

Messenger

News to the churches • 1 April 2011 • Volume 116 • 7

3/11

Our editor reflects on the 11 March tragedy

'Honey, come and look at this!' My wife's voice had an urgent edge to it, and I knew that something major had happened.

What I saw left me still and stunned. Sweeping across the TV screen was a muddy sea of floating cars, trucks, boats, buildings and other nondescript flotsam. I watched spellbound as the rolling wave of water-borne debris swiftly ingested kilometres of farmland, greenhouses, aircraft and roads.

It seemed unbelievable, surreal, like something from a Spielberg movie – until something in my head said, *'There must also be people in that tidal wave!'*

At least 10,000 of them

At least 10,000* are expected to have died in Japan's 3/11 quake. A human tragedy of enormous proportions . . . something that cannot be measured by a corpse count. Only the test of tears and heartache can begin to quantify the reality of this earthquake.

A 'megathrust' quake

Geologists are calling it a 'megathrust' quake, caused when one tectonic plate is forced over another, deep within the earth's volatile crust: in this case, along the Pacific rim – the so-called 'ring of fire'.

*'The epicentre was well out to sea – some 130km from the city of Sendai; but at a relatively shallow depth below the seabed – just 24km.'*¹ And all of this just 300-odd kilometres from the biggest urban area in the world, greater Tokyo, with a population of 31,036,900.²

According to news reports this quake, at a magnitude of 8.9, was 8,000 times more powerful than the one that



KeyStoneUSA-ZUMA/Press Features

recently ripped through Christchurch!³

This is not our jurisdiction

My reflections on that Friday evening of the quake were sombre to start with. I realised that this world-gripping spectacle of natural destructive force stresses the fact that this planet is not our jurisdiction. We don't own it, cannot control it, and will never tame it.

We cannot disaster-proof the environment. Even the most idyllic locations, the most benign climates, are only an ash cloud or a tsunami away from calamity.

Prophetically, the psalmist captured the decaying nature of this earth in these words:

'In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, . . . they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded.' (Psalm 102:25, 26, NIV.)

On 11 March the earth tore its tired 'seams' apart off the coast of Japan – and more 'wear and tear' lies ahead!

A timely reminder

The events of that day have been a timely reminder to me of two important things. Firstly, that I must come to terms with a harsh reality – this planet is in decay, and nothing in the safe, secure environment that I enjoy can be taken for granted!

I must be ready – emotionally and spiritually – to leave for 'higher ground' when the tsunamis of life threaten to take it all away.

Secondly, the events of that day remind me that, when disaster and calamity strike, I am not alone! The psalmist's prophecy portrays a scene of geological and ecological decay. The earth splits its seams, tears its fabric, frays its edges and loses its shape . . . but he added something that I left out when quoting the verse above:

'They will perish [heavens and the earth], but you remain; they will all wear out like a >2

ADRA was at 'ground zero'

Within hours of the quake, ADRA Japan's Tokyo office was already sharing accommodation, food, internet and Wi-Fi facilities with those stranded in the city centre due to the huge traffic jams and the closure of its metro and train services. ADRA Japan also began liaising with the Japan National Disaster Office without delay, laying plans on how best it can support the relief effort. Daniel dos Santos, ADRA Asia director and former Newbold College student, who was in Japan when the disaster struck, also provided support and guidance from a regional level. Donations can be made via the ADRA-UK website, www.adra.org.uk.

Bert Smit, ADRA-UK CEO



<1 garment.' (Psalm 102:26, NIV, emphasis supplied.)

But you remain

Everything, and everyone else, may perish, wear out or be torn away, **'but you remain'**! I am not alone, and neither are you.

When we reflect on the biblical history of salvation, we find that God remained with his followers through thick and thin. He went into Pharaoh's court with Moses and Aaron. He joined Daniel's three friends in a blast furnace. He spent the night with Daniel in a lions' den. He pushed with Samson against the pillars of Dagon's temple. He stood with Elijah on Carmel.

He is not always visible!

Yes, I know that he is not always visible! I know there are countless cases where God appears to have deserted the innocent or the faithful – as in Japan. The innocence of Jewish children didn't stop them dying with their parents in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. John the Baptist's faith didn't blunt his executioner's sword. Stephen's vision of glory didn't shield his face from crushing rocks.

At Calvary, even Christ struggled to see his Father as the nauseating waves of pain



* Various estimates suggested this figure at the time of going to print.

¹'Quake was big even for Japan', by Jonathan Amos, Science correspondent, BBC Mobile, 11 March, 2011. ²http://www.mongabay.com/cities_urban_01.htm. ³Japan earthquake: What caused Japan's massive tsunami?, by David Shukman, BBC Mobile, 11 March, 2011.

Message from ADRA-UK's CEO



I would personally like to thank all those who are participating in this year's ADRA Annual Appeal. It is great to hear and read your reports, from all over the British Isles, of activities that are adding to our yearly fundraising effort. From car-washes to sponsored walks, to fundraising concerts – all of it is making a great difference. A very special thank-you to all those collecting from door to door.

Together we are indeed making a difference! Therefore I very warmly thank you on behalf of the poor and needy for whom ADRA provides essential support. Without your financial help we could not do this.

Just a few days are left to collect for people in need! The Annual Appeal ends on 10 April (London 17 April). We are thankful for the incredible effort that is being made to help us raise the goal of £700,000 this year. If you have not participated yet, please do so now. Pick up a collection tin from your ADRA agent or make a personal donation using our GiftAid envelopes – or do both! You can also donate online at <http://adra.org.uk> – remember, every contribution helps!

Please ask your ADRA agent to provide you with a special 'home tin' to keep collecting small change at home, even after the Annual Appeal! Many thanks!

Bert Smit

wracked his tortured body. *'And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"'* (Mark 15:34, NKJV).

He may seem to slip away – to become invisible – but he is there. He remains with us, just as he promised Joshua: *'... as I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.'* (Joshua 1:5, NIV.)

British Union Conference Quinquennial Session

Notice is hereby given that a quinquennial session of the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held on Sunday, 3 July at the Stanborough Park church, 609 St Albans Road, Garston, Watford, Herts, WD25 9JL.

Delegate registration will commence at 8am in the Stanborough Centre adjacent to the church, and the opening business session in the Stanborough Park church is scheduled for 9am.

The business session will be preceded by a day of fellowship at the Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, London, SW1H 9NH on Sabbath, 2 July 2011.

editorial

Killed by 'friendly fire'



Julian Hibbert
Editor

Please don't let 'friendly fire' cause any more casualties in your church.

In 1977, after three years in urban ministry, I transferred to a large town in an agricultural region. It sported a good university and a large military base, both of which supplied the church with a few new, young faces each year.

I was glad for these 'temporary' youth, but was also concerned that some of the congregation's own youth no longer attended. Where were they?

The majority had moved away to the cities in search of better jobs; some had married and joined spouses elsewhere; but there were one or two who seemed to be 'friendly fire' casualties!

One of them 'died' in a skirmish during a Sabbath School class, just a few years earlier. It happened on a sweltering day, in a room that bore the full brunt of the mid-morning sun. To survive the heat, the young men had removed their jackets – but not for long. The elder assigned to the lesson that day walked in and fired on them without warning: *'Put your jackets on, or leave!'* he said harshly.

The rest reluctantly surrendered, but one lad took the proverbial 'bullet in the chest' – he picked up his jacket and left for good!

What a tragedy! Our youth are so precious, and yet someone had thoughtlessly eliminated one of them over such a trivial matter.

According to the rules of war he would have been regarded as a casualty of friendly fire caused by 'an error of identification'. This simply means that *'friendly troops are mistakenly attacked in the belief that they are the enemy'*. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friendly_fire)

It costs casualties

There is no doubt that we are in the middle of a great controversy – a battle to the death between good and evil, God and Satan. Sadly, that battle costs casualties, of whom Christ was one.

But why are our youth so often the target

of trigger-happy adults, who fire off impulsive, irresponsible or angry statements at them?

Yes, we know from personal experience that youth is a time of inner turmoil, identity formation, vacillating and volatile emotions, irresponsibility and silly behaviour. Most of us have been there, done that, and earned the T-shirt – and I earned more than one!

Christ wasn't so tolerant

In the military, someone who misdirects fire at his own troops will be the subject of a high-level inquiry. His actions will be reviewed in minute detail, and may lead to censure and severe military discipline – even a dishonourable discharge!

In the Church, however, such offenders often get off without so much as a slap on the wrist. Christ wasn't so tolerant though, was he: *'But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.'* (Matthew 18:6, KJV.)

Is there a better way?

Is there a better way to deal with difficult youth in the Church? Yes, I think there is, and here are some suggestions:

1. Don't act impulsively, angrily or before a good night's sleep and a full day's reflection – first make sure you're not a *difficult adult*.
2. Don't confront the young person until you have had time to think about the possible consequences if you do.
3. Seek the advice of the pastor, head elder, youth leader, parent or guardian first, before saying or doing something you may regret.
4. If it is necessary to speak, do so with kindness and respect.
5. Youth – like most of us – respond best to those they respect and trust, so build positive relationships with them. You will be blessed!

