



2009: 'One of the best years for accessions in the SEC'

A report on the SEC mid-term constituency meeting on 20 September

by Dr Richard DeLisser and Pastor Jon Gendle

On an autumnal September Sunday morning, over 400 delegates from the length and breadth of the South England Conference (SEC) gathered together in the Royal County of Berkshire in the town of Maidenhead for the SEC's first mid-term constituency meeting on 20 September 2009.

Opening the meeting, SEC president Pastor Sam Davis welcomed the gathered delegation and introduced the morning's devotional speaker, Pastor Don McFarlane, president of the British Union Conference. Pastor McFarlane spoke on the theme 'Building Up, Reaching Out'. Using Acts 11 as a foundation for his discourse, Pastor McFarlane stated that the only form of evangelism that works is not to spend all the available time talking about it or training for it, but doing it. We have a duty to preach to other cultures as well. We are one of only two or three unions where the composition of the Church is almost the exact opposite composition of the host country (Israel and Holland are the others). We have to come out of our comfort zones. We have to reach others – that has to be the burden we have as a conference. Our duty is to reach the population of this country.

He further stated that even in times of difficulty we cannot give up the work of preaching the Gospel. We are always going to have problems of dissension and disunity in our church, or we might be lacking in not having a building, but there should be nothing that prevents us from preaching the Gospel.

His presentation was quiet and deliberate, both serious and humorous, insightful and compelling in its recognition of the evangelistic task that faces the conference.

The devotional was concluded with a song by the group Faith Vocals, followed by a prayer session led by Dr Emmanuel Osei, Ministerial secretary for the SEC.

Pastor Sam Davis presented his presidential report in the form of a DVD

produced by the SEC Media Centre. Under the theme 'Building Up, Reaching Out', he spoke of how the SEC is being built up evangelistically, spiritually, financially and educationally through ministries spearheaded by SEC directors. Touching on the issue of diversity, he announced a series of meetings to be held around the SEC to grapple with this complex issue.

Paul Lockham, Executive secretary, provided the statistics of the conference's current membership which now stands at approximately 20,000. It was heartening to know that this year is proving itself to be one of the best years in terms of accessions to the Church through baptisms.

Earl Ramharacksingh, SEC treasurer, reported that for the past two years tithes has increased and our members have continued to be faithful. God has blessed the SEC, and for this we are grateful and continue to give him thanks.

Departmental reports followed from the SEC directors who took questions from the floor. These reports can be seen at www.secadventist.org.uk.

As the meeting was coming to a close one delegate, going over time for the second time, had just begun a story about meeting a witch in his door-to-door evangelism. The president stood up and said, 'You have gone over time, but I want to hear the witch story so please carry on!' The hall erupted into laughter. If you want to hear the story, and other amusing testimonies of the power of God, ask John Hemming from the Isle of Wight – or the president!

It was a long day, with much ground to cover, but it was good-humoured, well-ordered and informative. Though many of the questions sought answers to difficult issues and, indeed, some remained unanswered, still no whips needed to be cracked to maintain order, no voices were raised in loud dissent, and there was no sense of us and them. There was just the sense of a Church purposefully, prayerfully and passionately concerning itself with ways of preaching the Gospel in a difficult and challenging age. It was a mid-session meeting that raised the bar for the session proper in two years' time.



Left to right: E. Ramharacksingh, C. Stewart, T. Messenger, N. Stickland, O. Johnson-Christie, P. Lockham, E. Staple, E. Osei, S. Davis, J. Grant, M. Bediako, E. Hypolite, P. Petrasbahadur, P. Lee, R. DeLisser

Week of Prayer dates: 7-14 November

What did you think of the huge interest generated by the relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux when they were touring UK churches and cathedrals in October?

Up to 15,000 people are believed to have visited Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral to view the remains of the French nun. The casket, containing bones from her thigh and foot, went on a nationwide tour and, after Liverpool, went to Salford, Manchester and Lancaster, among other places. Thérèse was described by Pope Pius X as 'the greatest saint of modern times'. The Roman Catholic Church said the relics had been credited with promoting healing and reconciliation. . . . St Thérèse, a French Carmelite nun who died of tuberculosis in 1897 aged 24, came to wider attention after her autobiography was published. (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/merseyside/18274310.stm>)

What was it that encouraged so many people to visit those relics? Was it curiosity, the hope of healing, a belief that one's own faith would somehow

be strengthened, or interest in something very old? We can, perhaps, discount that last reason, as the bones were not much more than 100 years old, whereas most relics are centuries old. We can only guess at what motivated people to go. Along with many other Adventist ministers, I was in Israel earlier this year, and we visited such sites as the alleged birthplace of Christ. There weren't any bones there, but if the queues were anything to go by, a great deal of interest was generated.

Although I wasn't particularly moved by being in such places (probably because I was sceptical about their authenticity), I still wanted to be there. Was it just to say I had been, or was it because I wanted to see if it would be of spiritual value in some way? It was probably a bit of both. Rational as we are, I suspect there is something in all of us that has an irrational interest in special places or things.

That may be OK, as long as this interest encourages us to a stronger and deeper spirituality. Does it? Alternatively, our interest

with Jonathan Barrett

Religious relics?



may encourage us to look for some kind of magic or something 'supernatural' to happen when we are in the presence of the 'holy'. Some even went to the physical presence of Jesus for the wrong reason: 'Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. . . ." Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." ' (John 6:26-29.) Wherever we go, spiritually speaking, our aim should be to strengthen our belief in Jesus and to live the kind of life that will flow out of that belief.

Messenger photography

Is it THE MESSENGER or just THE MESS?

That largely depends on the 'look' of it. Our layout man, David Bell, is hampered by the fact that most of the photographs sent in are sub-standard, point-and-shoot, low-res jobs. Good digital cameras are common these days. Someone in your congregation has one and knows how to use it. Let that person take the pictures of your big event. Cameras need to be set on maximum resolution and, when the pictures are emailed in, please make sure they are not reduced in size. From 1 January 2010 we shall be excluding all the gruesome stuff. We are upping the standard. EDITOR



Enhancing Health

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

EcoHealth — Is your home making you sick?

Part 5

Scientific research continues to alert us to the environmental impact of modern-day lifestyles. Additionally, some of the commonly used domestic products have come under scrutiny in relation to their long-term use and our safety.

Assessing the impact of domestic chemicals, the Environmental Protection Agency states: 'Fifty percent of all our illnesses can be traced to indoor pollution, which is ten times more toxic than its outdoor counterpart.' Chemicals and harmful substances in the home have been linked to the following: fatigue, headaches, allergies, skin irritations, depression, memory loss, confusion, respiratory problems, asthma, nausea, dizziness, changes in genetic structure, birth defects and cancer.

On the list of 'hazardous' products in the home are: chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), formaldehyde, phosphates, ammonia, chlorine, bleach, petroleum solvents, abrasives, aerosol propellants, deodorisers and high emissions from electromagnetic fields.

It has been suggested that many ingredients in cleaning products make indoor air unhealthy

to breathe, irritate the skin and eyes, harm the respiratory tract, as well as damage the natural environment.

Comparative studies have been undertaken on the use of biodegradable, less-toxic cleaning products.

Suggested suitable eco-friendly alternatives are naturally derived cleaning products like: tea tree solutions, baking soda, white vinegar, salt, essential oils, lemon juice and other citrus solvents which are safe and cost effective.

As we close this mini-series on EcoHealth, here are a few final tips to ensure healthy living in your immediate environment.

Reduce electromagnetic fields:

- Avoid electric blankets.
- Sit at least 4-5 ft from your TV screen.
- Avoid sleeping next to electronic equipment.
- Avoid over exposure to electromagnetic fields by sitting 4 ft away from operating appliances.
- Sit 2 ft away from computer screens and take regular breaks from the computer.

- Cut down on microwave use. Stand away from the microwave when it is in use and wait for 1-2 minutes before eating the food.
- Use a cushion when working with a laptop computer.

