



You + ADRA = hope

by Bert Smit, ADRA-UK executive director

Ethiopia. Paul Smart, then ADRA country director, was driving through a remote part of the country. Watching the emaciated cattle and the people, who were barely more than skin and bones, caused his heart to ache.

Getting out of his vehicle and walking into a village, he greeted a small boy standing by the path. After they had said a few friendly words to one another, Paul asked the boy, 'Would you like a drink of water?'

It was a simple offer – nothing that would excite most children. However, Paul knew that this village was experiencing a severe famine and water shortages.

'No. No thank you,' the little boy replied. 'Today is not my turn to drink water.'

Paul was taken aback by this answer. However, he knew what it meant. In this drought-devastated area, children get a drink of water every second day – if they're lucky. The rest of the time they must live with the dryness in their mouth and their whole body.

Unfortunately, when children in arid areas do get water to drink, it's often muddy. Most likely it's contaminated with bacteria, which can cause life-threatening diarrhoea to someone who is already dehydrated. Children are the first to get sick and die from water-related diseases. In fact, dirty water kills nearly 5,000 children each day. ADRA is committed to changing this disturbing fact. And your generosity to give becomes the cup of water that keeps a child alive.

Will you help ADRA provide clean, pure water systems?

Clean water is a building block of life. It is a basic requirement of living. Access to a plentiful supply of fresh, clean water is fundamental to health and growth. That's why ADRA has been actively developing water resources for more than twenty years. Water is life, and we know it. In the communities that we serve around the world, no need is more urgent than the need for good, clean water.

Your financial support will help us provide water to many more families and villages.

Families must have water to survive. When there is no clean water in the village, it becomes the duty of young girls to spend their day searching for and carrying water to their homes. Many times they are forced to walk great distances, which puts them at risk of physical danger and usually closes the door to an education.

The needy are desperate for water, and in Isaiah 41:17, 18 (NIV) we find that God has indeed promised them water. 'The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the Lord will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs.'

Through the Annual Appeal you have the opportunity to bring God's Word into action. Why not donate a

couple of hours to collect this year, when every pound counts even more than before? Or participate in the many other fundraising activities that are organised? You can share the blessings of also bringing water to those whom God has promised not to forget. ADRA is keeping individuals alive and bringing hope to their communities. Your help represents the love and support that encourages and enables our staff to carry on their work.

Providing people and their communities with access to clean water is fundamental to easing the bondage of poverty. Please help this year with the Annual Appeal and enable ADRA to provide essential, life-giving water.

P.S. Providing pure, clean, life-giving water is the single initiative with the greatest impact. The benefits of clean water impact every aspect of life in a community. Your help will make it possible for ADRA to give a glimpse of God's mercy and grace to individuals who are literally dying for a drop of clean water.



Follow the Bible in 2009

'That I may know him'

by David Marshall

What would you say to someone who accused you of *bibliolatry*?

The first thing you could say would be, 'What does that mean?'

At all events, that's what I did when it happened to me. When the reply came, 'excessive passion for the Bible', I could recall being accused of worse things!

In common with the late *Rumpole of the Bailey* I rarely, if ever, plead 'Guilty as charged'. But the evidence against me was considerable. I own most of the English versions of the Bible currently in print. One or other of these versions is invariably close to hand. I habitually walk around with a copy about my person. Nothing gives me greater, deep-down satisfaction these days than studying the Word. That satisfaction is never greater

than when I discover some new insight into a Bible biography, a parable of Jesus, a prophetic book, the gospel story or the letters of Paul.

That evidence would all seem to point to a Guilty verdict.

A final piece of evidence — the one that had prompted the charge in the first place — was that, with the help of a friend, I have recently completed the construction of a log cabin at the end of my garden. It is insulated, carpeted, heated (my wife calls it 'GCHQ') and exists so that, when I so choose, my studies can be uninterrupted!

Nevertheless, I enter a plea of Not Guilty to the bibliolatry charge! And not just because of my *Rumpole of the Bailey* instincts!

Bible study is a means to an

end, insofar as I am concerned. The 'end' is not simply satisfaction at discovering some new take on the truth or grip on the Gospel. It is not just (to paraphrase A. T. Pierson) that 'The Bible is the study of the evidences of Christianity [of which] the Bible itself is the greatest evidence of all.' That is not to dismiss the extraordinary way in which the books of the two testaments validated themselves and came to be included in the 'canon'. Nor is it to detract from the astounding manuscripts and archaeological discoveries of the last two centuries which have proved the accuracy of the Bible.

The Bible is not just an accurate book: there are many. It is not just a powerful book: there are others. It is not just that it is an inspiring book: books *about* the Bible can also be inspiring.

The Bible is a book with a Voice: it speaks to me. Above all things the Bible is the supreme revelation of God. The central focus of the Bible is on a Person, and it is a Person whose 'voice' I hear. The perfect

revelation of God in Scripture is in Jesus Christ. Jesus makes the unity between the two testaments. In the New Testament he fulfils hundreds of Old Testament prophecies. All sixty-six books enshrine him. The chief characters, institutions and histories prefigure him. The best 'windows' on Jesus are the four gospels. That is why any study of the Bible must begin there.

Christ is the central figure of Scripture and the Cross is its central symbol. The very shape of the cross suggests the length, breadth and height of the love of God. Men may reject an angry God, but how can they reject a God who, even at the point of their rejection, leans forward in entreaty?

Only one day in every 350 in the life of Jesus is referred to in the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But the record of the events of the last seven days takes up one third of the accounts.

Why? Because the Cross is the clearest depiction of the heart and the mind of the God I study the Bible to know and to hear.



When will it end?

David Marshall

Most of the mysteries of Christianity are rooted in events that lie far away in the past. One major Christian event, and one only, lies in the future.

All Christian creeds with which I am familiar proclaim that Jesus, who is now at the right hand of the Father, will return at some unexpected moment in the future. Only the Father knows precisely when.¹

Christians believe that the world is coming to an end which is also a beginning. A beginning, in fact, of the reign of Christ, in which things will be as they were always meant to be, as they always should have been. But more than that even. For in the 'great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb' will be those 'who have come out of the great tribulation . . . washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'.²

What I'm saying is that that future event is of vital interest to you and to me because we're both going to be there. Without the triumph of justice, without an end to sin, suffering, disease and death, without the triumph of God, of right and of righteousness — without the Second Coming of Jesus — history makes no sense, and life is pointless.

At a time when pain, war and death were everyday realities, the prospect of the return of Jesus thrilled Adventists and appealed to others, too. I know. I can remember that time. But *factors* have led to a de-emphasis on Christ's return. Perhaps a little embarrassment about it in some quarters.

What *factors*? Profits have dumbed down the prophets. Prosperity has diminished interest in eternity. Satan instigated Jonestown and Waco to make the apocalyptic appear an insane embarrassment. And 'the love of many waxed cold'.³

But Jesus *is* coming. In his poem about his grief at the death of a close friend, Alfred Lord Tennyson's hope was in 'One far-off divine event, / To which the whole creation moves'.⁴ But is it 'far-off'? It may seem so especially to younger people; but those of the senior generation know that the next thing we shall experience when the great light dies and we sleep — is the return of Jesus. Why? 'The dead in Christ shall rise first'. For those who

are 'alive and remain' when Jesus comes,⁵ Scripture contains any number of injunctions to 'Watch, for you do not know the hour' and states that, not only will there be a fiery display when Jesus returns, but he will come 'like a thief in the night'.⁶

Did outreach go out of fashion? When was the last time you did any? Or was it one of the things you sacrificed in order to 'blend in' and be 'politically correct'? A female pastor of a black majority church in London said in a debate on outreach at the Church of England's General Synod that it is more important to be 'Christ-correct' than 'politically correct'.⁷ And I think she was right. What do you think? Isn't it strange to believe in the imminent return of Jesus and, as is the way with some Adventists, never mention it to anyone — *and* expect to be taken seriously by other Christians? You say.

Watching is the business of the Church until Jesus comes. But 'watching' has never implied inactivity. Watching means active preparation. Preparation is not just keeping yourself 'unspotted from the world'.⁸ It involves introducing 'the everlasting gospel'⁹ to every people group on the planet. In what Alister McGrath calls 'The Great Age of Protestant Missions: 1790-1914' this involved a great deal of travelling. Thanks to recent changes, a cross section of the people groups once the target of missions now live in these islands.

Is God trying to say something? To *them*? To *you*? To *everyone*? Is there a reason for the shrinkage of the world by the jet plane and the mass migrations of the last sixty years? If we are, as has often been said, 'the hands and voice of God in the end-time world' — isn't there something we should be doing? Something we should be saying?

Since national prosperity is a factor behind the dumbing down of our personal witnessing, is there a reason why God has permitted the economic foundations of the West to be shaken and its major financial institutions to fall? Be honest, do *you* remember a time when, but for Government intervention, most of the banks of Britain would have collapsed?

Communism's Iron Curtain came down twenty years ago and the capitalist institutions that undergird democracy have never



been in this much trouble before. Is God trying to say something? Could it be, 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away'?¹⁰ Is it, 'Work . . . [for the] night is coming, when no one can work'?¹¹ In other words, 'You don't have much time. Get on with it'?

