford, so she stepped forward in faith, and God has blessed her faith and the project by providing all that was needed: an excellent committee, a variety of programmes, and even free publicity courtesy of BBC Radio Oxford, *The Times* supplement, and *The Guardian* Guide, when support was running low.

The HLSC was launched in May 1996, with a series of five weekly meetings, but after ten years of monthly meetings has now earned



Marriage Enrichment weekend

Ballencloerch House, at the foot of the picturesque Campsie Hills north of Glasgow, was the setting for the 'Endless Love' Marriage Enrichment weekend. Nine couples from the Glasgow and Dunfermline Districts, and a pastoral couple from the Mission, were joined by one from Nottingham Central church. They arrived on Friday evening with high expectations of what, for the Scottish Mission, was the first of its kind for many years. It was led by John and Delivon Frances from Nottingham Central, who play a prominent role in the Family Ministries department of the North England Conference.

The programme focused on various aspects of marriage and family, including God's Ideal, Communication, Relational Needs, and Conflict. Workshops, involving all the couples, were mixed with presentations and interactive exercises. Saturday evening was the highlight, consisting of a meal, some 'wine' in a romantic candlelit setting, an opportunity for the spouses to

affirm each other with gifts, songs and speeches, and an evening out for dessert at a local hotel. Pastor Lew Edwards led out in a commitment service on Sunday morning, allowing all the couples to recommit themselves to their partners and to God. Interactive sessions and workshops, by Pastor Clifford and Ophelia Herman, on the Love Language each of us speaks, helped participants to understand and listen to each other's language.

Pastor Herman said afterwards, 'Once you are married you never stop learning. Just when you think you know it all you learn something valuable to make your home and family special. Every chance to enrich your marriage is another chance to appreciate the partner God has given you to love.'

All the couples present expressed a real appreciation of the opportunity, away from their homes, to enrich their marriages as they focused on the gift God has left us – to love and care for our families.

JOHN WILBY, Communication Sponsor

the nickname, The Healthy *Loving* Supper Club because the meetings have generated such warm loving friendships. There are over a hundred names on the database.

The aim is to demonstrate health principles and the delicious simplicity of a vegan/vegetarian diet through guest speakers who talk, and cooks who demonstrate under a variety of themes. The meetings invariably end with mild socialisation over supper, and, in *The Guardian* reporter's

words, 'Eating out has never been so civilised!'

The tenth anniversary was marked by a celebratory cruise down the River Thames.

God provided this club when the world was about to suffer Mad Cow and Foot and Mouth diseases, and Avian Flu. Junko praises God with a grateful heart for his everlasting presence and his mighty caring hands.

Submitted by DAVID SPEARING

Giving my best to my community in Dunstable

by Jacqui Grant

Commuting to work is a challenge. Should commuting to church be considered another?

Many of us travel great distances to attend church. Admittedly, we live in a modern age where it is quite normal to commute during the week for work. Like many others, I commute five days a week in order to earn a living and to seek job opportunities that are not available locally. Should Sabbath be different?

Until August 2005, I travelled a round trip of 36 miles to and from church on Sabbaths. Apart from being time-consuming and exhausting, this prevented me from fully participating in church activities, services and community outreach projects. I became half-hearted because I could not fully commit myself to the work of the church.

Quite honestly, by the time I arrived home after a tiring day, with the meetings beginning at the customary 7.30pm, the attraction of an early night in would be too enticing. To justify my actions, I would console myself that these were only weekday programmes; Sabbath was more important! Surely, as long as I attended church on Sabbath that was OK.

I have now relocated to the Dunstable area, even further away from my usual church which would involve a round trip of some 60 miles. I found myself resenting the journey even more than before, yet the church with which I was familiar still held many attractions:

**I was a church officer there
My family and friends were there
I enjoyed the style of worship
I felt committed to the leadership
I have always been there!**

Sabbath is the day of rest and one that I look forward to. Without guilt, I can refrain from work. Because I felt that it was possible to become equally committed within another area, my focus was on the social aspect, which acted like a magnet and drew me towards the motorway and a lengthy journey.

Then I found out that I needn't contemplate the dreaded lengthy journey because a new Church Plant was about to begin in Dunstable.

I needed to seek clarification by asking the following questions:
*What are my reasons for attending church?
Where is my community?
What is my purpose for being a Christian?*

I came up with the following answers:
*My reasons for attending church are to worship God and to have full fellowship with others.
My community is the neighbourhood within which I live.
My purpose for being a Christian is to love God and have a positive impact in the community within which I live and so*

lead others to find Jesus Christ.

Once I had answered these questions, I saw clearly that to become an effective Christian I needed to become involved within my own local community. I soon recognised that even if there had not been a group within my town, I myself could have taken the initiative to begin a Church Plant by inviting a few friends to meet in my home.

February 11 2006 saw the birth of our new Church Plant, and Pastor Andrew Leonce preached the opening sermon. Although we are a small group, already we have become fully involved within the local community. In answer to the request of this new community, the group has already hosted two Health Emphasis programmes; the first was attended by Elsie Staple, Community and Health Emphasis director of the SEC, along with other health professionals. On the day, various free health checks were carried out along with the opportunity for the community to sample some exotic fruits and juices.

Following this event, our group was invited to take part in local community planning meetings where local leaders discussed ways in which the Downside Community of Dunstable could be improved. We were invited not just as observers but to become involved in the plans for the area; it was recognised that we have a role to play within this community. Downside has truly embraced our group and has made it clear that we belong there. This experience has served to emphasise that wherever you may live, it is possible to become active and expand God's Kingdom. People everywhere need to know God and as Christians we

have the privilege of being able to lead them to him through friendship and involvement.

Personally, the word 'local' has now taken on a whole new meaning. I am able to worship, fellowship, become active and am more effective within my new local community. The word 'local' has become both an attraction and my motivation to be truly involved.

Local living – Local travel – Local church – Local community involvement – Local witnessing – Local impact.

**Where is my community?
My community is my neighbourhood!**

Where has God placed you?

by Pastor A. Vontzalidis,
Strategic Development & Church Growth director

There are hundreds, if not thousands of our members who travel quite far to attend an Adventist church. I believe that although some, for valid reasons, will continue to do so, there are many, under God's guidance, who can join a local group, or even start one themselves. Ministry and involvement in our local communities is very important for the extension of his Kingdom, and for our own personal fulfilment.