Mould and mildew prevention:

- To reduce excess moisture, fix leaks promptly.
- Increase ventilation naturally by opening windows and using fans.
- Clean and dry spills on carpets quickly to prevent mould growth.

Avoid artificial air fresheners:

- These contain multiple chemicals and hazardous solvents to achieve the fragrance.
- Diluted essential oils are a safer option.

Don't idle vehicles. Idling cars release more pollution than moving cars and the exhaust fumes affect both health and environment.

Good health!



The seasoning of Alice

David Marshall

Alice was a gracious lady who carried with her an old-world aura. That aura spoke to me of better, more leisured times, of gentle speech and genteel behaviour. She put me in mind of our pioneers; and her age when she died was such that she might have known some of them. That was why I asked her niece, when she sorted through Alice's papers, to draw anything of significance to my attention. When she had finished she brought me some ancient photographs, a few letters and *The Complete Book of Insults* by Nancy McPhee.*

That last entry was a bit of a surprise! The book gave evidence of having been read, but anyone who knew Alice would testify that she didn't do insults. When I dipped into the Nancy McPhee volume I discovered a litany of what were called 'glorious insults from an era before the English language was reduced to four-letter words'. I also discovered that Alice had had more humour about her than I had given her credit for!

Clarence Darrow: 'I have never killed a man, but I have read many death-notices with great pleasure.'

Oscar Wilde: 'Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go.' 'He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends.'

John Bright: 'He is a self-made man and worships his creator.' [Think about it!]

Irvin S. Cobb: 'I've just learned about his illness. Let's hope it's nothing trivial.'

Groucho Marx: 'I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But this wasn't it.'

Lady Astor to Churchill: 'If you were my husband I'd give you poison.'

Churchill to Lady Astor: 'If you were my wife, I'd drink it.'

We laugh, but we should spare a thought for those on the receiving end of those powerful put-downs. Anyone with a flair for words can use them destructively. From time to time I meet up with middle-

aged persons who are still smarting under the devastating verdicts I pronounced on them (or so they tell me) between thirty and forty years ago when they were at school. It's only funny if (as in the case of Churchill and Lady Astor, I suspect) both parties are laughing. 'Man does not live by words alone,' wrote Adlai Stevenson, 'despite the fact that he often has to eat them.'

Talk may be cheap but words are powerful. A judge's summing up at the end of a trial often determines the outcome of the case. A hospital consultant's words can produce both ecstasy and despair on the part of the patient and her husband. For every single word in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, thousands lost their lives.

Recognising the power of the spoken word, James (chapter 3) compares the tongue to a bridle and a rudder, a fire and a poisonous animal, a fruit-bearing tree and a fountain. From these images he wants us to understand that words can build up and words can destroy.

Paul says, 'Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt.' He says, 'Be gracious in your speech. The goal is to bring out the best in others in a conversation, not to put them down.' (Colossians 4:6, NIV and MGE.)

In verse 5 Paul has said, 'Walk in wisdom towards them that are without.' (KJV.) In verse 6 he makes it clear that walking in wisdom is at least as much about what we say as what we do.

Our conversation should, says Paul, 'be always full of grace'. We must live grace and we must talk grace. Talking grace means talk that glorifies Christ. Speech that glorifies Christ puts no one down and should never be such that it can be mistaken for the barrister who presents the case for the prosecution!

Grace comes from the heart (Colossians 3:16) and it is from the heart that the mouth speaks. Some hearts are 'bigger' than others. Large-hearted people

carry enough grace with them that they can afford to give much of it away. Some people are mean-spirited; and it shows in the way they talk to and about other people. If there is grace in our hearts it will be obvious in our conversation. We shall 'speak the truth in love' and 'minister grace' to our hearers. (Ephesians 4:15, 29.) Alice did that.

Bible language expert William Barclay provides us with, for me, the best translation of Colossians 4:6: 'Let your speech always be with gracious charm, seasoned with the salt of wit.'** The salt of wit will be a preservative; it will contain no corruption. The salt of wit that seasons the conversation will bring out the flavour; it is best used to affirm and build up, not demolish.

Too many of us sound like Prosecution QCs. Too many find faults in others to divert attention from faults in ourselves. Too much of our speech is combative or sanctimoniously dull. What we say should neither oppress nor depress. It should scintillate.

The context of Colossians 4:2-6 could be summarised as: How to live and speak in the world. Notice: *in the world*. Paul wants us to take care how we live and speak with 'them that are without'. (Colossians 4:5, KJV.) 'Without' what? Without the Gospel. Paul is principally talking Christian witness. He wants us not to miss an opportunity to do it. He wants us to live the Gospel as well as speak about it. And when we speak the Gospel he wants us to do so graciously and well. To do so graciously, it will have to come from the heart. To do it well, you will have to engage the brain. Alice did that, too. Do not be afraid of wit and humour. Alice wasn't.

*Book Club Edition. Published 1983.

** William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians* (St Andrew Press, Revised edit), page 167.



Choosing and being good youth leaders

by Des G. Boldeau, Youth director, BUC

The challenges of youth ministry in the twenty-first century are immense, complex and frustrating. Youth ministry requires leadership to be cognisant of those challenges and to lay plans to address them. Youth ministry presents great opportunities for meeting and ministering to young people, but those who minister must be aware of their own giftedness and limitations as they venture to touch the constantly changing lives of these young ones.

As church boards and nominating committees sit and consider the best person to work with youth, may I be so bold as to suggest that the following would be a good reference for some of the qualities needed by those who would qualify to work with them.

1. What characteristics make a good youth leader?

- A genuine love for youth and interest in helping them to live a healthy, functional and fulfilling Christian life.
- Interest in their salvation.
- Willingness to model the principles of the Kingdom to them.
- Willingness to spend yourself and to be available for them.
- A keen and deep spiritual experience.
- A good sense of adventure and humour.
- Learning and knowing their names.
- Letting them know that you are praying for them, especially at crucial times in their lives, like exams, periods of family tension and relationship issues.
- Planning activities *with* them not just *for* them.
- Empower them to become involved, to take ownership of plans and nurture them if they are a little shy.
- Be a servant and not a know-it-all leader.
- Learn to be a good listener rather than always giving advice, but don't be afraid to give appropriate advice when asked for.

2. What advice would you give to a young youth leader just starting a term of service?

- Be yourself and don't try to be someone else or one of them (youth). You don't need to dress or talk or behave like them to identify with them.
- Hang out with them to get to know them and show them you care.
- Stand up and speak up for them, irrespective of how they may behave. Then chat with them about their actions afterwards in a private moment.
- Visit them in their homes, schools, universities or at work.

- Take them out for a meal or at least a sandwich.
- Visit their parents so that they (parents and adults) may develop confidence in your ministry for their children.
- Be willing to mentor those who need it.
- Don't try to impress them with electro-toys.
- Hang out in places where they are more likely to be found.
- Text and phones are OK, but face-to-face chats and visits are best.
- Before you go public with any new experiment, try it privately first to see that it actually can and does work.
- Spend time with your Bible and the Lord of the Word. They can see through us and will know if we are faking it or are being real and transparent.

The following are some of the personal observations and lessons learnt in over forty years of youth work within the church community.

When you accept the responsibilities and privileges of youth leadership, be aware that there will be pain, heartaches, disappointments, successes, joys and a lot of hard, hard work and investment of yourself in those for whom you work.

The rewards?

Seeing some commit their lives to God in some form of service, maturing into responsible adults in society, carrying leadership roles or serving their community, entering and forming relationships which empower them to marry and have a family or some other mark of success in their onward journey towards becoming citizens of God's Kingdom – these are the rewards of your hard work.

