

Messengers

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SEC FUN RUN for ADRA



by Terry Messenger, Personal Ministries and Sabbath School director, SEC

'I haven't attended the Adventist Church since 1956 but seeing you all come out today has made me want to go back,' commented a man who was sitting on a park bench to one of the participants. The glorious weather brought many people out to the Crystal Palace Park in South London, the favourite venue for this prestigious event over the past four years. Many members of the public asked what it was all about. The run is becoming well known in the area, and this year for the first time the police sent six of their personnel to watch over events. One of the policemen remarked that it was such a joy to be here instead of fighting crime!

At 10am sharp on 18 April the run began, after final instructions were given by Terry Messenger, Personal Ministries director at the SEC. Pastor Sam Davis, SEC president, offered a word of prayer, and Nathan Stuckland, Pathfinder director at the SEC, blew the horn to signal the start.

More than 500 participants took part. Some ran, some walked and others cycled. Some chose to do the full 12 miles and others completed the shorter distances. It was good to see many different types of people participating – the young and fit, children and older folk, all doing their bit to raise funds for ADRA. Some of the participants travelled far, coming from Chelmsford, Guildford, Colchester and Hove. Ray Horrett from Colchester came with his wife, Ritta, who had been very ill.

They collected £500 in sponsorship, which will be match-funded by Barclays Bank, Ray being a bank retiree. This will increase the total to £1,000! Ritta was unable to go door-to-door collecting this year as she was having chemotherapy for breast cancer. This was her third attack of invasive cancer, a disease that has claimed both a daughter and a niece. This wasn't going to stop her and so she came up with the idea of doing a sponsored 'push' at this year's event. Her husband Ray pushed her in a wheelchair for 3 miles, or two circuits. He commented, 'How do they make the incline the second time around steeper than the first?' Despite the physical effort it was worth it.

Pat Joseph of the Croydon church pushed her four-month-old twin granddaughters around the course, seeking sponsors for the twins to help them raise money for ADRA. They raised £50 with £10 donated by the ice cream man! These are the youngest fundraisers at four months old!

Everyone had such a good time – so much so that no one wanted to leave and spent the rest of the day sitting and chatting on the grass. It was, indeed, the perfect day. Bert Smit, ADRA UK director, stated that he thought this was the best Fun Run ever.

Much-needed funds have been raised by this event. If you haven't participated in this before and you're looking for a way to help ADRA, it doesn't come much better than this. Come and join us next year. I promise you, you won't regret it!



Ray and Ritta Horrett from Colchester

Recently I saw a poster and at first I thought it was advertising Alpha, the course about Christianity for enquirers. They have used the same phrase that caught my eye in the poster, 'meaning of life', in their advertising. Then I looked again and saw a mini in the poster, and light began to dawn. This was an advertisement for a mini convertible! On the one side it had a book with these words written on it: 'The Meaning of Life'. Above that was the caption, 'CLOSEDNESS BAD'. On the other side it had a picture of an open top mini and above it the caption read, 'OPENNESS GOOD'.

I wonder if people really do think like that. Is it a closed question, whether life has meaning? The designers of the advert certainly thought that most people would identify with the concept; otherwise the advert would not work. How about us as Christians, what would our thoughts be?

You could say that the Bible is about ultimate things, such as the meaning of life. However, even here there are biblical writers who admit the question is beyond them. Solomon, for instance, said: 'Meaningless! Meaningless! says the Teacher. Everything is meaningless!' Ecclesiastes 12:8. When God himself speaks on this theme, however, he says this: '... everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made'. Isaiah 43:7. In those words we find a reason for our existence, which is to glorify God. It may not be entirely clear what that means, but it does give us a strong pointer in a certain direction. The meaning of our lives has to do with God and our relationship with him.

The Bible assumes the existence of God and states that our meaning is found with reference to him. Jesus did say in this regard that he was 'the way, and the truth and the life'. John 14:6.

Do we as Christians, and particularly as Adventists, have anything to say to this post-modern, sophisticated, educated, cynical, secular generation about the meaning of life? Yes, I believe we do. While we may not have

all the answers, we are in touch with the One who does. We do have some understanding about life's meaning. However, the question about the meaning of life would be better framed as 'Who?' rather than 'What?' We know **Who** the meaning of life is.

The meaning of life is not a closed subject. Rather, it is open to those willing to engage in a search not just for theoretical answers but willing to seek to know God. At the bottom of the mini poster it says, 'STAY OPEN'. They mean for us to stay in the open while driving. I would say, 'STAY OPEN' to God and 'STAY OPEN' to finding meaning in him.

with Jonathan Barrett



The meaning of life is 'Who?' not 'What?'



Enhancing Health

by Sharon Platt-McDonald RGN, RM, RHV, MSC
Health Ministries director, BCC

Mobile phones — help or harm?

Once again the health debate on the safety of mobile phones has resurfaced.

A *Times Online* report published on 23 April 2010 carried the headline: *Mobile phone study to check effect on health over 30 years*. Launched on 22 April, this is considered to be the biggest study yet on the health impact of mobile phone use.

British scientists are leading the research which is estimated as a multi-million-pound undertaking. The research captioned Cosmos (Cohort Study on Mobile Communications) will track 250,000 mobile phone users over a period of 20-30 years, monitoring their health. Experts hope to ascertain any significant links between mobile phone use and health and from their findings judge how safe they are to use.

Study subjects range in age from 18 to 69. Of the 250,000 participants, the UK will engage around 90,000 and 100,000 people, while the remaining numbers will be drawn from across

Europe to include Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden. Funding for Britain's contribution to Cosmos comes from the Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research (MTHR) programme.

So what will be studied? A comparative analysis will be made of any changes in people's health compared with their usage of mobile phones. This will take into account aspects like the number of calls made, duration and the positioning of handsets. A number of conditions will be investigated. Scientists will analyse trends for cancers of the brain, head and neck, and neurological and degenerative disorders such as multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's, motor neuron disease, Parkinson's and cardiovascular conditions such as heart disease and strokes.

Additionally, records will be taken of symptoms such as headaches, tinnitus, sleep disorders and conditions like depression, all of which have been reported in some previous studies as possible

effects of mobile phone use.

In May 2000 findings from the Stewart Report undertaken by the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP) concluded that there was no clear evidence of harm to health from exposure to mobile phone signals. However, the report suggested further research to answer scientific and health anomalies and recommended discouraging excessive use of mobile phones by children, who may be more susceptible to their effects than adults.

Reflecting on previous research outcomes, Professor Challis* states: 'There just hasn't been enough time. Most of us have not had mobile phones for more than ten or twelve years. Some cancers take ten or twenty years for symptoms to appear, some even longer.'

Advice: Limit use to short periods.

Good health!

* Professor Lawrie Challis is a member of the MTHR management committee funding the current research.

Fear knocked at the door. Faith answered and no one was there.

with David Marshall, editor

Is that it and all about it as far as fear is concerned?

Fear and faith are certainly opposites. Ever read *Robinson Crusoe*? As a boy I read it simply as an adventure yarn. As an adult I was encouraged to read it as a spiritual autobiography. It made more sense that way.

Crusoe was, you may recall, stranded on a deserted Caribbean island. Among his effects he discovered a battered Bible. After reading it, he became a prayerful Christian convert.

However, one day Crusoe found a single human footprint in the sand and was gripped by fear. Negative fantasies of hostile enemies obsessed him. *'Fear banished all my religious hope,'* the story goes. *'All that former confidence in God, which was founded upon such wonderful experience as I had had of His goodness, now vanished. . . .'* The journey from fear back to faith took years.

Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, chose not to become a minister, but theology was reflected in much that he wrote. We may be certain that the footprint incident is about the destructive effect of fear on the Christian's experience. On that theme Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote, 'When a man is defeated by life it is always due, ultimately, to the fact that he is suffering from a spirit of fear. . . . The spirit of fear is the real, the ultimate cause of all failure in life, and of all unhappiness.'¹

Paul was often a victim of fear, but fear did not defeat him. To the Corinthians he wrote, 'When we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn — conflicts on the outside, fears within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him.' (2 Cor. 7:5-7.)

Not for the first time, Paul was depressed and deeply discouraged.² Sleep was denied him and he was under intense pressure.³ But he did not wallow in the gloom. He jumped from the condition to the cure, and the cure, as you will have noticed, began with the words, *'But God, who comforts the downcast. . . .'* The very words he used recalled the God of Isaiah 40:1-2. The God of our yesterdays, Paul is

When fear comes calling



saying, is the God of our todays. God, this God, who comforted patriarchs and prophets, comforts Paul in mid-crisis Macedonia. And how? God comforts Paul by sending him Titus who brought with him affirming news from Corinth. The 'God of all comfort' often employs Christ-like people to comfort his servants in times of distress. Let's praise God for people like Titus. Let's be a person like Titus. Be a comforter. Be an encourager. There are too many critics already. God needs a hundred comforters for every critic.