The Strategic Development & Church Growth department is keen to hear from anyone who would like either to join an existing church plant, or find out how they can start a house group where they live, instead of travelling far to attend church.
avontzalidis@secadventist.org.uk



The Dunstable church plant

Hove: Thanksgiving and Praise

'I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart.' Psalm 86:12 was certainly true on Sabbath 1 July. The weather was fine and sunny, and the church was full as normal. The service of praise was a departure from our normal divine service, as we had no sermon, but instead an all-musical programme. This proved enjoyable and we plan to have further praise services.

Among those taking part were Hove Choir; Fortune Mahlangu from Huddersfield church, who gave us a meditation on 'My Music and My Lord'; Anthony 'n' Family, three talented boys playing keyboard, violin and flute; Hove Male Choir; Jonathan Seetaya, aged 9, playing the violin; Tomas and Lenka singing a duet, with Tomas on the guitar. We also had congregational singing.

We wish to thank all who contributed and Regina, the organiser of the event.

ANNE BEATTIE

Where are we now?

This thought-provoking question encompassed a recent two-day retreat for Scottish Mission Pastors and Sponsors, hosted at Roundelwood and the Crieff church on 17-18 October. Clive Wilson, Campus chaplain of the Kettering College of Medical Arts in Ohio, USA, led with a series of presentations. Through a business and inter-personal approach, participants were invited to consider the effects of globalisation, issues of competency and greatness, 'Is small the new big?' and 'What are the new rules?' The event offered a fascinating insight into management developments and an inspiring opportunity to review personal approaches to mission outreach.

JOHN WILBY, Communication Sponsor

Unusual method of evangelism

With the upcoming 'Amazing Truths 2006' campaign just around the corner, the High Wycombe Mickfield PM team decided to use a different approach to taking the Gospel to the locals by inviting them to a Church Car Boot Sale & Free BBQ.

The early hours of 23 July looked pretty bleak, and the prospects of the day being 'washed away' quite a



reality, but by 11am the church car park was full of items, new and used, donated by the members and friends of the church.

Hundreds of people turned out for a wonderful day of bargains for the visitors, but more importantly, a chance for the public to find out about the church and what we believe.

The church band provided outdoor music that drew the crowds, and the waft of the great veggie delights from the culinary masters made the day a grand success. One visitor decided to spend the entire day with us, while many viewed the church building.

Over £250 was raised for the Personal Ministries department.

MICKLEFIELD COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

The forgotten songbook

Psalty is a life-sized singing songbook who loves to sing the songs nobody sings any more. When he is seen crying in the playground, children are drawn to him, and Psalty plays on their curiosity, teaching them that singing and praising the Lord can be fun.

Children and young people from aged 2-17 were involved in this evangelistic project organised by West Bleckley Adventist Community church in Milton Keynes, and in the space of seven weeks the youngsters had transformed mere words into a vibrant musical of praise to God, presented to friends and relatives of the church and community.

One young man from the community was so interested in what



Fulham keeps busy

During August students from far and wide who attended the Vacation Bible School were fully informed about two centuries of Adventist history since the 'Age of the Reformation'.

The Day of Fellowship held in the Wembley Arena was a memorable event. I felt very proud of my church.

Then, in September, Fulham held a Prayer Emphasis day, spearheaded by Sister Samuels. Testimonials were conveyed from the congregation and addressed to the platform party. Everyone was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and more 'earthly' needs were provided by a delicious meal of organic foods.

We pray that God's plans for Fulham will continue to bless.

MARIA L. MAY-PHILLIPS

Jotsam
Keep praying, but be thankful that God's answers are wiser than your prayers!

William Culbertson

The principal of the Adventist Discovery Centre acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £300 received in October, from the Manchester area.

Mums in Action

presents

Sunday 3 December 2006

THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

gospel explosion extravaganza concert. At the Colloseum Theatre, Watford. Doors open at 5pm for 6pm start

Artistes include:

The Sainsbury's Choir Award winners The London Adventist Chorale, Stanborough Park Primary School Choirs, Mark Delisser, Karen Rhamie, The Garston Community Church, The Animated Gospel Choir, to name but a few. This is also a community event. Please invite your friends, family and colleagues from the community. The Mayor of Watford will also be in attendance, along with a representative from Hertfordshire Constabulary who will give a short talk on keeping safe.

Price: Adults £5; Children £2.50. Call 0794 000 7331 or 0786 913 2901 or log on to www.mumsinaction.org/xmas.

Playscheme to re-open

With the untimely death of Mrs Pearly Francis, its founder and organiser, the Wednesfield church Playscheme had to be cancelled earlier this year. Parents who have supported the scheme were saddened by the news. Pearly had served the scheme faithfully for many years.

An exciting new Playscheme is set to re-open under new directors and supervisors in 2007, so watch out for details in the near future.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

Newbold for Families

by Helen Pearson, Newbold PRO

An Icelandic family who have just arrived at Newbold may be set to start a new trend in Newbold enrolment: parents and children studying at the College together.

Instead of sending their daughter to Newbold and staying at home in Iceland to continue with their teaching jobs, Thora and Manfred Lemke came with her. She came to take a Humanities Degree, they came to study Theology.

When they started to think about Newbold, their 19-year-old daughter Jona was just finishing her degree in science and thinking about what she would do next, when she read a book about an English teacher living in Korea. 'I thought I would like to do something similar and learn about culture. And I knew that teaching English as a foreign language, and taking a degree in English, would enable me to do that,' she says.

Meanwhile, mother Thora had been teaching Art and Textiles at Sudurhlidarskoli – the Adventist primary school in Iceland – for seven years, and was feeling claustrophobic. 'I could feel that, even though I was enjoying my small class, I wanted to get more ideas, more space; do something bigger.' She was looking around at the universities in Iceland for 'something to get my spirit going', she says, 'and recognised that Theology is where my interest has always been'.

While his wife and daughter were thinking about their futures, Manfred was continuing to lecture at the Iceland University of Education,

completing an MA, and making plans to start on a PhD in Education by distance learning. But at the same time he was thinking about the twenty years of working life he has left. 'Who am I going to serve in those years?' he asked himself. 'I thought that perhaps I needed some time to think about my philosophical assumptions.'

And so it was that, on the advice of some Newbold alumni in Iceland, the three of them began to think about Newbold.

Thora, convinced that she would like to study theology, began to talk to Manfred, whom she describes as 'always a very enthusiastic student when he was preparing to preach and teach Sabbath school classes'. Eventually he was persuaded.

The idea of taking the 'Licence in Theology', a one-year course for graduates of disciplines other than theology, appealed to him. And he even began to think about adding an MA in Theology afterwards. In August, the three new Newbold students and the fourth member of the family, 14-year-old Freyja, arrived in England.