Affirmation works

There are success stories too. Let me tell you mine. My early experience of religion had been in the Church of England Sunday School, but by the time I was in my early teens we were attending a small but active Adventist church.

There I found the adults to be affirming. They allowed us to put out the hymnbooks, hand out bulletins, and even do the mission's reading in the adult Sabbath School. When I look back, I know that they were glad we were there.

Then, one Sabbath, something very special happened. The Conference president, Pastor Geoffrey Garne, visiting speaker for the day, had finished his sermon and the members were filing past him. I was doing my best to slip behind them un-noticed, eager to join my friends outside in the bright afternoon sunlight.

But he had noticed me and brought my escape to an abrupt but gentle halt with his outstretched hand. *'What is your name young man?'* he smilingly asked.

'Julian Hibbert', I blushing answered.

'Are you going to become a pastor one day?' His question had me speechless for a moment. What could I say? What should I say?

'Maybe' I blurted out. What else could I say? It wasn't something I had really thought about!

'Well, Pastor Hibbert, you have a good day!' was his twinkle-eyed reply.

That day he treated me like an adult. He planted a seed – and for the first time I began to think about becoming a minister!

Every time he visited our congregation he would greet me with his: *'How are you, Pastor Hibbert?'* – warmly affirming my tentative 'maybe', and gradually coaxing it into a conviction!

They are on our side

The youth are our friends. They are on our side. When we fall, they will take our places in the front line. Please don't let 'friendly fire' cause any more casualties in your church.

Enhancing Health

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

Knowing your body – part 2a Adrenal health

In this issue we turn our attention to the adrenal glands. These glands sit on top of the kidneys and are responsible for many of the functions essential for life and the maintenance of good health. These include:

- Maintaining metabolic processes such as energy production by converting carbohydrates, proteins and fats to blood glucose, • Balancing fluids and electrolytes,
- Regulating blood pressure, • Controlling the 'fight or flight' response, • Producing hormones such as adrenaline, cortisol, progesterone and testosterone.

The hormone cortisol is crucial for cell protection and balancing our body's systems. When functioning optimally it increases appetite and energy levels, but also tones down our immune system allergic and inflammatory responses. Cortisol assists our body by resisting the impact of internal and external stressors like infections, extreme temperatures and trauma, and helps to maintain stable emotions.

Cortisol's benefits are reversed, however,

when the body is subjected to chronic stress which forces the release of high levels of cortisol. Too much cortisol, over a long period, exhausts the adrenal glands and gives rise to serious health conditions ranging from impaired immunity to organ damage and even cancer.

Dr James Wilson coined the phrase, 'adrenal fatigue' in 1988, to identify a group of signs and symptoms that people experience as a result of poor adrenal function. Stressful lifestyle was identified as a major cause. He states: *'Our lifestyles have changed, but our bodies haven't.'*

So what happens with poor adrenal health?

Signs and symptoms of adrenal fatigue:

- Morning fatigue – inability to feel awake until late morning, even when you've been awake for several hours, • Afternoon drowsiness, • Resistance to sleep even when feeling tired, • Cravings for salty and fatty foods, • Low immunity to infections, • Inability to handle stress, • Increased allergies, • Dizziness when getting up, • Low libido, • Mild depression, • Persistent lack of energy, • Poor digestion, • Muscular weakness, • Unexplained hair loss, • Worsening PMS or menopausal symptoms.

Although the above are varied symptoms, if you can identify with several of them, you may be experiencing adrenal fatigue. It is advisable to consult a medical practitioner.

In the next issue we highlight the causative factors in more detail and examine some preventative health practices you can follow. Until then, get adequate sleep, reduce stress and boost your immunity: this will support your adrenal health. **Good health!**

Membership retention

'I believe that our sermons should be more like those of Jesus than those of Paul'

'Feed my sheep'

Pastor Julian Hibbert interviews Pastor Ian Sweeney

We take pride in our investitures, rejoice over our baptisms, and eulogise our deceased – but what are we doing about those who no longer attend church, by choice? This is the first in a series of articles about *membership retention* that will appear from time to time in *MESSENGER* this year. We hope that they will make a difference in your congregation.

What is membership retention?

Simply put, *membership retention* is the ability of a local church to keep its members attending on a regular basis – hopefully, because they enjoy doing so! In order to achieve this, there are usually some functions that the church needs to perform.

Our church fellowship should be warm, affirming and inclusive. We should provide the mechanisms for members, new and old, to develop spiritually. Our worship should be joyous, uplifting and interesting.

Then when our members encounter life's inevitable challenges – sickness, death and other forms of loss – our practical care should carry them through. And when they savour

life's special moments – births, birthdays, achievements, weddings and anniversaries – we should rejoice too.

What is our score?

How is your *membership retention* scorecard? Are you happy with it? Is there more that can be done to meet the needs of your members?

Is the pulpit passé?

Jesus gave Peter a commission on the shore of Galilee to 'Feed my sheep.' (John 21:17, KJV.) Traditionally the Christian Church has regarded preaching as an important part of that commission. Can we still make this assumption though? Is the traditional sermon still

relevant as a means of nurturing and retaining our members? Or is the pulpit *passé*?

In search of an answer, we now turn to one of our nationally acclaimed preachers for his take on the issue.*

Editor: Pastor Sweeney, thank you for granting *MESSENGER* a chance to chat to you about the role of the preaching ministry in membership retention.

Pastor Sweeney: Julian, it is my pleasure.

Editor: We live in a society that is called 'secular', 'postmodern' and 'sceptical': a society that is often uncomfortable with universal, objective truth – especially if

it is from a pulpit! Under those circumstances, does preaching still have a role in the Church today?

Pastor Sweeney: Yes! I am convicted that preaching still has a role in the Church today, and this is reflected in the fact that most Adventist congregations experience their peak attendance in the lead-up to the sermon. To me, this is an indication that people view the sermon as the highlight among the various Sabbath services. They want to hear the Word of God proclaimed.

Additionally, sermons that are biblical, Spirit-guided and well presented will engage 'secular, postmodern' people because they will deal with life. They will discuss the great universal themes we all grapple with – such as love, acceptance, poverty, pain, doubt, fear, and so on.

Editor: Pastor Sweeney, how important is the Sabbath sermon in retaining our members – in the faith, and in the Church?

Pastor Sweeney: The Sabbath sermon is crucial. It ought to engender a desire in the listeners to deepen their Christian experience through commitment,

devotion and discipleship.

Preaching should be the catalyst that leads to a greater sense of wonder about God's Word, and a desire to know more about him through personal Bible study. After having preached, I am always thrilled when someone comes to me and says: 'I never saw that in the Bible before, I will need to study this again.'

Editor: Please give our readers the 'ABC's of a good sermon.

Pastor Sweeney: Firstly, the sermon needs to be biblical. The message of the sermon needs to be the message of the passage, and not what I think or believe.

This came home to me early in my ministry, while preparing a sermon for an evangelistic series. The topic happened to be the Second Coming of Christ, and I was using my newspaper clippings to show how wars, famines, pestilences, and so on, were a clear indication of his soon return. If truth be told, I was intending to scare the people into responding to the message!

Fortunately, the Spirit guided me to read Matthew 24:6 (KJV): '... see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet', and: 'these are the beginning of sorrows' (Matthew 24:8, KJV). I was using the Bible to make my point, without realising, or even acknowledging, the point that Jesus was making!

Secondly, I believe that our sermons should be more like those of Jesus than those of Paul. If you study the preaching of Christ you will see that it was built around stories and illustrations – things that captured the imagination of his diverse audiences. He used simple, unambiguous language to convey deep biblical truth.

Editor: How important is preparation, and what forms does it take?

Pastor Sweeney: Julian, I am glad you have asked this question, because the importance of sermon preparation cannot be overestimated. For me, sermon preparation involves reading and re-reading the Bible passage, reflecting on it, questioning myself about it and, most important of all, asking God, 'What message are you seeking to convey to me here?'

In all of this I am constantly typing or scribbling notes – recording my thoughts and impressions. Sometimes, I am in the car driving, and it just comes to me . . . that this is what God is trying to tell me! I then have to pull over and jot it down.

Editor: Should a sermon be structured? What are your thoughts on that?

Pastor Sweeney: Sermons should be structured. As I think of them, sermons are opportunities to take your listeners on a journey with you. In this regard, let me illustrate by referring to a series I preached from the book of Jonah. The final sermon in the series began with my personal dissatisfaction as to how the book ended.

In fact, I began by telling the congregation that, if I were writing or editing the book of Jonah, I would have concluded it at the end of chapter 3 – with Jonah having conducted the most successful evangelistic campaign in the history of planet Earth!