One of these two statements is biblical. Which?

1. 'The Church is a secret, exclusive society — so keep a low profile.'
2. 'The Church is the only society in the world that exists for the benefit of non-members. So, go! Share!'

If you come down in favour of 2, why does our behaviour indicate 1?

Jesus said the Church is like ten bridesmaids with lanterns who went out to join a wedding party.¹² Five were giddy-witted and five were cool. The giddy-wits took their lanterns but no oil. The cool gals took extra oil for their lanterns. They all started nodding and napping. When all ten woke up, the five giddy-wits were out of oil and the cool gals did not have enough oil for everybody.

What happened then?

You decide. You're in the story. And the story is a work in progress.

Only the Author knows when the play will end. Let's not waste our time guessing when that will be. Let's play the parts the Author assigned to us. Then shall the end come. And, beyond the end, that great new beginning.

References:

- ¹Mark 13:32; Matt. 24:36. ²Rev. 7:9-17. ³Matt. 24:12. ⁴The last two lines of 'In Memoriam'. ⁵1 Thessalonians 4:16. ⁶Matt. 24:42; Luke 22:46; 2 Peter 3:10. ⁷telegraph.co.uk, 11 February 2009. ⁸James 1:27. ⁹Rev. 14:6. ¹⁰Matt. 24:35. ¹¹John 9:4. ¹²Matt. 25:1-13.

Enhancing Health

by Sharon Platt-McDonald RGN, RM, RHV, MSc
Health Ministries director, BUC

Brain Health Part 11d

The sleep impact

A shocking headline appeared in an article in *New Scientist* on 6 September 2003. It stated: 'Lack of sleep can cause brain damage and affect memory.' OK, sleep is important; but surely losing *some* sleep could not amount to so much damage, could it? In this fast-paced, pressurised world we sometimes find ourselves with too much to do and not enough time in which to accomplish it. In an attempt to meet deadlines and squeeze more into a twenty-four-hour period than is reasonably possible, we can find ourselves cutting back on much needed sleep. Now scientists are finding that this is to our detriment.

Roxanne Khamsi, reporting in *New Scientist* on 11 February 2009, highlighted a new study which demonstrates that sleep deprivation can severely hamper the brain's ability to learn. In an experiment led by Seung-Schik Yoo and colleagues at Harvard

Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts, the study demonstrated that people who fail to get a good night's sleep before studying new information did not retain as much information as individuals who slept well. In fact, the results showed that they remembered roughly 10% less than their well-rested counterparts.

The researchers concluding the report stated that it was 'a worrying finding', particularly in light of other current findings which suggested that the average amount of sleep people get each night is decreasing. 'This study shows that the brain has to be well rested to receive and store information for memory processing,' stated Seung-Schik Yoo. Previous studies have also shown that a full night's rest after studying can improve learning.

So what happens to the brain during sleep?

Scientists have found that when we're asleep, our brain continues to learn the material we've been

exposed to while we were awake. From all the information that the brain processed during the day it derives meaning. Subconsciously the brain analyses the information and works through unsolved problems. During this process the physical structure of the brain cells alters so that specific pieces of knowledge are etched more permanently in the memory. Neurologists refer to this process as *consolidation*.

Facts

- Adequate sleep is essential for study, retention and retrieval of information.
- Hours of sleep gained before midnight are twice as valuable and restful to body and mind as the hours after midnight.
- An hour of work in the morning is twice as productive as an hour of work late at night.

Good health!



I left the Adventist Church in 1983 following a divorce. I'd been the editor of *Insight*, served as a pastor for five years, and had written three books. At the time I left, I was doing departmental work in the South-western Union Conference Ministerial Association.

From the perspective of someone who left the Church and then came back, the purpose of this article is to share some ideas on how to reconnect with and perhaps reclaim some who have become inactive or who have left church membership completely.

In my case, I submitted a letter of resignation to my local church. I had no major doctrinal differences with the Church – but ministers aren't supposed to get divorces, and I was embarrassed. So I decided to step aside and return later. I didn't expect to be gone for sixteen years, however.

After turning in my resignation, I never heard from anyone at my local church. One of my sons called me a few months later to tell me I was no longer a member. When I asked him how he knew that, he told me he'd just read about it in the church bulletin.

After returning to membership about eight years ago, I learned I hadn't been alone in leaving. Denominational statistics show that more than 1.6 million members worldwide were dropped from membership or were missing between 2002 and 2006.¹ Some church leaders believe that number could be much higher. Each of the first two pastors of the church that my wife Diane and I joined after returning to membership also left the Church, which was a bit disconcerting. Here are some recent statistics for you to mull:

- The ratio of new members who join the Adventist Church to the number who leave is 100 to 24.²
- Worldwide between 2002 and 2006, 1,684,303 Adventists dropped out or went missing.³ This breaks down to an average of 6,478 who slipped away every week during this five-year period.
- Forty to 50% of Adventist teenagers in North America become inactive by age 25.⁴

As you can see, we're haemorrhaging. So how do we reach those who've left? How do we stop the bleeding? Here are a few thoughts for your consideration:

1 Leave the former member on your church mailing list. I no longer heard from my church again once I was no longer a member. Because my name was removed from the church books, I also stopped receiving the union paper and the *Adventist Review*. So let me ask you: If we want to reclaim inactive and former members, does it make sense to cut off all communication with them?

Several years ago, the *Adventist Review* ran an article I wrote about my return to church membership. A few months later, I heard from someone I knew back in the sixties who had been out of the Church for nearly fifty years. It turns out he still received the *Review*, saw the story, and made contact with me. So keep the inactive and former members on your mailing list.

Reconnecting

Winning back inactive and former church members



by Mike Jones*

2 Watch for inactive members on Sabbath mornings when they visit. During my years away from church, I used to visit local churches several times a year – and so do other inactive and former members. Frankly, I was usually lost in church once I got past the deacons. I can recall only one time when a pastor encountered and spoke with me.

Diane and I were invited once to speak at a small church whose leaders told us they had a plan in place to reach former members. After the sermon, I chatted with a man in the lobby and learned he was a former member who hadn't attended church in twenty-three years. I asked him how many of the members had greeted him. He said, 'None.' During the afternoon meeting, I told the group about him, and they were shocked. They also confirmed what he had told me – not one of them had connected with him.

So let's look out for these people. We tend to think of inactive or former members as being 'out in the world' when, in reality, they may be sitting in church only a few feet away from us. And keep in mind that they don't arrive wearing 'backslider' signs, and they may arrive late and leave early.

The church I used to pastor in Anchorage, Alaska, reclaimed a large number of inactive and former members largely because the church leaders joined me in greeting and talking with people in the lobby. We focused on getting acquainted with everyone who darkened our door. Did you notice I said it was the 'church leaders' who were engaged in this ministry? That's an important point to remember.

3 Pray for but don't nag your family member who has dropped out. Several years ago I discovered I was trying to do the Holy Spirit's work with my oldest son, who had been inactive for more than twenty years. How do I know I was doing that? Because I learned through a family member that he was frustrated when I came to visit because 'all Dad can do is talk about religion'. I did, in fact, give him a bad time because his boys were growing up with little spiritual nurture. But I decided to clean up my act. The next time I visited I didn't

say a word about God or church. I mainly asked questions about his favourite hobbies, which are coaching basketball and football. A few weeks later, my daughter-in-law emailed my wife and told her that Mike Jr was talking about coming back to church. About a year later, he was re-baptised, along with two of his sons.

This doesn't mean, however, that we shouldn't encourage inactive members to consider coming back. Recently I talked with a businessman in my home church about his time out of the church. 'I was out for about twenty years,' he told me. 'I just got busy and drifted out. If anyone had invited me to return during those years, I believe I would have,' he said.

4 Consider anointing the former member who becomes ill. My friend Don Gray tells the story of anointing his brother Burt, who had been out of the Church for forty-three years, in part because of a drinking problem. Don stayed in touch with Burt throughout the years, but was unable to reach him spiritually until Burt was in the last stages of cirrhosis of the liver.

Don's first hospital visit found Burt in a coma with four tubes coming out of his body, his skin the colour of a pumpkin. A few days later, when Burt was able to hold a conversation, Don asked him if he'd like to be anointed. He agreed, and the day after the anointing Don found him sitting up and alert. Not long after that wondrous event, Don re-baptised him, and Burt rejoined the Church and lived for another nine years.

5 Apologise for the church when a former member feels wounded. You and I never know for sure how accurate their 'church-done-me-wrong' story is. But we can tell them we're sorry for their pain. I often tell the inactive former member, 'I'm really sorry for your pain, and on behalf of our church I'd like to ask for your forgiveness.'

Many people tell me it wasn't me but the church that caused their problem. And I always tell them, 'I understand, but I'd still like to apologise on behalf of the church for whatever happened or didn't happen.' Then I ask if they

Recently a minister from a black majority church in London told members of the Church of England's governing body, the General Synod, that many Christians appear to see community cohesion as more important than evangelisation.

The Revd Nezlin Sterling, general secretary of the New Testament Assembly and an ecumenical representative on the Synod, made her passionate comments during a debate on 'the uniqueness of Christ in multi-faith Britain'.