Manfred and Thora are doing exactly the same classes, Greek, Biblical Theology, Homiletics, Pastoral Ministry, and a Ministerial Placement. 'We're used to sharing professional interests,' they say.

'It's a bit strange to sit there and be the student when you are used to being the teacher, but it's good!' she adds. 'We've left our friends and family and our plan is to go home to them,' says Thora. 'But when God

says "Go", we are open to that. Our idea is at least go home for a few years. We might try to do some overseas work for the church when the girls have left home.

'As teachers and now with this degree, we could be useful. But we would always want to come home to Iceland to our little summer house by the sea for vacations.'

Stanborough: The benefits of the small school atmosphere

Victor Hulbert, Communication director, BUC

Ray has come back home. Brought up in Germany, educated at Stanborough, with a degree from the USA, he has returned to school to 'give something back'. As head of marketing, the aim of Ray Dalias over the next year is 'to give kids a joyous experience and memories that they will take with them'. That is not the kind of comment you expect to hear from a staff member, but then, Stanborough is no ordinary school. Combining academic excellence with a spiritual ethos results in the kind of school that children are proud of and that alumni want to return to.

Newly-appointed head teacher Roger Murphy is also proud of his students. With a 79% A*-C pass rate in this summer's GCSE results and with Key Stage 3 results some 20% above the national average he believes in them and their future. 'We are a mixed ability school,' Mr Murphy states. 'Most independent schools are selective and people sometimes compare us with other schools in the private sector. But for a school with a mixed intake we are way above the national average.'

Mr Murphy emphasises that this is a school where parents are encouraged to work with students. With only 170 students it also means small class sizes and individual attention. 'The small school family atmosphere leads to a good

The Lemkes know that what they have done is unusual. Their friends have told them that they are watching them to see how transplanting the whole family works out.

'We know that there are others who have been saying to themselves for a long time, "I would really like to do something for the Church," and wondering how they could do it. Some of them have said to us, "If you can do this with the whole family, then maybe we have to do something too."'

Who knows, the Lemkes may have started a trend!

ethos where students and teachers work and share together.' Rim Choi has been studying at Stanborough for the last ten years, having started in the Junior School. 'Boarding School life eases the tension of study. The relaxed, family-like atmosphere makes my stay here very comfortable. The small classes help us relate to the teachers on a more personal level.'

This is equally true in Stanborough Junior School where they cater from nursery up to year six. With 110 pupils, head teacher Cheryl Allen sees the school providing an all-round Christian education. She believes that, 'in all areas of school life God is the centre'. Together with the whole staff she says, 'We lift our pupils and their families up to the Lord daily. Our staff are committed Christians who allow God to lead and direct in every area of their teaching.' The results are seen in the Key Stage 2 SATS results where all were at or above government targets for Science, and the school was ahead of government targets for English and Maths.

Since its establishment in 1919, Stanborough has lived out its motto, 'Dominus Magister Ludi Nostr' (God is the Master of our School). This comes through, not just in the teaching ethos where Christian values are built into the curriculum, but



in the worship, in teachers conveying their own personal values and what Roger Murphy calls the whole 'synergy factor of Christian staff working together'.

Ray has returned to the school because of that very culture. He found it was a place where he could question his beliefs in a safe atmosphere. In charge of marketing, but also involved in organising student exchanges and coaching the basketball team, he enjoys working in an environment where children are encouraged to be thinkers. He states, 'There is an open-minded approach but a strong commitment here.'

With thirty nationalities represented among the 170 students, Stanborough is also a place where students learn tolerance and where they make international friendships that last a lifetime. While just over half the intake is from Adventist families, some 20% come from other Christian faiths and the rest are made up of Muslim, Hindu or no religious faith at all.

This particularly excites Ray as it gives opportunity to share faith in

'the real world'. 'We have started our own special Sabbath worship service, CAYA. (Come as you are). At the moment it runs just once a month but we hope to expand it in the future as it is a place where all students and their friends feel comfortable.' First-year student Sara Pastor enjoys the service. 'It's a nice alternative to the regular church service we have to attend every week. I actually prefer CAYA, because the activities make it easier to relate and therefore we learn more easily.'

But for all students, 'the real world' expands beyond the boundaries of the green acres of Stanborough Park. Mr Murphy emphasises the service aspect of school life. 'Students here have an outward looking approach to life. Our links with orphanages in India and Albania have changed the lives of students. Older students have been given the opportunity to fundraise and travel to the orphanages. With links to ADRA, students have discovered that they are part of an international church and have taken an active part in that church.'

ABOUT STANBOROUGH:

'Boarding School life eases the tension of study. The relaxed, family-like atmosphere makes my stay here very comfortable. The small classes help us relate to the teachers on a more personal level.' Hye-Rim Choi (Student at Stanborough Primary through Secondary for ten years).



Maidenhead baptism

At a recent baptism Annene Cloete dedicated her life to Jesus and joined the Maidenhead church in Berkshire. Annene has lived in the UK for four years and met her husband Daniel here, although he comes from Zimbabwe and she from South Africa. Daniel, and Annene's mother Marietjie Deiner were present at this very special service.

It was through her mother that Annene became an Adventist as she witnessed to her family by sharing with them the CD, *Panorama of Prophecy* by Doug Bachelor after she became an Adventist three years ago. Her cousin had initially given her the CD and encouraged her to watch it. Annene began attending the Maidenhead church in October 2005 and soon asked Pastor Vlado Godina to baptise her. She is a valued member of the church.

MIRIAM WOOD

Southern Asia Division speaker at Sutton Coldfield Day of Fellowship

Sabbath 22 July was a big day for the Sutton Coldfield group – a day of fellowship. The meeting was held at St Columba's CE Church, Sutton Coldfield, and was themed 'New Beginning'.

More than 180 people attended from far and near. Manchester, Preston, Chorley, Bolton, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall, Leicester, Kent, Enfield, Harlow, Chelmsford, London and Swindon were all represented, as were our local churches in Birmingham.

Sabbath School was co-ordinated by Dr Yesudian and Brother Jairaj. We had two excellent talks, one by Dr Eleazer Paul, 'Are you a diion?' Comparing the growth of the bamboo to the growth of the church, he challenged us all to keep growing and to continue spreading God's message in our local communities.

The second talk was given by Brother Noel on the fast-progressing work of the Adventist church in Zimbabwe. He talked about each member bringing an additional soul to the church in Zimbabwe, and encouraged us to do the same here. The lesson study was led by Pastor Dalbir Masih, and we were richly blessed by the special music from Noreen, Ruth and Mercy. The

Leicester choir sang many items.