3. Here are some of the most important lessons I have learnt in working with young people over forty years.

- Always be available for them in good and rough times.
- Avoid criticising and condemning attitudes towards them and their peers.
- Be transparent in the way you live your life and don't attempt to become someone you are not.
- Act and live with integrity.
- Never 'speak down' to them or others, for that could cost you your effectiveness.
- When they mess up, support and counsel them through. Their parents and other adults will do enough of the pointing of the finger and the 'I told you so'.

- When *you* mess up, don't be slow to 'fess up' and apologise.
- Maintain respectability at all times and situations in order to retain your credibility.
- They appreciate and respect your honesty and consistency.

4. Know and understand your motives and philosophy for working with the young people of our Church.

My personal philosophy for doing youth ministry is found in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. It reads very aptly from *The Message* paraphrase.

'Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, non-religious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized – whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ – but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn't just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it.'

I call it the 'all things to all men' approach. I believe that when working with the Lord to bring his youth to him, there are no limits or barriers that would prohibit me from going to meet one of his young people in order to work with them to bring them from where they are to where he wants them to be. The Spirit of God will accompany me into the very presence of the devil, if necessary, in order to find and be an agent to bring deliverance to young people.

I see the way God dealt with Israel of old – how he was always patiently searching for them, how he would bear with them even in their rebellion against him and, when he found them, he would bring them home. He always expressed his concerns and warnings and outlined the consequences of disobedience, but was always available and waiting for them to acknowledge him and invite him to become part of their lives.

I believe in trying anything to reach young people 'where they're at' and to retain them and involve them for the Kingdom. I believe that we have placed too many limitations on ourselves that have served to restrict and 'hedge us in', and the result is that it has served to prevent us from being relevant and transparent Christians in today's society.

So take the challenge and give them to the Lord and allow him to address all the issues of working to bring his youth into a meaningful and saving relationship with him.

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All proceeds to go towards Walthamstow Seventh-Day Adventist Church - Building Fund

In aid of Walthamstow's church building fund a Day of Fellowship is being planned, consisting of two parts. A morning worship service, where you will be inspired through testimonies and blessed with inspirational music from Mark Bunney, Walthamstow Choir and the Ambassadors, to name a few. You will also be uplifted by our guest speakers, Pastor Sam Davis, Dr Elliott Williams and Pastor Clive De Silva. In the evening a spectacular concert is being held. International artists BLQ, formerly known as Breath of Life Quartet, will be performing in the UK for one night only. See poster above for further details.

BUC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SPONSORED EVENTS

These events seek to promote an understanding of the principles and practice of Adventist education and home schooling.

Adventist Education & Home Schooling Weekend Programmes

7-8 November – Area 5 (SEC): Moor Close, Newbold College, Binfield, Bracknell, Berks RG42 4AN
21-22 November – Glasgow SDA Church, 18/20 Turriff Street, Glasgow G5 9SB

Home Schooling Day

15 November – Stanborough Secondary School, Stanborough Park, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 9JT

For more information, contact Neal Lawrence (BUC Home Schooling Adviser) on 01686 651067 or homeschooling@adventist.org.uk



PRAYER, PRAISE & TESTIMONY 17 October 2009

Day of Fellowship - For sufferers, survivors, supporters and carers of people challenged by cancer, other critical illness and chronic conditions. Come and join us for a time of Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving for health and God's healing. We will share and be blessed with the testimonies of God's hand in our daily lives, so learning more of God's way of sustaining, recovering and preserving our health.

Venue: St Mary's Church, Church Lane, Lapworth, Solihull, B94 5NX, West Midlands

Time: 10:30-4pm

Lunch: bring and share – simple plant-based food items

Walk: come prepared to walk in the countryside

Contact: Naomi & Malcolm Watson on: 01564771353 07786380769 07786380770

Email: watson.n@me.com

December 5 is Sign Up Sabbath!

by Dr Richard DeLisser, Stewardship director, SEC

Every year the South England Conference misses out on millions of pounds because members are either unaware or unwilling to sign up to the Gift Aid scheme! Research carried out by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) reveals that this is especially acute at this time of global recession when donations to charities have fallen 11% in 2009 when compared with corresponding figures for 2008.

The Mail Online reports that charities (churches included) miss out on £750 million a year because donors fail to give through the Gift Aid scheme, which lets us increase our contribution without it costing us a penny. If we give £100 through the Gift Aid scheme, the church can claim £28 back from HM Revenue & Customs, as long as we fill in the Gift Aid donation form, declaring that we are taxpayers.

The membership of the SEC currently stands at approximately 20,000, of which 7,300 are on the Gift Aid scheme, with only 5,000 being classified as active Gift Aiders. These 5,000 Gift Aiders allow the Conference to claim at least £2 million each year for conference, area, district and local church programmes. However, if we were to reactivate the inactive members and sign up at least 3,000 new Gift Aiders, we could realise an extra £2 million a year!

The SEC Stewardship department has designated Sabbath 5 December 2009, which is World Stewardship Day, as **Sign Up Sabbath!** On this special Sabbath, pastors, elders, treasurers and stewardship leaders, armed with the necessary Gift Aid forms, will encourage church members who are not yet Gift Aiders to **Sign Up!** And those who are inactive to **Wake Up!** It is hoped that by 2010 the SEC will have 10,000 active Gift Aiders, realising a record £4 million a year. These extra funds can be used for evangelism, procuring new church buildings, establishing a home for the elderly, securing British Adventist media presence here in the UK. All these dreams can become a reality if you will just **Sign Up!**

Sign Up today without delay and help us realise 10,000 Gift Aiders by 2010!



with Pastor Sam Neves

'Please get rid of your spiritual life . . .'

Somewhere along the line I think we missed the point. I am constantly reminded of the difference between the *secular* and the *sacred*, the *worldly* and the *spiritual*. Have you ever wondered why so much energy has been spent labelling parts of our life? I remember being taught that I should develop my academic life, my professional life, my family life and – you guessed it – my spiritual life. Over the years I have noticed that if each area of my life were compared to a slice of pizza (can't help it, my family is Italian), then my spiritual life was just another slice of the pizza.

In practice, this meant having to do my morning worship to feed my spiritual life before I faced the secular world. It meant dedicating one day a week to my spiritual life, the Sabbath, while caring for my needs the rest of the week. It meant having to choose certain music as sacred and ignoring others as secular. Some friendships were spiritual while others were worldly. Maybe you can relate. If you are happy with this, please forget this invitation and stop reading now! If you are not fully satisfied with this formula, read on. . . .

When I realised what my life had become – a compartmentalised complex of disconnected interests – I did what I'm inviting you to do: I got rid of my spiritual life. 'But I thought you were a pastor,' I hear you say. Yes, I still am. So here is what I mean.

I realised that the Bible does not separate our life. It seems far more interested in showing that God is in every part of it. If our various activities are like the slices of the pizza, our spiritual life is the box that holds everything together. Furthermore, it's the cheese that melts through every slice. I call this Domino's Theology! This has given me incredible freedom to explore my life as a dynamic whole. Everything changed.

Today I no longer divide my day between the moments with God and facing the world. As a fellow pastor, Rob Bell, has put it: 'Everything is spiritual.' In my own life, here are a few examples:

- Kissing my wife and baby in the morning – spiritual.
- Eating – spiritual.
- Driving – spiritual.
- Shopping – spiritual.
- Facebook – spiritual.
- Listening to music, any music – spiritual.
- Preaching – spiritual.
- Praying – spiritual.
- Playing tennis – spiritual.
- Reading, any reading, including the Bible – spiritual.

- Sex – spiritual.
- Hospital visitation – spiritual.
- Starbucks visitation – spiritual.
- Everything – I really mean it – *everything* is spiritual.

When I read the story of Jesus it is abundantly clear that he would never have referred to his spiritual life, because everything he did was spiritual. Sure, he spent much time in prayer, but that had no more spirituality than healing the sick or going to meals and parties. Paul goes further: 'So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.' (1 Corinthians 10:31.)