She said: 'We cannot allow ourselves to be marginalised. This process of marginalisation of Christianity seems to be moving at a rapid rate in our country. . . . I am of the belief that we in the church are so anxious to be politi-

cally correct that we on occasions forget to reflect on whether our actions are Christ-correct.' *Telegraph.co.uk*, 11 February 2009.

Do you see any of those attitudes in yourself as a Christian? When I read that, it made me think of the British 'unmentionables' – politics, sex and religion. Those three have traditionally been things you don't discuss in polite society. In recent years we seem to have grown more comfortable in talking about the first two, but religion still causes a problem. It is OK to talk about it in general, in the abstract, but what is not acceptable is to bring it closer to home and to personalise it.

And then there is the issue of political correctness. Do we fail to mention our faith for fear that it might cause offence to our hearers if they are atheist or

would be willing to forgive me.

Very few turn me down. And when they say yes, I quickly pray with them, thanking God for the forgiving spirit the person has just exercised. I also pray that the Holy Spirit will make their decision a reality and bring great healing into their lives. Believe me, these are always healing moments.

6 Consider prayer warrior Roger Morneau's protocol for the inactive. Morneau, author of the books *Incredible Answers to Prayer*, *More Incredible Answers to Prayer* and others, developed the following plan to reclaim inactive and former members.⁵

- Read Matthew 27:24-54 daily, then plead the merits of Jesus' shed blood on behalf of the inactive person and pray that their sins will be blotted out.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to minister the graces of redemption for them and fight their spiritual battles, even though they haven't asked for this kind of help.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to re-create their spiritual faculties, looking to the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2) to do this miraculous work.
- Pray this way daily, recognising that the person you're praying for has the power of choice, but that the Holy Spirit now can work with added power in the person's life.
- Give thanks daily for what God is doing in the life of the person you're praying for, whether you see any results or not.

7 Remember to claim God's promises on behalf of the inactive or former member. Then let God do what God does best. There's an example in Jeremiah 3:22 in which God promises: 'I will heal your backslidings' (KJV). In wonderful ways God seems to be reconnecting with inactive and former

Muslim or whatever?

What did Jesus have to say about this? Consider his words: 'You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.' (Matthew 5:14-16.)

As Christians, we are to be as light, bringing spiritual truth to people.

However, perhaps the most important aspect of the passage is Jesus' emphasis on people seeing our good deeds. Being light shiners is not necessarily about words, but

with Jonathan Barrett

Christianity 'marginalised'



actually has more to do with actions. Of course, we should always be ready to talk about our faith; elsewhere the Bible is clear on that. However, according to these words of Jesus, it is our actions that count. I would have to agree with the Revd Sterling on that score, as she asked us 'to reflect on whether our actions are Christ-correct'. That seems like a good thing to consider. Political correctness may have its place, but 'Christ-correctness' certainly does.

empathetically. Remember that Job's friends really did comfort Job – until they started to talk.

9 Never give up. Roger Morneau tells of praying for a young man named Robert for three years before Robert was ready to turn his life around.⁷

Was someone praying for me during the sixteen years I was away from Church? I may not know the answer to that question until I reach Heaven. But if there was, I will be eternally grateful.

Don't stop praying, and never give up. After all, God doesn't.

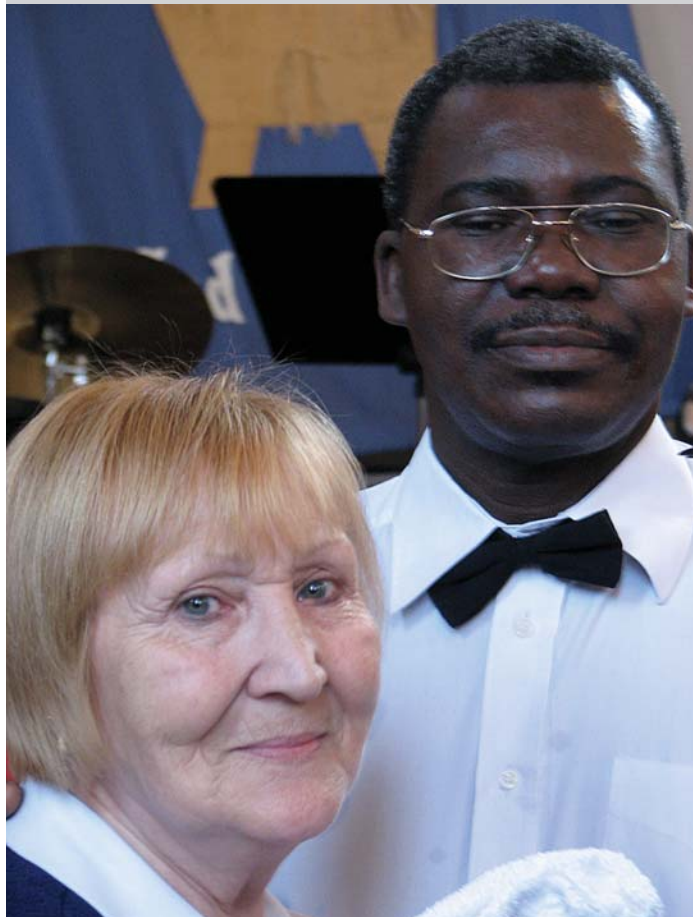
References:
¹Office of Archives & Statistics, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. ²*Ibid.* ³*Ibid.* ⁴Roger L. Dudley, *Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church*, p. 35. ⁵Roger Morneau, *When You Need Incredible Answers to Prayer*, chapter 9. ⁶The rest of the story is in my new book, *Sometimes I Don't Feel Like Praying!* ⁷Roger Morneau, *Incredible Answers to Prayer*, p. 75.

*Mike Jones lives in Portland, Oregon, with his wife Diane. He wrote his new book, *Sometimes I don't Feel Like Praying!* with inactive and former church members in mind. He directs the Voice of Prophecy's outreach to former members in North America. Originally published in *Adventist Review*, 19 June 2008. Permission sought.



Ipswich: Starting the New Year right

Ipswich church witnessed a very special occasion on the first Sabbath of 2009. It was a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving when mother and daughter, Margaret Long and Tomisha Kersey, were baptised by Pastor Samuel Quadjo. Margaret and Tomisha (also fondly known as Maggie and Tammy) have been attending for over a year and made a public declaration of their commitment to God after a series of Bible studies. The elders and church family warmly welcomed the new members. Husband and wife duo Stan and Sophia Sigawale graced us with the special item 'I Surrender All' – a lovely rendition which complemented a very special day. COMMUNICATION TEAM



Norwich and Kings Lynn

Sabbath 8 November was a day of joy and celebration for the churches of Norwich and Kings Lynn, as the Norwich church hosted a mighty service. To begin with, Marc and Janice Naiken of Kings Lynn brought their children to be dedicated to the Lord and accepted into the Christian family. Then two young ladies, Selulako Sibanda and Avis Davidson, gave their lives to the Lord in baptism.

Selu had studied with the elders of the Norwich church, and Avis, who is the first person ever to be baptised from the Kings Lynn group, had prepared for baptism with the pastor, Chris Peake. Both gave many testi-

monies of how God had led them. The children were also delighted and, wanting to be a part of the moment, sat and stood close by the baptistry to see for themselves what 'dying to sin and rising to faith' really meant. They watched intently as each went under the water and then rose again to welcome a new beginning in their lives.

During the service we were likewise blessed with a moving song by Sidney Grant of Norwich, Marc and Janice. The service was followed by food and fellowship and much welcoming of visitors and friends.

FRIDA PEAKE



Northcott Avenue after-school club

Under the capable leadership of Hazel Sommers, Paula Campbell, Caroline Sturge and others, Wood Green church has been reaching out to the Wood Green community with their after-school children's club. The club is open to all children within the Wood Green community and provides an opportunity for the children to socialise and enjoy themselves outside of school, while learning constructive new skills at the same time. The activity club has hit the ground running and kicked off to an excellent start, with a majority of the children coming from non-Adventist families.

On Sunday 14 December, the children had their first 'graduation' ceremony, where they had the opportunity to present their newly acquired skills to their friends and relatives. Over the course of six weeks, the children (ranging from 8-10 years old) took part in steel pan and cookery lessons. Parents were treated to an entertaining display by the steel pan team, as well as all the tasty treats prepared by the children, including plaited bread, scones and fruit kebabs. Due to the positive feedback from parents and children alike, the club has continued to run in 2009.

Our pastor, Royston Smith, and the team would like to thank Dr Terry Messenger for attending the graduation programme and handing the certificates to the graduates.

CAROLINE MANDEYA



What's cooking?

by Brian Pilmoor

Visiting Newbold church cafeteria, beginning at 7pm, I discovered thirty-eight individuals attending the first evening supper to taste ten different dishes of food. Butternut squash soup, an agreeable starter and acceptable to all, was our first taste. I asked a number of those attending, 'How did you like it?' One man sitting next to me, Geoff, responded in one word, 'Excellent.'