Elisha woke up in Dothan one morning to find his servant in a state of panic. The place was surrounded by a Syrian army 'with horses and chariots. . . . "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?"' the servant asked.⁴

Dothan was surrounded by a mechanised Syrian army thirsting for blood, Elisha's in particular.

What did Elisha do? He prayed. 'O Lord, open his eyes so he may see.' What did Elisha want him to see?

Elisha wanted his servant to see all that he already saw — *but through the lens of faith.*

'Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and he saw the hills full of horsemen and chariots of fire all around Elisha.' (Verse 17.)

Elisha had seen them from the start. Yes, there was a mechanised Syrian army, but God's forces were far superior. Elisha knew that. That was why, even before he prayed, he had been able to say to the servant, 'Don't be afraid. . . . Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' (Verse 16.)

Only prayer can supply the lens of faith. Without that lens, things are not exactly what they seem.

It seemed that Dothan was protected only by crumbly walls and the village militia. Beyond the walls was that menacing army of Syrians intent on slaughter.

'This is what the Lord says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength,

or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this:

*that he understands and knows me. . . .'*⁵

Through prayer and the Word we know the Almighty One, and when we do we see — through the lens of faith — the legions of Heaven.

God's MO was given to Zerubbabel in Zechariah (4:6). 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty. Zerubbabel had faltered and lost heart in the great work God had given him to do. God needed him to know: Your weak spirit must be kindled with fire and fed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Does that apply to you, too?

It applied to Timothy. Paul told him: 'God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.'⁶ For that reason Paul was 'not ashamed' of Christ or his Gospel.

In every storm-tossed sea, Jesus still says, 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.' (Matt. 14:27.)

Knowing God and his Word brings faith in the midst of the storm, and you need faith before you can have peace. That is why Elisha prayed that his servant's eyes should be opened. Moses had said, 'Do not be faint-hearted or afraid. . . . For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.' (Deut. 20:3, 4.) David had said, 'Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.' (Ps. 27:3, NKJV)

Faith enables us to see God's invisible army.⁷

Unlooked for troubles may seem unconquerable. Through the eyes of faith the unseen becomes as real as the visible. Faith visualises the unseen, and the unseen is both spiritual and eternal. So, yes. Send faith to the door when fear comes calling.

References:
¹D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *I Am Not Ashamed* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1986), page 162. ²See 2 Cor. 4:8, 9. ³Paul Barnett, *The Message of 2 Corinthians* (IVP, 1999), page 134. ⁴Read 2 Kings 6:15-17. ⁵Jer. 9:23, 24, my italics. ⁶1 Tim. 1:7, NKJV. ⁷See Heb. 11:27.

The internet and your children: Real threats

by Patrick McKerrrow*

The internet is a dangerous place for young children – and adults. All parents have a responsibility to take appropriate steps to safeguard their children from the real threats of cyber-bullying, brutal computer games, and undesirable images (so called ‘adult’ content). Additionally, we now have issues of internet addiction affecting our young people worldwide.

There are tens of thousands of sexual offenders lurking in computer networks popular among our children.

To parents

Social networking sites such as Facebook are growing at a phenomenal rate. Janet Street-Porter, writing in *The Mail Online* (27.3.2010), observes: ‘Professor Sonia Livingstone, of the London School of Economics, found that Facebook was the sixth most popular social networking site among 6-11-year-olds, a fact that was buried in a report written by the media regulator Ofcom. Although Facebook proudly tells us that their users have to be 13 to sign up, who’s doing the checking?’

She continues: ‘An EU study of online behaviour found that 40% of teenagers had seen pornography and 20% had been bullied. For the young and vulnerable, social networking should be added to the list of addictions, like gambling, drink and drugs.’

Professor Urs Gasser of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society (Harvard University) points out: ‘By the time our children reach adulthood, they will have spent around 20,000 hours in contact with digital technologies, roughly the same amount of time needed to become a professional pianist.’

There are steps parents can take to protect children, as well as software programmes that can help to filter unwanted material, and organisations ready to help. The internet also contains a world of information and advice on how to protect our children.

The most important advice is that you as parents have a responsibility to *learn* and do all you can to *protect* your children. Fundamental to this is the need to talk with them and give advice about the dangers. This is the key to protecting your children against unwelcome interactions with other children over the internet. Tell them and discuss positively the issues and dangers and how to overcome them.

The aim of any effective measures designed to protect children on the internet is to take advantage of the enormous benefits and positive elements of the internet while recognising the serious and real dangers that inherently exist in it. I list below some useful sources of help:

- **Google – Tips for online safety**
http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en/landing/family_safety/
Safeguards you from ‘adult’ content. Basically, you can modify the computer’s SafeSearch settings.

- **Childnet International**
<http://childnet-int.org/safety/factsheets.aspx>
Aims to make the internet safe for children.

- **Love Our Children USA**
http://www.loveourchildrenusa.org/parent_internetsafety.php
Has helpful advice on safeguarding your children on the net.

- **Filtering software**
Relatively cheap, these computer programmes protect your children from unwanted and harmful material. I would recommend the Net Nanny parental controls – sometimes it can be seen as over-protecting but on balance this software provides strong filtering and blocking of unwanted material. Others include Safe Eyes, CYBERSitter, CyberSight PC, McAfee Parental Controls, FilterPak, imView, and so on. What you want is what is called ‘Contextual dynamic filtering’ – blocking of what is actually there at that precise time. Some of these programmes can report on how long and where your children are looking.

- **These sites are useful for advice and help with any issues:** www.ceop.gov.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk

To children

In a short article it is not possible to cover extensively this important subject, however the following rules should be useful for children:

- Do not give out your name, address, mobile phone number, school name or password to people online whom you do not know – always check with your parents first.
- Do not meet in cyberspace unless you are very sure of who is at the other end – seek permission from your parents and only meet these people when your parents are present.
- Do not accept any emails or open files from people you don’t really know or trust. You may find that they contain viruses or nasty messages.
- Do not forget that people online may be lying and may not be who they say they are.
- Any time you suspect or feel uncomfortable when chatting or messaging, end the conversation immediately.
- You must tell your parents if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or you are worried.

Finally, parents . . .

Finally, when you set up your computer you can set up accounts for your children to login under a

limited access account so that you as a parent can control what they can search and view. You can use parental control blocks to set limits to how long they can use the computer, the types of games they can play and programmes they can use.

In addition to search engine facilities to control what children can search, and the controls available via the computer’s operating system such as Windows XP, Vista, and so on, your Firewall should be configured to block unwanted images and sites. Additionally, your anti-virus software should come with lots of modules for protecting you from spyware, internet ID fraud and so on.

Remember, whatever steps you take, you need to review them regularly, daily if possible, because there are people out there intent on doing great harm to your children and they are working 24/7 to do so. And please talk to your children.

* Patrick McKerrrow did postgraduate studies in computing at the London School of Economics. He has worked in the field of computing at British Aerospace (now BAE Systems), Dalgely Plc and Local Government.

Will England go Catholic again?

by Patrick Boyle

On a Tuesday in March over seven hundred people, including the writer, paid £30 a head to listen and share in a two and a half hour debate on this the motion: England Should Be A Catholic Country Again.

The debate, organised by *The Spectator*, took place in the lecture hall of the Royal Geographical Society. Lying behind the debate is the visit to Britain of Pope Benedict XVI in September of this year.

The motion was proposed by Cardinal Cormac Murphy O’Connor. Opposing it was Lord Harries, retired Bishop of Oxford and currently Professor of Divinity at Kings College, London.

Andrew Neil, editor and media personality, chaired the meeting.

Both the proposal and objection had two supporting speakers.

In support were Piers Paul Read, a well-known Catholic author, and Don Anthony Sutch, parish priest and former headmaster of the famous Catholic School, Downside.

Against were journalist and author Matthew Parris and Stephen Pound, MP for North Ealing.

Each speaker had nine minutes for his presentation, after which the meeting was open to response from the audience.

A straw poll was taken before the debate of which 247 were in favour of the motion, 189 against, leaving 244 undecided.

A public debate of this nature is of interest to all Christians, not least to Seventh-day Adventists who have a particular understanding of the Catholic Church and its role in history.

Cardinal Cormac, a fine gentleman, presented the Protestant Reformation as a negative event for

England. He argued that a return to Catholicism would be of great value to the English people.

Lord Harries, objecting to the proposal, pointed out that Catholicism is a rigid and inflexible religion which does not respond to scientific, cultural and societal change. Anglicanism, he argued, is adaptable to change, accepting the Darwinian concept of evolution and the rational approach to Scripture. A final point was directed against Catholic intransigence in regard to contraception, IVF and abortion.