So how is my life now? Well, I'm free! For example, my music collections are no longer secular v. gospel. There are certain tunes that I simply deleted from my iPod. Other tunes that I would have considered 'secular' and listened to with a slightly heavy conscience, now speak loud and clear into how amazing God is. Just as an example of each, I no longer listen to 'Learn to Fly' by Foo Fighters, while many songs by Leona Lewis have become deeply spiritual to me because of just how accurate they are in describing my love for Amy, my wife (The first time I ever saw you; Here I am; Footprints in the sand; and so on).

I can now see God everywhere I look. When my life was divided, I used to ask a very silly question: 'Where is God?' Now that everything is spiritual, the real question is: 'Where isn't God?' My ministry invites people to see where God has been in their lives all along. I no longer take God to the 'secular' people as God can be quite heavy! I truly believe that God is already there, because they are people and so God is fully present in their lives – they just can't see it yet.

In Acts 14 Paul addresses a crowd that really doesn't believe in God and proclaims: 'Yet he [God] has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.' (v. 17.) It was God who gave them rain, food and joy. Joy! The next time you see a family playing and laughing in a park, it is God who is giving them that joy – but they might not be aware of it yet.

So once again, let me invite you to get rid of your spiritual life and discover the amazing truth that *everything is spiritual*. Join me as we take praying without ceasing to a whole new level. Walk with me through the streets of our cities showing people just how close God has been all along. So once and for all – please get rid of your spiritual life. . . .



25 years as Press manager

Photos: David Bell

Following a meeting of The Stanborough Press Board on 1 October, Board chairman Pastor Don McFarlane made a surprise presentation to Press manager Paul Hammond. The presentation was arranged to commemorate the fact that Hammond has just completed 25 years as Stanborough Press managing director. The Board members and the Press staff were present for the celebration.

The Stanborough Press, which has an annual turnover of £2.5 million, was founded in London as the International Tract Society in 1894. From 1907 to 1966 it operated from Stanborough Park. A move was necessitated by a major fire in 1964. The young Paul Hammond had first been employed by the Press in October 1957. When The Stanborough Press moved one hundred miles north to Grantham he was a young man married to Maureen. In common with most Press employees, the Hammonds moved to Grantham. They have a family, Trevor and Nicola, both

grown up and married now. Prior to becoming manager, Paul had served for 27 years under, in turn, managers Joe Craven, Walter Newman, Ken Elias, Ernest Pender and Dennis Archer. For many years Hammond was bindery foreman. However, in recognition of his accountancy and entrepreneurial skills, he was made assistant treasurer. At the time when the Press Board, chaired by Harold ('Budd') Otis, president of the Review and Herald, appointed Hammond manager, he had spent some months as NEC treasurer where he had worked with the R. H. Surridge-D. W. McFarlane administration. Hence it appeared significant that, 25 years on, D. W. McFarlane, now Union president, was making the presentation.

Hammond became manager within a year of the collapse of the West African exports markets and the consequent redundancy of one third of the Press workforce. 'Part of Paul Hammond's contribution,' stated McFarlane, 'has been to

build up and cultivate new export markets in the countries of eastern and southern Africa – as well as to revive the West African market – to a point where 90% of the company's product is exported.' There had, said McFarlane, been a crisis in the company's affairs in 2001 which had necessitated a rationalisation of The Stanborough Press as a result of which there had been some redundancies, a significant redeployment of staff and the closure of the printing and binding facilities. The result of the outsourcing of printing and binding to the Far East and elsewhere had resulted in the current financial soundness of the Press which, thus far, had resisted the effects of the current global recession.

In a speech in response to Pastor McFarlane, Paul Hammond expressed his thanks and sense of privilege to have served with the gifted and dedicated staff of The Stanborough Press.

Paul Hammond, 67, lives with his wife Maureen on the Manthorpe Estate, Grantham. Nearby live their son Trevor, daughter-in-law Kristina, and three grandsons Daniel, Tim and Sam, of whom they are justly proud. Paul Hammond also expresses gratitude for the conspicuous blessing of God upon the Press, most especially in the nine years of the new century.

EDITOR



Christmas

– the best time for community outreach

Make the most of the best season for outreach. Sing carols in the shopping mall, down the streets, in the markets – and hand out copies of the special Christmas-flavour *FOCUS*.

Order on 01476 539900

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50 copies of *FOCUS* cost £12.50 + p&p



Last issue at old price



Stars

Christian Stars

Everyone's special!

Can you guess how many hairs you have on your head? Jesus said that you are so special that God knows exactly how many hairs you have. Jesus also said that children are very special and anyone who hurts a child deserves to be drowned in a lake! You can help other children by being kind to them, even when people are teasing them and bullying them. You can be their friend, stand up for them, and tell a grownup what happened. Do you know someone who finds it hard to make friends? They are as special as you are! How could you be their friend and make their life happier?



Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.' John 21:15.

Did you know that Jesus loves children? He didn't like the way the disciples bullied those who wanted to bring their little ones to him. Jesus said that although he was tired he always had time to say a prayer of blessing over the children.

In this text Jesus is telling Peter to be like a shepherd to the church members. Jesus says the first ones he should look after are the children. Did you know Jesus wants you to be a shepherd, too? Here is one way to do it. Draw a picture of some lambs and make them fluffy by sticking some cotton wool on them. Next to the lamb write the name of a younger child you know and pray that Jesus will help you to look after him or her.

A verse for you

Write your name on each of the blank spaces and then read the verse several times, until you feel how special you are to God.

For God so loved _____ that he gave his one and only Son
that if _____ believes in him, _____ will not
perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

Eat your own face!

Make a healthy sandwich that looks like you! Take a slice of wholemeal or brown bread. Find a glass or bowl that fits inside the slice of bread. Turn it upside down on top of the bread and use it to help you cut out a circle from the bread. Use the crusts in a nut roast or feed them to the birds. Toast the bread or leave it soft. Then spread a healthy topping over the bread, like peanut-butter, hummus or honey. Use slices of fruit and vegetables, nuts and grated carrots and so on, to create a face on top of the spread. Make a whole family of faces and share them with your family for supper. Feeling extra hungry? Make a face on the cut side of a baked potato for a more filling snack!



I am special

Unjumble the letters to make the words of a sentence. The capital letters are the beginning of each word. Keep the words locked in your heart!

a e e c u B s I m A c p e i l S a I

l i l W t T r a e o y r n e E v e

i W h t o v L e n d A R p s e e t c.

Star names

Write your full name, one letter on each line, down the side of a sheet of paper. Then use each letter to start a different word that describes you in a special way. For example:

E excellent
D delightful
W wise
A artistic
R rare
D determined

Help if you are being bullied

Childline — www.childline.org.uk, 0800 11 11
Kidscape — www.kidscape.org.uk

Don't forget to tell a helpful grownup when you are being bullied, or if you see someone else being bullied.



Love in Action (MK) receives Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The late Cheryl Arthur took the initiative and got the support of the church to meet the needs of clients she met as part of her daily work as a social worker. Since her untimely death, the baton has passed to Anne Loftman and the work has expanded to the point where Love in Action (MK) Limited, a Community Interest company created by the Milton Keynes church, regularly caters for up to forty people each week through the provision of a warm meal, companionship, clothes and a bag of groceries.

This work has reached the ears

of the government and this should not be a surprise to us. The reason is clear: this type of work is approved by God and is part of his blueprint for the way we should live and serve as Christians. James 1:27 tells us: 'Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this; to visit orphans and widows in their trouble' – in other words, to look after the needs of those in distress.

Love in Action was not formed to seek awards but, nevertheless, we are grateful that others have 'seen our good works' and spoken on our behalf and we are thankful to

Councillors Tom and Isabella Fraser for sponsoring us (without our knowledge) for this award. The prestigious national honour, which is equivalent to the MBE, sets the national benchmark for excellence in volunteering, and the activities of those awarded have been judged of the highest standard.

