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Messenger

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ASI-UK convention

The ASI-UK spring weekend convention was a great success, well-attended by a variety of BUC members, eighty-four in all, who met over March 25-27 at the Hunton Park Conference Centre, Hertfordshire.

Their programme was well planned and full of spiritual nourishment. There was lively praise singing, supported by a very competent band from Newbold College, and some excellent sermons.

It was the period of presentations and testimonies of ASI members, however, which turned out to be one of the most inspiring parts of the convention. Some of these will be featured separately in future issues of *Messenger*, but the following three deserve special mention here:

REACH International UK

Alvira Pearson spoke passionately about REACH (Render Effective Aid to Children), telling of the organisation's work in Africa and Eastern Europe, of which she has first-hand experience. During the past thirty-seven years this lay-driven organisation has helped countless children from disadvantaged backgrounds achieve far beyond their wildest dreams. REACH owns and manages schools, orphanages, hostels and feeding and day-care centres around the world, and its 'primary purpose is to free children from hunger and illiteracy.' (For more information about REACH and its goals, contact Alvira at rpelvira@aol.com.)

STOP International

Kish Poddar was there to represent STOP International, a registered charity that has been operating since 2000 for the 'relief of poverty, sickness and distress of orphans [and abandoned children], resulting from the effects of war, famine or any other natural or man-made disaster anywhere in the world.' (See information@stop-intl.org.uk): in addition to which, they offer educational assistance to these children until age 16.

Special Needs Camp

Joy Bussey, who co-ordinates the annual Special Needs Camp at Aberdaron, was there to represent this worthy initiative. The camp is held each July for a week, and most of the campers are not Adventists. This ministry emulates the concern that Jesus had for the disabled of his day, giving them a safe, caring and fun-filled week, along with some appropriate spiritual food. It also gives their regular caregivers a brief and well-deserved respite. According to Joy, through the years, a number of staff members have found their inspiration to train as caring professionals at Aberdaron. If you want to know more about this initiative contact her at: js.bussey@ntlworld.com.

Have you thought about joining ASI?

Adventist Services and Industries provides an opportunity for Adventist business and professional people to meet regularly and inspire each other to witness in *their* workplaces, and take on projects that make a difference in the community. Have you thought about joining? For more information please contact Jim Cunningham (j.cunningham.323@btinternet.com) or Christine (Manners-Smith manners-smith@ntlworld.com).



Registration was a professionally run affair.



Good food – good fellowship – a great combination!



Megapixels of creation

MESSENGER will run a four-part series during the next twelve months entitled *Megapixels of Creation*, offering our photographers the opportunity to have their nature photography published in the magazine.

Whether you are a 'casual snapper' or a 'budding pro', it matters not (and neither does your age). All you need to do is send us your finest-quality nature photos – landscapes, wildlife, cloud formations, close-ups – anything in the UK that you think shows God's creation at its best. Please tell us where your picture was taken, and what equipment you have used. If your submission is really good, it might even appear in our devotional calendar.

This is not a competition, and the only reward will be to see your photography in print! Please send your photography to me at: dbell@stanboroughpress.co.uk. Happy snapping!



Lady Mary's Walk, Crieff, Scotland, taken by Pastor Martin Bell.

Canon G9.

DAVID BELL, MESSENGER DESIGNER

Enhancing Health

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

Knowing your body – part 3a

Detoxification and elimination

Have you ever wondered how your body copes with the abundance of products that you put into it each day? What happens to all the food, drink and varied medication we take from time to time? This article gives a synopsis of the seven body systems which enable us to detoxify harmful substances and eliminate unwanted products in order to maintain good health.

When your body confronts a toxic substance, a foreign body or even an excess of good products, the following systems come into play:

Blood – this is the key liquid which transports substances throughout the body. It delivers the needed nutrition to areas that require it, and assists the body in eliminating waste by transporting it to the organs that will expel it.

Colon – the colon transports waste

outside of the body. Adequate hydration of the digestive system enables the colon to function efficiently. Inadequate fluid intake encourages the colon to hold on to waste products, which causes the body to accumulate toxins.

Kidneys – the kidneys produce urine from the waste products of the body. Adequate hydration enables the kidneys to produce urine, making the waste easier to expel. Poor diet and dehydration can negatively affect kidney health. A Department of Health report revealed that 33,059 hospital admissions in 2002-2003 were due to kidney disease.

Liver – this organ is sometimes referred to as the body's 'factory' and is one of the largest and most vital organs. Its multiple roles include: filtering toxins; metabolising foods; converting ingredients into specific substances for use across the body; storing fats, sugars and vitamins; producing natural chemicals; breaking down harmful substances; removing harmful products from the blood and balancing the body's chemical makeup.

Lungs – these control our breathing and are vital to life. When we exhale we breathe out waste carbon dioxide made by our cells. Deep breathing, therefore, is crucial in assisting this process.

Lymphatic system – this is the body's filter system which gets rid of bacteria and other foreign particles. It also supports the body's immune system. Exercise and hydration are key factors for its health.

Skin – this is the body's largest organ. By sweating naturally, we encourage the cleansing of the skin and help to maintain its elasticity and health. The skin also gets rid of some toxins.

In the next issue we will look at exercises and food products which encourage the body to cleanse itself and eliminate harmful substances.

Good health!

editorial

As a lad I was given a boomerang. Unfortunately, the gift did not have an 'operator's manual', and I was left to experiment with the oddly shaped device. Experimentation quickly became frustration, however, as the boomerang failed to do what the dictionary said it should – 'return to the thrower'!

That boomerang disillusioned me, and I soon tired of fetching the perverse thing from the neighbour's yard. I never mastered it.

The eggs came back!

I failed to get that stick to 'boomerang', but let me tell you about some eggs that did.

As a young teen, I remember slipping out of a church social one Saturday evening. There were three or four of us, and we were armed with eggs. Fresh, uncooked, large hens' eggs!

We circled the neighbourhood, flitting through the shadows, peering over gates, searching for targets. Then, to my shame, we threw those eggs . . . into post boxes, against front doors, onto verandas and at garage doors!

Four decades later those eggs 'boomeranged'. I found them splattered on my garage door!

Egg 'splat' eats paintwork

That morning I learnt the bitter lesson that I unwittingly inflicted on others: that the sulphur and amino acids in eggs harms paintwork!