Piers Read was more radical than the Cardinal. He presented the traditional Catholic view that Jesus founded the Church on Peter as the one true Church. He said that the moral teaching of the Church was the antidote to the breakdown of society. The Catholic Church, he said, represented the full truth of the Gospel, safeguarded by Scripture, tradition and the magisterium.

He faced full on the problems of abortion, homosexuality, divorce, and the moral morass of society caused by liberal thinking. Catholic morality does not adapt to moral chaos but confronts it with divine truth, he concluded.

Matthew Parris began his response by declaring himself a non-believer. However, he said he was going to argue the case from a Christian perspective. He would have pleased the most right wing Protestant or Seventh-day Adventist with his response in dismantling of the heart of Catholic belief. He did so forcefully but with a spirit free from abuse or rancour. He was a model of how to present a topic in public. With rigour, historical accuracy, intellectual power and transparent honesty he laid bare the difference between, on the one hand, Catholicism and, on the other, the teachings of Jesus. He commanded and received unstinted applause from everyone present. Yet his presentation did not lead to the defeat of the proposal, England Should Be a Catholic Country Again, which from the facts he presented should have done so.

The power of Matthew’s argument was in setting forth the person and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth and contrasting them with those of Catholicism and Anglicanism. Rituals, robes, pomp, ceremony were both a denial and a rejection of his person and teachings. The exaltation of Mary as an intercessor between God and men, priestly celibacy, the absurd claim the church was founded on Peter, papal infallibility and the superstition of the Mass, one and all have no place in Jesus’ life or teachings. His observations caused some heckling which he handled easily.

He concluded with a significant observation. Where the Catholic Church had the power it has always persecuted those who opposed it. His closing statement: ‘This Protestant atheist holds that England must never be a Catholic country again.’

Reflecting on the fact that his presentation did not lead to the defeat of the motion led me to ask the question, ‘Why?’

Were the people present stupid, bigoted, prejudiced, fanatical? I don’t think so. If anything, I would say they were a highly educated audience. I believe the reasons the motion was carried lay in the manner of its presentation. The proposers

MONO-ETHNIC CHURCHES

Dear Editor

Once again we have an article, *MESSENGER*, 16 April 2010, [The Challenges of Diversity in the British Union] which highlights the continuing disturbing segregation along racial lines of the Adventist Church in the UK. My feeling is that this is a very dangerous trend for a number of reasons, not least among them that in the current economic recession, coupled with today’s political uncertainty and possible instability, such communities may become easy targets for the disgruntled in society.

My other concern is that this trend seemingly disregards the ‘majority culture members’ – those of us who can still find a comfortable seat in an Adventist church. I can imagine the accusations of racism were I to suggest that I would feel far more comfortable worshipping in a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) church, with its tradition of order, structure and timeliness. Pastor McFarlane notes that ‘worship is meaningful only in the context of one’s culture’.

Does this apply equally to the indigenous population? I do not go to church to have an African experience, a Caribbean experience, a Filipino experience or, indeed, even a British experience. I go to church to worship God, however uncomfortable it is for me at times.

Name withheld at writer’s request

IMPORTANT DEBATE

Dear Editor

Theologians and pastors in the Danish Lutheran as well as free churches are presently debating important questions relating to the value of Christian doctrines and the probability of salvation in non-Christian religions.

asserted that what they were saying was self-evidently true. Who would reject it? They did not attempt to argue their position so much as to proclaim it. This kind of approach always makes the burden of proving the assertions wrong difficult. It is easier to make claims for a position than to argue against them.

Another very useful ploy was treating objections, not with abuse, but with good humour which indulges them but, in fact, ignores them.

The prevailing perception might have been that Matthew Parris’s view was old fashioned, prejudiced and out of date in this enlightened and liberal age.

Is it because verbal presentations do not have the same power as those written down in black and white? There are biblical examples which suggest this may be true. Pilate’s appeal to the Jews to set Christ free. Stephen’s presentation to the Sanhedrin. Has truth more persuasive power in written form than in verbal presentation?

It is a war of words where the conservative Christians firmly emphasise that ‘salvation is found in no other name’, while extreme liberals go for a radical revitalisation of Christian doctrines.

These are areas that I as pastor and missiologist not only follow with great interest, but I also try to be involved, make my contributions and extend my studies as I learn a lot from the exchanges of views.

I want to share with you the two succinct sentences from a female Lutheran pastor, a valuable contribution to the debate:

‘When we are most keen to obscure or obliterate religious differences, the risk is that we will just be left with empty air. What is worse, we will have robbed others of the beliefs they thought they had.’ Sorine Gotfredsen.

BORGE SCHANTZ

SHOCKED AND PAINED!

Dear Editor

While the letters of *MESSENGER* 16 April 2010 raised a point that should not be ignored, did they address the real issue? A survey done of young women night-club dancers indicated that they showed the most bare flesh at the time in their monthly cycle when they were most likely to conceive! Is the real point that all our young women – not just the ones in the pictures – need to be aware of the subconscious message they may be sending to young men? We exclaim when our young women become pregnant, but should we address the point at an earlier stage in the mutual attraction process?

B. GOWLAND

This letter has been substantially reworded hopefully without distorting the point being made.

ARCHAIC ATTITUDES

Dear Editor

I wish to respond to the letter published in the 16 April 2010 issue of *MESSENGER* regarding the attire of young church members.

I am dismayed that such archaic and spiritually irrelevant attitudes still exist in our church congregations. Opinions such as these will further deplete the youth membership and alienate people who need our guidance and support at this challenging period in their lives.

Perhaps we should be asking ourselves, ‘What would Jesus do?’ rather than judging one another by appearance alone.

MRS C. L. R. SCHOLES, Bartsley

SHOCKED AND PAINED!

Dear Editor

I refer to the correspondence in *MESSENGERS* 16 April and 30 April. Thus far correspondents have shown no appreciation of that wonderful aspect of humour we call ‘irony’. First, the irony of the young couple [5 March issue] who were awarded the ‘Best Dressed’ cup, and are deliberately wearing fashions from their great-grandparents’ era, the Age of the Débutante. Second, the implied – ironic – message of the young couple to a people whose national motto (inappropriately in old French) is ‘Honi soit qui mal y pense’. That, I believe, means ‘Evil to him who evil thinks’. ‘May I infer that any evil is not in the picture, but IN the eye of the one who has looked at the picture?’

A. J. GRANT

Editor: I think readers have just about exhausted the implications of the picture of an end-of-year youth banquet. Time to move on, perhaps? Unless, that is, the youth themselves would like to have the final word. . . .

Don Sutch and Stephen Pound added humour but nothing of substance to the debate.

A vote was taken before the evening concluded. In favour 349, against 277, the rest undecided. The motion England Should Be A Catholic Country Again was carried.

What follows is a personal reflection.

In the great public debates, are Seventh-day Adventists conspicuous by their absence?

Is the Church in serious danger of becoming, if it is not already on the way to being, a religious social club which meets on Saturdays?

Do its members mistake converse with the Church for dialogue with the world?

Are we aware of religious, social and political changes within society?

We do not need to moderate, dilute or change our beliefs. They are solidly founded on the Word of God. But we must find new, fresh and relevant ways to witness to our beliefs and communicate them to the world outside the Church.

Is Christianity being edged off the BBC?

by Helen Pearson



Newbold's final diversity lecture of the 2010 academic year was given by a Welsh Jamaican Quaker from a Yemeni Arab Irish background who had never before set foot in a Seventh-day Adventist community. As her wide-ranging lecture showed, Linda Mitchell was clearly qualified by her experience in the print and visual media to be former Director of Diversity at the BBC.

Throughout her lecture she encouraged her audience to view the media and themselves

critically. 'After 90 minutes watching TV, I criticise Wimbledon finalists or Arsenal footballers as if I'm an authority. I am not,' she said. 'The media make us feel we know more and can do more than we actually can,' she added. We need to be aware of its effects upon us.

Examining some of the effects of television Ms Mitchell pointed out that TV pictures can put us in touch with sides of ourselves that we hadn't expected. 'The sight of British servicemen being taken through the deathly quiet streets of Wootton Bassett thronged with members of the public shows that the British public is finding a way of expressing its deep questions about the war. The media are able to collect those expressions and focus them back to people,' she said. She talked about 'the multiplier effect' of such images feeding back into people's feelings and people wanting to make their feelings known. 'There is a growing division in the country between those who passively accept what the media show and those who respond,' she said.

Once people respond and start communicating with each other, they need to find ways to do it in an increasingly complex society. 'As a place for informed debate between various interest groups, Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) is more important now than ever,' said Ms Mitchell.