I told them that chapter 4 left me 'dissatisfied', because I just did not know if Jonah understood the point that God was trying to make to him. The listeners were initially surprised that I was critical of how a book of the Bible concluded. But they soon agreed with me, as I took them on a journey through the chapter, explaining to them that my 'dissatisfaction' with the book's ending was actually because we had all missed the real point that God



'I have witnessed a number of powerful thirty-minute sermons being undone because they went on for sixty minutes!'

was trying to make!

My structure or journey served to spike interest and keep them engaged to the end.

Editor: Someone once said that a sermon 'should be as long as the seat can endure!' Talk to us about sermon duration and audience attention.

Pastor Sweeney: I believe that a sermon's primary function is to communicate God's message from his Word to his people. It is my responsibility as a preacher to make that happen. If I preach to such a length that people are not listening, then I am not communicating!

I have witnessed a number of powerful thirty-minute sermons being undone because they went on for sixty minutes! The members forgot the message of the first thirty minutes because of their annoyance with the overall sermon length.

So Julian, in my preaching, I strive to quit while I am ahead!

Editor: Pastor Ian, how should the Bible feature in our preaching?

Pastor Sweeney: As I shared earlier, I believe preaching should be the effort to communicate what God is saying in his Word. Too often, preachers have a message, and then they look for Bible texts to back up their thoughts. For me, that is putting the cart in front of the horse.

Editor: I know that there are different views on this, but what role do you think the books of Ellen White should play in our preaching, and our preparation to preach?

Pastor Sweeney: I use the writings of Ellen White extensively in my research and sermon preparation, and unashamedly quote her in my preaching. However, whenever I quote her, I never use that typical 'Adventist language' we all know so well: 'Servant or messenger of the Lord . . . Sister White says . . . The Spirit of Prophecy tells us . . .' and so on.

Use of this language is exclusive, and foreign to those who might have stepped into the church from the street. So I always say, 'My favourite Christian author, Ellen White, wrote in the book . . .' I want my language to embrace someone who is totally ignorant

of Seventh-day Adventists.

Editor: How do you guard against being a one- or two-theme preacher?

Pastor Sweeney: Early in my ministry, a close friend and pastoral mentor counselled me to preach in series form. I took that counsel on board, and so now my sermons are nearly always part of a series. I base these series on a biblical book such as Jonah, or the life of a biblical character such as Joseph or David.

Editor: A final response from you on this quotation, please. It is from *Evangelism*, page 193: 'Some ministers err in making their sermons wholly argumentative . . . But often the cross of Calvary is not presented before the people. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear, and the golden opportunity lost, is lost forever.'

Pastor Sweeney: I fully endorse that quotation! Again I recall my good friend and pastoral mentor saying to me, 'Sweeney, leave them at the foot of the Cross!' Preaching is not about winning an argument. It is not a debate. It is about revealing God and his love, and his desire to save all people. Yes, when we preach, it should be in the realisation that this might be the last word from God that they may ever hear!

Editor: Pastor Sweeney, it has been great to have you engage with us on the subject of preaching. From your answers, and the enthusiasm with which you shared them, I have a strengthened conviction that preaching is not *passé* – the Sabbath sermon still feeds God's sheep! Thank you!

*Pastor Ian Sweeney, the NEC president, received *The Times* newspaper's 'Preacher of the Year' award in 1998. He was the first Seventh-day Adventist to be entered (against his knowledge) in this annual competition, which is designed to celebrate the spiritual art and craft of preaching.

Editor's note: For our devotional article in this issue of *Messenger* we have chosen to feature one of Pastor Ian Sweeney's sermons. Hopefully it will serve as both a spiritual blessing and a technical illustration of the art of good preaching.

The fugitive

Text: Jonah 1:15-2:10



by Pastor Ian Sweeney

For many people, the story of Jonah is unbelievable. A preacher was on a plane, engaged in a conversation with a lady seated next to him. She said, 'One of the reasons I don't believe in the Bible is because it is full of inconsistencies and errors.' The preacher asked the lady to explain, to which she replied, 'Well, how can anyone expect me to believe that Jonah swallowed a whale!'

God did indeed perform a miracle in Jonah's life, but it was not that he swallowed a whale; rather, that a great fish swallowed him. Jonah the prophet was called to be a fisher of men, but it was a fish that ended up fishing for him.

When Jonah plunged into the water, he must have believed that his life was coming to its end. As he struggled for breath and consciousness, his body slowly descending to the bottom of the sea, his whole life and recent rebellion must have flashed before him.

But the psalmist had it right when he declared, 'Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.' (Psalm 139:7-10, KJV.)

While Jonah was trying to escape the presence of God, his subsequent deliverance from drowning in the fish's stomach led him to be grateful that he could not outrun or hide from God.

God loved Jonah and was not prepared to see his prophet die, so an unusual but necessary medium of salvation was sent to save him: a great fish.

Means of salvation not always pleasant

A first lesson we might learn from Jonah's experience is that the medium by which God will save us is not necessarily going to be pleasant for us.

Jonah was delivered by being swallowed by a fish.

What must that have been like for Jonah?

As a child I saw illustrations of Jonah in the belly of the fish, seated on a chair at a table, reading a book with a cup of tea – but the reality must have been so terrifying.

Inside the stomach of that fish, Jonah endured darkness such as never before. In the belly of the fish, sloshing gastric juices washed over his body burning his skin, eyes, throat and nostrils. He would have contended with the rancid smell of half-digested food as he himself slowly suffered a similar fate. Everything he touched would have had a slimy feel about it from the mucous membrane of the fish's stomach. Jonah would have felt claustrophobic, and with every turn and dive of the great fish he would have slithered and wallowed in the cesspool of its digestive fluid.

For three days and three nights Jonah endured this journey.

The medium God uses to deliver us may not always be pleasant, but we should thank God that he still wants to save us.

As his means of salvation, God can use a prison cell, a doctor with a pessimistic prognosis, a failed relationship, bankruptcy, hunger and many other unpleasant experiences.

Lessons of prayer – 1

But Jonah's experience inside the fish also teaches us lessons about prayer. Jonah's prayer, which is recorded in chapter 2, shows to us that we can pray to God even when we have blatantly failed him. Even in the times when we are experiencing distress as a result of our own rebellion and recklessness, like Jonah, we ought to pray.

It is in the times of our wilful disobedience that we can find it most difficult to pray because our self-condemnation is at work, and we think either that we have no right to call on God, or that he will pay no attention to us.

Lessons of prayer – 2

Another prayer-related lesson that Jonah teaches us is that we should not wait for a crisis before we cry out to God.

Yet, how often is this true of us? We are

so negligent in our Christian life; we allow our prayer life to deteriorate; and it is not until a crisis hits that we are awakened from our spiritual slumber.

We should resolve to be diligent in prayer at all times, and not just in the difficult times.

When difficulties come, people often find faith, seek out God in prayer and attend church. This is all fine, but we also should seek to find God and attend church when things are going smoothly in our lives. As a sign at the front of a church so aptly put it, 'Don't wait for the hearse To bring you to church.'

Lessons of prayer – 3

I sense in Jonah 2:4 that Jonah's desire was not solely to be saved, but that he desired to have fellowship with God, and so there was a longing look towards God's Temple. The story of Jonah began with him trying to run away from God's presence, but now in the belly of the fish he desires fellowship once again.

When we pray, we should pray with the joy of being in God's presence and not simply because we want something from God, whether that be health, a job, a spouse, money, or whatever! How would we feel if people only spoke to us when they were after something? Surely prayer should include a desire simply to be in God's presence.

Lessons of prayer – 4

Another lesson we might learn about prayer from Jonah's experience (Jonah 2:9) is that we should seek opportunities for thankfulness even in situations of distress.

In the most unpleasant circumstances imaginable, Jonah anticipated giving thanks for his salvation. Giving thanks to God in the middle of hardship is something we all must work on fostering.

The story is told of two men who were being chased by a raging bull as they crossed a field. As the men raced towards the nearest fence, it became apparent that neither of them would make it in time.

In a state of terror, one man shouted to the other: Put up a prayer, John. We are in for it.'

John answered, 'I can't. I've never made a public prayer in my life.'

'But you must!' implored his breathless companion.

'All right, I'll say the only prayer I know – Lord, for what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful.'

Conclusion

I am so comforted by the story of Jonah, for it tells me that I can call on Jesus any time, any place, anywhere:

- I can call on Jesus any time because he never slumbers or sleeps.
- I can call him from the deep places of the earth, for he can still hear me.
- I can call him in the darkness of the midnight hour, because Jesus can still see me.
- I can call him when I'm lost, because he is always able to find me.
- I can call him when I'm down, because he's always able to lift me.
- I can call him when I'm weak, because he's always able to strengthen me.

Creation in Revelation

by Colin Mitchell

Does the Bible say anything specific about the evolution-creation debate in the twenty-first century? Let us look at the first angel's message of Revelation 14:6, 7 . . . ¹

The message

John sees an angel 'fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters'.

This is the last invitation to salvation for the whole world – a call to worship God at the time of final judgement.

The angel quotes directly from the Sabbath commandment. But he also reminds us of something else. The commandment states that 'in six day the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is' (Exodus 20:11). But the first angel significantly omits the final phrase and substitutes it with these words: 'and the fountains of waters'.