Divine service was co-ordinated by Dr Thomas and Brother Alwin Luke, with special music by the members of the Sutton Coldfield group, who sang in harmony the song: 'Never give up for Jesus is coming'. The highlight of the day was the message by the guest speaker, Pastor M. Mammen from the Southern Asia Division, who has been conducting revival seminars throughout the UK over the last few months. His message, entitled 'The Old and the New', was most apt for the occasion and thoroughly inspirational. Following this spiritual nourishment, everyone was invited to take part in the sumptuous meal prepared by Brother Younis Henry of Langley church, which was organised by Pastors Masih and Gill.

The afternoon programme was co-ordinated by Brothers Enoch and Alex, and we had a feast of music and testimonies from brothers and sisters across the country, mixed with other Bible programmes presented by the children.

Finally, Sister Yesudian thanked everyone for coming and participating, thus making this Day of Fellowship a joyous, uplifting and most memorable one.

JOSY THOMAS



Worship makes a difference in Area 5

by Catherine Boldeau, Communication director, SEC

Real Worship in the Real World was the theme for the Area 5 Day of Fellowship, held at The Globe, Reading, on Sabbath 30 September. One thousand five hundred people, 500 of them youth, joined together to worship and fellowship at this annual event.

The guest speaker was Victor Hulbert, Communication director of the BUC and outgoing Executive secretary of the SEC. As an innovator, Victor did not just preach, or teach, he used a multimedia presentation to assist his morning delivery.

Patrick Johnson, senior pastor of the Newbold church district, ably delivered a difficult Sabbath School lesson. Sabbath School was organised by Pastor George Dadey. In attendance for the day was Des Boldeau, BUC Youth Ministries director, who promoted the Valuegenesis survey for the youth of the United Kingdom that will be conducted in December.

Area 5 is alive with 'diverse people groups from over fifty countries' according to David Spearing, the co-



ordinator for the district and also the event organiser. This diversity was most evident in the afternoon musical concert, arranged by Nana Bonnie and articulately compered by Alan Hudson. Choirs from the Ghanaian congregation sang, and musical items were given by young people from all over the area.



Photo: Ken Jones

Colchester baptism

Netsai and Tracy Mbiriri, mother and daughter, were baptised at the Colchester church on 1 July. After studying with Pastor Paul Smith, they decided to commit their lives to Jesus. Over the short while they have been in our church, they have taken an active role.

Women's Day

Once a quarter the Women's Ministries department of the Colchester church takes the day's services. August 26 was one such day, and several of the women of Hampstead church had agreed to take part.

The sermon was taken by Diane Coleman, who addressed the sermon specifically to the women, and told us always to look for the blessings in the storms. We were inspired by the sermon, and eager for the afternoon programme and concert to begin.

After a scrumptious meal, the Health Ministries leader of Hampstead church gave us a programme on health. We continued with a concert. The Hampstead church has a range of singing talent, and we were treated to the sound of the Hampstead ladies' trio singing. Poems were read and instruments played.

ELIZABETH MARSHALL

Baptism, Fellowship and Farewell

For Christians, Bible baptism signifies new birth, a new beginning. Just as marriage symbolises the joining of human lives, so baptism symbolises our joining with Jesus and the church family.

Sabbath 23 September was a day of fellowship for three churches, Canterbury, Folkestone and Ashford International Community church,

when we gathered to witness the baptism of five candidates from Ashford, but also to bid farewell to Pastor Fernand Lombart who is leaving after nine years of ministry in the district.

Dr Richard de Lisser, our guest speaker for the day, preached a sermon that challenged us that true fellowship, one with another, only comes when we have a true relationship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. He admonished us to extend the Sabbath fellowship to our members during the week and to share one another's burdens. There was a great feeling of spiritual blessing throughout the day.

A sumptuous fellowship lunch followed during which the local press took photographs, and then the afternoon service saw five precious souls accepting Jesus as their personal Friend and Saviour.

Judith and her son Herve took to the pool. They are part of the foundation of Ashford church and the members rejoiced that they finally decided to declare publicly their desire to follow Jesus all the way. Adesh shared his proud moment with Reeshma, his wife, a Buddhist who finally found Jesus. Tears of joy flowed down their cheeks as they watched each other being baptised. The parents of 14-year-old Sachin knelt in front of the pool, very emotional, watching their only son declare his desire to follow Jesus. It was a moving and emotional time for Pastor Fernand Lombart as he baptised the candidates.

After the service, members and elders of Pastor Lombart's three churches paid tribute to him and thanked him for his ministry and kindness to them. When he arrived he was responsible for two churches. But he was leaving three, having been responsible for raising a new church plant in Ashford.

A farewell party brought the day to a close when church members were able to wish Pastor Lombart God's richest blessings in his future ministry. Tears of joy and sadness were the order of the day.

KAREN LEARMOND

How others see us:

This is how the *Churches Together* magazine in Dorset reported an event at the Bournemouth Seventh-day Adventist church:

Flags, Food and Fun

Where could you hear a song from Nigeria and a poem from Spain, and then eat food from Japan and Wales? They were all to be enjoyed at the International evening hosted by the Seventh-day Adventist church in Bournemouth as a fitting event soon after One World Week.

People wore national costumes,

and flags from over a dozen countries were waved enthusiastically in a colourful reminder of the wonderful diversity of our world.

Representatives offered a few words about their home countries and then sang or recited short pieces. It was good to have a wide range of ages among the contributors, as well as the rich variety of countries, which included Bangladesh, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the West Indies and South Africa. After a varied programme everyone adjourned to

cement international relations over a superb array of dishes from across the world. The smells, colours and tastes meant that most of us ate our way around the world with relish!

The format was simple, and many of the contributors were international students at the university or college, and this is an idea which could be copied across the area, helping to forge closer links with the people who live here who have roots or connections with other countries and cultures across the world. We are not as mono-cultural as it may at first appear!

Submitted by Joy Elliott with her report of Bournemouth's International Night.

Dr William Ackah credits God

Bristol Central would like to acknowledge William Ackah, who recently obtained the qualification of PhD in politics. His thesis was titled *Political Opportunities and Black Community Organisations: The Case of Structural Funds in Liverpool and Manchester*.

In the acknowledgements page William wrote: 'To



God. You have brought me from a mighty long way and so I will always remember and acknowledge your amazing influence on my life.'