Yes, Justin Timberlake's lyrics got this one right: *'What goes around, goes around, goes around, comes all the way back around!'*

When we deliberately injure, embarrass, humiliate, exploit or harm our fellow men in any way, we run a high risk that such things will return to haunt us, even hurt us! I have seen it come *'all the way back around'* for others, just as it did for me.

History provides countless examples of those who were beaten by the 'boomerang'. Adolf Hitler, author of immeasurable human

Lessons from the 'boomerang'



Julian Hibbert
Editor

misery, whose minions murdered many innocent people with a bullet to the head, died in his Berlin bunker from the same fate.

During one phase of the French Revolution it became a dictatorship run by Maximilien Robespierre, who used 'The Committee of Public Safety' to arrest and execute anyone suspected as a 'counter-revolutionary'. They fed thousands of innocent civilians to the guillotine in 1793 and 1794, in what became known as the 'Reign of Terror'.

Then the tide of revolution suddenly turned, and: *'In July 1794, he was arrested and executed in the same fashion as those whom he had condemned.'*² What goes around 'comes all the way back around'!

Ever heard of Haman?

The Bible tells 'boomerang' stories too. Ever heard of Haman? He plotted the genocide of God's people in Persia, and the death of Mordecai – the Jew who would not grovel before him. But he reckoned without Esther's inspired plan (Esther 5-7) that resulted in the following bizarre events:

'Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, "A gallows seventy-five feet high stands by Haman's house. He had it made for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king."

'The king said, "Hang him on it!" So they hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai . . .' (Esther 7:9, 10, NIV.)

It doesn't make any sense

Doing things to hurt and harm others – or destroy their reputations – just doesn't make any sense, does it? Firstly, because life is already so full of what I call 'ambient' danger. That threat, pain and suffering that lurks in our surroundings – primed and ready to cause us harm when we least expect it. An invisible virus; the loose pavestone; slippery ice; a malignant cell; tired brakes; redundancy; that stray bullet!

Life's circumstances are potentially hostile. Why should we make it more difficult for others to cope with them by our meanness?

Secondly, the law of the 'boomerang' tells me that if you intentionally and maliciously inflict harm on others, it's just a matter of time before you get it back, with interest!

Pass it on – give someone else a push!

In the light of this, I am so glad that Jesus made this one of the rules of his earthly kingdom: *'Do to others as you would have them do to you.'* (Luke 6:31, NIV.) Here he takes us beyond the **avoidance of evil**, to the **commission of good**.

He urges us to do good wherever there is an opportunity for it. Not just any kind of 'good', mind you. Not half-hearted or begrudging 'good'. Not a carefully measured **well-that-is-good-enough-for-them** sort of 'good'. No, he wants us to practise the kind of good that would make us feel blessed, were we to receive it.

Dr Elton Wallace told this story during one of our college chapels. His car ran out of fuel on a US interstate highway, a few miles short of a service station. He sat for a minute or two, scolding himself and psyching himself up for the embarrassment that lay ahead. After all, no self-respecting man wants to be seen walking along a highway carrying an empty can!

Suddenly there was a shout from behind: *'Hi there! You git problems?'*

'Yeh! Run out of gas', was Elton's reply.

'Take it outa gear, an' I'll push you to the gas station.'

The man skillfully matched their bumper rubbers and began to push Elton's car down the interstate. One, two, three . . . just as many miles as it took to park him at a pump.

Elton leapt out and waved his wallet. *'Thanks! What do I owe you for your kindness?'*

'You owe me nothing, Mister. Just pass it on – give someone else a push!'



¹Collins Compact English Dictionary, New Edition, 1998. ²'Guillotine' in www.en.wikipedia.org.

The King's translation



by David Marshall

The King James Version of the Bible has been called the 'noblest monument to English prose'.¹

It is no accident that the works of literature most widely believed to have been defining influences on the English language – the King James Version and the works of Shakespeare – both date from the same period. That period was the late English Renaissance, when English was coming into its own as a language.

No one disputes the elegance

of the King James translation. Nevertheless, that elegance was achieved by accident.

The fifty-four translators appointed by the King and Archbishop Richard Bancroft following the Hampton Court Conference (1604) were instructed to follow strict rules of translation: fifteen in all. What these amounted to were:

Accuracy. Most of the translators appointed were experts in biblical languages. James wanted the 'best-learned'

in both universities, and directed that their work should be 'reviewed by the bishops and the chief learned [men] of the Church.'

The past. The translators were made aware that they were standing on the shoulders of giants. The 'rules' made it clear that full weight should be given to previous English translations in the new work. They were mentioned specifically: Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Matthew's (actually the work of Tyndale and his

disciple John Rogers), the Great Bible, Whitchurch's Geneva Bible and the Bishops' Bible (1568).

The King's translators set out to achieve the best rendering of God's great revelation to man. Accuracy was what they aimed for. Later translations would deliberately set out to achieve literary merit. The King James translators did not, but achieved it.

So where did this stylistic elegance come from?

Of the earlier English translations

– which the KJV translators were told to use, but, if possible, improve on – only the Tyndale translations were the work of one man. Tyndale's translation of Genesis to 2 Chronicles, the whole of the New Testament, and, according to Tyndale's biographer,² certain other Old Testament passages were used with minimal amendment in each of the subsequent versions. Nine tenths of the Tyndale New Testament of 1534 is used in the KJV of 1611. So, was the elegance Tyndale's? Some, apparently, but by no means all. Pre-KJV translators, other than Tyndale, must share the credit. And so must the King's translators themselves.

A major contributing factor to the KJV's elegance of style was a decision taken early on by the King's translators and mentioned explicitly in the preface to the 1611 Bible. They chose to abandon the purely mechanical approach to translating biblical languages. That approach would have woodenly translated Hebrew

and Greek words by the use of the same English term throughout. Instead, the King's translators harnessed the richness of the English language by translating Greek and Hebrew words with differing English words and expressions according to context. The resultant vocabulary and turns of phrase enhanced the text, and avoided awkward 'translator's English'.

The six groups of translators – two at Westminster, two at Oxford, two at Cambridge – and the smaller groups that reviewed and revised their work must be given credit:

- For choosing the best in the work of their predecessors;
- For taking full advantage of more recent developments in the art of translation and in the better understanding of Hebrew.

Can the King take any of the credit for the translation that bears his name?