Viewing the long table of various dishes, I soon discovered the theme for the evening was 'Colourful Cookery'. Yes – this arrangement of cream, yellow, pink, orange, red and purple colours followed the starter in rainbow order of yellow and orange peppers, pink mashed potato, red cabbage and purple beetroot slices with greens. I mentioned the 'rainbow' spectrum because I spotted one young lady wearing a rainbow horizontally striped jersey spoon-feeding her daughter dressed in a bright red frock. I enquired of her, 'How did she like it?' 'Lovely!' she replied. I was glad to see a number of mothers in attendance with their children, because a healthy diet for the family is so important.

After every meal had been eaten, Dr Clemency Mitchell, the organiser, with her team of healthy helpers, gave a commentary on some of the foods and also spoke on the positive side of preventing diseases like cancer. Another helper named Brit, hailing from Norway, also explained one of her dishes. This was immediately followed by a lecture on vitamins conducted by Dr Isabel Moraes from Brazil. Her illustrated talk was about fifteen minutes. She was dressed in a bright red sleeveless jacket and white blouse. Her shoulder-length black hair was clear of her ears which were ready to listen to the many questions that were posed.

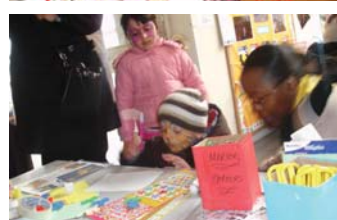
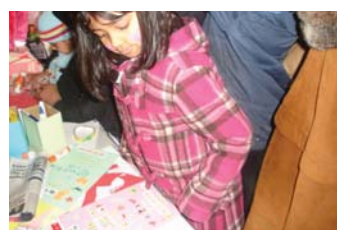
One thing I liked about this item in the evening programme was the issue of vitamins. We were given five things which contain vitamin E – sunflower seeds (which I am feeding to the blue tits on my garden bird table) and sunflower oil, wheat-germ, almonds and pine nuts. This was my 'take-away' morsel to chew over.

This evening's meeting concluded on a clap-happy note as everyone expressed their appreciation of the work that had been undertaken to make this 'colour cookery' evening a success. A further three cookery evenings were held in February.



Green Street Community Forum event

by Susan McLean



God was with us on Sabbath 31 January.

On 17 January I had met with the Plaistow Active Team Community Forum and we finalised plans for the Environmental Awareness community event at Lister on 21 March. Counsellor Ali and the Community Participation Unit officer for Plaistow were present. It was here that I suggested that the Pathfinders could be involved on the day and I was asked to coordinate with the Pathfinders club.

It was like an extended Junior Sabbath School activity in which we met parents and children of all nationalities. Many were interested in the Pathfinder club and indicated that they would like to get their children involved. We gave Pathfinder literature to those who inquired and answered questions as necessary. One parent left her details and asked when her 5- and 7-year-old children could start!

The jumbo cigarette for the anti-smoking was on display. Melodie and Alberto were performing with the puppets and playing the kids gospel music at intervals. Meanwhile, Carol and I were helping children to make litterbags from recycled papers/carrier bags. All day long swarms of children and their parents queued for their chance to make a nicely decorated bag with the message: 'My Litter Bag – Keep God's World Clean'.

It was a good experience. We were located right outside the principal's office of the Cleves Primary School. When we met her she said we were doing a great job and she liked the display and interest the children had in what we had to offer. We also met the Community Participation Unit officer for the area who said she could link us to all the other activities in the borough if we wanted to become more involved. As a result, we have been added to the list of 'stakeholders',

which are different groups invited to community events in the borough.

Following this event, the coordinator of the Dirty Hands Community Project, Alison Skeats, came to Plaistow church to look at the surrounding area to identify possible sites for the Pathfinders to get involved in growing fruit and vegetables in various sacks/drums/containers. Two days later she sent details of GrantScape and the Church Urban Fund Launch New Grant Scheme (London). These enable churches and similar organisations to request funding for projects of up to £10,000. The aim is to help volunteers to create green places within the community, with volunteers growing food to share with each other, breaking down barriers and building up positive relations with people within the immediate area.

Our next event will be held at the Lister Community School on 21 March.

Hulbert. Following his baptism, Jason received a formal welcome into St Austell church membership.

The day's celebrations concluded with a meal and barn dance in the church hall. And by the way, Jason has no hard feelings about the 'blackmail' that prompted his first attendance at a service.

STEVE GREAVES



Jason (middle) with Steve Webb and Silje Møller

Valentine's Day baptism

The demonstration of God's love for Jason Collings was reciprocated in the pool at St Austell church on 14 February.

Jason lives near the church and started attending a Friday evening programme during the early days of the St Austell Youth Project. When he found himself and a friend stranded in a local town with no way home, he knew what to do. He rang Ashley Brooks, one of the youth volunteers, confident that he would help. However, this came with a price. 'Sure, I'll pick you up, if you help me with an item at church next week.'

As friendships and fellowship developed with the young people, friends and members, Jason started to take a more active part in the services, tentatively at first, but with a growing confidence. Alongside this, his growing relationship with God was enriched by more formal studies with Pastor Mick Smart and led him to request baptism.

The baptismal service was attended by Jason's mum and brother, friends, visitors, past youth volunteers and church members. Music items especially chosen by Jason included 'Our God is an awesome God' and also 'Take me in', performed by Jen Bahrain and Steve

Pastoral preparation

by Helen Pearson*

Some of the Theology students at Newbold College took a significant step towards employment during two days of interviews last week.

On Tuesday evening in Moor Close, eighteen students, some of them with their spouses, gathered to meet the church leaders from the British Union Conference. Half of them were seeking employment when they complete their studies later this year, the other half were seeking sponsorship for postgraduate studies with the hope of employment later.

The event began with a magnificent evening buffet provided by Newbold chef, Zak Ambrus, followed by a meeting where the students were addressed by the Irish Mission president, Pastor David Neal, who spoke about the challenges of the first year in ministry. 'Listen to God, listen to each other and listen to the world,' was his advice.

The following day, all eighteen students were interviewed by the church leaders who finished off their day with a debrief with the members of the Department of Theological Studies.

The British Union president, Pastor Don McFarlane, was positive about the Newbold product and commented favourably on the diversity and maturity among the students he met. 'In the four years since we have been meeting like this,' he said, 'this is probably the most diverse and the most mature group of students we have interviewed. Diversity is good because it means that these people are naturally more qualified to minister to the increasingly culturally diverse Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK. Maturity is always good and, in this case, means that some of the students are bringing to ministry years of experience of lay church leadership. Our meetings reflect well on Newbold's training of these men and women and augur well for the future life of the Church.'

Ugandan MA student, Samson Kasumba Mulunda, was impressed with the co-operation between the College and the church leaders in the hiring of ministers in the UK. 'I have never seen such an open, transparent process before,' he said. 'If ever I get the chance I shall try to implement similar procedures in other places.'



*For more information about Newbold go to www.newbold.ac.uk

Youth preach

by Alan Hush, NEC Youth director

I remember reading about 10-year-old Tilly Smith who had recently enjoyed learning about tsunamis in her class at school and was now on holiday, standing on a beach in Phuket.

On 26 December 2005 she recognised the signs, (the swell, the unnatural tide, among other things), and interpreted them correctly. She sensed something powerful was coming, and very fast. To say that she got excited would be an understatement; hysterical is a better word. She screamed to everyone with a loud voice that they should get off the beach. Some did, including her family. Thanks to God and Tilly's prophesying, they survived. That day Tilly was a prophet and a powerful witness.

Witnessing is not a spiritual gift. It is something we all do naturally, often without even knowing about it, and we all witness to that which we get excited about and that which is most important to us.

In Colossians 1:23 Paul is clear when he says that the Gospel in one generation was preached to 'every creature under heaven'. How did they do that? How did the Gospel go to the entire known world so fast?

In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul says, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' Evidently Paul didn't try to be a witness; it was natural. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. He didn't try to become a witness – his life was a witness in what he said and did.

Youth are among the best witnesses I have ever seen. They have energy, passion, sincerity and vision. I have observed youth witnessing personally, excitedly and sometimes even hysterically about the things that excite them and mean most to them.

'Hey, you've got to get that CD; they sound awesome!' 'Listen, man, you've got to go and watch this movie!' 'Have you checked out the Sony Ericsson W800i?'

This is witnessing – sharing a message. Getting excited about what is important to us is natural and perfectly normal. The world is an excellent witness, mostly for the devil. You didn't have to try to witness for the devil, did you? It

came naturally. But when we become a Christian, all of a sudden we all need classes in witnessing. We need training in how to be witnesses.