As the media audience diversifies, public service broadcasters must be more representative of

the society in which they are operating than ever before in terms of race, religion, gender, sexuality and disability. Ms Mitchell looked at the importance of debates in newsrooms between people of different backgrounds and experiences and emphasised that organisations must be changed so that these debates happen and programmes will reflect the society in which they are made.

Finally, Ms Mitchell came to the subject of Faith in the Media and whether coverage of Christianity was being edged out by coverage of other religions. 'If there is less coverage of Christianity,' she said, 'it is probably more about pervasive secularism than any conspiracy against Christianity.' In a week when Adventist contributions had been made both on the BBC1 programme, The Big Questions, and Premier Radio, she also emphasised that Christians should not just rely on PSB, but should take advantage of and create their own media offering in what she called the 'intangible' channels of the internet, you-tube and viral networking.

The audience responded with questions – first a formal session talking about Christians working in the media, the tension between authenticity and political correctness, and the differences between public service broadcasting in the UK and other countries. An informal Q&A session followed as students gathered around to quiz Ms Mitchell for another half an hour. 'It is vital that young and old in the Church understand the way the media work,' said Victor Hulbert, Communication director at the BUC. 'In her conversation with Newbold students, Ms Mitchell made an important contribution to that process.'

Watford Mayor makes presentation

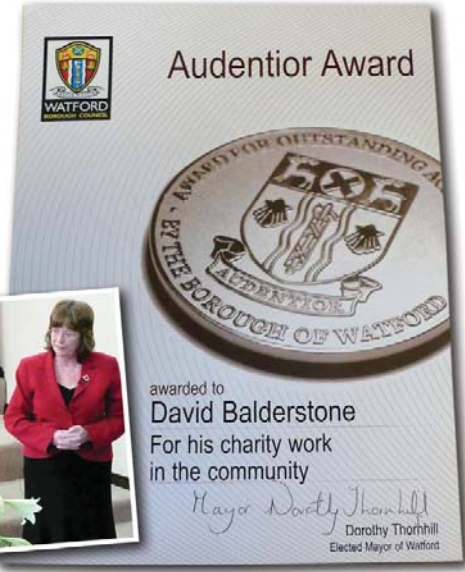
On Easter Saturday, 3 April, our elected Mayor Dorothy Thornhill made a special visit to the Stanborough Park church. Her purpose was to make a posthumous Audentior Award to David Balderstone for his charity work in the local community.

Born in nearby Slough, David lived and worked in or near Watford for most of his life. Apart from running his own businesses, David devoted a huge portion of his time, energy and finance to charity work. He had been closely associated with ADRA-UK, the Adventist Development & Relief Agency arm of his Church. Over the past four decades, his involvement had taken him to various countries in Africa and Eastern Europe. On more than one occasion, David was in great danger.

Sadly David passed away on 16 January after his long fight with cancer.

During her presentation, Mayor Dorothy paid tribute to David for his charity work conducted both in this country and overseas. The Audentior Award was then presented to David's wife, Mrs Audrey Balderstone. In accepting the award, Audrey spoke briefly of David's contribution to the various charities with which he was associated. In the congregation was his elder son Dr Peter Balderstone, who has also grown up here in Stanborough Park and is now a lecturer at Newbold College in Bracknell, Berkshire.

Photos and article by JOHNSON WONG



Distinction for Stanborough Primary

On Sunday 21 March Mrs Hanson was pleased to take a group of children from Stanborough Primary School to the 2010 Watford Music Festival. For the second year running, Stanborough Primary pupils received a 'distinction' for their performance. The adjudicator said that the performance was 'characterised by real precision of diction and intonation'. He also went on to say that the choir 'sang with a good blend and a very well projected tone, communicating how much fun they were having'. His final remarks were: 'It was a most enjoyable and thoroughly well prepared performance.'

We have many gifted and talented children at our school, and it is particularly rewarding when we are able to find suitably challenging events for them to be involved in. The children worked extremely hard in preparation. They came to realise that excellence in singing requires focus and dedication. Each one rose suitably to the challenge, and we were very pleased with the outcome.

KATHLEEN HANSON

Now is the time

Daniella Fuller was dedicated as a baby in the Balham church in January 2001 and has been attending ever since. When Daniella heard that there was to be a baptism on 5 December 2009, one week before her ninth birthday, she approached her parents and said she would like to be baptised.

That was not the first time Daniella had spoken to her parents about being baptised. She had approached them a year previously, but decided to wait until her eldest brother, Anthony Fuller, came back from studying at Oakwood University, so that he could witness his little sister's baptism. So Daniella's parents knew she had been giving it much consideration and did not hesitate in helping her be prepared for her baptism. Daniella said she enjoyed going down in the baptismal pool. She loved hearing her favourite text Hebrews 11:1 read by her mum and dad, and it was especially nice when she heard her favourite song 'I surrender all' sung by Jonathan and Joshua Clarke.

Sharon Graham grew up in the Adventist faith since the age of 7. Many baptisms came and went and she did not feel ready to be baptised. Sharon never gave up waiting for the assurance that the time was right and believed that at the right time God would reveal to her when she should be baptised. Sharon started attending the Balham church seven years ago. She did visit other churches but felt that Balham provided the most comfortable and welcoming atmosphere. God directed her to make her commitment to him on 5 December 2009. God showed her tomorrow might never come and now is the time. Sharon knew this was the right time; God has done so much for her and has helped her through the good and bad times. Sharon knew she could not go through another year without committing her entire life to him.

NATASHA SHARMAH and SHARON GRAHAM



Left to right: Pastor Selburn Fray, Fairai Manangazira, Mengezi Thebe, Brenda Rivera (with baby), Berman Rivera, and church elder Eric Lawrence.

Baptism at Bethel

'How to become a favourite child of God' was how guest speaker Pastor Chihway emboldened four candidates for baptism.

Berman Rivera, Brenda Rivera, Mengezi Thebe and Fairai Manangazira, who had been regularly attending Bethel church services in Derby, made public their alliance with God on Sabbath 20 March.

On that day, Pastor Chihway powerfully exhorted the candidates and the church to become and stay children of God: 'Practise the presence of God', 'Don't be casual with God' and 'Don't be too busy for God'. These three practical tips set the tone for the baptismal ceremony where Pastor Fray, the minister for Bethel Derby, had the immense joy of leading all four into the baptismal waters.

The baptismal service saw another celebration. Brenda and Berman Rivera not only publicly accepted Christ as their personal Saviour, they also celebrated their eighth wedding anniversary.

Bethel church then warmly welcomed its four new favourite children of God in its midst. Indeed, God's favour is at work in Derby, which will certainly lead to other baptisms soon and maybe to a new church being planted as a result.

CLARISSE ELYSEE



Hello Christian Stars!

Of what are you reminded when you see a rainbow in the sky? Do you think of Noah, God's friend, who built a boat just as God had asked him? Isn't it amazing that the lessons Noah and his family learned about God and life are still important for us today?

Remember how God promised Noah that if he obeyed and trusted him, God would keep him and his family safe in the boat. He didn't promise to take Noah away from the flood, but he promised to bring him safely through it.

Do you sometimes feel you are drowning in a flood of problems? Perhaps you are worried that you do not yet understand something you are learning at school, perhaps you are having relationship problems with your friends or a member of your family. Maybe other things cause you to worry. During these times, remember God's words to us. He promises that if we obey and trust him, he will help us through every challenge.

Rainbow prayer

We know Noah was God's friend and he often talked to him in prayer. By keeping close to God, he treated people kindly and with respect, unlike the many other people who were horrid and cruel. Here is something fun you could do this afternoon or later in the week.

Draw a rainbow on a large piece of paper and colour it in. Remember the order of the colours - red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. Cut it out. Write this promise from God on the rainbow:

'As long as the earth continues planting and harvest, cold and hot, summer and winter, day and night will not stop.'
Genesis 8:11

Now draw some large raindrops, cut out the shapes and punch a hole near the top. Thread a narrow ribbon or piece of wool through the hole of each raindrop. Make sure each one is a different length.

Write something special on each raindrop for which you want to pray. Make the same number of holes at the bottom of the rainbow as there are raindrops and tie the raindrops to it. Hang it up in your room and use it as a prayer reminder. Pray that God will take care of you and your family just as he did Noah.



Promises to share

Make a template for the outline of the ark. Draw round it five times and then cut them out. Use a Children's Bible to find the following promises, and write one on each ark.

Psalm 4:1; Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 40:31; Luke 11:9 & 10; Philippians 4:7.

Colour the arks and decorate them. Share them with family or neighbours to remind them of God's great love and care. They will make lovely bookmarks or fridge magnets.