The suggestion by the Hampton Court Conference that a new

translation of the Bible be undertaken came from John Reynolds, one of the few Puritans permitted to attend, who was Master of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and subsequently became one of the translators. The King latched onto the suggestion for political reasons and was involved in some initial planning. However, aside from occasional expressions of impatience, the King would appear to have 'lost interest'. He put no money into the project. It was paid for by what we would call 'the private sector'. Though it must be said that, while the translators were not paid, most of them subsequently received lucrative promotions. The suggestion that the dilettante King took any part in the translation process is absurd. The fact that he lent his name to the project did not ensure its success either. The generally recognised quality of the King James Version did that, but not until decades after the King was dead. Initial post-1611 attitudes were apt to enlarge on its faults.

After four centuries, the faults we might highlight would be quite different. Though translated when the language was coming into its own, the KJV was not 'cutting edge' in its use of English. Professor David Daniell, in his biography of Tyndale, and his monumental work *The Bible in English* (Yale University Press), argues that, in many places, Tyndale's phrasing feels 'modern' and, by comparison, the KJV feels 'archaic'. 'Tyndale's genius,' says Daniell, 'is that his ear for how people spoke was so good . . . ; it really was, at base, the spoken language of the people.'³

Only rarely can we fault the KJV's elegance, but it was not close to the language of the people – even in 1611. To some it seemed 'unnatural, artificial and stilted'⁴ – and that in spite of its preference for 'native English, rather than Latinisms'.⁵

Some blame the fact that the KJV was 'already a bit archaic in 1611' on its 'conservative mandate': 'not to make a new translation but to revise the old'. That 'restrained [the translators] . . . from modernising the English of it, even up to the usage of their own time'.⁶ They still used 'ye' in 'ye cannot serve God and mammon', even though very few people said 'ye' in common speech. They used 'thou' for 'you', 'gat' for 'got', 'spake' for 'spoke', and so on, all of which were archaisms by 1611.⁷

Professor McGrath believes that part of the reason why the King's translators used archaic forms like 'Thee', 'Thou', 'Thy' and 'Thine', and verb endings such as *sayest/sayeth, givest/giveth, hast/hath*, was that almost all of them came from the South-East of England. Studies of linguistic usages elsewhere in England indicate that these forms had been out of date for half a century further north and west.⁸

Translators have a responsibility to the languages from which they are translating; and the responsibility to render the messages of inspired books with especial care. However, they also have a responsibility of the language into which they are translating those inspired books; and to use words and thought forms comprehensible to potential readers. What is at stake is the Good News which is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes (Romans 1:16). That being the case, the responsibility to both sets of languages (biblical and vernacular) is, arguably, a responsibility to God, as well as to readers.

Hence a nineteenth-century bishop could – correctly – state that the King James Bible raised the English language to new heights. Hence an eighteenth-century evangelist, John Wesley, could – equally properly – yearn for Scripture cast in language that the ordinary man could understand. The latter was most akin to the vision Tyndale had, to make the Good News as clear to the ploughboy as to the bishop.

While, today, we are right to exult in 'the noblest monument to English prose' and four hundred years of 'the most influential book in the English language',⁹ do we also have a responsibility to reach the twenty-first century with the Good News in clear, comprehensible language – as Tyndale did to the sixteenth?

Translation involves aiming at a moving target. The speed of that movement has accelerated with the centuries.

¹'King James Bible Turns 400', *tothesource*, 16 September 2010. ²David Daniell, *William Tyndale, A Biography* (Yale University Press), p. 333 et seq. ³*Ibid.*, p. 356. See also pp. 303, 312. ⁴Alister McGrath, *In the beginning: The Story of the King James Bible* (Hodder), p. 258. ⁵McGrath, *op cit.*, p. 262. ⁶Benson Bobrick, *The Making of the English Bible* (Phoenix), p. 264. ⁷Melvyn Bragg, *The Adventure of English: The Biography of a Language* (Sceptre), p. 114. ⁸McGrath, *op cit.*, pp. 269-276, 301-310. ⁹Adam Nicolson, at the launch of King James Bible exhibition at Cambridge University Library.

'No one disputes the elegance of the King James translation. Nevertheless, that elegance was achieved by accident.'

God is only a call away

by Steve Holden



'We are affirming that *the final victory will go to love, not to despair.*'

So reads a newspaper article in *The Telegraph*, reporting on the wedding of Emma Howard – a survivor of the recent Christchurch earthquake.¹

Miss Howard, we are told, was rescued from the wreckage of a shopping centre in the early hours of the morning after the earthquake, which measured 6.3 in magnitude, hit New Zealand.

The uplifting account tells of how, only three days later, she was able to walk down the aisle to marry the man she thought she would never see again.

The emotionally charged wedding took place as previously planned – along with assembled relatives and friends, many bearing injuries sustained during the quake.

Emma was trapped in the dark, beneath a collapsed slab of concrete and steel, with little room to move. 'For about five hours I thought I was going to die', she said. 'I was panicking and experienced uncontrollable crying fits.' Fortunately she managed to retrieve her mobile phone and, discovering she had a signal, was able to contact Chris Greenslade, her husband-to-be, who was able to direct rescuers to her location.

Before setting off for the church (one that was still intact), Emma was re-united with Carl Stockton, a British volunteer who had pulled her from the pile of metal and concrete – thereby saving her life.

She had been so, so fortunate to survive the disaster, he said. The quake killed her manager and put another workmate in hospital in a serious condition. At the time of writing some fourteen other persons were still unaccounted for, buried under the debris of the same building.

The minister who conducted the ceremony acknowledged the 'extraordinary circumstances' in which this wedding was taking place. At the same time a meeting for the families of people still missing was held at a school hall just across the road.

'We are a city in suffering', he said, 'which makes what happens here this afternoon all the more poignant.'

'We are affirming that *the final victory will go to love – not to despair.*'

What a powerful statement that is. It echoes many such statements of faith and trust recorded in the Bible, in the face of difficulty and danger.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians 4:8 (NIV), paints a word picture like this:

'We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.'

Our journey through life is not always a smooth one. Most of us have to face difficulties and perhaps moments of despair. Events may suddenly, and without warning, have an unwellcome impact on us – well-made plans may be dashed. We may feel buried at times, as Emma was, beneath a heavy load that seems insurmountable (or immovable) – we may feel trapped and helpless!