Why does he say this, and what are these fountains of waters?

He uses the Greek word *peegee*, which is the New Testament equivalent of the Hebrew *mayan*, used in Genesis 7:11 to describe the 'fountains' of the deep which brought Noah's Flood. They refer to the same event. The angel is urging his hearers to worship God, both as Creator and as the Author of the Flood. This flood, with its torrential rain and cataclysmic opening of underground waters, explains the earth's geological layers and fossils better than long ages of evolution. In fact the Flood is the key to our understanding of Creation, the Fall and the young age of the earth.

And the three angels' messages cannot refer to anything after Jesus' return because they are still proclaiming the everlasting Gospel. We must conclude that they are an end-time warning of the final reaping of Earth's people.

What time does this message relate to? What is the hour of judgement?

John wrote the book of Revelation around 100 AD. It gives Church history in a chain of pictorial images from his day up to, and including, Jesus' future return to Earth. It falls broadly into two halves: a) From John's

day until the earth's last days in chapters 1-11, and b) End-time events in chapters 12-22. The three angels of 14:6-12 make a call to the last-day population of the whole earth. How do we know this?

The first angel flies in 'the midst of heaven' and appeals to 'every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people'.² This underlines his worldwide message and influence.

Secondly, his message must be for the end-time. He declares it to be part of the everlasting Gospel and announces the opening of the judgement. The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message is a part of the Gospel which could be preached only in the last days.

The subsequent second and third angels' messages (Revelation 14:8-12) must likewise refer to this time. The second angel tells of the fall of Babylon. As with other such Old Testament terms used in Revelation, this may be best understood in terms of Babylon's role in the ancient world as an idolatrous empire which opposed God's work in the world. By analogy the name 'Babylon' refers here to morally fallen churches in the last days.³

The third angel warns against worshipping the beast described in the previous chapter.⁴ This beast is likewise generally understood to represent the dominant apostate church of Earth's last days. It is a final warning to us to choose God's way before Jesus' imminent return.

Immediately after the three angels, John sees Jesus reaping the whole earth with a sickle.⁵

continued on page 10

with Andrew Puckering



All too human

Out of the 2,000 men he had started with, King Saul had only 600 men left (1 Samuel 13:2,15). The people with him at Gilgal were trembling; many had already fled across the Jordan, and those that remained were in danger, distressed, and cowering in thickets, in pits, in holes and under rocks (1 Samuel 13:6, 7). Facing them was a vast host of Philistines with chariots and horsemen (1 Samuel 13:5) – the very same Philistines who controlled the smiths, to whom the Israelites had to go to sharpen their tools (1 Samuel 13:19-21). Only Saul and his son Jonathan had actual metal weapons (1 Samuel 13:22).

What a turnaround from two years earlier! God had given Saul victory over Nahash the Ammonite and secured his reign (1 Samuel 11:11-13). Now the Israelites gathered at Gilgal feared the wrath of the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:4). Samuel had promised to come to Gilgal in seven days (1 Samuel 10:8), and Saul did wait seven days – but Samuel was nowhere to be seen (1 Samuel 13:8). What could he do?

'So Saul said, "Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me." And he offered the burnt offering.' (1 Samuel 13:9, NKJV.) OK, so Saul sacrificed to the LORD – probably most of us would have done the same. What's so bad about that?

The problem was that kings weren't supposed to offer sacrifices – only priests could do that (Leviticus 1). Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, had been killed on the spot for messing around with the LORD's worship (Leviticus 10:1, 2), and when King Uzziah (called Azariah in 2 Kings 15) sinned in the same way he became a leper (2 Kings 15:5; 2 Chronicles 26:16, 21). Granted, the priestly family had been nearly extinguished at Aphek (1 Samuel 4:1-18), but Samuel was descended from the Kohath branch of Levites (1 Chronicles 6:33, 34), the same branch as Aaron and the priests (Exodus 6:16-20). Samuel's ministry was blessed by God, and Saul should have waited for him (1 Samuel 3:19, 20).

Even worse, Saul made his offering at Gilgal (1 Samuel 13:12) – Gilgal was special because it was the first place the Israelites had camped after God dried up the Jordan for them (Joshua 4:19). They'd even set up memorial stones there, at Gilgal, specifically so that future generations would remember God's miracles (Joshua 4:20-24). Gilgal was the base camp for the entire Israelite conquest of Canaan (Joshua 5:10; 9:6; 10:6; 14:6), which they had accomplished with the LORD's help (Joshua 24:8-15). The very name *Gilgal* symbolised the rolling away of reproach and the renewal of the Israelite covenant with God (Joshua 5:9). And now Saul, their first king (1 Samuel 10:17-24), had sinned because he was scared . . . what kind of message would that send to the surrounding nations?

We all know the consequence – although Israel was delivered under Saul's son Jonathan (1 Samuel 14), Saul's kingdom – which would have been his forever (1 Samuel 13:13) – would go to another (1 Samuel 13:14). If only Saul had waited a little longer (1 Samuel 13:10)! Yes, Saul's actions were understandable, given human logic and the pressing urgency of his situation, but he forgot the ways in which the LORD had led his people in the past. Sometimes human logic isn't good enough.

- How many Philistines was Saul facing?
- What long-term effects did Saul's actions have?
- What other sin did Saul commit at Gilgal? (1 Samuel 15)
- How did the faith of Saul and that of his son Jonathan differ?
- How long did it take for Israel to be reunited? (2 Samuel 5)



Natural medicine and holistic lifestyle strategy

by Sharon Platt-McDonald
BUC Health and Disability Ministries director

2011 sees the launch of the BUC Health Ministries Natural Medicine and Holistic Lifestyle strategy. A key aim of the strategy is to highlight the safe and effective use of natural medicine, while balancing this with the use of contemporary medicine in chronic and acute cases of illness. As part of the strategy launch, guidance on these issues has been given to both health leaders and ministers.

It is hoped that the strategy will:

- Encourage 'evidence-based' practice,
- Train individuals in the effective use of natural medicine, and
- Safeguard health practices and health-related programmes within the BUC.

Use of natural products/treatments

Among some of the key messages that our department wishes to get across with the strategy are the following:

- It is advisable to use only those alternative or complementary treatments and therapies that have a scientific validation and are deemed safe and effective for use.
- Individuals taking prescribed medication or undergoing medical treatment must consult their practitioner before taking any alternative or complementary medicine. This is to ensure that there are no contraindications, negative drug interactions or serious side effects as a result of additional non-medical treatments.
- We believe that members should not be reluctant to seek medical help in terms of elective surgery and use of medication for the treatment of serious or life-threatening conditions.

Guidance on health programmes and presenters

- First check** whether the conference-elected director of Health, or mission Health sponsor, is aware of or familiar with any individual who wants to undertake a health programme, run training events or approach members in the capacity of a health practitioner/advisor.
- Request evidence** of specialist training or qualifications in the specified area of practice from individuals who want to act as consultants.

- Health evangelism courses of up to four weeks** are not enough to classify an individual as an independent practitioner of any kind, be it in natural, alternative or complementary medicine. Courses such as LIGHT (Lay International Global Health Training) are excellent as training in medical missionary work, as is the MEET Ministry (Missionary Education and Evangelistic Training); however, these do not qualify individuals as practitioners.
- Medical missionary courses of six months and over** are sufficient to credit individuals to practise; however, the BUC Health Ministries department cannot be held responsible for the practice outcome of these individuals, as they are undertaking work as independent practitioners.
- Lifestyle centres** – a number of our reputable health institutions undertake comprehensive training in natural medicine. For example, Uchee Pines (USA) runs the courses, Lifestyle Educator (for six months) and Lifestyle Counsellor (for twelve months). Individuals undertaking these programmes and qualifying as practitioners are free to practise independently; however, the BUC Health Ministries department will be looking at how this may be undertaken within the parameters of natural medical practice in the UK.

In order to safeguard the health choices and health practices of our membership, this is what we should aim to do:

- Encourage pastors and health ministries leaders to ensure that, if alternative or complementary products or therapies are mentioned or presented as part of a health programme, they first must be vetted for validity by a medical or health professional or an individual with a science background. The information should also be presented within the context of a holistic lifestyle which promotes good health maintenance. It should not be presented as a sole treatment for any one ailment.
- If the above is presented as part of a programme it must be clearly stated by

the presenter that these products are not being presented as a 'cure', or as a replacement for essential medical treatment. Additionally, although some benefit may have been reported by some individuals using these products or treatments, this should not be used as an example for every case and assumed as automatically beneficial for those with serious illnesses.

- Encourage pastors, elders and health ministries leaders not to allow the promotion of any brand-name products, or network marketing schemes, as a means of drawing membership or sales. It should also be clearly established by the leaders that marketing techniques should be avoided in health presentations.
- As far as possible seek to ensure that a qualified health professional forms part of the church health ministries team. Where this is not possible we advise that a local medical practitioner, or someone suitably qualified in a scientific field, oversee health programmes and workshop content, and be present at events where health programmes are presented.
- We advise those in leadership positions to only accept health presenters who are in good standing and who do not hold extreme health views which are in conflict with our World Church Health Ministry department.