The external examiner, after telling him that he had passed with no corrections, said that he had read his acknowledgements and that although he was an agnostic he noted that he had acknowledged God and respected that. William said: 'God has indeed brought me a long way, from the 16th floor of a council flat in a tough housing estate in East London to PhD and lecturer at Birkbeck College University of London. I can do no other than give God the thanks and the praise for all he has done in my life and that of my family.'

William is first elder at Bristol Central church, and happily married to Karen. Bristol Central, as with many churches in Area 2, is enjoying unprecedented growth. There is a happy, friendly atmosphere there and a hunger for the truth. It has made two church plants in three years, has another baptism scheduled this month and most Sabbaths you must come on time to ensure a seat.

MILES CHAMBERS

Greenwich Golden Wedding

Claude and Emie Sookun celebrated their 50th Golden Anniversary in a blessing ceremony by Dr Terry Messenger on Sunday 18 December 2005 at Greenwich church, where they have been members for over 30 years since their arrival from Mauritius in 1972. They married 50 years ago in Mauritius at Eau-Coulees Adventist church.

They now live in Catford, south-east London, and are happily surrounded by their four children and seven grandchildren. Emie celebrated her 70th birthday in April 2006, and Claude celebrated his 75th birthday in June 2006.

JESSY SOOKUN



Buy Books this Christmas!
from the Adventist Book Centre

The Stanborough Press Ltd,
Alma Park, Grantham, Lincs. NG31 9SL
Tel: 01476 539900

Stoke Newington is growing!

On the afternoon of Sabbath 16 September church members, friends, relatives and many young visitors witnessed the addition of twelve new members to our church, nine by baptism, two by transfer, and one baptised in the Holloway campaign held in the summer in the Lea Bridge Road park.

This was the third baptism this year, and it was truly a family occasion because most of the candidates were related to and joined families who were already members of the church.

Those baptised on 16 September were brother and sister Evrol and Charmaine Corea, twin sisters Jodie and Jazzine Smith, mother and son Grace and Isaiah Ekpaloba, sisters Asha and Cheynne Eastwood, and Treslyn Charles.

Some of these candidates were prepared by our elders who ran Junior Bible classes each Sabbath afternoon.

Evrol, Charmaine, Jodie, Jazzine, Isaiah, Asha and Cheynne are our own church children, while Grace has been worshipping with us for some time, and Treslyn, a newcomer,

studied with Elder and Sister Mackenzie.

The baptismal pool was occupied by our minister Pastor Wilfred Blake and former minister Dr Richard De Lisser, now the Personal Ministries and Sabbath School director at the SEC, who conducted the immersions. Dr De Lisser was called back by Evrol and Charmaine to perform their baptism.

The sermonette was given by Pastor Blake, who advised the candidates that baptism is to walk the Christian walk and to talk the Christian talk. Before the candidates entered the pool, a prayer of consecration was given by Pastor Robert Hines from the Youth Ministries department at the SEC.

Requested songs and texts by families and close friends interspersed the immersions, and a special item was given by our group Infinity in support of those baptised. Afterwards, certificates and gifts were handed out by Dr De Lisser, who welcomed the candidates into fellowship on behalf of the Conference.

Joining the church by transfer

were wife and husband Chipo and Mbombe Kazoka. Chipo came from the Kabula Hill church in Blantyre, Malawi, and Mbombe came from the Wimbledon church.

Petrina Smith, sister of twins Jodie and Jazzine, joined the church through her baptism at the Holloway church summer campaign in the Lea Bridge Road park. All three girls join their mother Jennifer who was received into membership last December from the Muswell Hill church.

Evrol and Charmaine also joined their parents Elder Basil Corea and Pat Corea. Evrol has been active in the music ministry and has been blessing us for over five years now playing the piano, organ and keyboard. Stoke Newington had truly waited a very long time for Evrol's baptism. Charmaine is also active in the music ministry by singing in one of our Praise Teams.

Isaiah, the youngest at 10 years old, is the nephew of Asha and

Cheynne Eastwood and grandson of Fifi – Asha and Cheynne's mother – who is also a member of our church. Fifi has been bringing him to church with his younger brother since kindergarten age and Isaiah, in turn, brought his mother Grace into baptism.

All the new members were also welcomed into church fellowship by all the elders, after what has been the largest number added to our church in any one time outside a campaign, and the Stoke Newington members wish these new members God's all-abiding blessings in their new life.

F. R. SUTHERLAND



Pastor Blake about to baptise Isaiah Ekpaloba, at 10 years old, the youngest candidate, Pastor De Lisser partly hidden

God is crazy about you!

Those who have heard of Cheri Peters, director of True Step Ministries, will know that she is someone so excited for Jesus that to say she is bubbly is an understatement.

She recently conducted a campaign from 1-9 September at North Bristol church. Not only was it her first time in Bristol, but her first time in Britain. With her theme, *God is crazy about you!*, Cheri spoke of God's incredible intervention by saving her from a life of drugs, sexual abuse and homelessness.

From what seemed like a life heading towards an early grave, she encountered the power of God's love. In her autobiography, *Miracles from the Streets*, the foreword is written by the well-known author Randy Maxwell. He states that 'to hear Cheri Peters' story is to be forever changed. To meet Cheri in person is to encounter a flesh-and-blood bona fide miracle.'

There are few who, having experienced her ministry, will disagree with the above statement. We truly encountered a miracle of love.

SHILOH HARMITT



Asian Adventists fellowship

On Sabbath 16 September, about 150 Asian Adventists met in Watford for a day of fellowship. While the majority of them came from the SEC, there were some who came from the North. The day was organised by Daniel Mathew, John Varghese and the writer.

The Sabbath School was taught by Pastor Petras Bahadur, and the writer preached at the divine service, when it was pointed out that the test of a true relationship with God is a genuine relationship with one another.

After lunch, there was a musical programme with Angels Plus, the Leytonstone Youth Choir playing a major part.

PASTOR O. P. CHACKOCHEN

Who are you sitting next to?

On the surface, Southampton church is much like any other Adventist church. We have an African ladies' choir, Sumptuous Sounds. Our junior Sabbath School members willingly take part in the main service with Scripture readings and in the main prayer. So it's not so different from your church.

However, we do have a couple of people who work undercover, and it's these two I would like you to meet. Both Rayna Matthews and David Bradley are on our music rota – but it's their 'day jobs' I want to tell you about.