Love in Action (MK) has received the award for its work in relieving the hardship and distress among people who are homeless, living in poverty or suffering from social or economic adversity. Love in Action is

Malawians in Newport

On 1 August Newport hosted the third Malawian Adventist Union meeting since it was first established in 2007. Malawians from as far north as Blackburn travelled, unperturbed by the unpromising weather forecast, and were rewarded by the unrivalled experience of worshipping and fellowshiping together, networking and reuniting with old friends.

The icing on the cake was the presence of the guest speaker, Pastor Wenson Masoka, a Malawian pastor who had travelled from Berrien Springs, USA, to share the day. Being a former president of the Malawi Union, nostalgia filled the congregation, along with the singing of local language hymns. His message, 'Have you seen Jesus?', was a

the first community group to win the award at the first time of asking. Other winners have taken two or three attempts to reach the standards required. Winners of this year's award were selected from groups nominated by members of the public who have been helped personally or witnessed the benefits of a group's work in their community.

The award was announced in June, but the presentation took place on Sabbath 26 September.

MIKE JOHNSON

timely call to all who attended to renew their commitment to the Lord in a land far away from home. All left with a determination to reclaim any lost love and commit to living for Jesus once again.

CHIM NUKA

Handsworth Chorale's anniversary performance

Under the direction of founder Oscar Stewart, the Handsworth Chorale rendered a special commemorative performance of the Peterson's cantata, 'No Greater Love', to cap Handsworth church's Homecoming Day celebrations. The performance took place to a full house at St Phillips Cathedral, Birmingham, on Sabbath 26 September.

The Handsworth Youth Chorale was established nearly forty years

ago after Oscar Stewart returned from a Missionary Volunteer Youth Congress held in Vienna. Inspired by the performances of the choirs, Oscar came home feeling that the youth in Handsworth could do just as well. He began recruiting, and the

choir was formed soon after.

The group was reformed especially for the homecoming and choir members travelled from all over Britain, as well as from North America, to share in the occasion. Nearly forty former members came

together to sing praises to God and to celebrate their achievement.

Special tribute was paid to Oscar Stewart for his commitment and service both to the Chorale and the music in the Handsworth church. Many choir members expressed

deep appreciation to Oscar and his wife Eulyn, one member saying, 'The Chorale certainly played a significant part in keeping me in the church. Without it I do not know where I would be today.'

JEFF NICHOLSON

The spirit of kingdom living

Pastor Gifford Rhamie, lecturer in Pastoral Studies at Newbold, was the guest speaker for this year's Welsh Mission Day of Fellowship on Sabbath 26 September. For the third year running the event was held at the Pavilion in the Welsh spa town of Llandrindod Wells. Also for the third year running we were blessed with beautiful weather, meaning that the two hundred or so who attended were able to have their picnic lunches outside.

The Sabbath School time was led by Pastor David Foster and members from the north of Wales, with separate programmes being provided for the children and youth by Pastor Clyde and Mrs Anette Moore, and Pastor Jovan Adamović, respectively.

A praise band from the Swansea church opened the divine service with a combination of old and new songs, and the congregation was then introduced to the newest member of the ministerial team, David Rancic, as he told the children's story. Shortly afterwards David, together with his wife Dusanka, came to the front for a special

service to ordain him as an elder of the Welsh Mission church. Without this ordination, as former Welsh Mission president Pastor Brian Phillips explained, David would be unable to carry out essential duties in the Mission, such as conducting communion services and baptisms.

Pastor Gifford Rhamie chose as his subject for the day, 'The adventurous spirit of kingdom Living', building his morning message on the parable of the mustard seed as told by Mark. He pointed out that Mark, unlike Matthew and Luke, says that the mustard seed grew into a bush, rather than a tree. After telling a few jokes about 'bushmen' Pastor Rhamie went on to make the more serious point that as Christians we are called to be more like bushes than towering trees. 'True and undefiled kingdom living is always done at grass roots level,' he said, 'where my life impacts the lives of my neighbours.' He went on to say that as Adventists we may have made the mistake of 'reducing truth to a series of facts' without understanding that 'truth is spirit'.



In his afternoon workshop Pastor Rhamie continued to develop his theme, but this time with a much more focused and hard-hitting approach. Describing his 'dream church', he came up with a poetic list of qualifications that concluded with the line, 'My dream church is a church that interprets truth in terms of spirit.' Sadly, dream churches are hard to come by, partly, Pastor Rhamie said, because 'there are forces created to split our churches in two – one of which is fundamentalism.' A broad definition of fundamentalism was extracted from the congregation by dividing them into discussion groups, with the consensus being that those with 'funda-

mentalistic' characteristics tended among other things to be demanding and judgemental, to campaign secretly, be critical of church leadership, see things in black and white, focus on things which are factual and measurable, such as standards and end-time events, and generally be rather mournful and drab Christians. In addition he pointed out that from his observations fundamentalistic people tended to want to work within the church rather than evangelising the unchurched, and that they almost invariably caused divisions.

Pastor Rhamie finished on an upbeat note, however. To combat and protect against a spirit of fundamentalism we must study more deeply, develop and grow as Christians, and serve. Service which is authentic, mature, merciful, humble, courteous, and conducted with empathy and confidentiality, is evidence of the true spirit of kingdom living.

Although Pastor Rhamie presented the main afternoon programme, two parallel workshops focused on youth and the vital church policy document, 'Keeping the Church Family Safe'. The latter of these was run by Welsh Mission Family and Children's Ministries sponsors Clyde and Anette Moore, who emphasised the importance of every church having at least some people in it who are thoroughly conversant with the policy.

The day concluded with a 'Songs of Praise' programme featuring singers and groups from across Wales and from further afield.

JOHN SURRIDGE



Grantham baptism

No seats were going spare for the baptism at Grantham church of Helena Ventress and Daniel Hammond on Sabbath 5 September.

Grantham minister Pastor John Ferguson baptised both candidates. There was, he said, a contrast between the two. Helena has been a friend of church elder Karen Shelbourn for many years. She has attended church for more than ten years. It would be easy to assume that she was already a member, but her situation reminded the pastor of a similar one he encountered in his early years of ministry in the Republic of Ireland. There, a man who had been attending one of our churches for many years had never been baptised. When asked why, he replied, 'No one ever asked me!' At all events Helena said a very joyful 'Yes' after a series of Bible studies with Karen.



Pastor John Ferguson baptises Daniel, while his father, Trevor, proudly looks on

Daniel, by contrast, is a fourth generation Adventist. He is the eldest son of Trevor and Kristina Hammond.

Trevor is the son of Maureen and Paul, and Kristina the daughter of Joyce and Alan Redfern of St Albans. Some time ago a group of Grantham young people asked Pastor Ferguson for Bible studies. Daniel was the first member of the Bible study group to request baptism. Daniel, with his brothers Tim and Sam, plays a very active part in the Grantham church family.

Special speaker for the day, Pastor Eric Lowe, is a much-loved former pastor at Grantham. We rejoiced to have Margaret and Eric among us for the day. Pastor Lowe, now executive secretary of the British Union, made the words of hobbit Frodo the point of departure for a riveting sermon: 'What story have we fallen into?' The answer, said the speaker, was the most fundamental question we answer in our lives.

JOHN FERGUSON



Left to right: Helena Ventress, Pastor John Ferguson and Daniel Hammond

Cambridge VBS

This summer Cambridge church held its fifth annual VBS programme: 'Crocodile Dock – Where fearless kids shine God's light'. Attendance has increased over the years, to such an extent that the church has become too small to accommodate everyone. This year the programme was held in a local village centre, providing ample room for the more than fifty children attending each day to run, play, do crafts, learn and make new friends.

Each day the songs, Bible story, craft, games and snack (prepared by the children) were based on a theme, teaching that 'God is with us', 'God takes care of us', 'God keeps his promise', 'God is powerful' and 'God saves us'.