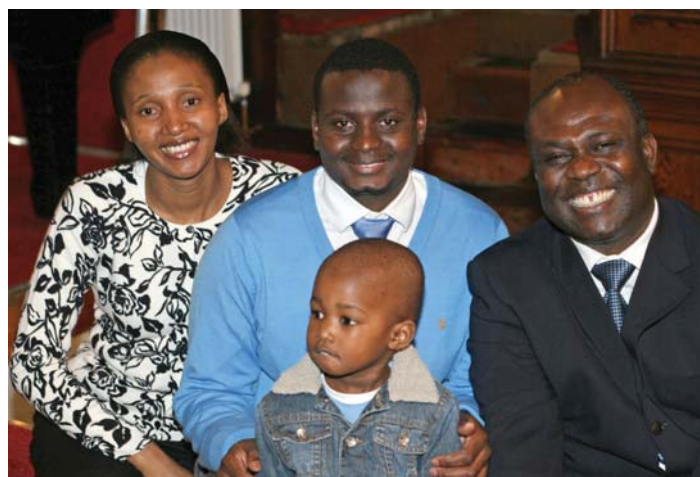
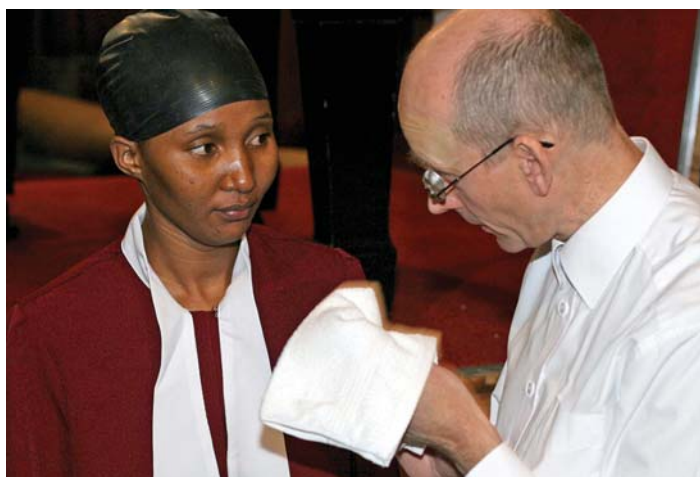
But think about this: Do you have to be a meteorologist to talk about the weather? Do you need to be a doctor to talk about your health? Just be who you are. The issue is not if we have had enough training. The issue is: are we Christian enough?

So my question is: What is exciting you? What are you getting excited about?

Everyone on this planet is a witness, but for whom?

However, having said that, we do need training in how to witness more effectively by better understanding certain things about our world and the youth culture we live in. This is why we have the ADVANCE conference and other such events. Tilly Smith preached with a loud voice on the beach that day and she saved lives. Our youth will likewise preach with a 'loud voice' (Revelation 14:9), not before a tsunami, but before Jesus returns and saves lives.

For more details about the NEC ADVANCE conference see www.necydc.com.



Baptism and evangelism plans for Cardiff African Fellowship

by Theo Gokah and John Surridge

On Sabbath afternoon, 14 February 2009, Mrs Kestine Mpofu Lusina was baptised in the Cardiff Central church and welcomed into membership of the Cardiff African Fellowship. Kestine's husband Future, who is already a member, and their son Ryan, were present for the service, along with a large number of friends and supporters.

The baptism coincided with a Children's Day at the Cardiff Central church, and many youngsters were able to witness firsthand – right from the edge of the baptistery – what a baptism is really like. Many of them, as well as a number of older people in the congregation, responded to an appeal to follow

Kestine's example in giving their hearts to Jesus and pledging to be baptised at some stage in the future.

The Cardiff African Fellowship, known in the community as the South Wales African Adventist Fellowship, or SWAAF, grew out of the Cardiff Central church nearly two years ago with the primary intention of reaching out to members of the African community living in South Wales. Under the leadership of Pastor George Asiamah it has retained its evangelistic emphasis and has grown considerably – to the extent that in May 2008 it was formed into an official company of the Welsh Mission.

An evangelistic campaign held in the autumn of 2008 led to five baptisms, with Kestine bringing the total to six baptisms in less than six months.

The evangelistic emphasis continues. On Sabbath 7 February Welsh Mission president Pastor John Surridge launched 'Evangelism 2009' as part of the Adventist World Church's 'Year of Evangelism'. The evangelistic strategy for the Cardiff African Fellowship will include using DVDs of the Australian evangelist Pastor Geoff Youlden, as well as a great deal of personal witnessing by the members. The leaders have also adopted a dual theme: 'Each One Win One for

Christ – Call your Friend'.

Pastor Asiamah and the leaders of the Cardiff African Fellowship have introduced a number of other initiatives to help build members' spirituality and capacity to be effective witnesses for Christ. These include a prayer chain programme, where each group prays and fasts on certain days throughout the year. In addition to this, Bible studies, active worship services and amicable social interactions, all add to the plan for equipping members and building capacity for the task ahead.

Pictures from the baptism can be seen on the SWAAF website at: www.swaaf.org.uk.



Balham Gospel Choir

December 13 was wet, windy and cold, but inside the Balham church it was warm, friendly and exciting. Invitations had been sent to members of the community to a concert organised by the Balham Gospel Choir, but when the weather turned cold and wet, making the church driveway muddy, it was questioned whether visitors would still come out. But God never fails and many members of the community did come, as well as a number of ex-members. The aim of the concert was to remind the community that Balham church is still here, ready and willing to serve. It was also a good opportunity to raise funds for the church building project. The choir organised an enjoyable evening of music and testimony and their numerous special guests included Balham's Children's Choir, Proclaim, Kristina Harper-Fuller, Phillip Massiah, Margaret Cameron, Degen Griffith and also Balham's very own assistant pastor, Vaughn Thorpe. The concert had great instrumental support from many talented musicians, including Richard Timmerman (guitar) and Amanda Timmerman (violin), Michael Massiah (sax), Kevin Rowe (bass) and John Bolvin (drums). Many of the visitors stayed afterwards for refreshments and gave many positive comments on the event, which is testament to the enduring power of the Gospel.

NATASHA SHARMAH

Preaching the mind of God

by Eileen Irvine

If there was a theme at the recent preaching seminar held in the Emmaus Centre outside Dublin, then it was 'Preaching the mind of God'. Pastors and lay preachers from all over the island of Ireland met together from Friday to Sunday, focusing on the principles of effectively preaching the Word. The seminar was led by Pastor Gavin Anthony, the senior pastor in Dublin, and by Pastor Patrick Boyle.

This was no mere 'how to' seminar; there were no short cuts or fancy techniques offered. It became very clear that when preaching we are dealing with the very things of God. Handling the Word is a solemn responsibility that needs to engage the preacher in thorough Bible study and prayer; to paraphrase John Stott, 'There can be no true and effective preaching until those who preach devote themselves to prayer and systematic and effective study of the Word.'

It would be difficult to condense what we learned into a few words but, essentially, we were led to understand more about expository preaching. That is when the preacher moves beyond the surface reading of a passage and digs down until he reaches a place where he comprehends something of the meaning of God's message to the original reader and then, beyond that, to what God intends the passage to mean to us today. In effect, to get to a place where the message is not *our* message but is truly a message from God. This is only accomplished through prayer, Bible study and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Some felt that the leading of the Holy Spirit may exempt the preacher from so much preparation, but as Pastor

Anthony said, again to paraphrase, 'The Holy Spirit is not only in the spontaneous but also, and maybe especially, in systematic study and preparation.'

For many this will mean a paradigm shift in thinking, as the method used by some preachers is to think of a subject and then try to find Scripture to support it or to try to manoeuvre Scripture in such a way as to mean something that it was never intended to mean in the first place.

Pastor Anthony led out in three seminars on expository preaching, demonstrating the depth of application required to move to an expanded level of understanding, with brief exercises for illustration. It was a revelation to hear that to prepare an eloquent, meaningful and comprehensible sermon takes fifteen to twenty hours! This, of course, is above and beyond devotional Bible study and a need to be totally immersed in the Word.

Pastor Boyle preached two exemplary sermons that not only demonstrated the skill of handling the Word appropriately but also succeeded in lifting up Christ. His sermons were inspirational and brought the hearer closer to the Saviour. Pastor Boyle also gave practical hints on sermon preparation. For example, he always uses the mnemonic ERIC: encourage, relevance, instruction/illustration and Christ in the sermon. Fitting these four elements into a sermon will satisfy the needs of a hungry congregation. The emphasis Pastor Boyle used that sticks in my mind regarding Christ is that the preacher is to 'lift him up, lift him up, lift him up'.



the lay preacher.

The Emmaus Centre is a place of peace and tranquillity. Set in pleasant grounds, it is comfortable and well equipped with very pleasant and helpful staff. It was good to see so many at the seminar; almost forty for the weekend, with many more attending for the Sabbath lectures. Our Mission president, Pastor David Neal, is to be congratulated for arranging and participating in such a helpful programme. This preaching seminar is now added to the previous two successful elders' seminars Pastor Neil has run in the Emmaus Centre.

Handsworth Family Ministries week



'We haven't been this full in the afternoon two weeks in a row for while!' exclaimed one senior member. She was right. Even by Handsworth church standards, the last two Sabbaths had been a sight to behold. However, as the subject matter was so emotive it wasn't hard to see why!