If we find ourselves in such a place, let's remember that help, rescue, and hope for the future are only a call away. If our batteries remain charged, we will have reception to the One who can help.

In Romans 8:28 (NIV) Paul affirms that '*... in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*'

He questions: '*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?*'²

'No,' he concludes – '*in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us!*'³

'*If God is for us,*' Paul says, '*who can be against us?*'⁴

The psalmist says, '*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*' '*Therefore,*' we are told, '*we will not fear, though the earth give way [as in Christchurch], and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.*'⁵

Our God is an *ever-present* help in time of trouble.

In verse 10 of Psalm 46 he gives sound advice: at times like these, '*Be still,*' it says, '*and know that I am God.*'

¹Christchurch earthquake: earthquake survivor weds three days after she was pulled from debris', *The Telegraph*, 25 February 2011, emphasis supplied. ²Romans 8:35 (NIV). ³Romans 8:37 (NIV).

⁴Romans 8:31 (NIV). ⁵Psalms 46:1-3 (NIV).

To the moon and back!

Dear David

I have recently arrived home, after a wonderful and awe-inspiring Communion Sabbath service, to be greeted, when turning down my street, by the most amazing and enormous full moon I have seen this side of the M40.

I rushed to pull the Samsung Galaxy mobile phone out of my bag to take a few scenic shots, but after recalling your excellent feature in *MESSENGER* (4 March 2011, pages 10-11) I feared my camera was not up to the job.

I really do hope someone has taken some good-quality (well over 1mb) photos of it and sent them to you. I don't believe in coincidences – simply in God's divine timing.

Nice job on the feature, by the way, to both you and Victor.

Please also send my regards to Dr Marshall. His 'nurture. . .' article on page 4 of the same issue was a great read.

ANGELA HUNTER

As yet Angela, no photos of the moon have appeared in my inbox, but you never know – maybe someone will respond to our request for photos for 'Megapixels of creation', and send me the moon. Thanks for your response. Don't be totally put off using your phone-camera; if that's all you have to hand, then use it.

DAVID BELL, MESSENGER DESIGNER

Restructuring

Dear Editor

Pastor John Arthur's interesting letter (*MESSENGER*, 18 February) on the possible restructuring of the British Union is challenging. It requires reflection.

Restructuring is not new in the history of the British Union. It has been tried in the past with no major reversal of fortune.

Is it not more important to have a clear vision and picture of intentionality as to what any restructuring is intended to achieve before embarking on such an exercise? Change of any kind, without measured and well-thought-out intention as to what it will achieve, is an unsure path to tread.

The Church changed Home Missionary to Lay Activities to Personal Ministries – to what end? We had a strong MV movement which was supported by the *MV Kit Magazine* and the *Youth's Instructor*. They have disappeared. The result?

In Acts 6 there is recorded the first structural response to internal conflict in the early Church. The

apostles' reflections and response are instructive. They established the non-negotiable imperative of the work of the ministry. They involved the people who had the problem in working out a solution. The result was progress.

If the work of God in the British Union is to be restructured, would it be correct to say that all those it will affect should be involved for it to have any hope of success? Without their involvement an effective outcome could be put in jeopardy.

PATRICK BOYLE

Another look at Islamic virtues?

Dear Editor

I read with interest and concern the 18 March issue on 'Why Adventists convert to Islam'. Firstly, it should be noted that Muslims do not generally use the term *conversion*. They talk about *return*, for to them all people are born Muslims, but are 'deceived' by parents to leave the 'true faith'.

Statistics on Islam and Muslims vary quite a bit from source to source. Exact figures are hard to get. However, it is a fact that, among Islamic converts, a majority are Christian women who marry Muslim men. They are not required to accept Islam, but they will be put under tremendous pressure from the new family, the group and even co-wives to join the mosque. Muslim women have no right to marry Christian men. However, there are interesting motives for 'reversions', where the man in love with a girl can get permission for a wedding just by saying the few words in the *Shahada* in Arabic, in front of witnesses. Those converting to Islam are not always taught that their later return to Christianity could mean execution.

Negative Christian 'baggage' is mentioned – there is much for us to be ashamed of. Among the arguments the author mentions are 'failures and inconsistencies of historic, mainstream Christianity', colonialism and crusades. Terrible things have taken place and are reported with the word 'Christianity' attached to them.

The article seems to suggest, however, that some people in the West, even Christians, read about the deplorable injustices of centuries ago and therefore contemptuously turn their backs on Christianity to join Islam.

Surely these good people also read the daily newspapers. Daily there are new reports about Muslims at war with each other; Muslims killing government ministers who believe in religious freedom; and innocent aid workers executed in the name of Allah because a deranged minister in the USA burns a *Quran*. In some Islamic nations churches are burned

down and members killed. There are stories of women being 'honour-killed' just because they have been with Christian men. All this is done with the words '*Allah is the Greatest*' on their lips. Why would Christians leave their churches because of past excesses to join Islam, where many Muslims commit religious atrocities today?

Despite all the mistakes made by the Church, Christianity has developed a strong culture of human rights; respect for other religions; individual freedom and brotherly love: so much so that our 'culture of hospitality' has reached the point where Muslims persecuted by other Muslims will cross the borders to 'Christian' nations to find shelter and safety.

Perhaps we should share these facts with any who may consider joining Islam?

BORGE SCHANTZ

A Cheshire surprise

Dear Editor

In December 2009 our daughter invited us to a Christmas concert in Cheshire. It would be held in what used to be a huge farm barn, and is now known as the Clonter Opera Theatre. The theatre provides a centre where young singers are trained and encouraged, and many well-known artists of national renown have first sung on that stage. The farm trust also invites professionals of various persuasions to perform in this venue, which holds around 500 in an intimate seating arrangement.

Imagine my surprise once we were seated and I discovered that the programme was to be presented by Ken Burton and the London Adventist Chorale. We sat there for the three hours, spell-bound by one of the best concerts I have ever heard anywhere. We were not the only ones held in awe by the chorale. These 500 tough Cheshire inhabitants enjoyed each item – spirituals, carols and Adventist hymns – stamping, clapping and even whistling after each!

That was in 2009. Eileen took us back again this past Christmas, for Ken was back with his chorale to thrill Cheshire, and the result was the same. I believe that they have been coming for several years already. I do not know how many of the audience profess Christianity, but they surely profess a total commitment to the chorale and its music!