Many local community children attended the five-day programme,



and quite a few of the families also attended the 'Finale' held at the Cambridge church on Sabbath afternoon, 1 August. Feedback from community parents was very positive, with comments on their children starting to offer help at home, and enjoying learning the Bible verses

and songs each day.

Many thanks go to the VBS team and the Cherry Hinton Village Centre for the use of their facilities and local church members who volunteered their time and talents to assist with the programme.

BRIDGET MANASSE

Holloway: You raised me up

Utter dependence and total surrender to Jesus were the themes of the campaign at Holloway church from 5 to 19 September.

The speaker for the 'You raised me up' campaign was the UK's own Anthony Fuller, recent graduate of Theology at Oakwood College and remembered by others as the former president of the London Youth Federation.

His objective was clear and Spirit-led: to unpack the familiar basics of the Christian faith and to challenge us to live by them. Basics such as 'abiding in Christ', 'righteousness by faith', 'dying to self', 'fruits of the Spirit' and the 'armour of God' were explored in detail in front of a full congregation – with many others also watching live online from all over the world.

The congregation also included a significant number of people from the local community. All admired the young preacher's ability to break down the great themes into simple, practical steps without losing the profound importance of who it all pointed to: Jesus. 'The only *deliberate* effort of the Christian is to seek fellowship with Jesus; not trying to be right but knowing the Righteous One,' he said under the sermon title

'What must I do to be saved?' Here we were also reminded that these principles were meaningless unless our primary goal was to get to know Jesus.

Like any other teacher who anticipates the questions of his students, Anthony Fuller drew upon his own personal experiences of occasions when his faith was tested to demonstrate how remaining in Jesus was a daily struggle. 'Conversion was only meant to last a day; we must die daily to self if we are to remain in him,' he reminded us.

While the first week explored the basics of our faith, the second week focused on its application with the emphasis on *remaining* in Jesus. Referring to the acrostic G.R.O.W.T.H (Go to God in prayer, Read God's Word, Obey God moment by moment, Witness, Trust God and Holy Spirit), we soon realised that our

image of God often misrepresented who he really was. The fault was in our own unstable relationships with others or sheer lack of study of the Word for ourselves. But from Scripture he pointed out that, despite our conduct in the relationship, his love is constant, not fickle, and it is this that motivates us to remain in him. 'How can you reject a love like that?' the speaker asked the congregation.

The final Sabbath saw six candidates make a public declaration of their commitment to Jesus through baptism. Several more have requested Bible studies as a direct result of the campaign. Many of the visitors were drawn by the health check sessions, which were held nightly before the campaign, as well in response to posters in *The London Paper* and handbills distributed through the borough. Surely the campaign was evidence that Jesus was true to his Word when he declared, 'When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself.' John 12:32.

RANETTE PRIME



February's baptismal candidates, left to right: Nathan, Nerissa*, Sameka (and daughter), Maurice, Pastor Roberts, Bridget and Golda (*Nerissa worships at Edmonton Central)

A special place

Let me tell you about a small street in North London, hidden but in full view. Let me introduce you to a congregation who love the Lord, love to worship and find joy in praising God. Let me tell you about a church bursting at the seams but which always has room for a visitor or two or three.

The street is Cuckoo Hall Lane and the congregation is at Edmonton.

We started this year with a spiritual extravaganza inspired by the Holy Spirit and led by our resident pastor, Steve Roberts. For the first nine Sabbaths of 2009 our souls were watered as Pastor Roberts presented salvation from the pulpit. As members renewed their relationship

with God, six new souls committed their lives to God on Sabbath 28 February (see picture).

Galvanised by this Spirit-filled start to the year, we embarked on our community projects – feeding the homeless, car wash programmes to supplement the ADRA Ingathering campaign and health screenings. Our Community Guests days attracted members of the public as the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries teams took to the streets to invite in and pray for those who accepted the offer. Our hearts expanded with joy and praise to God as we realised the importance of Jesus' example of spending most of his ministry among the people, not in the pews.

KATHI HYATT

LEO and the Three Ms

Lay Evangelism Outreach and Training Day (LEO) is a special day of fellowship, when training is giving in the art of witnessing. It was held on Sabbath 4 July at the Methodist Church, Chatsworth Road, Clapton, London E5, and was hosted by members of the Prayer Tower. The Prayer Tower is made up of church members and prayer co-ordinators from SEC churches, members of other faith groups and, recently, churches from the NEC. The Prayer Tower was started by the late Adelsa Smith, who was an elder at the Plaistow church. During her period of illness the mantle was passed on to Brenda Edwards, along with Carol Henry-Linton and others who inaugurated quarterly all-night prayer meetings and LEO days. Brenda Edwards and Carol Henry-Linton are two of the founding members of LEO.

For the past nine years, LEO day has been phenomenal; God has truly blessed the street witnessing outreach programme. Each year more and more people are coming to be trained so that they may be fully equipped to serve and take part in the work of evangelism. Pastor Roy Morgan, pastor of Dudley and Windsor Street churches in the West Midlands; Dr Terry Messenger, director of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries in the SEC; and Pastor Curtis Murphy, Publishing director for the BUC (fondly known as the

Three Ms) trained the candidates on how to give Bible studies, how to share their faith with others, and the effective use of literature evangelism.

Children aged between 5 and 16, together with adults, were keen to try out their newly acquired skills and knowledge by going out street witnessing in the afternoon. The day was crystallised by the testimonies brought back by those who went street witnessing. It was encouraging to hear how eager and interested people were when told of the coming of Jesus Christ. It is wonderful that, even today, we can bring hope to people in despair in an area of the East End of London, where knife and gun crimes are prevalent.

The day ended with a graduation ceremony, attended by over a hundred candidates. Each candidate received certificates of attendance and tokens of appreciation. We would also like to thank Pastor Eglan Brooks, director of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries (BUC), who was unable to be with us this year, but donated resources for the witnessing programme.

Next year will be the tenth anniversary of LEO. It will be held on Sabbath 29 May 2010. We invite you to come and join us for a truly amazing experience as we go out and spread the good news of the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

ELLIE SAMUEL

Tenth anniversary for mother and toddler outreach

On Thursday 24 September the church in Bournemouth celebrated ten successful years running their outreach programme – the 'Sunshine Club' – a local mother and toddlers group for young families in the Winton area of Bournemouth. The Sunshine Club has worked with many families over the years. Joy Elliott, founder and leader of the club, continues to manage this weekly event, supported by church members. The love and care given to each family has established a strong bond between the church and the local community.

The former Mayor of Bournemouth, Mrs Emily Morrell-Cross, a committed Christian, who was present at our fifth anniversary, was invited once again to officiate at our short service. Wearing as before her sunshine outfit in honour of the club, she cut the cake, assisted by some of the children, helping to make our celebration a very special occasion.

Emily was welcomed by our resident pastor, Ian Lorek, and retired pastors Martin Anthony and

Richard Vine also took part in the service. Mothers currently attending the club and former mums mingled and exchanged stories, and the special cake ordered for the occasion was enjoyed by all. We pray that this club will continue to reach out to

young mothers and toddlers in need of support for years to come.

More information can be found at <http://bournemouth.adventistchurch.org.uk/mothertoddler>.

JOY ELLIOTT



The Daleys' Golden Wedding

On Sunday 30 August, Brother Astley Donald and Sister Merdeline Daley attended a celebration held in their honour at the Watford Town church where they have been members for over forty years, (a period only broken by a brief sojourn in Manchester, Jamaica). As Brother Daley – Donald to his friends and family – watched the pale English sun, he need not have worried, as the sun shone throughout the day. Save for the chill in the air, they might have been in Jamaica, such was the warmth that surrounded them from their friends and family as they entered the church which has been a source of comfort, solace and support over the years.