As Pastor Garry Gordon expressed words of appreciation to the Family Ministries team under the leadership of Leonard Haye, there was a sense of satisfaction that the week had gone so well. Beginning on Sabbath 7 February, the morning service focused on Christian identity and self-worth. Pastor Gordon's sermon: 'Is there anybody there?' looked at the experience of Elijah under the juniper tree. However, passionate as his preaching was, the morning service became merely a prelude to an inspiring and emotional AYS who looked at the hot topic of 'Single by death, divorce, decision and default'. The first two categories took the form of an interview in which members shared their stories of singleness and loss from very different perspectives. While in this first section one could hear a pin drop, the last two areas produced a forthright and open exchange of views on the male-female ratio and the challenge of maintaining one's Christian integrity and purity as an Adventist single.

On the Sunday morning the series continued with practical and spiritual counsel in a parenting seminar delivered expertly by husband-and-wife team and home-schooling parents, Pastor Paul and Jeannetta Liburd. On Tuesday and Wednesday night Pastor Felix Jack, the recently appointed NEC Family Ministries director, chaired seminars on communication and conflict resolution in the family. A special feature and highlight of the week was the men's night, sponsored by the Men's Ministries leader, Oscar Stewart. This focused on men's health issues by Handsworth medic Dr Kevin Stewart. He challenged men to start breaking the cycle of not going to their GP as he explained the many possible serious ailments that could afflict men of any age.

The youth were not left out during the week with a Friday night focus: 'Learning to make the right choices'. The week concluded with a sermon by Pastor Gordon entitled 'Bringing Back the Love' in which he challenged married couples from the story of the Ephesus church to go back to their first love through the touch, taste, sight, smell and sound of romance. The week concluded with husband-and-wife team Ray and Glenda Augustine from the West Bromwich church and members of the NEC Family Ministries team sharing 'Top ten tips to keep the love flowing'.

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



Golden Wedding

On 14 September 2008, John and Margaret Barron celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary with twenty-two members of their family in Germany. A week later, Manchester South church opened its doors and seventy friends came to join the couple as they celebrated their

half century together. The master of ceremonies for the day was Pastor Peter Jaynes, and Pastor Jeff Couzins delivered a short message in which he said that Heaven intended marriage to last a lifetime, a fact beautifully illustrated in the lives of Margaret and John.

John and Margaret met fifty-two years ago while at a camp in Whitby and have raised four children. They, in turn, have given them seven grandchildren, and two delightful great-

grandchildren. Camping has remained an important feature in the lives of John and Margaret and they delighted in running camps for young people and older members alike. Before leaving Manchester South they regularly organised camping retreats, in association with the NEC Youth department, for up to 120 senior and junior youth. For the last few years they have organised the Bury retreat to Aberdaron.

The couple's life has been one of service for the Lord in sustaining the work of the church. Although they moved to support the work in Bury in 2000, John was the first elder in Manchester South for many years prior to that, where both he and Margaret were founder members.

The members present for their special day shared fond memories of John and Margaret. Many of those present recalled how the couple had influenced their lives over the years. For example, Margaret, a machinist, produced ten 14ft x 14ft tents and a marquee to hold 120 people, and new shirts for the Pathfinder troop. She also made robes for the church choir, along with seat covers for use in the sanctuary and curtains for both Manchester South and Oldham churches. John has blessed the church over the years as elder, lay preacher, and the longest-serving Pathfinder leader in the NEC. The Bury members also present expressed their appreciation for all that John and Margaret have done since transferring their membership to Bury.

JEFF COUZINS

Derby: Christ unites us in our diversity

On Saturday 10 January the members of Derby Chester Green and Bethel churches and the Burton group and friends were privileged to experience a heart-warming and Spirit-filled convention at the Derby Riverside Centre.

The convention commenced on Friday evening at 7pm at the Bethel church in Boyer Street in Derby. It was the start of a wonderful weekend. On Sabbath morning 10 January at 9.45 at the Riverside Centre was Sabbath School, followed by divine service.

There was an enjoyable fellowship lunch for which the church members were very grateful to Beryl Shuttleworth and her team for the cuisine.

The afternoon programme was conducted by Tony Smith from 3 to 4pm. It was a wonderful inspirational hour with many well-rendered musical items, especially from the male Northampton group and from Bethel Children's Choir.

This was followed by an hour in which appreciation was expressed to

our faithful members who have given long and outstanding service to their churches. The proceedings were conducted by Pastor Selburn Fray, and the other coordinators were Eric Lawrence, Dawn Hallam, Sansia Fray, and Don and Clarisse. Recognition was also given for the contribution of the youth. The awards were presented to the youth by Pastor Selburn and Sansia Fray. The programme was brought to a close by Pam Burrell, elder of the Bethel church. Pastor Moses Msimanga gave the closing prayer.

On the Sunday our Bible worker Eric Lawrence commenced the day with a morning devotional, followed by the church officers' training day. As the Communications officer for Derby Chester Green and on behalf of the joint church membership of both Bethel and Chester Green and the Burton group, the writer would like to thank Pastor Selburn Fray and his team for organising and making this weekend convention such a success.

MRS O. MARR



Keturah and Co.



The honorees



The newly baptised with Pastor Wilfred Blake (left), first elder Rory Mendez (right) and Nicardo Delahayes (back)

Stoke Newington: Youth week of revival baptism

The Youth department of the Stoke Newington church held a week of revival from 22 to 29 November. The theme for the week was 'We would see Jesus'. Youth Day on Sabbath 22 November launched the week of revival. In the Sabbath School session the lesson study period took the form of a scene in a doctor's surgery. There were five young speakers in the divine service basing their talks on 'Portrait of Jesus'. Each speaker told how they see Jesus.

From Sabbath afternoon our speaker for the week was Nicardo Delahayes, a 20-year-old final-year theological student from Oakwood College. Nicardo was making a return visit after two years. Each night he delivered sermons with titles such as 'Blind Faith', 'Thou art the man', 'This Man receives sinners' and 'There is a lesson to be learnt and a blessing to be gained'. Each night we were blessed with a different praise team from other churches.

On Sabbath afternoon, 29 November, family, friends and church members witnessed the baptism by our minister, Pastor Wilfred Blake, of three candidates. Sister and brother Monique and Lamont Roper, our church children who joined their mother Sandra who is a member of our church, and Keith Dyer, who has been attending our church since this year. In his short sermon, Nicardo told the candidates that if they put their hands in the Master's hand everything will

be all right, which fitted in with his sermon title: 'Everything will be all right'.

Spiritual mentors were assigned to each candidate, and each was given the usual baptism package.

FLO SUTHERLAND

Levi Lawrence at 90

On Sunday 8 November members of the Stoke Newington church honoured their oldest member Levi Lawrence on his 90th birthday.

The occasion began with a short thanksgiving service conducted by our minister Pastor Wilfred Blake. After the service Brother Lawrence, as he is affectionately called, and his wife Jean were escorted to the church hall, followed by the congregation, for a reception. A sumptuous meal was laid on, prepared by the Stoke Newington ladies. After the meal, which we all enjoyed, many speeches were given, telling of their encounters over the years with Brother Lawrence. This was followed by the cutting of a birthday cake.

Brother Lawrence was born into an Adventist family in the parish of Portland in Jamaica and emigrated to the UK in 1948, the year of the SS *Windrush*, when the first immigrants arrived from the Caribbean to start a new life. He worked in the tailoring industry for most of his life. While in England, Brother Lawrence strayed away from the faith for thirty years but since he returned he



Delainie Louth (left) and Kandace Saunders

Pathfinders baptised

Yardley witnessed the moving baptism of two lovely young ladies on 29 November. Kandace Saunders, 11, and Delainie Louth, 13, declared their desire to commit their young lives fully to the Lord. They were led into the church by their fellow Pathfinders who themselves followed the excellent drum corps led by Theodore Bell playing solo on the snare. Kandace's testimony was especially touching as she told us using PowerPoint and video of her serious car accident that has resulted in the loss of her sight in one eye. Even while lying in the ambulance she comforted her parents by telling them that God would take care of everything. Needless to say, there were some tears in church. Both Delainie and Kandace were well supported by many family and

friends and were lovingly baptised by Pastor Trevor Thomas and Pastor Peter Sayers.

PAUL SAUNDERS

Proud parents at Balham

It is not unusual to invite your parents to attend your baptism. But the parents of four of our young people and two women did not have to travel very far to attend their children's baptism on 6 December. Between them their parents have been attending Balham church for over ten years, so when their children expressed their desire to be baptised at their usual church in Balham, it was a pleasure for all parents to come to church on Sabbath as usual but for an extra special occasion – to witness their children dedicate their lives to Christ. Douglas Ssekyanzi, Brandon Graham, brother and sister Kenny and Carla Neller, Margaret Cameron and Trudian Francis were baptised by Balham's very own Pastor Keith Boldeau. All the parents along with the members of Balham church welcome these new members.

NATASHA SHARMAH

has never looked back. He has been blessed with good health and a very active life. Most Sundays he can be found at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park witnessing for the Lord, and prior to that in the 1990s in his 80s he could be found in Leicester Square every Saturday night witnessing. He still sings in the church choir and is an assistant Sabbath School superintendent.

Brother Lawrence attributes his longevity mainly to God's good

grace towards him and a very active church life.

Brother Lawrence is the father of four children, ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, and he still lives at home with his second wife of thirty years, Jean. His birthday will be featured in the *Voice* and the *Gleaner*, two popular Caribbean weekly newspapers published in the UK, following a visit from a reporter and photographer.