Ken and the chorale have a lovely little custom of coming back at the end of the programme to chat with the audience, and that was where I asked him if he would mind if I told the Adventist world about their witness for our Maker. This is now what was one of the best-kept secrets blown wide open!

DEREK BEARDSSELL

with Andrew Puckering



Not now, Amaziah!

Amaziah the king of Judah was squaring off against Jehoash king of Israel, ready for battle (2 Kings 14:8). No reason is given for this posturing, but Amaziah had at least taken counsel (2 Chronicles 25:17); during the reign of Jehoahaz, Jehoash's father (2 Kings 13:10) the Israelite army had suffered severe losses in manpower at the hand of the Syrians under Hazael, from whom Israel had only barely escaped with the LORD's help (2 Kings 13:3-7). This compounded the losses which Israel had suffered under Jehu, Jehoahaz's father (2 Kings 10:32-35). Suffice it to say that, by the time Jehoash (also spelled Joash) came to the throne, Israel was in bad shape.

Amaziah therefore had grounds for optimism in the coming battle, and, however imperfectly, he served the LORD (2 Kings 14:3; 2 Chronicles 25:2). Jehoash, by contrast, did evil in the sight of the LORD, just like his father Jehoahaz (2 Kings 13:1, 2, 10, 11). Amaziah should have wiped the floor with Jehoash, right?

Well, 2 Kings 14:12-14 and 2 Chronicles 25:21-24 say that's not quite how events transpired – far from being easy prey, Jehoash captured Amaziah, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and carried away the treasures of the Temple. How could this have happened?

Jehoash had given Amaziah fair warning, but Amaziah refused to back off (2 Kings 14:9-11; 2 Chronicles 25:18, 19). God had also given Amaziah warning after he had started worshipping captured Edomite idols, but Amaziah ignored that as well (2 Chronicles 25:14-16) – and now he suffered for it (2 Chronicles 25:20).

So Amaziah had ignored good advice, both from his enemy and from his Maker; but that wasn't all he'd ignored. God had promised Jehu that his sons would rule Israel to the fourth generation, even though the ungrateful Jehu continued leading Israel into sin (2 Kings 10:30, 31) – and, as we've seen, Jehoash was only Jehu's grandson. Jeroboam II and Zechariah were still to reign (2 Kings 14:23; 15:8), so any hope Amaziah might have had about terminating Jehoash's lineage and uniting the kingdom would have been misplaced.

Furthermore, the LORD had plans for Jehoash – he visited Elisha when the prophet was on his deathbed, and his cry, '*... the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!*' (2 Kings 13:14, NKJV) suggests that he was worried about the military legacy passed down to him from his father Jehoahaz. Elisha had good news for him – he would beat the Syrians, although he could have had the chance to destroy them completely (2 Kings 13:17-19).

Hang on a minute though – Jehoash did evil, as Jehoahaz had done, and his offspring Jeroboam II and Zechariah would too (2 Kings 14:24; 2 Kings 15:9)! Why was the LORD being gracious to Israel? Well, they were being raided by Moabites (2 Kings 13:20) and oppressed by Syrians (2 Kings 13:22), and the LORD had compassion on them, remembering his promise to their forefathers (2 Kings 13:23).

Yes, they seemed determined to do evil – but they were still his people, and he still loved them. He still had plans for them, and Amaziah, who didn't serve the LORD perfectly himself, was opposing those plans by thinking he could defeat them. It was Amaziah who ended up being taught a lesson.

- Who told Jehu to take the throne of Israel? (2 Kings 9)
- From whom did this command originate? (1 Kings 19)
- What proverb did Jehoash use to rebuke Amaziah, and what did it mean?
- How many times was Hazael, Ben-Hadad's son, defeated by Jehoash?
- How did Amaziah's reign end?

Dear fellow believers

Current events tell us that 'our redemption draws near'. The general unrest in our world; the inability of world leaders to solve our economic problems; the seeming escalation of natural disasters and the wickedness in the hearts of men – the Bible claims these as part of the fabric of world occurrences and experiences as we get closer to the coming of our Lord. We are living in momentous times, but also times of great opportunities for proclaiming the Gospel. Those opportunities must be embraced as we seek to advance the Kingdom of God, and most of our resources should be channelled into the fulfilment of our mission. I, and many others, are of the view that we can restructure the Church in the British Union so as to save very large sums of money, which can then be used for evangelism and outreach.

On 10 March the British Union executive committee took an action to support the start of a dialogue on the future structure of the Church in the British Isles, based on the proposal that follows. Placing the proposal in the *MESSENGER* is part of that dialogue process. I want to ensure that major decisions, such as the restructuring of our Church, are not based on the views of a few individuals only, but on the views of members in general.

We have sought, in the proposal, to explain why there is a need for change, and what the benefits to the Church are likely to be. I would welcome feedback from you on the proposal document. Such feedback can be in the form of 'letters to the editor' or letters written to the Union president. We also plan to meet with members in various settings to discuss the proposal. All feedback will be recorded in an attempt to gauge the general views of members on the subject. I must stress that, at this point, the document is merely for discussion. No decision has been taken by anyone to restructure the Union.

At the British Union field leaders' committee (quarterly meeting between Conference and Mission presidents and the BUC officers) the SEC president shared with us a discussion that he had with his directors regarding the restructuring of the Church in the British Union for greater efficiency and effectiveness. He stated that he and his directors would support any system that reduces the large sums being spent on administration, and that would provide more

resources for direct mission fulfilment. The support from all eight leaders was remarkable, given the knowledge that all of us could lose our current jobs in the process. I must also add that, when I discussed the idea of restructuring with the BUC directors, they also gave overwhelming support to it.

I was tasked with the job of formulating a proposal based on the discussion at the field leaders' meeting. The attached document is the result of that particular undertaking. I had already prepared much of the background material as part of a project I had been working on, so the job was not as onerous as it might otherwise have been.

My fellow leaders in the Union office, and in the conferences and missions, are all aware that restructuring cannot be imposed on the Church. It will happen on the basis of consultation and widespread agreement. Should we sense that there is not an appetite among the members for change, then change will not take place.

For as long as I can recall, during my thirty-three-year sojourn in the British Union, members have been calling for restructuring. Just recently, former BUC president, John Arthur, made an appeal for restructuring in the *MESSENGER* (issue 4, 18 February). I was unaware that he had written such an article until I read it, but it articulates what many have been saying for years.