Fifty years ago the last thing on Donald's mind was whether it would rain. As he prepared himself for his

wedding, perhaps he wondered whether Merdeline would turn up! Merdeline, radiant in white, rivalled the warm Caribbean sun as they were married at the Bird's Hill church on Sunday 30 August 1959 in Clarendon, Jamaica. The couple were well supported by the bride's parents, Brother Hubert and Miss Alice and brothers and sisters and family members. One thing was clear: Donald and Merdeline could not have imagined how very different their life would be as they prepared to celebrate their golden anniversary.

Ronald Daley (their son) welcomed the guests to the church, which was resplendent with flowers which were testimony to Merdeline's skill at flower arranging. Ronald reminded his parents that, unlike other achievements, marriage had



no finish line, and they could not sit back on their laurels and still had hard work to do. Pastor Cecil Perry, former British Union Conference president, with characteristic warmth and humour admonished them to keep on loving and supporting each other. He surprised the couple by assisting them to renew their marriage vows, surrounded by their witnesses, their five children, in-laws and eleven grandchildren. Only one set of witnesses from the original ceremony, Violet and Wilbert Williams (the bride's sister and brother-in-law), were there to witness the renewal of vows.

The couple were grateful for the music provided by Valerie McCleary and her husband Ralford, and sister Heather Meikle. Sister McCleary performed the ever popular 'Love divine all loves excelling', while Heather Meikle sang a medley of favourites from the Daleys' family worship, such as 'Tis the blessed hour of Prayer' and 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind', and Troy Campbell (grandson of the couple) surprised them with a violin piece that he had been practising especially for the occasion.

Pastor Roy Chisholm, former minister at Watford town, invited all of the married couples to join with the Daleys in presenting their marriages to the Lord. He reminded them that even marriages in trouble could be touched by God's blessing and inviting him to honour their commitment as couples in a society in which marriage is increasingly seen as temporary and disposable.

Heather and Mike Thompson's 40th wedding anniversary

On 23 August, Mike and Heather Thompson celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. Their three children, Gail, Lisa and Keith, arranged a very lovely afternoon tea for them and gave an open invitation to the church members to attend, and a good number accepted the invitation. While the various activities were proceeding, the PowerPoint presentation gave a fascinating pictorial record of the lives of Mike, Heather and their children right from childhood. The occasion was especially poignant because Heather has been very ill and this influenced their children to try to make this a very special occasion. Mike met Heather at Newbold College and got married there and, after further training, worked for the Government in agriculture before going to Africa. They finally settled in Crieff, working at Roundelwood. Heather then decided to train as a nurse and followed this career until she retired.

BOB RODD



Picture: Mike Lewis

BUC receptionist

The British Union Conference has an impending vacancy for a receptionist and is looking for a cheerful person, conversant with modern switchboard operations and able to offer a welcoming, helpful and professional approach to visitors and callers, both in person and on the telephone. Responsibilities include oversight of photocopying, franking and fax machines, supervision of the post room, the maintenance of general office supplies and light secretarial duties. Employees at the BUC Office are expected to be committed to the mission and the values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Salary £17,500-£20,000 per annum, in accordance with experience. Closing date for applications is 2 November 2009 with interviews in the following week. Applicants must have the right to work in the UK. Application forms are available from Executive Secretary, BUC Office, Unit 11, Park Industrial Estate, Frogmore, Herts. AL2 2DR or secretariat@adventist.org.uk

Later, at the Holywell Community Centre, the couple enjoyed tributes from their grandchildren in the form of poetry and song and moving tributes from nieces, nephews and well-wishers as every member of their family took the opportunity to honour this special couple.

The couple had asked that, rather than gifts, donations were given to the Sickle Cell Society and the Diabetic Association. The couple would like to thank those who gave donations and helped to raise £60 for the Sickle Cell Society and £150 for the Diabetic Association.

KARL JOHNSON

Remembering Linda Clark

David and Marci Neal remember Linda Clark who had served at Chapel Porth but has died recently. A bench was dedicated in her memory outside number 11.

Chapel Porth seems to be the most wonderful and appropriate place to remember Linda. She 'gave' to Chapel Porth for what must have been nearly twenty years.

Her anchor role was as camp nurse for the children, teens, youth and staff on site. More often than not she was 'counsellor' to the camp director. She would calm a stressful

situation with the wisdom only a mother could provide.

We'd sit in number 11 caravan, have a hot drink, work through the problem and, before we knew it, it was on with the programme and time to get the campers in the minibus and off to the beach at Perranporth. Perhaps the wisdom she shared was the result of her own personal devotional life. In the caravan would be her Bible and devotional study guide. She would quote from it in quiet moments. It signalled to me that she enjoyed a personal and close relationship with God.

The view from number 11 is the best on site. Perhaps this picture was also another way God spoke to her. Chapel Porth was a taste of Heaven on Earth for her, and who could disagree? The site speaks volumes, not only about the goodness



Left to right: Earl Ramharacksingh, Sam Davis, Mike Smart, Steven Hulbert, Debbie Zachary, seated (Linda's daughter), Terry Clark, seated (Linda's husband), David Clemo, Alex Zachary (Debbie's husband), Bernie Holford and Colin Stewart

FRANCES ELEANOR COOMBE (1909-2009) d. 20 July. Frances Eleanor Coombe (known as Bobbie) was born on 27 June 1909 in Southend, Essex. She was the youngest of four daughters born to Maud and Edwin Carter. Her family was very musical. She finished her schooling at the age of 15 and was baptised into the Adventist church at Westcliff-on-Sea while still in her teens. She worked as a telephone operator until she was 20 years of age and then left home to go to the Stanborough Hydro in Watford where she took the three-year nursing course. There she met her future husband who was also taking the course, and they were married in 1935 in the Stanborough Park church. Bobbie and Roy had a son, Martin, and a daughter, Pauline. They had three granddaughters and eight great-grandchildren. Roy died in Dorset in 1984. Bobbie passed to her rest on 20 July. She was proud of the card sent by Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her 100th birthday, some three weeks before her passing.

ROBERT BELL

BESSIE DUKE (1921-2009) d. 14 August. Bessie Duke was born on 18 May in Doncaster, Yorkshire, and lived there until 1951. In 1939 she started working at Doncaster Airport as a teleprinter operator. When that job finished in 1940 she worked at the London and North Eastern Railway Company as a shorthand typist. Her father also worked for the railways in Doncaster, later transferring to Ipswich in 1951 and Bessie and her parents then settled there. Bessie attended Pastor George Hyde's campaign at Bath's Hall in Ipswich and started going to church and was baptised in 1952. As she was unable to have Sabbaths off, she left the railway and went to work for Reavells and Co. as a secretary, staying there until she retired in 1981. Bessie was a very active member of the church and for many years she arranged the flowers each Sabbath. She was church treasurer and church clerk for forty years and was very faithful in all her duties. In 2002 Bessie became unwell and was unable to do the work she loved and had to retire from

church office. Bessie loved her garden, dressmaking, knitting and embroidery and was very active until the final few years. In 2006 Bessie had to go into hospital and from there to Wellington House in Stowmarket. In 2007 it was felt it would be better for her to be nearer to her niece Jean and her husband Mel, so she moved to Brookside House in Jacksdale, Nottingham. Bessie died on 14 August and was brought back to Ipswich for the funeral and laid to rest in the old cemetery where she awaits the call of the resurrection morning. We look forward to that day.

OLIVE VOELCKER

RONALD BRADBURY (1916-2009) d. 23 September. It is with sadness that we report that Ronald Bradbury passed quietly to his rest. Ron was an only child. He spent much of his life in the Coventry area. There he spent his childhood and went to school. Born during World War One, Ron was again confronted with the world at war as he served with REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) in World War Two. It was during that time in Oldham that he met Marion as the family dog was being exercised in Alexander Park. They married in 1942 and set up home in Coventry. This marked the beginning of sixty-seven years of marriage for Ron and Marion, who passed away early in 2008. Marion and Ron attended a series of meetings held in the Coventry Technical College in the 1970s. It was there that they became acquainted with the Adventist Church and took a decision to join it. In 1984 Ron and Marion moved from their home in Coventry to a new build in Bishop's Hull, Taunton, where they became active members of the Taunton congregation, holding the responsibilities of treasurer and deaconess respectively. Even after being challenged by strokes, Ron continued with his church attendance and treasury duties as long as he was able. Ron is survived by his daughter, Pam Robinson. A memorial service was held at the Taunton-Deanne Crematorium on 1 October. The service was conducted by Pastor Watson Southcott and Pastor Wayne Erasmus.