Animals of the world

Have you ever considered that Noah might have been the first animal conservationist? And the ark could have been the first animal sanctuary! Saving the animals meant that the whole ecological cycle could begin again. Sadly, people have been reckless and careless about the animal world, and many animals have become extinct. God wants us to look after the beautiful creatures and world he gave us. Think about the part you can play in saving the endangered animals. Here are pictures of five animals on the endangered list. Can you link them to the country where they live?



Craft an ark

- Place a dinner plate on a large piece of stiff paper or card and draw around it. Do this twice, then cut out the circular shapes.
- Colour the top edge of one of the circles to look like a rainbow.
- Fold the other circle in half and cut it on the fold line. You now have half a circle.
- Colour the half-circle brown - make it look like wood. You can add some portholes. This will be the front of the boat.
- Run some glue round the edge of the back of the half-circle and glue it to the circle on which you have drawn the rainbow. (Make sure the edges match up neatly. You should have the rainbow at the top, and the boat at the bottom.)
- Now draw Noah and some of your favourite animals. Colour them in and then cut out the shapes. Glue them in place so that they look as though they are in the ark, but visible.



Find God's special promise

HELP! By accident, extra letters were added to this special promise. Strike them out and see if you can read this beautiful promise.

Wxhxexnxtxhxerrxaxixnxbxoxwaxpypxexaxrxsxiixnxtxhxexcxlxo
xuxdxs,lxwxixlxlrxexmxexmbxexrxtxhxexagxrxexemxexnxtx
xhxaxtcxoxnxtixnxuxexsxfxoxrxexvexrxbxextwxexenxmex
axnxdxexvexrxylixvixnxgtxhixnxgxoxtxhxexexaxrxtxhx



Sabbath 3 April 2010 was a high day in Greenwich church for the Adventurer and Pathfinder club. It was also a day of firsts.

- The first Master Guide to be invested
- The first Master Award to be achieved by a Pathfinder
- The first Adventurer and Pathfinder march through the town of Greenwich
- The first Adventurer and Pathfinder induction service

The Sabbath School programme was overseen by Edem Venyo who was later invested as an Explorer. His fellow Explorer investees Lanae Alman and Tailar Lindsay-Brown presented a cheque to James Hunt from the local Demelza Children's Hospice after the club raised over £100 from a sponsored read.

Members from the Brixton and Lewisham drum corps brought the church to order as the Adventurers and Pathfinders performed a slow march into the sanctuary. Presentations were made to members of the church for their contribution to the club over the past year. Then a surprise presentation of flowers and trophies was made to the director Judith Smith and deputy director for many years Dorothy Blenman. These two sisters have contributed over twenty-five years each of dedicated service to the Deptford

Greenwich Adventurers and Pathfinders

and Greenwich Adventurer and Pathfinder club, touching young lives and sowing seeds for God in the hearts of young people. Following a year of hard work and commitment from all, a record two Eager Beavers, twelve Adventurers, nine Pathfinders and one Master Guide were invested.

Pastor Des Boileau, the BUC Youth director, was guest speaker for the day. Other guests present were Trevor Harewood, Trevor Wilson, Vernon Noel and Master Guides and Pathfinders from Lewisham, Plumstead, Brixton and Philadelphia, USA.

Lunch was enjoyed by all and God held back the rain as the Adventurers, Pathfinders and church members marched through the streets of Greenwich led by the Brixton drum corps. A drumming display was conducted by the Brixton drum corps in the famous Cutty Sark Area and was thoroughly enjoyed by the public, after which the procession continued back to the church. Once rehydrated the Adventurers conducted a brief song service with their deputy director. This was followed by two Adventurer counsellors conducting the Adventurer induction service where parents pledged to support their children in this course of study.

The director and deputy director then conducted the first Pathfinder induction ceremony in the history of the church. Every Pathfinder took part, by reciting their pledge and law commitments and lighting a candle in a solemn ceremony. The new members also added their lights to the club and were welcomed into the fellowship of the Greenwich club.

SOPHIA LINDSAY-ROBINSON

Passion play

On Good Friday 2 April, the Stanborough Park church Passion Play took place for the second year, directed this time by Diana Ionita, assisted by Angelika Horwood. Recounting the events of Jesus' life and ministry leading up to his crucifixion and resurrection, the church

members were transported back to first-century Jerusalem as they watched the story unfold. Many of the actors reprised their roles (and costumes) from last year and even the donkey made a welcome return, although this year he needed Nick Dean (in the role of Jesus) to put a gentle arm around his neck and encourage him into the crowded sanctuary!

A new feature this year was the exhibition in the Stanborough Centre. These were of scenes that life can sometimes throw at us – times when we hurt and cry out in anguish. But at the end of the walkway, a picture of Jesus' face was drawn in large scale, made up of the same scenes just viewed. However, as one looked at the detail in the large drawing and the accompanying pictures drawn by the Stanborough Park church and school youth, it was made obvious that in our times of trial Jesus is by our side every step of the way.

During the play, the children in the audience were entranced as the story they had heard told or had simply read in books was brought vividly to life, even more so for those children who took part in the market scenes and other memorable scenes. The acting was so good that those sitting in the front rows of the church were heartbroken when one little girl sitting on her father's lap cried out, 'Help, help!' as Jesus was being nailed to the cross. Another touching moment occurred as Jesus rose from the tomb after defeating death, when several of the children ran onto the stage, faces beaming, anxious to be hugged by the risen King. Somehow I believe all those in

the audience felt his joyful embrace that evening. As the lights faded not a sound could be heard as everyone seemed transfixed, until the resounding round of applause brought us back to the present and showed the audience's appreciation.

The rest of the evening was spent in happy fellowship over a glass of juice and a hot cross bun. A wonderful start to the Easter weekend.

Photos from the event are available on the BUC gallery. Some photos have been put onto a special fundraising site. See: <http://tinyurl.com/passionplay2010>. If anyone would like to purchase images, the transaction is carried out directly with Photobox who will print and deliver their photos or mini-books. Any profits will be donated to the ADRA Haiti appeal (approximately £0.10 from a small print or £3.60 from a miniBook).

NATALIE DAVISON

Kettering Pathfinders

An invitation to Sabbath lunch is a welcome opportunity to enjoy good food and good fellowship. On Sabbath 27 March the members of the Kettering church were invited to a special lunch hosted and served

Wednesfield baptism — after 34 years!

Why so long? Is that your reaction, too? I decided to ask Carolgene Novelette Sawyers that very question. Carolgene has been attending church in Wolverhampton, mainly Wednesfield, for such a long time (over thirty-four years) and few realised that she had not been baptised. So when her name came up for baptism some were asking, Is this a rebaptism?

Carolgene started attending church with her parents as a child but kept putting off her decision. She said, 'I believed in God, I believed in his Word but struggled to commit.' Carolgene finally made her commitment after she and her family went through some difficult times. This led her to spend time down on her knees praying for others until she turned fully to God. The key element in making her decision was, as she put it, 'talking and, even more, listening to God'. Her advice to others who may be in a similar situation is to 'commune with God and listen more to him and his leading'.

On 13 March Carolgene was baptised after an inspirational sermon from Dr Patrick Herbert entitled 'This thing called convenience', reflecting on Paul's appeal which brought Felix to the gate of opportunity, yet Felix put off to a more convenient time his decision for God (Acts 24:24, 25). God in his mercy and gracious love allowed the difficulties of life to bring Carolgene once again to the gate of opportunity. This time she grabbed it and was baptised by the resident minister Pastor Moses Msimanga at Wednesfield church and received into fellowship thirty-four years after first stepping into the church. This was the crowning event for this quarter's Guests Day.

LYS NAYLOR



by the Kettering Pathfinders. This was no ordinary occasion but had a special reason.

After the eldest group attended the TED Camporee four years ago, our younger children were eager also to go to Finland in July/August 2010 and realised that they would all be old enough to attend. But the cost seemed far beyond their means, especially as for five families there were two children each eager to go. However, Kettering church values its young people and the Board gave them a challenge. 'You raise at least £100 each for yourselves, and we will match it.' This made the dream appear more of a possibility, and numerous activities, aided by birthday and Christmas gifts, brought money rolling in. The Board kept their word and added bonuses in

various ways to enable the deadlines for deposits and payments to be met.

This Sabbath lunch – a choice of main courses, choice of desserts, rounded off with hot drinks and mints – was the Pathfinders' way of expressing their thanks to the church members for their support. Or as they put it in the cards we all received:

'Thank you for your support of our plans to attend the TED Camporee in Finland this Summer. We really appreciate the money that you have set aside to enable us to go. With best wishes and thanks' – and then all twelve names of the Kettering Pathfinders.

We know how to invest our money wisely in Kettering.

DOROTHY TAYLOR



London Ghana youth

by Rubina F. Arthur

Going to church without the power of the Holy Spirit is like baking without flour, young people at the London Ghana SDA church have been told.