FLO SUTHERLAND



Levi Lawrence enjoys his birthday celebrations

Watering Hole witness

by Rosemary Lethbridge

Jesus loves to hear his followers sing their praises to him. In Luke 19 Jesus says that if we don't praise and witness then the 'very stones will cry out'. The Watering Hole church plant did not use stones; it was puppets that did the witnessing over the Christmas period.

Our church plant puppet team, called REACH (Reaching Everyone and Changing Hearts), was invited to witness for three hours in December on a busy Sabbath afternoon in Southampton city centre's third largest shopping centre. Members of the public adjusted their shopping schedules, security guards took a break from looking out for shoplifters and joined other members of the public in enjoying the performance. The puppets sang and played musical instruments, and while scenery was being changed we had opportunities to speak and hand out literature. One shop was so impressed by what they had seen that they gave a T-shirt to each puppeteer.

On a follow-up visit to the centre two shops

said that we had made a significant contribution towards their achieving the highest sales figure in a single day. Others said we brought a much needed Christmassy feel to the shopping centre, and the centre management were happy with the professionalism and conduct of all involved. Invitations have been extended for us to do something similar in two of the shopping centres over Easter.

But the puppets witnessing did not stop there. The following week they were the star attraction in a community carol service in Totton that drew a crowd of over 130 unchurched people. The carol service had a creative arts feel to it, as the local school choir and members from the local gymnas-



tics team made contributions to the programme. One family so enjoyed the performance that their 16-year-old son who had missed it said that he would definitely be there next year.

REACH have also volunteered their time and skills to set up REACH UP, a puppet team for junior-school-age children.

Both teams have been asked to visit the children's wards at the local hospital. Plans for 2009 include Easter and Christmas evangelism, hospital performances and a musical, working with other creative art clubs in the area.

Senior members' appreciation service

On Sabbath 31 January, the Merseyside district of churches showed its appreciation for the contribution made by some senior members to the work and life of the church over the past several years.

The service preceded the baptismal service at the Liverpool (Kensington) church in the afternoon, and was organised by local pastor, Ebenezer Daniel.

Following a song service and a prayer of meditation, church elder Felix DaSilva from the Wallasey church called out the members one

after another, giving a description of the work that they had done for the various churches, before giving them a special gift and a certificate of appreciation. He was assisted by church elder Enna Rey from the Liverpool (Kensington) church and Pastor Daniel.

Among those recognised were church elders Frederick Mativo and Edward Wilson, who had been instrumental in the establishment of the Stonecroft church about two years ago; church elder Robert Grailey, whose untiring work in personal ministry has contributed to the saturation of the Wirral district of Merseyside with Adventist literature; Pat Hilderbrandt, whose quiet devotion to personal ministry and harvest ingathering are rarely proclaimed, but make a considerable contribution to the Liverpool (Kensington) church; Ethlyn White, whose deep spirituality, devotion to personal ministry and motherly guidance of the Women's Ministries and Community Services departments over the years have helped establish a vibrant women's ministry in the Liverpool church; and Lorna Mason, whose work in the Children's Ministries and Pathfinder departments has helped shape many boys and girls into spiritual young men and women with a sound Adventist footing.

MERLVIN MOYO

GBK banquet

On Sunday 18 January the GBK church Community Services department organised a banquet for the senior church members and people from the local community. Young Pathfinders participated.

The well-attended event started with a mini thanksgiving service conducted by Pastor Steve Palmer.

Following that, and in a pleasant, relaxed and cheerful atmosphere, delicious, appetising meals were served. At the end of it all, some talented senior citizens presented humorous stories from Jamaica. The evening ended happily as the youth entertained the guests with musical instruments and songs.

DELVA M. CAMPBELL



of appreciation, positive question and our use of words, as well as 'sitting thoughts', 'using humour and comedy' and 'exploring the Psalms'.

Karen's creative skills were also evident in her workshop 'Writing the Journey', where each participant was encouraged to be imaginative in tracing their life journey.

Sharon's second presentation was 'Words in Season', where she travelled around the seasons and asked the participants to write down what the seasons meant to them.

'Life is a Journey - Write it Well', the theme for the conference, was the title of the seminar delivered by the writer. This session centred on the benefits of spiritual journaling and was accompanied by a booklet of the same title with exercises for the participants to take with them. Naomi Best, chaplain at Stanborough Secondary School, and Anthea Davis, a history teacher at the same school, shared some of their poetry about challenging times in their life journey. Their ability to be vulnerable about their life experiences was truly appreciated.

And poetry was one of the workshops delivered by Alex Mowbray in the afternoon. Alex is a gifted poet, who although not an Adventist is a committed Christian who has attended several of A.W.E.'s programmes over the years. His poetry is Christ-centred, biblically-based and deeply moving. He was one of two non-Adventists who attended the programme. Marlene Morday was invited by Josette Constance from the Harlow church. Marlene actively participated in the programme and wants to use the knowledge that she has gained to write more. She plans to develop a series of cards, combining her artistic and creative writing talents.

CATHERINE ANTHONY BOLDEAU

Year 3/4 teacher required
Newbold Primary School is seeking to appoint a teacher for Year 3/4. The successful candidate will be required to commence in September 2009.
If you would like to join a committed, professional team; are familiar with the National Curriculum; are keen to keep abreast with current educational practices; enjoy being part of a learning and faith community, please send CV along with covering letter to the Head Teacher, Newbold Primary School, Popeswood Road, Binfield, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 5AH.
For information about the post please contact Mrs Pat Eastwood at Newbold Primary School. Tel: 01344 421 088 or email: newboldschool@hotmail.co.uk
Appropriate checks will be carried out. Applicants are also required to have the right to work in the UK.
Application deadline 31 March 2009

ERIC SAMUEL BURTON, Sr (1921-2009) d. 22 January.

On 5 May 1921 Eric Samuel Burton was born in Santiago de Cuba on the beautiful Caribbean island of Cuba. His parents, Charles and Anita, were Jamaican missionaries who were devoted members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As a son of Anglophones in a Spanophone country, Eric's early search for identity mirrored that of the newly independent Cuba. It was only two decades before his birth that Cuba had broken from American rule, and less than five years before independence Cuban residents had been under the colonial yoke of Spain.

During this politically turbulent time, the young Eric - aka Boysie - would have witnessed events surrounding Gerardo Machado y Morales's suspension of the Cuban constitution and the later revolution led by Sergeant Fulgencio Batista. While Cuba transformed into a totalitarian socialist society, Boysie's parents decided to transition to other pastures. Anita would take the children back to her family homestead in St Mary, Jamaica, and Charles would chart the course for the family's immigration to the United States of America.

After settling in the rural district of Mile Gulley, Eric was enrolled in the Mount Angus Elementary School where he excelled in academics. Following in the footsteps of his eloquent mother, he was also a skilled orator and would win the local oratorical contest every year. In addition to his intellectual prowess, Eric was a man who mastered the art of practical living. His agricultural skills were enviable, and he had the uncanny ability of producing the biggest and best of whatever he planted. He also had a knack for fishing and was an avid hunter of edible birds, which would be quickly plucked, cleaned, seasoned and transformed into a succulent stew - hence one of his nicknames: 'Bud-soup'!

Rural life in Mile Gulley was challenging for Anita and her three surviving children. However, Charles' regular disbursements of cash from the United States allowed the family to live in relative comfort. Things were to change suddenly when a delayed telegram informed the Burtons that Charles had succumbed to death - a situation that thrust Eric to the helm of 'man of the house'.

After passing the local high school exam, Eric chose a practical career path and became the apprentice of one Brother James, who nurtured him in the carpentry trade. Always an eager and proficient learner, he soon spread his wings and moved to Kingston, where he decided to specialise in cabinet making and opened a shop on Princess Street. His meticulous approach to his task and his affable persona ensured his business success.

Industrious to the core, Eric's day did not end with cabinet making. In the evenings, he would work as a conductor on the famous 'chi chi buses', operated by the Jamaica Omnibus Service. His multiple streams of income were also enhanced by his established clientele that would purchase the day-old loaves of bread he acquired from Mr Wong.

While he advanced in his entrepreneurial endeavours, the spirit of war that compelled the Burton family to leave Cuba would summon Eric to new shores. The armies of Adolf Hitler had challenged Jamaica's colonial master, and King George VI pressed his far-flung subjects into service as the major world powers confronted each other for the second time in a century. Upon his enlistment in the Royal Air Force (RAF), the sought-after Kingston cabinet maker became Aircraftman Eric Burton.

Always conscious of the sanctity of human life, Aircraftman Burton was a conscientious objector, who nonetheless carried out his assignments conscientiously. His warm personality endeared him to many, and he was especially lauded when he and other Caribbean servicemen lobbied their squadron leader to broaden the bland menu with the inclusion of West Indian delicacies. While in the RAF, Aircraftman Burton also had the opportunity to interact with black servicemen from the United States of America. Blacks in the American military were often fearful of entering social establishments frequented by whites. With the encouragement of Eric and others, many of them gained the confidence to confront and overcome those mental segregation barriers.