WAYNE ERASMUS

of God through his created world, but also about how God has become real to countless campers and staff over the years.

Youth ministry is the business of Heaven. Linda was a key member in that business. It often involves sacrifice. I'm not sure that Linda would ever have considered being at Chapel Porth a sacrifice – far from it. But there were times when, for example, she would return east to go to work for a couple of nights and then travel back down to the campsite. Today with you I want to thank the Lord so much for allowing her to be used by Him at Chapel Porth.

May the Youth ministry business be soon complete with the Lord's return. Somehow and in some way I would like to think that there will be time and space on the earth made new for a Chapel Porth reunion, not only with Linda, but with all the boys and girls, men and women who were inspired by the business we've all been involved in. Hope your time on site gives meaningful reflection on how the Lord used Linda in a wonderful way.



BRAZENDALE-EIKUM

On Thursday 6 August Sonja Eikum and Alan Brazendale came together in the beautiful setting of Queens Chapel in Aberdeen University for their marriage. The day began brightly with the sun shining. Sonja arrived at the university Chapel on the arm of her father and was piped into the church for the service. The marriage was conducted by the writer who is a friend of the Eikum family and the former pastor of the Aberdeen Adventist church. Over one hundred guests witnessed the service, having travelled from all over Britain and Europe. Sonja was accompanied by maid of honour Fiona Fernie, flower girl Sara McCandless, and page boy Thomas McKibben, while Alan was attended by best man Cameron Robertson. The wedding ceremony was followed by a reception at the Norwood Hotel. Alan and Sonja left Aberdeen for Canada where they set up home. We all wish them every blessing as they begin a new Christian home together.

PASTOR B. MCCORMAC

And finally...
 He who angers you controls you!
 If God is your co-pilot – swap seats!
 The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us.
 We don't change the message, the message changes us.

Amazing Facts evangelism in Birmingham

The North England Conference in conjunction with Amazing Facts is sponsoring a four-day evangelistic outreach in Birmingham with Doug Batchelor as the presenter. These meetings will run from 2 to 5 December at the Bethel Convention Centre, Kelvin Way, West Bromwich. The nightly presentations will be broadcast live on the Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN). The venue can accommodate up to 2,500 people, and the Sabbath midday and evening services will also be broadcast live. Attendance at the Sabbath service will be by ticket only. There will be no dedicated programme for children on the day as the

venue does not have space to facilitate this.

North England Conference president Pastor Ian Sweeney, commenting on the event, said, 'This is a first for the Adventist Church in Britain and we are very happy to be hosting this event. My prayer is that it will further lift the profile of the Church in this country and lead many to a commitment to Christ.' The afternoon programme will include a service of ordination. Those interested in attending the Sabbath services will need to register online for tickets on the North England Conference website. There will as usual be a £1 charge for this service.

J. NICHOLSON, NEC Communication

Faiths and the feminine

Women and their role and treatment in world religions was the theme for a lecture at Newbold College last week attended by about 100 people of different religious backgrounds in Bracknell, Wokingham and further afield. 'Faiths and the Feminine' was the title for the 2009 Beach Lecture at Newbold College given by Dr Elaine Storkey, writer, broadcaster and theologian, on Tuesday 6 October.

Dr Storkey began her lecture with a sociological sketch of the position of women in the world. She described contemporary and traditional religious attitudes to women and to their exercise of spiritual authority in the major world religions. 'In inter-faith dialogue we find that patriarchy and male hierarchies enforcing their power by reinforcing dress codes on women is characteristic of all the major world religions,' she said. 'Religious leaders in all of them are challenged by the question, "Who may

have spiritual authority and what does it look like?"'

As a leader of several different Christian organisations and director of the charity Tearfund, Dr Storkey has had extensive experience in inter-faith dialogue around the world and the process of relating first-hand to women and men of other faiths. She recounted different experiences in different religious contexts as she answered the question: 'How do Christians work with the traditions and systems which are in place while maintaining their own Christian freedom?'

Finally Dr Storkey looked at the ways in which the process of inter-faith relations draws religious people from different backgrounds into considering bigger global issues where gender remains a factor. She described in graphic detail the problems of poverty, illiteracy, gender-based violence, child bride practice, trafficking of women, female genital mutilation, and the abortion of girl children in China

and India. She concluded with descriptions of initiatives where women of different faiths are working together to alleviate some of these problems.

The lecture was attended by representatives of the Binfield churches, Bracknell Churches Together, Wokingham Churches Together, Bracknell Forest Faith Action group, several clergy, and three members of the Bahai faith. Newbold's sociologist, Valerie Bernard, chaired the meeting.

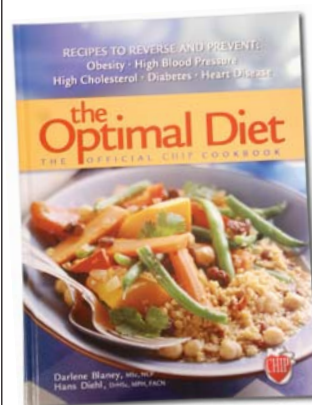
'The Beach Lectures have now been running for over a decade,' said Dr Michael Pearson, Newbold's vice-principal and chair of Newbold's Diversity Centre, which sponsored the lecture. 'We are delighted that Dr Storkey provided yet another in a series of thought-provoking lectures which are becoming an annual gathering for thoughtful people of different faiths and no faith in the towns around the College and further afield.'

Note: The Beach Lecture was sponsored and organised by the Centre for the Study of Religious and Cultural Diversity at Newbold College. It was endowed by a former board member of Newbold College, Dr Bert Beach and his wife, Eliane, to build bridges between Christians and those of other faiths.

For further information go to www.newbold.ac.uk.

HELEN PEARSON

Pastor Gifford Rhame, Dr Elaine Storkey and Dr Jane Sabes. Photo: Asun Olivan



New book of the week

The Optimal Diet Cookbook

by Darlene Blaney & Hans Diehl MD

The CHIP cookbook

If you want to enjoy good food and good health, then this is for you! Add healthier dishes to your diet, reduce your dependence on refined and fast foods, and learn invaluable nutritional information.

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11am-5.30pm, Monday-Thursday.
10am-2pm Friday.
1st & 3rd Sundays 10am-2pm
Advent Centre, Sundays 11am-3pm

Messenger

Volume 114 • 23 – 30 October 2009

EDITOR: D. N. MARSHALL

DESIGN: DAVID BELL

COPY FOR No. 25 – 9 November 2009

Copy should be sent to the Editor, MESSENGER, The Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL. Tel: (01476) 591700.

Fax No: (01476) 577144.

Email: Editor@stanboroughpress.com

Send high resolution pictures to: dbell@stanboroughpress.co.uk

ABC Sales line: (01476) 539900
Mon-Thurs only, 8am-5.30pm.

www.stanboroughpress.com

The Editor may alter, clarify, précis or expand articles sent to him if he thinks it necessary. Published fortnightly on Fridays by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Printed in the UK.

Visit the BUC website at: www.adventist.org.uk
ISSN 0309-3654

Sunset

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

	Lond	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Oct 30	4.37	4.49	4.37	4.37	4.52
Nov 6	4.25	4.37	4.24	4.22	4.38
13	4.14	4.26	4.13	4.08	4.25
20	4.05	4.17	4.03	3.57	4.15

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Cost to member supplied in bulk to churches £6.
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