Ending the Youth Week of Prayer on 20 March, Pastor Charles Bediako of the Stuttgart Ghanaian church addressed the youth and the rest of the congregation: 'The Holy Spirit is the flour that makes the bread of the Christian. Without him, you cannot be a true friend of Christ.'

Running with the theme, 'Jesus the Leader', Pastor Bediako urged his young audience during the prayer week to be experts in the knowledge of God, passionate about people, and to maintain absolute self-control in order to be able to win souls for Christ.

Showing an eagerness for spiritual growth, the London Ghana youth abandoned all their after-school activities and attended the programme in their numbers with friends from all walks of life. Their dedication and hard work was especially evident on the final day, when many of them ministered in songs and mimes, as well as the 'Two

girls, Two Dilemmas, One God' sketch (written by two of the youth, Vanessa and Danielle), which demonstrated God's amazing power to save sinners from all cultures and backgrounds.

Following Pastor Bediako's call to become leaders for Christ, many of the young people who attended the Youth Week of Prayer have made the bold decision to be baptised. Thirteen-year-old Esther Mensah is one such young person. She says, 'I want to be baptised because I want to give my life to God and keep my body as a temple.'

Michael Dankwa, who is 12, also had some remarkable things to say when asked why he wants to get baptised. He said, 'I want to be baptised because I want to start afresh. I want to go to Heaven, and the Bible says you can only go to Heaven if you get baptised.'

Hearing such profound words from young people in East London was refreshing since it showed that amidst all the temptations and pressures which they face, the power of the Holy Spirit always surrounds those who yearn to follow Jesus Christ the Leader.

Derby Chester Green church is holding a special day of praise and celebration in honour of the church's rededication. Services will be conducted by Pastor Ian Sweeney, president of the North England Conference, and Pastor Paul Haworth, executive secretary of the Conference.

Date: 15 May
Morning service: 9.45am-1pm
Lunch: 1.30-2.30pm
Rededication service: 4-6pm

Croydon: 'To Haiti with love'

'To Haiti with love' was the title of the memorable fundraising concert held at the Croydon church on 28 February. The packed, diverse audience – several hundred strong – incorporated a sizeable number of folk from the local community. One determined visitor endured a five-hour journey in order to attend the event. He, along with the rest

of the audience, was not to be disappointed!
The concert was the brainchild of Croydon member Clive Coutet, and his idea soon snowballed and came to fruition.
Stirring solos, lilting airs, powerful anthems – all were provided by the artistes on the night. The themes that melded all of the songs together

were those of the reality of God's love for us and the acknowledgement that in the midst of adversity, God is still close by. Performing on the night were Croydon SDA Gospel Choir, Croydon Children's Choir, Estelle Lavard, Gerard Lam-Hing, Abigail Lee and her father Paul Lee.
During the course of the evening, ADRA Representative Godwin Benjamin delivered an extremely comprehensive, enlightening report on the amazing work that ADRA is currently performing in Haiti in profoundly challenging conditions.

The appeal for funds was enthusiastically given by Ainsley Stephenson, and an initial impressive £2,051 was duly raised. With the strong belief that the round figure of £2,500 was still attainable, Ainsley made a second appeal and instigated an additional collection. Subsequently, a grand total of £2,711 was raised on the night! Once Gift Aid is factored in, it is expected that the final sum will exceed £3,000.

The Croydon SDA Gospel Choir ended the concert with a rousing, majestic rendition of 'The Final Word' performed in their own inimitable style. Croydon's Pastor Richard Daly followed this with his vote of thanks in which he thanked the local dignitaries for taking time out to attend the event. These included Croydon Mayoress Margaret Meade, Croydon Borough Commander Adrian Roberts and his daughter, Jason Hadden (prospective MP for Croydon North), and Mervyn Went (prospective Councillor for Selhurst). Three representatives from Haiti were also in attendance.

BOBBY BARKER



Paul Lee

ENDITNOW campaign in Carlisle

From 20 March till the end of May, Carlisle church is running a campaign for 'enditnow – Adventists Say No To Violence Against Women' in the town centre of Carlisle, Cumbria. Youth from Stockport church accompanied by Pastor Geoff Smith sang in the town centre with a portable amplifier while others collected signatures for 'enditnow' from the public. It is hoped that a million signatures throughout England will be obtained and handed to the United Nations by the end of May. While some people are in a rush and have no time to sign, others stop and appreciate the effort that Adventists in Carlisle are willing to make. Many conversations are started about all kinds of abuse, and some people are given brief counselling with the approach of not reliving but forgiving others, and cutting off the past by walking into a new abuse-free future.

CRAIG BAXTER



Worcester centenary

The members of the Worcester church celebrated their 100th anniversary on 27 March, and all those present had a joyful day of fellowship and thanksgiving. For those present, it was an opportunity to remember, with gratitude, all those who were their 'spiritual ancestors', especially those who were organised as a church in Worcester, and who became part of God's special people. Twelve precious souls were baptised on the evening of Friday 25 March 1910 in the local baths, after tent meetings were conducted by Brother A. S. Rodd (later 'Pastor'), during the summer of 1909, assisted by J. B. West and Clara Sanders. 'The attendance was small, but a few were deeply interested.' After some months of house-to-house visitations there was a better attendance and interest at the meetings held in a local hall. Several visits were made by the BUC and NEC presidents at that time. On the next day, Sabbath 26 March, the twelve newly-baptised members, with six others by transfer, officially became a church in the North England Conference. Hence that first Sabbath day must have been a wonderful and exciting one for all those eighteen plus souls, becoming part of the great family of God! Within six months (September 1910), another ten people were also baptised and their names were added to the membership list.

For the anniversary in 2010, invitations were sent to previous members and friends and there was a good congregation gathered for a very happy Sabbath day, celebrating a very special birthday. At the end of the Sabbath School, everyone present was given gifts of a rose and a bookmark by the children, as a reminder of the special occasion. The motto 'Lest we forget' was



chosen for this centenary year, as well as for the recent Sabbath. In the message for the day, given by the writer, the congregation was encouraged to remember at this particular time the goodness and love of God for his people down through the centuries, and also to be just as thankful for those who, one hundred years ago, responded to the three angels' messages, and then faithfully lived and preached God's truth. They, like us, were not only part of God's family, but also part of God's history, the history of all God's saints and martyrs in times past. The congregation was reminded that there are many Scriptures that exhort us to 'remember' and 'not to forget' God's leadings and blessings. God wants us to remember him and his saints, as he remembers us.

After a luscious and generous lunch, the afternoon was a time of praise and thanksgiving by the use of music, arranged by the young people. Various groups sang lovely songs, and there were also duets and solos. The congregation also lustily sang some wonderful hymns of praise, and their singing reminded them that Jesus is coming soon, and God is waiting to welcome his people into his everlasting Kingdom. And that will be a wonderful time of reunion, when we shall meet all those, among others, who established the church in Worcester for us today who are part of their legacy.

Another celebration day is planned for 12 June, when we shall have the NEC president (Pastor Ian Sweeney), previous pastors, lay-preachers and friends with us for the day to continue with our celebrations during this present year. If there is anyone who would like to visit us on that special occasion of thanksgiving, you will be very welcome.

DORIS J. LACK

The Good Samaritan church

On 20 March, Walthamstow church held its first Bone Marrow and Blood Registration Clinic. The clinic was organised by the Health Ministries department in conjunction with the charity organisation African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust (ACLT) and the South England Conference. ACLT was founded by Beverley De-Gale and Orin Lewis to raise awareness of leukaemia and the shortage of bone marrow donors within black and ethnic minority groups after their son Daniel De-Gale desperately needed a donor. Why is this charity so important? I'll let the figures speak for themselves. If you are in need of a bone marrow transplant and you are white, your chances of finding a donor are 1 in 5; if you are black or mixed race it's 1 in 100,000. This is simply because there are not enough black people on the register.

So how did it all begin? Well, Health Ministries leader Eugenie Farrell, already an avid supporter of the ACLT charity, had read an article in *MESSENGER* about the charity holding a Blood Registration Clinic in Clapton church last year. She contacted Beverley De-Gale to find out how Walthamstow church could help out. The charity was already familiar with Walthamstow church as they were going to be part of a 'Health Expo' held in 2009 and so were excited at the opportunity of working with the church this time round.

Beverley explained that as part of a campaign for 2010 called 'Heroes Wanted' they aim to recruit approximately 2,000 new black and ethnic minority donors through Blood Registration Clinics all over the country. It was through this conversation that Eugenie was informed of an appeal for a 4-year-old boy called Tabo Chibafa who was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) in July 2009. Sadly, in January 2010 Tabo suffered a relapse and urgently needs a bone marrow transplant to survive. His parents attend a Seventh-day Adventist church in Johannesburg, South Africa, and put out an appeal for members of the church congregation and members of the public to support their son in finding his lifesaver.