There are three possible outcomes following the consultation process. One is that a decision will be made by the relevant bodies to accept the recommendation made for restructuring, with modifications; the second is that we remain as we are; and the third is that a different structure from that which is proposed be adopted. Whatever decision is finally made, may it serve to strengthen the work of God in the British Isles and sharpen our focus on the mission of the Church.

DON W. MCFARLANE



A mission-driven structure for the British Union

Don W. McFarlane

The structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at times gives the impression that the Church is more like a multi-national corporation than the body of Christ that has been commissioned to take the Gospel to the world. Some have justified its structure by claiming that it was appointed by God and is necessary for global cohesion. However, others have concluded that the complex, layered and repetitive nature of the Church's structure has become a millstone around its neck and is consuming resources that ought to be used in the pursuit and fulfilment of its mission. Whatever the value in the past of the structure of the Church, it appears to have become burdensome and prohibitively expensive to maintain.

George Knight captured the essence of the need for structural changes in our Church when he wrote:

'Seventh-day Adventism in 1995 is something and somewhere that it never expected to be. It has passed its 150th birthday and is still on Earth. Those facts are realities that bring all other Adventist problems and tensions in their train, including problems in Church organisation. To large numbers of Adventists, reorganising the denomination's structures is past due. Many are calling for significant and responsible changes in a system that no longer seems to meet the needs of a Church and a world that have been radically transformed since the denomination last reorganised in 1901-03. . . . The reorganised structure has also become increasingly more rigid and bureaucratic. Some have even wondered aloud if Adventism hasn't "out-beasted the beast" in the area of hierarchical organisation. In 1995 it may be the most tightly knit worldwide ecclesiastical organisation in existence. Adventism has gone from one polar extreme to the other in the realm of organisation. And yet there are rumblings of a desire among some for more centralisation in order to keep things "under control". The reaction to these hierarchical tendencies on the part of many has been an inclination to revert to local control and congregationalism.'

The *British Union 2009 Statistical Report* shows that, of the non-institutional and educational workers, 165 employees were

engaged in frontline evangelistic and pastoral work while 103 were in administrative/promotional/office work. The statistical report also reveals that, of the 151 ordained pastors in the British Union, thirty-three are office-bound. Of course, those pastors who work in the office also make an important contribution to church life, but are not engaged on a daily basis with local churches and local communities.

Role of local congregations in Church organisation

It is widely accepted that the local church, in any Christian denomination, is the level at which the mission of the organisation is carried forward. However sophisticated the infrastructure of the organisation, its primary purpose is to aid the local church in its effort to respond to God's call and purpose. It is therefore appropriate to give space briefly in this proposal document to the role of the local church, as outlined by Scripture.

The word 'church' occurs 113 times in the New Testament (ESV). Ninety-six of the references pertain to local assemblies of believers. Though 1 Corinthians 12:12-14 speaks eloquently about the universal nature of the Church in terms of it being 'one body' (ESV), approximately nine tenths of the scriptural references see the local church as the unit that God uses in carrying forward the preaching of the Gospel.

In Acts 13 we find a demonstration of how the local church functioned in New Testament times:

'In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.'

From the above, and other references in the New Testament, it is clear that individual churches took the responsibility to provide missionaries to preach the Gospel in new places: 'Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers. . . . As they ministered to the Lord, and

fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.'

It is at the local church level that the Gospel is proclaimed, where hearts are reached for the Kingdom of our Lord, and where the nature of this Kingdom is demonstrated in the lives of members. If the Church is to be the dynamic force that it ought to be, it is imperative that the local congregation is resourced for that purpose. Consequently, any change in structure that is likely to have a significant impact on Gospel fulfilment must, of necessity, strengthen the local church by increasing the resources that are available to it.

The significance of the local church cannot be overstated. The work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not done in the quiet corridors of the GC headquarters or in Union and Conference offices dotted around the world. It is done by those who occupy the pews in our local churches, whose lives and words tell forth the praises of the One who has redeemed them from sin's bondage.

Brief history of the organisation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

For the first few years of Seventh-day Adventism, Church organisation was not a major issue. No one seriously considered it a necessity. In 1851, some in the movement concluded that a form of organisation was required, however basic. Initially, organisation was considered necessary in order to have unity in doctrine and to protect the Church from growing fanaticism.⁴ The variant doctrinal views in the Church led to the writing of the testimony entitled 'Gospel Order' in 1853. Commenting on the need for order, Ellen White wrote, in *Early Writings*, 'Formality should be shunned; but, in so doing, order should not be neglected.'

Despite the obvious need for some kind of order, many leaders were extremely fearful about moving in that direction. Ellen White herself was seen as ambivalent on the matter. In 'Gospel Order', for example, we find the statement, 'We want no human creed; the Bible is sufficient. The divine order of the New Testament is sufficient to organise the church of Christ.'

In addition to doctrinal unity, three other reasons arose for the Church to have some form of organisation. One was the need to

give approval to those who went forth to preach and teach in the name of the movement. Some such preachers and teachers were not true to the teachings of the Church. It was important that a distinction be made between the genuine Seventh-day Adventist preachers and the false, by providing those who were in harmony with Church teachings with some form of authentication. *The Review and Herald* stated that ‘. . . it is of the highest importance that those who go forth to teach the Word should be in union in sentiment and in their course of action . . . the order of the gospel is that men who are called of God to teach and baptise, should be ordained, or set apart to the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands.’⁷

Another reason given by the *Review and Herald* why organisation was required was the need to spread the responsibilities of Church leadership to a wider group. ‘The whole church should be taught to feel that a portion of the responsibility of good order, and the salvation of souls rests upon her individual members. . . . In one sense we are our brother’s keeper.’⁸

The fourth reason that emerged for Church organisation was the support of those in ministry. ‘The church should be ready to see and to supply the temporal wants of those called to labour in word and doctrine.’⁹

The fifth reason why Church organisation was considered necessary was the need to hold property.

Battle over Church organisation

For approximately ten years, a ferocious verbal battle raged among the believers over the matter of Church organisation. Those of us living in the twenty-first century might have some difficulty understanding why this was the case. We need to appreciate that some of the early believers saw organised religion as being responsible for many of the woes that had befallen the Christian Church and which had affected some of them personally. They wanted their movement to be unlike that which had gone before. Adventist historian, C. C. Crisler, wrote, ‘The instruction given to Sabbath-keeping Adventists regarding gospel order, was received by some with gladness. Others hesitated, questioned and doubted.’¹⁰ After ten years of debate and rancour, the group of believers accepted organisation in 1863.