Ladies first. Rayna has been worshipping with us for about 3 years now, and she has brought to life music, singing and all things poetic. The photograph will tell you that she is an elegant rider and that horse Lucky is just that, but take a closer look. Give up? Well, Rayna, who suffered a polio-type illness 30 years ago, is riding side saddle. Although she did try riding with a Western-style saddle, the pain it caused was too much for her. Not to be defeated she tried a side saddle and a whole new world of freedom began. Now an expert horse-woman, Rayna has taken the riding world by storm, and she has won some amazing prizes and honours competing for 'Riding for the Disabled Association'.

With all the pain came pleasure, and with all the pressure came rewards, and Rayna can remember how she felt the very first time she took to the side saddle. It was exhilarating.

Now she runs clinics for disabled children, giving them the freedom she first felt. All these things cost money to run, however, and Rayna is now seeking sponsorship to enable her and the children to continue, and open up this sport to even more disabled youngsters.

Stop Press. At Highbury College Cosham, (part of the Open University), Rayna has just passed, with flying colours, a four-day intensive First Aid course. As Rayna will be teaching both adults and children with disabilities, for insurance purposes she had to have an up-to-date First Aid certificate. Not as easily gained as you think because part of the course is on your knees for resuscitation of a patient. Easy with two good legs, but Rayna doesn't have two good legs. Needless to say, she even did that with expertise. Her classmates were very impressed and why not? Rayna was not in a class for disabled students. To date we think Rayna is the first disabled instructor for the RDA and also the first instructor teaching side saddle.

While Rayna was getting on her first horse, my husband David Bradley and I joined the Adventist

Church. Nothing has ever been the same since. First David trained and passed the exams to become a lay preacher, which has kept him busy for the passed twelve years. He has preached twice in Romania, but had to pay his own expenses! About eighteen months ago I started volunteer work at Southampton's General Hospital. David liked the idea of giving his time to the NHS a couple of days a week, and so began the 'day job'.

The worst thing about being in hospital, elderly and away from home and family, is loneliness and it does not lend itself to a quick recovery. David and two other volunteers are now known as the Three Musketeers as they 'trilled' the 'Time 4 You' visiting service. As co-ordinator, David has done a splen-

did job of bringing the number of volunteers to ten, working on the wards visiting with elderly patients. 'Time 4 You' is exactly that, and the volunteers work from referrals given by the ward Sisters. As a very 'new boy' eighteen months ago, David had three patients to visit, the first one was asleep, the second one had been discharged that morning, and the third one had died. Thankfully, life has since looked up. Patients love to chat to a willing listener and the exploits of a WW2 commando and the tales from two lady pilots keeps the interest of the visitor and helps the patients' 'little grey cells' to keep working.

Both Rayna and David get such a blessing from the work they do for, and with, others. Everyone needs a challenge a day, and these two found that helping others was rewarding and beneficial for all concerned.

So who are you sitting next to?

WENDY BRADLEY



Division president speaks at Stanborough Park baptism

Dr Bertil Wiklander, president of the Trans-European Division, was the guest speaker for the fourth baptism to be conducted during the past five months at the Stanborough Park church on Sabbath 28 October.

His theme was the Lordship of God, and the fact that everything that we possess is held in trust. God wants his people to respond to his generosity by demonstrating love to him and our fellow-men. Many of our activities are inflexible, but we can choose how we spend a good portion of our time. 'Let us be sure that we give as much of this time as possible to serving God and our neighbours,' challenged Dr Wiklander.

An inspiring vocal duet was presented by the 12-year-old Guenin twins, Daniel and Pierre, who also performed at St Paul's Cathedral in the afternoon.

Two individuals were then

immersed by Pastor Ian Sleeman. Ann Jones, whose husband is a church member, was influenced to make a full commitment to Jesus Christ by Lloyd and Claudette Harris, who also studied with the second candidate, Michel Postdam, from a Catholic background. Michel also attended the recent 'Truth for Today – Hope for Tomorrow' campaign conducted by Brian Davison. The freedom to discuss matters of faith in the Sabbath School, and the absence of 'idol' worship were two of the factors which led to Michel making his decision.

The Park church is continuing its outreach emphasis through a short series of health lectures by Pastor Paul Clee, a departmental director at TED. And youth pastor Matt Vincent is attracting a good number of visitors and members to his Da Vinci Decode programmes – a new approach which features video material from Australia followed by discussion groups.

JOHN ARTHUR



Central London baptism

'God wants us to stand up to glorify him because in witnessing baptism someone's heart will be touched'. Such were the words of Dr Ella Simmons, Vice-president of the General Conference, on 10 June, in concluding her series of talks at Central London church. And it was to God's glory that, on that Sabbath, Brandon Rambarran, Winnie Collate, and David Passer took a public stand for their faith through baptism.

Speaking about what had prompted his acceptance of new birth, Brandon (aged 13) said, 'It's the only true way to live,' and he added that he was excited about the prospect of eternal life with God. Winnie (aged 16) explained how she had grown up in the church and how her journey searching for God had made her realise that she needed him and wanted God to reach others



through her. David (aged 10) was baptised a few weeks previously in Brazil and loves studying his Sabbath School lesson at home with his parents.

'It's inspiring for our church to see young people making public commitments,' said Central London's pastor, David Riley. 'A number of adults have enquired about baptismal classes as a direct result of their testimonies.'

JUDITH LESAR

Stratford baptism

On Sabbath 15 July a baptism took place at Stratford church conducted by Pastor Wilfred Blake – his first baptism since he came to us on 1 January. Five young people gave their lives to the Lord: Jordon Murdoch, Vanessa Mathwasa, Christine Moore, Rosaleen Lyons and Runyararo Nyabunze. These dear candidates had a series of studies with our elder Brother Farrell each week. The right hand of fellowship was offered to Rachel Trent.

On 15 September we also welcomed into fellowship Brother Patrick Geary who made a decision to return home. Brother Geary has been attending Stratford church for some time, but it was while attending the campaign at Millfield Park in August that he surrendered to the Holy Spirit's pleading and was baptised by Pastor Emmanuel Osei.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Meet the Bothas

Jimmy Botha is the newly-appointed pastor of the Edinburgh and Dunfirmline churches, and is joined by his wife Cedrene. Born in Pretoria, South Africa, Jimmy grew up in a military home, during a time when the country was active in a twenty-two-year war in Angola and Namibia. On leaving school he qualified as an electrician and served for four years in the South African Air Force, including more than a year on active service.

A measure of his commitment to Christ is that he repeated his final school year at the age of 24 so that he could qualify for entrance to the Helderberg Adventist College near Cape Town, South Africa. He completed his studies in Theology there in 2000.