Prayers were said, flyers distributed, invites on Facebook went out, local press were contacted and

finally Walthamstow church members did what they do best – they worked together to make sure that on Sabbath 20 March the doors were open ready and waiting for the congregation and members of the public to 'Save a Life and Be A Hero'.

As part of divine service, Orin Lewis gave a short presentation on leukaemia, eliminated the taboos and myths about bone marrow donation and how joining the bone marrow register could potentially save a life. This was followed by a testimony from Sheila Appiah who had recently lost her daughter in February after failing to find a donor for her. She bravely urged everyone in the congregation to register, and acknowledged that it was only through her dependence on God that she was able to stand in front of the congregation so soon after her daughter's death.

Dr Richard de Lisser's sermon, 'The unlikely hero', was on the Good Samaritan. He concentrated on asking whether we will be like those who walked past the injured man due to life commitments or prejudices or are we prepared to become that unlikely hero like the Good Samaritan and stand up to help our neighbour.

I can truly say that by the numbers I saw attending the clinic in the afternoon there were many Good Samaritans at church that day. It was an amazing day to watch, as the congregation members as well as members of the public came to give their support. After filling an application form and speaking with a counsellor to make sure the process was fully understood, a small blood sample was taken from each individual. If you were aged between 18 and 40 then you could register on the day with the ACLT, and The National Blood Service was on hand for those over 40 so they could register to join as a bone marrow donor at a later date at one of the many blood clinics around the country. Once blood was given, the day did not end

there. There was praise and worship, videos, poetry, songs, testimonies, including survivor Graceline Miller who beat cancer after having a bone marrow transplant, and fellowship with the ACLT volunteers who were running the clinic. The day ended with Orin Lewis thanking the church for its hospitality, a special thanks to Eugenie Farrell for arranging the day and a thank you to those who allowed them to hold the clinic at the church. On the day we recruited thirty-four new potential bone marrow donors and thirty-eight new blood donors.

If you have not yet thought about holding a clinic at your church, I would encourage you all to do so and find some heroes in your church. I leave you with the following words from SEC Communication director Richard de Lisser: 'Hope always has its heroes; the more heroes, the better and the greater the hope. As a Seventh-day Adventist Church we want to make hope happen by encouraging our members to support ACLT and become potential bone marrow donors and to give blood to make hope happen now!'

HELEN RATNEY

'I was delighted to be able to help this important event to raise awareness about the need to register as a potential donor with people in Walthamstow and the great work the Seventh-day Adventist Church is doing by promoting it. Reassuring people that being a donor is not a painful experience is vital in addressing the urgent need for donors, and the results they achieved with this event showed the difference these drives can make. I hope that by working together with other faith communities in Walthamstow we can continue to find donors among local people here and so help benefit leukaemia sufferers and their families across the country.'

Stella Creasy, Labour and Co-operative parliamentary candidate for Walthamstow



Women's International Day

'Reflection is key!' was the message delivered by various speakers at Women's International Day of Prayer at Bournemouth church on 6 March. The co-ordinator of the proceedings, Alysse Frazer, read out a powerful poem, 'My God and I', in which was packed the message of a deep friendship with our Maker.

The reflective testimony of church elder Douglas Vine was powerful, personal and extremely profound, especially in its relevance to our earthly lives, and the need to focus on the big picture – reunion with our Lord. Douglas briefed the congregation on how to deal with family circumstances such as illness, and what God's Word says about such circumstances.

The speaker for the day, Stella Jeffery, summed it all up with her sermon titled 'How are you known?' In short, a person is remembered by the words spoken by his/her character. Stella engaged the congregation in outlining how patriarchs such as Joseph, Daniel and Abraham are remembered.

DR JOHN MATHENGE KANYARU

Eighty years young

Pastor Kenneth Clothier celebrated his eightieth birthday on Easter Sunday, 4 April. The Exeter church family wanted to express its thanks to him for his many years of service, even in retirement. He preached on Easter Sabbath on the subject of Peter, the disciple who meant well but still failed to support his master at the critical time. However, after the resurrection Peter had a chance to reaffirm his love and loyalty to Christ.

Following the service there was a special fellowship lunch when Pastor Clothier was presented with a planted container and card in honour of his eightieth birthday. Stella Jeffery said that they felt they knew him as a child from his many stories about his upbringing in Wales and expressed appreciation for his willingness to preach on a regular basis in a number of churches. He rarely has a weekend off! He still counts it a privilege to preach the Word of God and is a keen Bible student. Pastor Clothier was once the church pastor in Exeter and Torquay and decided to stay in the area after his retirement. Therefore, he has built up longstanding friendships with the members. His love of nature and music has also been an inspiration and we still enjoy hearing his tenor voice leading out from the platform. However, his duties have included sadder elements, namely conducting a large number of funerals over the years. Yet, his positive faith delights in the fact that Jesus will soon return and he will be reunited with those who are now resting in Jesus, including his much-loved daughter, who passed away before he ministered in Devon.

Pastor Clothier blew out the candles on a birthday cake decorated by Michael Bowden after being baked by his neighbour. As the strains of 'Happy Birthday' faded away, Pastor Clothier made a short speech of thanks and said that he could not have retired in a better place. He recalled baptising Hannah and Louisa Jeffery some years ago, and as they were home for the weekend they were able to share in the celebration.

Pastor Clothier is still a youthful-looking eighty year old and is looking forward to visits from his other daughter, Gwendolyn and her children, and to his four holidays already planned for this year! He no doubt will continue to serve the Lord in any way he can, and we wish him God's richest blessings during the next decade. With characteristic humour, his parting words on Easter Sabbath were, 'I'll be back for my ninetieth!'

STELLA JEFFERY

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Florence Kathleen (Peggy) Foster (1923-2010), d. 1 March

Florence Kathleen Burnet was born in Lewisham on 5 December 1923. She was the first of five children and from an early age shared, with her mother, the responsibility of bringing up her brothers. They were a close and loving family and it was here where she became affectionately known as Peggy.

This is the name many of her friends will recognise. When she arrived as a student at Newbold College in 1949 few of us knew anything of her background. However, as she walked into the college dining-room for the first time all of us realised that here was a young lady who was somewhat different. True, she was a little older than most of us, but it was her poised and dignified bearing and a serenity about her that was so impressive. Those qualities remained with her throughout her life. You can imagine how surprised and intrigued we were to learn how this slender young lady, as a soldier in the British Army had, among other duties, driven huge military vehicles up and down the whole country. These were not the sophisticated lorries we see on the roads today.

It was through the prayers and influence of one of her aunts that Peggy's life changed dramatically. She was persuaded to attend an evangelistic campaign conducted by the very able and charismatic minister Pastor Tom Bradley. Here she found and accepted the good news of salvation through our Lord Jesus and was baptised. Not long after this she took the next step in a new life of service by enrolling as a student at Newbold

Missionary College. After her graduation in 1953 she was appointed to work as a Bible instructor with Pastor Billy Frazer who was holding an evangelistic campaign in the Ulster town of Portadown. This was a situation for which she was well suited. However, while studying at Newbold she had met and fallen in love with one of the senior lecturers. He was a Devon man of considerable renown not only at Newbold but throughout the Adventist Church in the British Isles. His name was Edwin Horatio Foster. They were married on 27 December 1954. It was a very successful and happy union.

Eddy went on to hold positions of leadership both in the North and South England Conferences and then at the British Union Conference. Though never seeking the limelight, Peggy was always gracious and gentle in dealing with people and quite magnificent in the constant support of her beloved husband.

Without doubt they were blissfully happy but it was when their two children Grenville and Cheryl came along to complete the family circle that this happiness found its high point. How they loved those children! Thank God Peggy lived to hold in her arms, not only her children but her grandchildren and her great-grandchildren.

Pastor Eddy Foster died in March 1994. The great loss affected Peggy both in her personality and her general health. Even though she had good and helpful friends living close by, she naturally longed for the comfort of her own loved ones. It was after living alone for

ten years that she was able to move into a brand new flat especially built for her right next to her daughter Cheryl who lived in the small town of Whittlesea near Peterborough. Here she was able to spend the last five years with her caring and affectionate family.

The last five years of her life, however, were not spent merely recollecting events of years long past. She was able to join a fine local choir which gave concerts in the surrounding area. Through this choir she was able to find people from other churches with whom she could share her faith. Together with Philip Reynolds and members of his family she had the opportunity to find friends among the clergy of other Christian denominations with whom they had regular dialogue. This was a grand finale to a well-spent life.