Progression in organisation

When the Church was organised in 1863 it was thought that the system of organisation accepted by the believers was adequate to accommodate and facilitate the growth of the Church until the coming of Jesus. Those who were involved in the organisation of 1863 did not even consider the possibility that at some stage in the future a revision of the structure might be needed.¹¹ However, at the 1888 General Conference session major decisions were taken to reorganise the Church. For example, the United States, for administrative purposes, was divided into four areas. In the following year the number of areas was increased to six. While such changes were considered radical, the most significant

change of the period took place in South Africa when A. T. Robinson decided that the disparate associations, organisations and churches all needed to be brought under one umbrella. The General Conference was unhappy with Robinson’s proposal, but their letter expressing disapproval arrived too late. Robinson had gone ahead and implemented his proposal in bringing all auxiliary associations under the umbrella of the executive committee of the South African Conference. A similar development occurred in Australia. After several years of debate and recrimination, the General Conference adopted the South African model for the Church in general.¹²

The next major reorganisation of the Church took place at the 1901 General Conference session. The structure which the Church agreed then is largely the structure of the Church today.¹³

Ellen White’s position

Ellen White’s position on Church organisation can be deduced from letters written on the subject or from presentations made. She believed in Church organisation of a kind, and urged reorganisation in the 1901 General Conference session by saying, ‘What we want now is reorganisation. We want to begin at the foundation, and to begin upon a different principle.’¹⁴ Despite her support for Church organisation, she was opposed to leaders assuming a controlling power on the work of the Church in local areas. She believed that the work had been greatly restricted by that approach:

‘God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control this or that branch of our work. The work has been greatly restricted by the efforts to control it in every line. Here is a vineyard presenting its barren places that have received no labour. And if one should start out to till these places in the name of the Lord, unless he should get the permission of the men in a little circle of authority he would receive no help.’¹⁵

Lessons from the history of Church organisation

So, what lessons can be drawn from the history of organisation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church? First, the structure of the Church is not divinely appointed. Second, the structure of the Church came about in response to the needs of the Church in North America and overseas. Consequently, as needs and circumstances change, it may be necessary for the structure to change as well.

‘The reason for Adventist organisation is mission . . . both the 1861-63 organisation and the 1901-03 reorganisation were based on functionality for mission. That means that the structures set up at those points in time cannot rightly be seen as necessarily applying for all time. Structure is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means to forwarding the mission of the Church. Thus reorganisation is demanded when structures grow too cumbersome or are rendered less than optimally effective by changes either within the Church or in the larger culture in which the Church finds its mission.’¹⁶

The Church today is very different from what it was in 1901. For example, strong local leadership has been developed in different areas of the world field. Local leaders now share the vision for the advancement of the Church and the guarding of its beliefs as much as did the General Conference leaders of a hundred years ago. Additionally, several countries individually have more members than the total membership of the General Conference in 1901. Adventist leaders in those countries are doing a good work in providing direction for the Church. The society in general has moved on from being agricultural to being technological, from being pre-modern and modern to being post-modern. People have become suspicious of highly centralised organisations, and process information very differently from the way in which it was done a hundred years ago. The changed situation may require amendments or acute changes to the structure of the Church as it has existed for the past hundred years.

Argument for change in the British Union

Being a part of the Church’s global organisation, the British Union reflects the problem outlined above. Its various parts and levels are well maintained and seem to work well in relation to each other. However, the question needs to be asked whether the central purpose of the British Union is being served by its well-ordered organisation. Are the resources available being channelled largely into soul-saving, or is maintenance of its structure consuming large proportions of those resources? In other words, is the Union primarily soul-seeking or self-serving?

The flowcharts that follow show the current executive and departmental structures of the Church in the British Union:

See Figs. 1-3

Apart from the large number of individuals working in the three Church offices, the independent nature of the three units does not escape the eye. As separate charitable organisations, the BUC, SEC and NEC operate as independent units, bound together only by church policies and denominational courtesies. Some members and workers struggle with the idea that the British Union does not have full responsibility for every aspect of the work of the Church in the British Isles.

The recent drive to have a dedicated Adventist television channel in the British Isles highlighted some of the challenges of the present system. While various segments of the Church initially felt it was a good idea and committed to supporting it, two of the major players subsequently stated that they had other priorities and were no longer able to commit major funds to the project. The result was that the project was abandoned.

Another illustration of the disadvantage of the segmented approach is seen in the media work within the BUC. The SEC has a substantial media department in which four people are employed. The BUC’s media department has two full-time workers, and the NEC a fifty-percent budget. While the different units working independently do some good things,