Jimmy says, 'Cedrene and I have been working for Jesus since the mid 90s. We both love the Lord with all our hearts, and will serve him wherever he may lead.'

JOHN WILBY, SM Communication sponsor



Turning Kumasi upside down

by Julia Smith, Women's Ministries director, SEC

'You've turned Kumasi upside down,' Pastor Emmanuel Dente, president of the Central Ghana Conference, told the 49 members of the South England Conference 'Connect Ghana' team. In an initiative led by the writer, along with Dr Emmanuel Osei of the London Ghana church, the group spent almost three weeks in Ghana, running a programme of community health, community skills development, basic skills training and support, and evangelism.

Health professionals from a range of specialities participated in the programme, offering free health screening, health advice and counselling. In addition to the community health checks, health programmes were conducted in each of the five sites where evangelistic programmes were held from Sabbath 7 October to Sabbath 21 October. Almost 2,000 people were screened by the team. Natural Health specialist David Addo conducted healthy living seminars, including cooking demonstrations, encouraging people in the use of local vegetables to help improve their health. In a culture where women are seen as the natural cooks, having a man demonstrate cooking provoked a very positive reaction. Over sixty pastors, church leaders and members attended the Counselling Skills Level 2 Certificate programme. Many of the pastors commented that the information and materials they received free of charge were of a similar standard to that provided by the local universities.

Sewing classes were held in two areas. With basic sewing skills the women are then able to earn more money to supplement their sometimes meagre incomes. Sylvia Bernard of the Balham church arranged for the printing and distribution of over 2,000 exercise books for children in 10 schools in and around Kumasi. Carol Pusey of the Brixton church was inspired to provide free school meals to children in a local school and, overall, the project provided free meals for over 2,600 children and teachers in two schools.

'Connect Ghana' had a spiritual as well as a social impact. As a result of evangelistic programmes led by pastors and lay members, over 300 people were baptised in the five areas across the Kumasi district. The speakers included Julia Smith at the Old Tafo church, Pastor Ebenezer Jones-Lartey at the Bantama church, Pastor Maslin Holness and Doreen Edwards at the Bremang church, and Lucy Acquah at the Soame community. Elsie Staple was the speaker in the Yonso area where much of the health and community work was concentrated. A new 'Connect Ghana' church was established there for the 85 newly-baptised members. A health programme held for the women in a high Muslim area resulted in many of the Muslim leaders attending the Old Tafo church to express their thanks for the work that was carried out for members of their communities.

Pastor Dente was impressed by the 'hands on' model of evangelism brought by 'Connect Ghana'. Together with his Conference Administrators and the Personal Ministries director, Pastor James Amoah, he now wants all future evangelistic programmes brought to the Central Ghana Conference

to be based on the SEC Women's Ministries model.

The hard work brought its rewards in terms of great appreciation from the people of Kumasi, from the leadership in Ghana, and most specifically from those who gave their lives to Christ. Special thanks go to Millie Williams who co-ordinated the medical health programme, Lynthia Grant who led out in the Counselling Skills training, and Elsie Staple who co-ordinated the community programme held in Yonso, a village just outside Kumasi. The local leadership plan to continue with the programme established by the SEC team. However, they do face a number of challenges and further assistance will be needed.

For further information and ways to help please contact Julia Smith on 01923 232728/07984 814098, jsmith@secadventist.org.uk, or Elsie Staple on 020 7224 8997, estaple@secadventist.org.uk. More information on the programme can be found at www.connectghana.org.uk. A selection of photographs can be found on the BUC website at www.adventistpictures.org.uk/gallery.

to be based on the SEC Women's Ministries model.

Discrimination: The Law and the Christian

by Victor Hulbert, Communication director, BUC

In the week that British Airways suspended without pay a member of its ground staff for wearing a small cross on a chain, an imposing panel of five legal experts gathered together with an eager and early rising audience for a breakfast seminar at The Law Society's Hall, Chancery Lane, London for the latest 'Level Seven' seminar entitled, 'Discrimination: How should we fight it? Is litigation the answer?'

Richard O'Dair, an employment and discrimination law specialist, started the discussion with the idea that it is easy for Christians to believe that they are free from discriminatory prejudice and that it is an area where 'we need the Holy Spirit to help us'. He pointed out that on an organisational level it is easy to be sued for alleged discrimination 'even though you and the Lord know that you have acted in good faith'. O'Dair believes that generally, discrimination law is something that Christians should welcome as they must be able to give a coherent justification for anything done in the workplace.

At the same time, Paul Diamond argued that discrimination legislation is used to discriminate against people and that it is very political. Diamond specialises in the law of religious liberty and argues that, for instance, legislation that protects rights for people of a certain sexual orientation may, by its very nature, discriminate against religious organisations that believe in sexual relationships in terms of God-ordained heterosexual marriage.

On a very practical level, Mark

Mullins, a member of the Council of the Lawyer's Christian Fellowship and Chairman of its Public Policy Committee, argued that Christians are called into the world to be 'salt and light', and that, following the principles of Romans 12, they should 'endeavour to live at peace with everyone'. He believes that legal remedies should always be a last resort and that a Christian employee or employer should always work towards seeking a reasonable accommodation. 'Nevertheless,' he stated, 'Christians must always stand for Christ and must not compromise their faith.' Mark Jones agreed, stating that, 'we must take a stand against evil'.

For the past three years, Jones has run a practice applying his specialised experience in employment law to assisting Christians, Churches and other Christian employers. Contrary to the widely held view that lawyers are always looking for more business, he stated that 'while litigation is an answer, it is not the only answer'. Among the many methods he saw of making a stand were, 'being stoical' and taking council from friends and ministry. He sees the ACAS grievance procedure as very much in harmony with the Biblical principles of Matthew 18, and sees the initial informal meeting as an opportunity for Christians to be able to resolve differences in a pastoral manner. However, O'Dair warns, while as a Christian you may want to avoid litigation, sometimes it is best to follow the old Roman dictum: 'If you want peace, prepare for war.'