Health practices

Health practices, dietary guidelines and unregulated therapies which conflict with Adventist belief are valid areas of concern. The General Conference voted in 2007, at the Autumn Council, to reaffirm the health guidelines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A letter to this effect was sent out to all pastors and health ministries leaders at the beginning of 2008.

At the forthcoming health summit (scheduled for 21-26 June) we will launch the WELLNESS initiative, which underpins the holistic lifestyle aspect of the strategy and will train members to deliver this programme to their churches and communities.

Canvassers for Jesus

Would you like to be a Canvasser for Jesus? Would you like to sell our truth-filled books to the public as a literature evangelist? Here is your chance to apply for one of only six vacancies in the NEC.

This scheme will run for eight weeks in the Birmingham area in June and July. Training and support will be provided. For further information, please contact Pastor Curtis Murphy by phone: 01476 591700, or email: cmurphy@adventist.org.uk; or Pastor Peter Sayers by phone: 01455 612232, or email: pksayers@btinternet.com.

ADRA-EC project gives 'sight' to the blind!

by Isaac Kankam-Boadu, EC project manager, Ghana

Like the blind Bartimaeus who sat by the road to Jericho begging (Mark 10:46-52), many blind people in Ghana sit by the roadside and beg for alms. The case of blind Suonkorate Faah, from Kpaglaghi in the upper-west region of Ghana, is different however. Instead of allowing his predicament to overcome him, he has decided to confront his challenge courageously.

Before the inception of the ADRA-EC Food Security project, Suonkorate used to harvest 150kg (one and a half bags) of maize from a one-acre field he cultivated each year: insufficient to meet both his food needs and other livelihood needs. The low yield was caused by planting the local variety, a lack of funds to purchase fertiliser, manual tilling of the land, and the use of traditional cultural practices.

Though he worked hard, his returns were low, making him live in a perpetual cycle of poverty. Lack of money to repair his leaking roof forced him to sit up all night in a corner of the room any time it rained, as the entire room got wet. Though he needed rains to give his crops better yields, he loathed the rainy season as it made sleep very uncomfortable for him. His dream was to increase his production, get enough to eat, and sell the surplus to repair his leaking roof.

As a result of the support he received from the project (tractor service support, improved seeds, 150kg of fertiliser, and technical training), during the 2010 farming season Suonkorate was able to increase his maize yield per acre from 150kg (one and a half bags) to 700kg (seven bags) of maize, an increase of over 360%. He has set aside 300kg to sell to enable him to pay for the tractor service and fertiliser for next season's farming.

He also intends to sell 200kg when the price of maize increases so that he can purchase aluminium roofing sheets to repair his leaking roof. He will keep the remaining 200kg (two bags) for consumption. He is happy and thankful because his dream has been fulfilled. Like the blind Bartimaeus whose dream was to receive his sight, blind Suonkorate's dream of having sufficient food to eat and repairing his room has been met through the ADRA-EC Food Security project.

There are many blind and vulnerable people like Suonkorate who need just a little push to become capable of living independent and dignified lives. Your contribution for this year's Annual Appeal, whatever the amount, can make a great difference in the lives of such disadvantaged individuals. As you help to feed the poor and the blind you are lending to Jesus!



Top left: Suonkorate Faah shakes hands with Pastor Don McFarlane. Top right: Through practical help from ADRA, Suonkorate has learnt how to care for his crops. Right: He now has sufficient food for himself, and a leak-free roof.

Caleb

Dear Editor
Although Kenaz was one of the tribal divisions of Edom (see Genesis 36), as Andrew Puckering rightly points out (*MESSENGER* 4 March) – this does not make every Kenizzite a descendant of Esau. In fact, the Kenizzites are mentioned as early as Genesis 15:19 as one of the peoples occupying Palestine in Abraham's time. They are not mentioned in the time of Moses and Joshua – at least, not in connection with the entry into the Promised Land – and neither are the Kenites or the Kadmonites. Although this does not rule out an Edomite connection in Caleb's family line, neither does it absolutely prove it.

BARRY GOWLAND

Response: Thank you Barry! Yes, I was aware of Genesis 15:19 – God may have been referring to people who did not yet exist, as he also does in Isaiah 45 with reference to Cyrus. Judges 1:13 and 3:9 apparently identify Caleb as a descendant of Kenaz, but Genesis 15:19 does pose the question; thank you for writing in!

ANDREW PUCKERING

Church structure

Dear Editor
I am in complete agreement with the sentiments expressed in Garfield McIntosh's letter concerning our Church structure (*MESSENGER*, 4 March). It is a commonly held view that there are too many administrators in the conference offices and not enough ministers working in the field.

Rural churches are very badly affected because these are spread across wide areas, and the distances between the pastor, new contacts, church members and the church itself can be considerable. Often there is only one minister to work for two or three churches. This is not fair when there seems to be a surfeit of ministers working as administrators.

Our church gets numerous invitations to come for training or join courses to cover all aspects of church life, but this is a waste of time when there is a shortage of help locally to follow this up.

Perhaps conference positions should be held for only five years before ministers return to the field. This would be of enormous help to us and would keep the ex-administrators up to date. They would learn how tough it is away from their offices.

VALERIE ROWE, REDRUTH CHURCH

Creation in Revelation

This is the culmination of the historical record and must immediately precede his return to Earth.

When is this hour of judgement? Every year the Jews celebrated a judgement on the Day of Atonement, when the earthly Sanctuary was cleansed. This ritual symbolised the final judgement when the Sanctuary in Heaven is to be cleansed of its record of sins. Analysis of the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 shows that this prophecy extends to 1844 AD. Since then we have been living in this time of judgement.

Conclusion

What then is the message of the first angel to us today? He calls us to remember God as Creator of the world and Author of the Flood. These events explain the world around us, the Fall, our need for a Saviour, and the truth of the Sabbath. The theory of evolution denies these truths and prevents many people from believing the Bible. Before they can accept its teaching about our need for a Saviour, they need to understand these events. A part of sharing the Good News of Jesus with unbelievers is that of preparing the way with a simple, scientific and reasonable teaching of Creation, the Fall and the Flood.

¹Bible quotations taken from the King James (Authorised) Version. ²Revelation 14:6. ³Ellen G White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 389. ⁴Revelation 13:1-10. ⁵Revelation 14:14-16

Dr Colin Mitchell has degrees from Oxford and Harvard, and a PhD from Cambridge. He taught Physical Geography at the University of Reading for many years and has been working as a consultant for the UN, and several national governments. For extensive scientific research on Creation, we suggest his book *Creationism Revisited* (published by Autumn House). Phone 01476539900 to purchase.

It is with sadness that we have received news of the death of W. D. (Bill) Beamish early on Sunday morning 13 March 2011 aged 72, following a battle with cancer. Bill Beamish gave almost thirty-nine years of denominational service between 1962 and 2001, serving in various treasury roles in the Stanborough Hydro, Liberian Mission, South England Conference and Stanborough School. His final period of service was as treasurer of the North England Conference from 1988 to 2001. Bill is survived by his wife Doreen and sons Paul and Michael. Condolences can be sent to: 18 Royal Oak Drive, Selston, Nottingham, Notts, NG18 6QF ERIC LOWE, BUC SECRETARY

news



Strong Arab support for new TV channel

by Amir Ghali/tedNEWS/BUC News

On 1 February the *Al Waad Channel* (the Arabic version of the *Hope Channel*) was launched.

While political and social unrest buffets much of the Middle East and North Africa, this new force appears to be making an impact on the hearts and minds of the Arab-speaking world. Running on the same satellite as *Hope Channel Europe*, Arabic programmes from the *Al Waad Media Centre* in Beirut, Lebanon, have caused an extraordinary phenomenon shortly after the launch of their broadcast. While the Audience Relations department has witnessed a surge in the number of received emails and hits on the *Al Waad* website, something even more unexpected is taking place.

Viewers are so excited about this new Christian channel that many of them are promoting the *Al Waad Channel* on their own websites. 'To my utter surprise I found that so many others who have watched *Al Waad* on TV

are promoting it on their own websites. They've put up pictures of the broadcast, made links to our website, posted the frequency of how to find *Al Waad*, and written recommendations about the content of this channel', says Tawfik Megally, Audience Relations manager at the *Al Waad Media Centre*.

The websites encouraging people to watch *Al Waad* are non-Adventist; some of them are Coptic Orthodox, but mostly they are hosted by Muslim individuals. 'I was amazed that the launch of *Al Waad* has made such an impact here in the Middle East. *Al Waad* is being shared by word of mouth, by various websites, by church members, by email, and more', states Megally.

The Middle East and North Africa are experiencing an unprecedented time of change. The time may be ripe for the Adventist Church to share its message of hope with the people of the Arab world.