Just a few weeks before our sister died a special request had been made by Peggy's granddaughter and her husband for Pastor John Ferguson to dedicate their new baby daughter. Although he had never met them he acceded to their request. His first visit was to explain the meaning of the service and then to hold a private dedication. They were so impressed by his ministry that a few weeks later he was asked to conduct Peggy's funeral service in the Grantham church, a long way from where they lived.

During the funeral service on 11 March Pastor Ferguson was again impressive as he presented the central message of the Gospel that Jesus died and was resurrected and has gone to prepare

a place in Heaven for all who have faith in him. There were many at the funeral who were left contemplating what our pastor had to say about the hope and comfort available to all when bowed down with grief. The writer, assisted by Peggy's granddaughter Georgina, presented the life-sketch.

In the 61 years I knew Peggy Foster, both in her joy and in her sadness, her faith never wavered. What an inspiration we can find in such lives that are so representative of the Christian Gospel.

RON SURBRIDGE

Death of M. T. Battle

Maurice T. Battle, who became the GC's first African-American associate secretary in 1978, has died in Maryland, USA, aged 82.

M. T. Battle lived in Britain in the 1960s and worked as a departmental director at the St Albans-based Division. His daughter Carla was a well-respected student at Stanborough School. Pastor Battle had also worked for many years in the division territories in West Africa, notably in Ghana. Jan Paulsen, the GC president, said Pastor Battle had been 'a good friend and highly valued colleague'.

Paulsen and Battle had served together in Ghana. Battle was an officiating minister at Paulsen's ordination.

M. T. Battle is survived by his wife, Esther, four children and six grandchildren.

EDITOR

WEDDING

CLODEAU-DA SILVA

On Sunday 11 April Claudia Clodeau and Karl Da Silva met in the elegant new Dundee SDA church to celebrate the first of their two marriage ceremonies. Claudia arrived from Romania accompanied by her father, brothers and sister-in-law. Karl travelled up from Newbold College where he works as lecturer in Media Arts. He was supported at the wedding by Rhoda and Bill Fleming, his mother and father-in-law, as well as his sister Sandra Nell. The marriage was conducted by Pastor Marcel Ghioalda who urged the young couple to remember and focus on the admirable qualities they first saw in each other. To help in this endeavour he presented them with a framed plaque listing the estimable traits each had noticed in the other during counselling. After the ceremony, the large company of friends and relatives left the heather-clad sanctuary and filtered through the folding doors into the newly refurbished church hall for the wedding reception. The young couple were obviously held in great affection by family, friends and members, as good wishes for a long, happy and successful marriage were showered on them from every angle. The couple plan a second ceremony in Romania, after Claudia completes her training there, before setting up home near Newbold.

JOHN WALTON

>16

STOP: The London Marathon

lump in my throat I crossed the finish line. The promises of prayer and the support of all my family and friends flashed through my mind and filled me with powerful emotion as the official put the medallion over my head. I could not believe what had just taken place. God had helped me through this most challenging event with little feeling of tiredness and surprisingly not much pain. When I took off my socks the blister on my little toe was like the O2 Arena. God had given me a blister to remind me of the struggle and took away the pain to show me that he was in control.

Running the London Marathon was the most exhilarating experience. The months of preparation, the change of diet, the focus on the goal, the discipline of routine and the answer to prayers were all part of the exhilaration. Paul completed the marathon in a time of 5.35.23 hours and I in 6.52.09 hours. About £12,000 has been raised to date. Paul and I would like to thank all those who supported us in prayer and helped us to raise a good sum for the charity and, most of all, we praise God for helping us complete the run.

You can still make a donation through the web address www.justgiving.com/Kish-Poddar-for-STOP and www.justgiving.com/Paul-Godfrey2010.



STOP: The London Marathon

by Kish Poddar, Marathon runner

The *Messenger* (Vol 115-7, 2 April 2010) carried an article about Paul Godfrey and Kish Poddar running the Virgin London Marathon to raise funds for STOP International.

This is our story. I had started training one year before the event, while Paul began in December. I trained at 5am and Paul in the evenings. On the Sabbath before the Marathon I went for a three-mile walk, and Paul rested. The night before the event we both slept uneasily. The excitement and anticipation of the task before us was pumping adrenaline prematurely. After a porridge breakfast we drove to St Albans station at 5am on Marathon day to catch a train to Tower Bridge, because there were no earlier trains from

Watford Junction, and the train seemed to be full of Marathon runners.

We arrived at Greenwich Park, the start venue for the red start runners and it was a twenty-minute walk to the site. Already there were streams of participants warming their way through the traffic-free streets. The

weather forecast (22°C) was not very favourable for Marathon running so when it started to drizzle Paul and I were very thankful.

When we crossed the official start line, the Ilico Sports tag on our trainers electronically clocked our start time. My strategy was to run one mile and walk for two minutes, a recommended strategy for beginners. Paul intended to run for as long as he could and then walk if he needed to. The crowd was cheering us and the first mile seemed to pass effortlessly. After the second mile the encouragement of the crowd became so much more intense and personal that I forgot to stop and walk. This kept on going mile after mile. I kept looking at my watch and the mile markers and realised that I

was going to complete the halfway stage in under three hours, something I had not achieved in training. By this time Paul had raced on and left me behind. Tower Bridge was the halfway point and the crowds that lined both sides of the bridge kept cheering me by name, as I had my name printed on my T-shirt, and as I waved in gratitude the cheers got louder. I had reached 13 miles, my first psychological booster distance. Now I only had to count down. I kept looking out for my family and friends at Tower Bridge and when I finally saw them I was just as thrilled to see them as they were to see me. That was an intensely encouraging moment.

My first problem was a blister developing on my little toe. I stopped to take a look. This was not good news as it happened before the halfway point. My energy levels were high so I did not want to have a blister prevent me from finishing. I prayed that God would take care of the blister and then set off running. The second pain was at Canary Wharf where my calf muscles felt like cricket balls with sharp spikes. I stopped, stretched them, prayed again, left them to the Lord and continued.

My second psychological booster distance was 20 miles which I had not yet reached. At about mile 18 I met a runner with a bandaged left knee limping and in pain. I asked him if he wanted a painkiller and he said yes. I stopped and gave him a tablet which I kept in my running pouch in case I needed it. I left him and ran on. I reached 20 miles and the thrill of only six more miles was a great satisfaction. At about 21 miles I had a tap on my shoulder and it was the man who needed the painkiller. He said, "Thank you for what you did for me back there," and carried on running ahead of me into the distance. The last five miles were running and walking with great anticipation and excitement. Every mile covered was a celebration.

Approaching Big Ben the cheers from the crowd got louder, assuring that it was not much longer. I was nearly there, and urged me to keep going. It was fantastic encouragement. My plan was to sprint the last mile but this was thwarted by an uncomfortably inflated bladder. I prayed and struggled to the final 200m marker and then risked running to the finish line. With arms lifted up in celebration, gratitude and a



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Messenger

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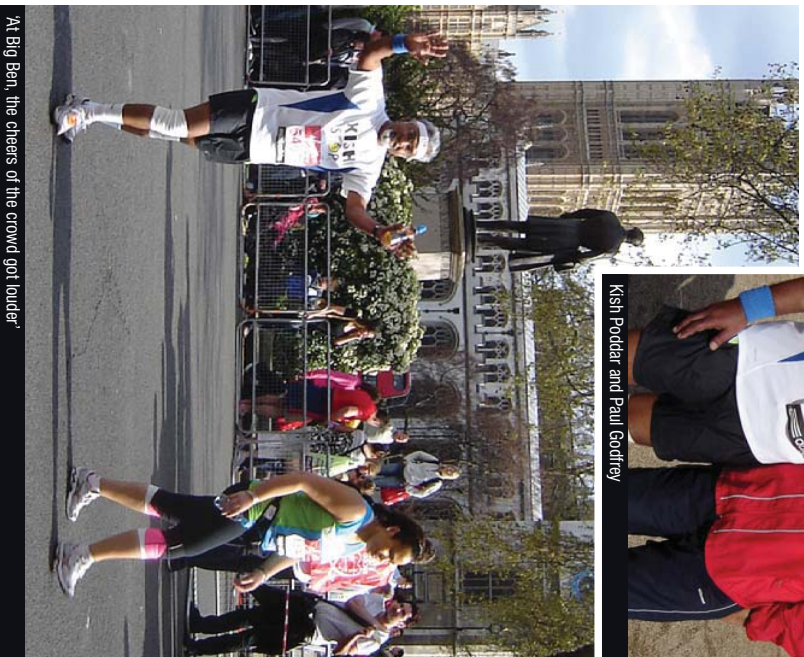
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	21	8.55	9.07	9.05	9.30
	28	9.04	9.16	9.15	9.41
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>15



Kish Poddar and Paul Godfrey

At Big Ben, the cheers of the crowd got louder