At the conclusion of World War II, Eric returned to Jamaica with newly acquired joinery skills. He accepted employment from renowned contractors Higgs and Hill and was involved in the construction of a number of notable structures, including Mona Hospital, buildings at the University of the West Indies and several large banks in Kingston. During this time, he met and eventually married Violet Murray with whom he shared six children, one of whom (Roy) preceded him in death while still an infant.

In 1954 Eric transferred to a Higgs and Hill plant in London. His company loyalty and superior work ethic attracted the attention of his superiors, and he was soon promoted to the supervisory position of charge hand. When the company was taken over by Holloway Brothers, Eric continued to gain favour in his employers' sight and he worked diligently until retirement.

Eric's dedication to service transcended the workplace. Having lived in the United Kingdom during World War II, he knew that if West Indian immi-

grants were to succeed, they needed to embrace the vision of Marcus Mosiah Garvey and seek ways to empower the community. Buoyed by this vision, after he purchased his home, he would ensure that new arrivals had the opportunity to 'rent a bed' at a reasonable price that would allow them to save. He was also one of the first West Indians to start a 'Pardner' in south London. As a result of his efforts, scores of people were empowered to use their savings along with their 'first and last draw' as down payments for their homes.

In addition to his contribution to the economic empowerment of his community, Mr Burton also believed in providing opportunities for social engagement. A lover of Caribbean music, he would often fire up his sound system on weekends as folk from the entire region would descend en masse on 27 Balham Grove. With other like-minded individuals Mr Burton would eventually become a principal founding director and member of the Balham and Tooting Social Club. His civic activities earned him a stellar reputation in the Balham community and beyond. He had the respect of the leading men in the community and was often called upon for advice in issues of race relations.

Upon retirement at the age of 65, the normally healthy Eric experienced some severe health problems. On two occasions, his doctors calmly informed him that he had only months to live. He outlived them both! Apparently, his longevity was due to some serious life choices. Although a pensioner, he decided to return to the swimming pool for regular exercise. More significant for him was the decision to return to the Church of his childhood, and on his 70th birthday, Eric Samuel Burton, Sr was reborn in Christ and accepted into membership of the Balham Seventh-day Adventist church.

With renewed vigour, Brother Burton continued to challenge, entertain and inspire. He was determined to enjoy life to the fullest, and would divide his time between England and Jamaica. As the family patriarch, Eric was always noticeably present at family events, and maintained his independence to the very end.

On 22 January 2009 Eric Samuel Burton was once again compelled to relocate as a result of warfare - a war that began at the beginning of time; a war that introduced death to our reality. He has been laid to rest, but one day soon the Life-giver will return and usher him to the place of his final destination.

As Eric sleeps, he leaves to mourn his memory one brother, Nehemiah (Cynthia); five children, Lorraine (Ken), Shirley (Lloyd), Marjorie (Marshall), Rosemary (Peter), Eric Jr (June); fourteen grandchildren; twelve great-grandchildren; sixteen nieces and nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

DR KEITH AUGUSTUS BURTON

Meet Gene Kol

by Sharon Platt-McDonald

Gene Kol currently serves as the BUC National CHIP coordinator, responsible for leading the implementation and development of CHIP in the British Isles. As part of Gene's induction to the post, she attended the Corporate CHIP training in Rockford, USA, and is now qualified as a Corporate CHIP director with the remit of introducing CHIP to external organisations. She also attended the CHIP Summit in Orlando, Florida, for the advanced CHIP training, the purpose of which is to bring holistic health to the community. This has the added advantage of being an excellent evangelistic tool.

CHIP stands for Coronary Health Improvement Project – a community-based lifestyle change programme, which runs for a period of thirty days. It has been scientifically validated and peer reviewed, and case studies have proved that it is able to reverse chronic lifestyle illnesses such as Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, atherosclerosis, obesity and depression. It also can help to lower high cholesterol and improve other lifestyle-related illnesses. It is both participative and demonstrative, involving food demonstration, educational DVDs, workbooks, weekly goal setting and a number of other facilitative aspects. For more information on CHIP visit www.chiphealth.org and www.adventistchip.org.

Since commencing with the BUC Gene has contacted close to forty churches to assist in the facilitation of the CHIP programme. Realising the potential of health ministry to impact lives, Gene says of her role: 'My mission statement is to allow God to use me in his healing ministry, whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual healing and to be the enabler of people who wish to live more effective lives in the UK and Ireland communities.'

If you are interested in using CHIP as an evangelistic tool, Gene will make an appointment to meet with you and your team to support you in the running of a programme and guide you through the process. She offers the following:

- An invitation for you to make contact with her to discuss the process of commencing a MicroCHIP or CHIP programme.
- Advice on how to take your plans



for this programme to the church board to discuss if this would be an option for your church.

- Gene will visit your church and those interested and offer a two-hour workshop in which all the finer details are given on how to go about facilitating the programme.
- Once you set the date, she will advise you how to register your church and order the materials for the programme.
- The training the trainers programme – MicroCHIP – takes place in your church.
- When this has successfully taken place, the team is established and planning for the CHIP programme gets underway. Gene will then offer support and guidance throughout the whole process.

If you would like to run a MicroCHIP in your church or CHIP programme for the community, please contact Gene Kol. Her contact details are as follows:

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+44 1727 872162
+44 7966 713469
gkol@adventist.org.uk
www.chipuk.org.uk

Wanted: Used computers

If you have any good used computers which you are willing to donate to our Adventist schools in St Lucia, please contact Pastor Andrew Leonce by email: andrewleonce@hotmail.com or telephone 07971218101

With profound gratitude, Andrew Leonce

STANBOROUGH SECONDARY SCHOOL VACANCY

Full-time teacher required from September '09 able to teach History up to International Baccalaureate and English to KS3 levels. Applicants should hold a History degree, a teaching qualification, relevant experience and have authorisation to work in the UK.

Application forms, available from the school, and a current CV should be sent to Judy McKie, PA to Head Teacher, Stanborough School, Stanborough Park, Watford, WD25 9JT, or jmckie@spsch.org by 25 March 2009. Further information is available from the school.

Mailbox

The Church and democracy

Dear Editor

I have been a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for over sixty years. However, there is something that has puzzled me: Why, being a Christian Church, has it adopted the policy of democracy in order to bring about decisions?

ARRAS TRENEAR, Redruth

Editor replies: The Reformation was about the democratisation of Christian institutions as well as about justification by faith. Churches in the Reformed tradition, like our own, have followed the electoral process to determine leadership and have left decision-making to elected leaders and elected committees.

Among the alternative models are the Papacy (the Pope) and what is called Episcopacy (bishops).

What happened to captions?

(This was a P.S. to a personal letter and was not meant for publication. However, it asks a question to which I, too, would like to have the answer! Editor)

P.S. I continue to enjoy *Messenger* – so colourful and newsy. And I like your photos! My only suggestion would be that you guys use more captions. When I see a news photo, I immediately want to know two things: Who are those people? What are they doing? I don't want to read the entire article to find out.

ROY ADAMS, Silver Spring

Editor replies: Are captions a victim of email? The fact that pictures arrive as a separate attachment (as they should) means that the Communication secretary must caption them. Occasionally, I know one or two people on a picture but, unless I know them all, it is unfair to write the names of those I know. So let's have the old 'left to right'!

Remembering Gwyneth

Dear Editor

I am writing to pay tribute to Mrs Gwyneth Mudford from Oulton Broad church. Gwyneth came to live here in the flats in 2003 and over the years we have enjoyed her friendship very much. She was faithful in coming to the meetings even when not well. Eventually, through age and failing sight, she went into The Dell and even there spread the Gospel message.

I was sorry not to be able to pay

my respects owing to ill-health, but would like to thank Pastor Paul Smith and Chris Peake, who have been very kind to her over the years. Owing to a short service, not much could be said, so at this point we would also like to thank the staff of the home, who cared for her so faithfully till the end.

We look forward to meeting her again in that heavenly home. She is now at rest.

ALVA SMITH for the members of Oulton Broad church

Suicide

Dear Editor

Re articles 'Suicide' (*Messenger* 6 February), those who believe there is no forgiveness for suicide need to read Hebrews 11:32-40, where a suicide is listed amongst those who gained 'a good report through faith'! His name was Samson!

PASTOR ROY E. HULBERT, Kettering

Corby church plant now meets at The Church of the Epiphany, Elizabeth Street, Corby, NN17 1PN
Sabbath School at 10am,
Divine Service at 11.30am.

ABC BOOK SALES

March

22	Stan Park Church	10am-2pm
22	Southampton	10.30am-2.30pm

April

5	John Loughborough	10.30am-2pm
5	Bradford	10.30am-2pm

ABC Shops

Watford, BUC. Due to the recent fire, the ABC shop in Watford is closed until further notice
Advent Centre,
Sundays 11am-3pm

Messenger

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Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by the Science Research Council.

	Lon	Card	Nott	Edin	Bell
Mar 20	6.14	6.26	6.18	6.27	6.37
27	6.26	6.38	6.31	6.41	6.51
April 3	7.37	7.50	7.43	7.55	8.04
10	7.49	8.01	7.56	8.10	8.18

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