Songwriters write for light

The weekend songwriters' retreat organised by Dr Diana Sinclair, NEC Music advisor, and Paul Lee, SEC Music co-ordinator, took place over 25-27 February, incorporating a collaborative approach to songwriting. The Holy Spirit guided the composition of the 'Revival Song', based on the theme for this year's camp meeting: 'Revival and Reformation'. Workshops over the weekend challenged writers to delve into the Word. As one of the attendees said, 'I have seen the book of Psalms in a new light!' Another added, 'I have seen how awesome and creative God is, through the beauty and music within his Word.'

The 'Revival Song' has now been posted on the NEC website. Songwriters interested in further meetings should contact: SDASongWriter@me.com. DIANA SINCLAIR

ADRA restructuring will not affect UK operations

by Bert Smit, CEO ADRA-UK/BUC News

Bert Smit, CEO of ADRA-UK, reports that changes at ADRA International in Washington DC will not affect the humanitarian and development work of ADRA-UK.

Confronted by a decline in revenue, ADRA has reduced the workforce at its international headquarters by twenty per cent and begun restructuring.

This difficult decision came after a close review of the agency's financial situation. The expenses, if not modified, would exceed the budget allocation for administrative costs. All departments have been affected by the reduction in staff. In total, seventeen positions were eliminated and transition packages were offered to exiting employees, ensuring that the agency can continue to serve its network and partners, while continuing to meet the needs of those in poverty and despair.

However, the changes at ADRA International will not affect the projects that ADRA is implementing worldwide. Offices like ADRA-UK develop and implement projects without any input or control from ADRA International. These projects attract funding from the European Commission and local governments, while the planning bureau at ADRA-I exists to attract funding from the US government.

A portion of the funds raised with the Annual Appeal that is taking place right now will benefit humanitarian work in Nepal.

The change in development funding announced by the UK government's International Development secretary, Andrew Mitchell, is also in line with the ADRA-UK strategic plan – focusing primarily on countries with the greatest need.

The ADRA-UK website has the latest news on projects and initiatives being run from this country.



More great news from Kilkenny!

On 15 January the Sudanese group which arrived in Ireland in 2008 celebrated the baptism of Samuel Morgan, Esther Nasser Samuel, and their son Emmanuel Tacima Samuel. Samuel and Esther have four other children; they worship nightly at 8pm, and they hope to start a Bible study group in their home for their Christian friends. They were baptised by Pastor Ben Pontanar, who ministers in the Dublin district, further augmenting a membership increased by the baptism of five young people in 2009.

EVELYN WILSON



New ADRA volunteer trips



ADRA-UK is joining ADRA Canada's Connections programme to give you the opportunity to participate in a short-term project with long-term, life-changing potential.

You can join our team of volunteers as we travel to an ADRA project and meet families and communities who are struggling with poverty. Perhaps you'll build a house, construct a dormitory, hug an orphan, encourage an impoverished family, or plant a vegetable garden. Whatever the task, your presence will make a difference.

2011 trips are planned for Peru (1-13 May) and Kenya (23 November – 5 December) with a special Youth trip planned for 20-30 December.

The Peru mission will be to assist the construction of a lodge at a training centre for rural Peruvians, built with funding from ADRA-UK. You will learn about the country of Peru as you visit Machu Picchu and other historic sites, and see first-hand how ADRA works with the underprivileged of Peru.

The Peru trip costs around £800 per person, excluding flights to and from Peru. You will be responsible for arranging your own flights. Prices may vary due to currency fluctuations.

This volunteer programme is co-ordinated and managed by ADRA Canada. For more information and prices, check the ADRA website.

GODWIN BENJAMIN

Dressed so that you won't be killed

This was the title of the sermonette preached by Pastor David Burnett who, on 13 November 2010, baptised Dorothy Stevenson, Joy Daley, Kelly Gordon, and Devon Debique. They were encouraged to put on the whole armour of God and to stand and fight on the side of King Jesus. Members, family and friends turned up to support the baptismal candidates. A few joyous tears were shed for some of the candidates who had wandered far from God and had now come home.

SONIA MUNROE, TOTTENHAM CHURCH



Hope Channel update

Many viewers are now enjoying the extra hours in English available on the new *Hope Channel*. There are still some schedule issues to resolve but we have been assured by *Hope Channel* that the current Sabbath School lesson will now be aired at 7pm on Friday evenings. There will be further adjustments to the English schedule in the next few weeks in order to bring some of your favourite programmes into prime time.



Thank you for your continued suggestions on key programmes. More suggestions are still welcomed. Visit www.hopetv.org.uk.

BUC NEWS

Youth baptism at Stanborough Park

On Sabbath, 12 February, the Stanborough Park church was packed with relatives, friends and well-wishers from far and near to witness the baptism of four young candidates.

The first candidate was Min-Young Bae, a Korean girl studying at the Royal College of Music. She is already an accomplished pianist, often playing at local church services and functions. She presented her own concert last year to raise money for the Stanborough School Music Fund. Many of her Korean friends, mostly music students, were there to congratulate her on this very special occasion. She was

baptised by Pastor Paul Clee. The next three candidates were brothers, twins Stephen and Michael (aged 18) and Luke (aged 15). Their father, Nigel Hankin, is part of a large family, having two sets of twins! The boys are third-generation Adventists and are part of the Hankin and Wells families, which have deep Welsh roots. Grandfather Stan Wells gave a short speech and grandmother Barbara Hankin read the Bible texts chosen by the boys. All three candidates were baptised by the Youth minister, Pastor Dejan Stojkovic.

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY JOHNSON WONG



The Hankin brothers were baptised by Youth minister, Pastor Dejan Stojkovic



Min-Young Bae was baptised by Pastor Paul Clee

Christian education is worth it!

Six months on, former Harper Bell pupils testify . . .

Tanisha Burgher

During my time at Harper Bell I have learned many lessons. I remember in Year 4 that at the beginning of every lesson we had to recite Philippians 4:13 – 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' (NKJV).

At my new school, many people used the Lord's name in vain, often without realising. Such an environment can be challenging and a bad influence. I explained why they should not blaspheme. They understood and tried to avoid doing so, and would correct themselves when they were around me. With Christ's strength I could help others.

If I hadn't gone to Harper Bell, I don't think I would be as far as I am now. I am able to enjoy myself but also live by the religious standards. By doing this I have made a difference in others' lives. But I believe I can strive towards 'a more excellent way'.

Samuel L. Jackson

In the summer of 2010 I left Harper Bell with a graduation ceremony I will never forget. I have been at Harper Bell ever since nursery, and the school has done a lot for me: both

academically and spiritually.

Getting through years 5 and 6 was a struggle, but thank God I overcame. I experienced real academic tests. However, there were a lot of teachers who helped me a great deal. Attending Harper Bell laid the foundation of a Christian lifestyle; going to secondary school has brought a great deal of challenges, but through Christ I can overcome. I have been blessed to have had a Christian education.

James Bell

Harper Bell was quite different to the local Catholic school. There was a lot of spiritual focus, and it had an influence on the way the school ran on a daily basis. Bible study was led by the teachers, pastors and Bible workers of the Camp Hill church.

The Bible studies helped me to understand the importance of following Christ more than passing exams. I was baptised in August 2009. One of my classmates, Juliet, was baptised at the same time.

We all had to keep our clothes clean, ties tied well and our shoes polished every day.



Former Harper Bell students outside the school

Our school thought that it was very important to have smart and polite children. Sometimes I would get up 6am, but, as Mr Stewart always told me, it paid off. I will never forget my teachers and friends at Harper Bell, and all that the school has taught me about how important it is to have Jesus in your life.

Micah Amon Woolley

Harper Bell inspired me and gave me a good start. I learned about God and how we should treat others when they are not nice to us. I also learned about temperance, obedience, honesty and lots more. When I do tests at school or get stuck I always ask God to help me: I was taught at Harper Bell that, 'If at first you don't succeed, try and try again'.

Juliet Mutemwa

My name is Juliet Mutemwa. I

was born in South Africa but raised in England. Harper Bell helped me settle in my new school, Selly Park Technology College for Girls.

The Christian foundation I received at Harper Bell grounded my walk with God. The teachers blended teaching with God's Word. In worship, we learned how God loves everyone and how to share it. Having a monthly theme based on a verse was helpful. The Thursday class worship was excellent. We recited and discussed Bible texts like Revelation 14. Mrs McDonald's explanations made the Bible more meaningful. Harper Bell friends helped me settle better. Harper Bell helped me because the classes were small; the teachers were able to focus on pupils better; therefore, for some of my classes, I am now in the highest set.

International friends at Stanborough School



Students from Hong Kong and Spain visited the school and enriched our students.

In February, Stanborough School had the pleasure of welcoming two groups of international students, one coming from Hong Kong (Tai Po Sam Yuk SDA School) and the other from Spain (Sagunto SDA School). Altogether more than thirty students came to improve their language skills and make friends with our students.

In addition to learning English, they had the opportunity to visit London and Cambridge, and they even visited the Emirates Stadium. Fun-packed afternoon programmes were organised, and, though we were sad to say goodbye, we are happy that they came.