ELAINE MARY EMMERSON (1941- 2006)

d. 1 October. It is with great sadness that we record the death of Elaine, beloved wife of Dr Ron Emmerson, and active member of the Newbold church. Born in Tavistock to Glen and Eileen Bunker, Elaine was selected to represent Devon in the hurdles while attending the local grammar school. She spent one year (1957-58) at Newbold College before undertaking nurses' training in Watford, where she met Ron, who at that time was a hospital registrar. Married in 1963, they originally set up home in Hemel Hempstead, and then moved to Wokingham in connection with Ron's work as a consultant dermatologist at the Royal Berks Hospital in Reading. Daughter Judith was born in 1963, and son David in 1966. Judy later graduated from Oxford University and was at the cutting edge of neurological research at St Thomas' Hospital in London when she was laid to rest in 2000 at the young age of 38 following breast cancer. David completed studies at Bristol University, and currently operates a dental practice in Bracknell. Elaine enjoyed excellent health and lived life to the full until six months ago when she was diagnosed as having severe cancer. Her friends in all parts of the world were totally shocked. She fought against her illness with enormous courage, and demonstrated an unwavering faith right to the end. The funeral service at the Newbold church on 12 October was conducted by Pastors Ian Sleeman, Denys Bailldam and the writer. A very appropriate poem, composed and recited by Dr Cynthia Benz, highlighted three distinct characteristics which Elaine commendably portrayed – faith, hope, and love. Elaine was buried in the cemetery of St Paul's Church in Wokingham, right next to daughter Judy. No doubt both of them will soon hear the voice of their Master as he returns to claim his own. Mourning her loss are husband Ron; son David and his wife Anne; grandchildren Sarah and James; and sister Elizabeth and her husband Tim, now living in France.

JOHN ARTHUR

Daniel Matovu recently defended an employee who was fired for distributing Bible passages relating to homosexuality to work colleagues. He counselled that Christians 'need to be careful to be sensitive'.

This is the third 'Level Seven' seminar aimed at business and professional people working in London and the first breakfast meeting. Attendees came from across London and included some business students from Newbold College.

The next meeting will be in the area of business ethics, entitled, 'How to avoid another Enron'. 'Level Seven' exists to provide a platform for challenging discussions about relevant contemporary issues from a Christian perspective and for networking and fellowship with people who want to make a difference in society. For more information visit www.levelseven.org.uk. Pictures from the discrimination debate can be viewed on the BUC picture gallery at www.adventist.org.uk.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Complaints have been received with regard to the distribution of materials soliciting funds for investment in real estate by an organisation calling itself 'Advent Books'. Despite the fact that this organisation would appear to retail certain Adventist books, it is important that church members understand that it has no connection with the organised Seventh-day Adventist Church, and no permission has been given by the Union, Conference or Mission to solicit funds from church members.

The Church publishing house is The Stanborough Press Ltd, and its retail arm is the ADVENTIST BOOK CENTRE.

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Hot-button issues

does not afford sufficient time for participation in an outreach programme. Some members are of the view that outreach is for the professionals (pastor, evangelist, elder, etc). Some think that the public is unresponsive to what the Church has to offer and therefore feel that there is no point in seeking to share their faith. During the next five years the BUC will seek to have a higher percentage of members involved in the evangelistic programme of the Church. This is to be one of the primary emphases of the Personal Ministries department.

5. Focus on the ADC and updating of Bible Correspondence School. The ADC (Adventist Discovery Centre) remains, in the opinion of many, one of the effective outreach methods in the British Isles. Many who have joined the Church over the years refer to the VOP as having played a role in their decision. The unobtrusive nature of the VOP's approach makes it ideally suited to an age when distance learning is on the increase. The Bible Correspondence School also provides a form of outreach with which most of our members are comfortable. The BUC will seek to provide greater resources for this area of operation and intensify promotion to pastors and members. Many interests are lost as a result of poor follow-up. Consequently, careful thought needs to be given to how this aspect of the work can be improved. In addition,

attention needs to be given to upgrading the content and layout of some lessons. Pastor Michael Hamilton has been appointed the new director of the Adventist Discovery Centre and Pastor Richard Willis as Course Development, Research and Liaison Officer. *The Adventist Discovery Centre (VOP) welcomes members' donations.*

6. Greater involvement of the Church in the community. The Church is relevant only as it interfaces with the community. The BUC is to promote greater civic involvement. Local churches and individual members will be encouraged to participate in community projects, and provide services and support as resources allow for various groups in their community. Local churches can also team up with non-Adventist congregations to support projects that do not conflict with the values and teachings of the Church. The national Church will seek to address national issues.

7. Focus on institutions. The three institutions of the BUC represent proven methods of outreach and evangelism. The printed word, as promoted by The Stanborough Press, is still a means whereby people are brought to faith. Stanborough School gives practical expression to our belief that the objective of education is the preparation of students for service to God and their fellowmen.

Seventh-day Adventists have a contribution to make to the world regarding lifestyle. The health institutions of the Church, such as Roundelwood, are designed to promote and demonstrate this lifestyle. The strategic importance of our three institutions to the mission of the Church demands that they be supported. This we will endeavour to do to the extent that resources allow.

8. Raising quality. 'Quality' is a buzzword today. Consumers look for the best quality product or service. In an age of choice, some organisations survive because the quality of what they have to offer is superior to what their rivals offer. As a Church we have an excellent message to give to the world but often we fail to impress with it because of the manner in which it is presented. If we are serious about reaching the populace in the British Isles with the Gospel, it is imperative that standards are raised and maintained in all areas of operation. The public will not be attracted to a church that is comfortable with mediocrity. Quality must be raised in the manner in which services are conducted and in the content of services. In an effort to raise quality we must also examine our places of worship, printed materials and audio-visual presentations. There are areas of excellence in the Union. We need to ensure that such excellence is replicated throughout the field.

9. Leadership development. One of the primary resources of an organisation are its employees.

Our employees are central to our operation and development. A programme of support and development is essential for those who are entrusted with the task of fulfilling the mission of the Church in its many areas of operation. A programme of in-service training for employed and voluntary leaders is to be a major emphasis of the Union. One way in which this can be accomplished is the establishment of a leadership institute. If standards are to be raised it is imperative that leaders at every level are suitably equipped. The leadership of the BUC is now considering the feasibility of setting up a leadership institute.

This list is not exhaustive, but it represents areas of our work that are crucial to the fulfilment of the mission of the Church in the British Isles. Much more will be said on these subjects in future issues. Members and church employees are invited to write to me with practical suggestions as to how we can progress the emphases outlined above. The Strategic Plan of the Union for the next five years will reflect these emphases.



ABC BOOK SALES

Nov		
19	Family Ministries Retreat	Daventry
Dec		
3	West Midlands	10am-2pm
10	John Loughborough	10am-2pm

Messenger

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Sunset

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	London	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Nov 17	4.09	4.21	4.07	4.02	4.19
24	4.01	4.13	3.59	3.52	4.10
Dec 1	3.55	4.07	3.52	3.44	4.03
8	3.52	4.04	3.49	3.40	3.59

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