Next month we will be hosting students from France (Maurice-Tièche SDA School), and from all over the world during our annual International Student Exchange Programme.

Colin, a Stanborough student in Year 9, enjoyed the opportunity to 'make friends with all of them, and to understand why people do things different'. Erika and Keleey, International Baccalaureate students, like to learn about their different cultures and languages. 'I learnt to count up to 10 in Cantonese', Keleey said. When asked if there was anything she did not like about the international students, Erika said, 'I don't like that they have to go back home!'

VANESA PIZZUTO



Making friends for life, not just for Christmas

by Patrick Herbert

On Christmas Day 2010, the New Life Community church put on a programme entitled, 'Hosting the Homeless and Loving the Lonely'. Regular members, along with friends and community guests, gathered to share the blessings of Christmas with the lonely and homeless. As early as 2 December 2010 an invitation to all of them to spend Christmas day together was placed in the Sandwell area local paper. That day the Christmas story was told, following Matthew's account and using solos, narration and carol singing. After the worship came the 'cordon bleu cuisine' – Christmas dinner, prepared and served on the finest platters.

People responded to the media in different ways. On the day the article was placed in the paper, Winsome Brown-Baarges (the leader of New Life) was immediately contacted by two ladies who wanted to donate financially to the programme. Michael, who was lonely, saw the advert and came to the programme. Ray rang during the worship service to see if there was room for one more person at the dinner. New Life even laid on transport for those who needed it. The event was a success and many from the community came for the worship programme and the dinner. New Life members



have tried to keep in touch with and give support to the guests who came. Through the warm interaction it was discovered that there are people in need right on their doorstep. In fact, one couple shared the fact that their house had burned down and that was the reason they attended on Christmas day.

Throughout Christmas and into the new year, New Life members have been involved in catering for the homeless. Through their community links, they have partnered up with Sandwell Council and Centre Point Christian Church to meet



A 'crazy' weekend

At Kennington Community Fellowship's annual retreat (24-27 February) at Hill House Christian Centre, Bridgewater, Somerset, something much more spiritual than usual occurred this year.

Pastor Paul King-Brown explains:

'At Hill House a great experience took place . . . we confessed our sins, opened our hearts, told our hurts. But in this came amazing healing. The Holy Spirit bound our wounds, and we started to trust each other again. God is so good . . .

'You will hear people saying, "I love you" a lot more. Don't be alarmed; this is simply what happens when we allow the Holy Spirit to take over.'

Professor Gifford Rhamie of Newbold College spent his birthday with us, and Pastor Leslie Ackie, SEC Family Ministries director, also presented. More than 100 people attended.

For pictures and more details, visit www.kenningtonlife.com. A short video report of the weekend is also available.

KWABENA ADJEI-OWUSU



Darlington raises funds for Air Ambulance

Marie Steward, an elder of the Darlington church, is also the charity organiser at the Sainsbury's supermarket in the town. The Hird Street congregation recently volunteered to bag-pack for Sainsbury's local chosen charity: The Great North Air Ambulance Service.

As a colleague, Marie was able to top up the £416 raised with a Head Office Local Heroes grant of £200. Money aside, this has been a good opportunity to highlight the work of Seventh-day Adventists in the local press.

MARIE STEWARD





Children's thirteenth Sabbath at Harlow

The children of the Harlow church put on a colourful and touching thirteenth Sabbath programme on Christmas Day 2010. Here they are pictured presenting the message that Jesus was:

- Born to a troubled world,
- Born to a world full of darkness,
- Born to be a Friend to sinners,
- Born to give us hope, joy, peace and love,
- Born to give us life and freedom.

ANITA J. SAMUEL

Truth for today, hope for tomorrow

Pastor Michael Anim led his Stoke Newington church in a successful evangelistic series between 18 September and 2 October, 2010. The meetings were well advertised, a week before they commenced, when the Pathfinders took to the streets supported by the Lewisham Drum Corps. They handed out tracts to all who would take them.

The series incorporated a number of special features: presentations on health, education, gifts, prizes and surprises; and the whole event was greatly enhanced by the variety of musical items from the church members.

Heaven rejoices when even one soul comes to repentance and on the afternoon of 2 October the series climaxed with the baptism of

Jasmin Stewart, who comes from a Pentecostal background, and was introduced to the faith by her daughter-in-law. After her baptism, Jasmin was given the usual baptismal package and then welcomed to the church family by elders, the church board and other members.

FLO SUTHERLAND



Baby Esther's dedication in Redditch Church

February 19 was no ordinary Sabbath for the Redditch church; the church witnessed the dedication of Esther Ivanov. Esther, born to Juliet and Paul on 12 November 2010, was presented to the Lord by Pastor Peter Hovarth.

The church was fuller than usual as friends and family of Juliet and Paul travelled to witness the occasion.

ANGELA CONNICK

Indefatigable church clerk elected

Loud, joyous cheers greeted the announcement of Collins Amofah as one of the serving elders of the London Ghana church for 2011.

He has been the longest-serving church clerk in the history of the church and has been the hub of most church activities. At one time he interviewed the immediate past executive secretary of the General Conference, Pastor M.A. Bediako, at the BUC session. Members of London Ghana say he is impossible to hate!

NANA SIFA TWUM



obituaries



Maureen Hazell (1964-2010) d. 13 May. More than 700 people, including family members from Canada, Grenada & Carriacou, friends,

and members of Chiswick and other Adventist churches, gathered together on 27 May 2010 to celebrate the life of Maureen Hazell. Born on 20 September 1964 in Stratford, Maureen was the oldest of 10 siblings. At the age of 2 she moved to West London. During her school years she was very popular and enjoyed many sports, especially hurdling and netball.

In her early teens Maureen took on the responsibility of looking after her siblings while her mum was at work. Her brothers and sisters recalled that she would often take their punishment, such as her love for them. Even at a young age Maureen showed signs of being a devoted leader.

At the age of 21 Maureen gave her life to the Lord Jesus and was baptised at the Chiswick church. She always gave her very best; for Maureen, it was all or nothing. Her passion was for deep Bible study and door-to-door witnessing. She served in a wide variety of leadership roles at Chiswick Church; most notably in her favourite area of health. Maureen trained as a professional nutritionist and

used her skills in her local church and community.

Maureen also loved to be around children and in the great outdoors, both of which she was able to enjoy in her last position as leader of the Pathfinder and Adventurer club. Many of the Pathfinders gave witness to her unflinching love, care, listening ear and her desire to see children and young people excel.

Maureen had an excellent sense of humour, loved music and always enjoyed a challenge. One such challenge was the completion of her Master's degree; however, three months before achieving this goal she was diagnosed with myeloma (cancer of the blood). She continued to be a living witness to the goodness and faithfulness of God. Even the doctors were confused when she said, 'It is in the hands of the Lord'. Maureen was exposed to a new mission field in hospital, bringing a knowledge of God as well as words of comfort and encouragement.

Maureen constantly put others before herself; it was her nature to help. She always made sure there was someone there to support her mother. Her character was filled with self-sacrifice and generosity. Maureen invited family, friends and colleagues to thank and praise God for her life.

It was Maureen's greatest desire to see her family and friends at the Resurrection, when Christ shall come.

The family of Maureen would like to thank the members of the Chiswick, Brixton and Bethel churches for their continued prayers and support.

GILLIAN FRANCIS-MUSANU

Phyllis Neath (1920-2011) d. 10 January. Phyllis was a loved member of the Norwich church, and was one of the church's oldest members.

Norwich members celebrated her 90th birthday in the church, and she enjoyed the celebration just two weeks before her passing.

Phyllis served in the army for three and a half years; upon leaving, she lived in Somerset for fifty years. She was the widow of Wally, who died in 1968. He also served in the army.

Malcolm and Iris, Phyllis's brother and sister-in-law, decided she should come to live near them in Norfolk, and shortly afterwards Phyllis joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She had a lovely, comfortable bungalow in Trowse, Norfolk, and was involved in all the activities at the Dell.

Phyllis will be missed greatly by all who knew and loved her.

WENDY GRADY



Julia Smith (1956-2011) d. 26 January. Julia Smith (née Andall) was born on 25 July 1956 in the parish of St Patricks, Grenada, to

Coslimus and Albertina Andall. Julia was sickly as a child, being born with a heart defect. Her condition was considered so

Revival with a difference

Between the Sabbaths of 5 and 12 February 2011, the Personal Ministries department of the Holloway church conducted a 'Reach Out and Touch' campaign, focusing on ways to improve relationships. The preacher for the week was Donald Yearwood.

Pastor Richard Holder led mini prayer sessions each night, in which the congregation shared testimonies in groups of twos and threes. After every sermon there was an altar call, to which many responded. The Holloway church praise God for allowing Donald to touch their hearts.

GEORGE-JINA ANDERSON



Revival at Swansea

On Sabbath 26 February many members of the Swansea church, which is experimenting with a new worship format in their current venue at the Holy Trinity church, went two-by-two to distribute leaflets while others stayed for Bible study, prayer and discussion. Some of the youth joined other churches at the Liberty Stadium to collect money for Marie Curie Cancer Care. Our youth have been involved with young people from other churches since the beginning of our 'Afterglow' programmes, some of which are being held at the Ty Tawe Centre. Sports evenings are arranged during the week, ensuring there is also a good variety of activities for the young people.

The church family is also involved in an ongoing ministry to 'displaced people', while our health team is preparing for the next CHIP programme.

LILY KIDWELL



serious by her family that they prepared for her burial.

When her parents moved to England to find work she was raised by her grandparents in a large, extended family, but she joined her parents when she was 12 and attended the Mary Boone School for Girls in London. Julia was a gifted pupil and she excelled academically and as an athlete.

Julia left school at 18 to work as a residential social worker. One evening, shortly after she had started her new job, she returned home with a black eye after intervening in a fight between two teenagers. This 'baptism of fire' appeared to spur Julia on, and she held various prominent positions in local government. In 2000, she became the head of Race and Diversity for the Metropolitan Police Authority in London.

While pursuing her career, Julia still found time to highlight women's issues in the Church. She became a Women's Ministries sponsor, in a voluntary capacity for many years and then in a paid capacity in late 2003. She was the first Women's Ministries director of the South England Conference and was instrumental in developing much of its programme. Julia was able to transfer her ideas into positive action.

Following the devastation of Hurricane Ivan on the island of Grenada in 2004, Julia galvanised community groups in England to donate money and supplies for those who had lost their homes or families. She also visited the country to personally deliver the aid to those most in need. In 2006 she organised a trip to Ghana to assist the women there, and in 2007 she visited Rwanda, a country that would have a lasting impact on her.

On leaving church employment, she became CEO of her own employment initiative as well as co-director of JCS Mediation, a team of family and employment solicitors and mediators.

While she was a true professional, she was also graced with a heart of compassion for those who were suffering, particularly abuse victims. She formed the organisation WOMAASH to support victims of abuse.

In spite of her many projects, she still found time to spend with Mike, her husband of nearly thirty-four years, and her beloved daughters, Zoe and Gabby. Julia loved quality moments with her loved ones.

Most of all, Julia loved her God, and demonstrated this through her love for others. Marge Malcolm, a long-time friend and leader of the monthly Home Fellowship group that Julia attended, said, 'She was truly a woman of God... she loved people and showed this love at every opportunity'. Mary McFarlane, wife of the BUC president and Julia's long-time friend and colleague, stated, 'Julia was a woman who loved life, loved her family, loved people and loved her God - she was a woman of virtue who will truly be missed.'

Julia died unexpectedly on 26 January 2011, a life snuffed out that was dedicated to a purpose greater than itself. She will be missed.

CATHY BOLDEAU

**Adventist Discovery Centre/
British Union Conference Office
Maternity leave cover vacancy
Web Design/Maintenance and IT Support Person**

The ADC and BUC Communication department seek an individual to help develop and maintain their IT and Communication services, including websites and databases, online courses, the roll-out of *netAdventist* websites for churches and the resolution of IT issues within the BUC and ADC offices. An interest in, or experience of, working with media will be a recommendation.

Salary: £27,000-30,000 according to experience.

Closing date: 7 April 2011 (with interviews to follow on 20 April).

Applicants must have the right to work in the UK.

Application forms are available from: Executive Secretary, BUC Office, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts, WD25 9JZ.

Email: secretariat@adventist.org.uk



REVIVE

North & South England Conference

joint
camp meeting
2011

Guest Speaker Pastor Henry Wright
of Community Praise Centre, Alexandria SDA Church, USA



13th-19th June

Pontins, Prestolyn Sands Holiday Centre, Bosby Avenue,
Prestolyn, Denbighshire, North Wales, LL19 7LA

ASI Europe Convention 2011

Registration: www.asi-europe.org

Convention programme

Wednesday 15 June 2011:

Registration, Opening of the ASI Exposition, Touristic Programme: Constance, City Walks, Supper, Convention Opening (John Bradshaw), Testimonials and ASI Projects.

Thursday 16 June 2011:

Morning Worship, Workshops, ASI Europe Administrative Meetings, Lunch, Workshops, ASI Europe Administrative Meetings, Supper, Testimonials and ASI Projects, Special Sabbath Beginning (with John Bradshaw).

Sabbath 18 June 2011:

Sabbath School, Testimonials and ASI Projects, Donation for ASI Projects, Sermon with Ted N. C. Wilson (president, General Conference), Lunch, Presentation of the New Elected ASI Board, Testimonials and ASI Projects, Lecture (Ted N. C. Wilson), Supper, Public Concert with the Harmony Quartet, Preview: The Creation.

Sunday 19 June 2011:

Morning Worship, Workshops, ASI Chapter Administrative Meetings, Closing of the Convention, Lunch, Touristic Programme: Dornier Aviation Museum, Flower Island Mainau, Swiss Mountain Säntis, Visitation of the Josia Missionary School, D-Isny, Public Event: The Creation (with Henry Stober).

Workshops:

Science versus Faith, Founding of Small Bible Study Groups, Leading of Evangelistic Campaigns and Effective Outreach Work, Leading to a Decision for Christ.

Inspiration and special music:

Public concert with the Harmony Quartet.

Testimonials:

Current Experiences, Testimonies and Projects.

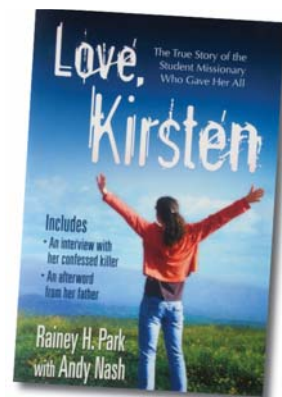
Main speaker:

John Bradshaw

(speaker/director of the international *It is Written* ministry).

Special speakers:

Dr Jan-Harry Cabungcal, Rahel Ludwig, Gabriel Maurer, Dan Millares, Dr Rivelino Montenegro et al, Ted N. C. Wilson.



**New book of the week
Love, Kirsten**

Rainey H. Park with Andy Nash

How much do you give for God? This young student missionary gave everything. In her diary entries you can catch a glimpse of her commitment, her humanity, and her perception of the Lord she served.

Contact ABC Sales on
01476 539900

to purchase your copy at £9.25 plus p&p

ABC BOOK SALES

April

3 Wolverhampton 10am-2pm
10 Southampton 10am-2pm
21-25 BUC Youth Congress, Telford

ABC Shops

Watford, BUC.
9am-5pm, Monday-Thursday,
(Closed for lunch 1pm-1.30pm)
9am-12pm Friday.
Closed on Sundays

Advent Centre

Saturdays, 6pm-8pm
Sundays, 11am-3pm

Messenger

Volume 116 • 07 - 1 April 2011

Editor: J. G. Hibbert
Contributing Editor: Dr D. N. Marshall
Proof Reader: Andrew Puckering
Design: David Bell

COPY FOR No. 09/10 - 7 April 2011

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.co.uk

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 HM Nautical Almanac Office.

	Lon	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Apr 1	7.33	7.46	7.39	7.50	8.00
8	7.45	7.57	7.51	8.05	8.13
15	7.57	8.09	8.04	8.19	8.26
22	8.08	8.21	8.16	8.33	8.40

MESSENGER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Cost to member supplied in bulk to churches £6.

Single copy subscription by post £13.

Overseas airmail £27.50

Dudley Church address change

The Dudley congregation now worship at Wolverhampton Street, near KFC. Postcode: DY1 1DB. For details, phone: 01384 213803 or 07868288310.

Camp meeting transport

Coaches will be picking up members from twenty-eight churches across the midlands to attend the 2011 Revive camp meeting, from Birmingham to Wolverhampton. For details, phone: 07868288310, 07789206171, 07736509625 or 01384 213803.

Brother Smiley - ADRA needs YOU

Brother Smiley (71) has been going door-to-door with a collecting tin for ADRA-UK since 1966. During March 2010, however, he broke his foot, and on 30 December he contracted deep-vein thrombosis, impeding his ability to walk. He appeals directly to *MESSENGER* readers to continue his work, 'a real privilege, to do what you can while you're still able'. Workers are needed for this year's Annual Appeal; next year may be too late.

BROTHER SMILEY

A BUC Sponsored Event

THURSDAY 21 - MONDAY 25 APRIL 2011

i-Change 18+

BUC YOUTH CONGRESS

i-Change, u-Change, wif-Change
Be the change you want to see in the world

David Asscherick - James Black
Dick Duerksen - Tim Gillespie

Looking for innovative, new, outside the box ideas of doing
YOUTH MINISTRY
with the Gospel, to the post-Christian generation.
No old, tried and tested methods
...time to try something new!

@ The International Centre
ST QUENTIN GATE, TELFORD, SHROPSHIRE TF3 4JH

For application and more information please visit:
www.adventistyouth.org.uk/congress