Fig. 1

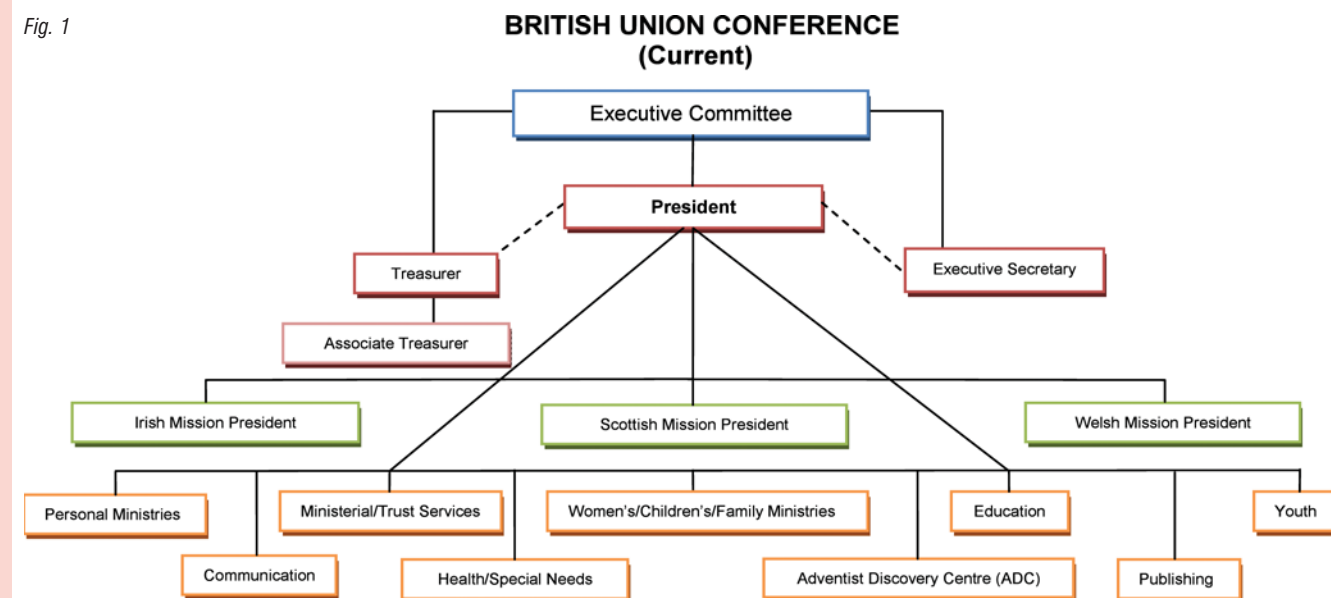


Fig. 2

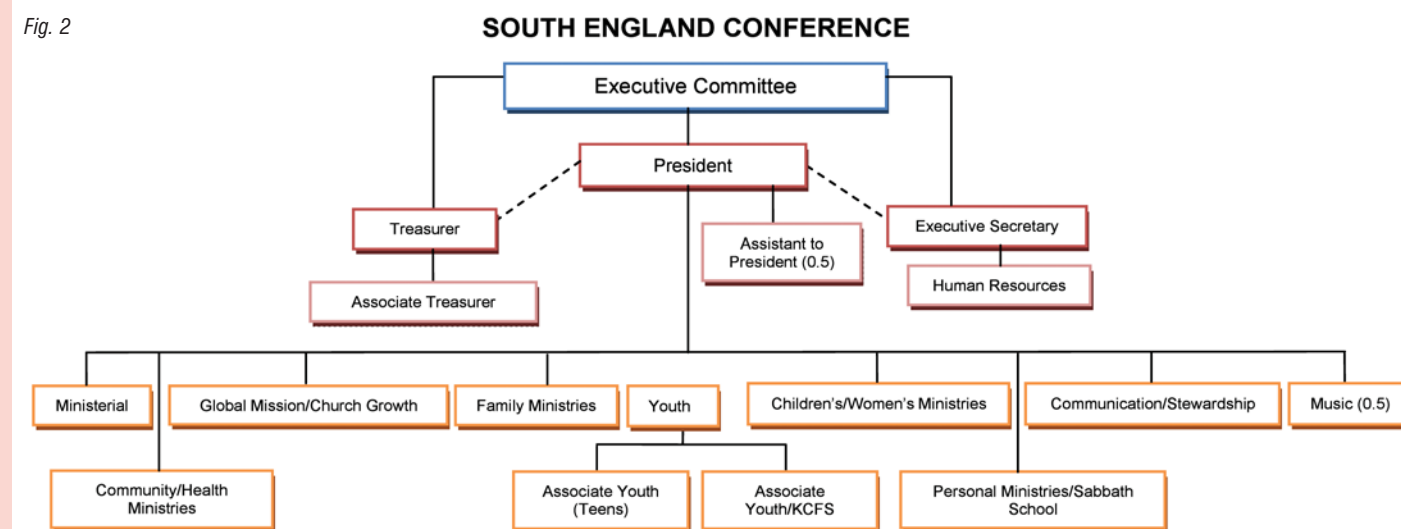
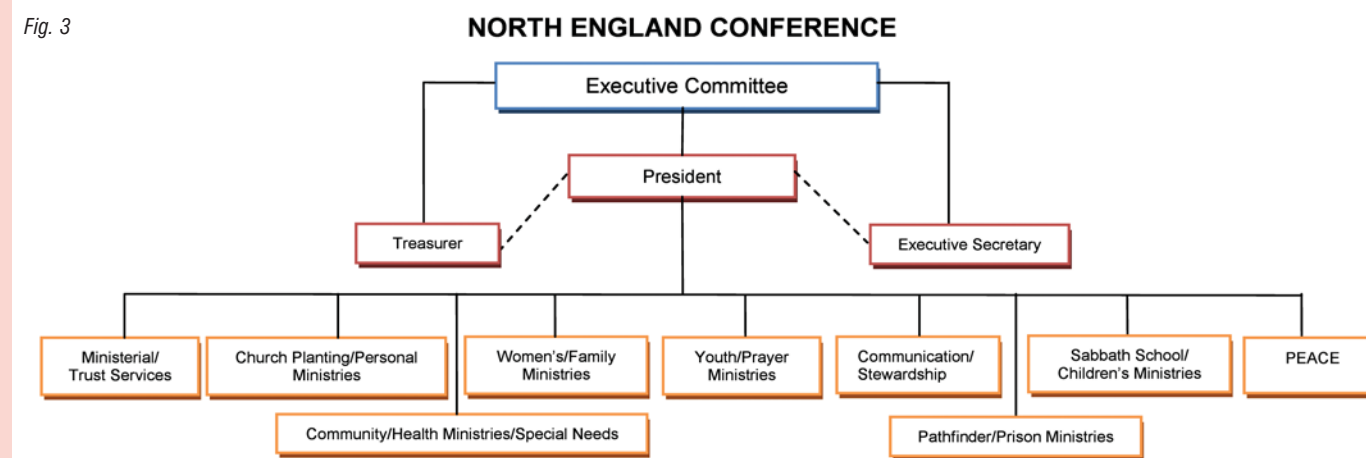


Fig. 3



the benefit of having one media department for the British Union seems immense. Current workers would be able to pool their talents and resources for the good of the Church. Competition would be eliminated and, hopefully, a better product would be the result.

Initiative by BUC Church leaders

The leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist

Church in the British Union are acutely aware of the need for the restructuring of the Church in their territory for the sake of more effective mission fulfilment. In December 2010, field leaders (field presidents and BUC officers) concluded that urgent action was required to restructure the Church in the British Union in order to:

1. Eliminate unnecessary duplication,
2. Reduce expenditure on executive/

3. Provide more resources (financial and human) for local churches, where the mission of the Church is carried out,
4. Position leadership closer to members and the community,
5. Operate the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK as one charitable organisation,
6. Streamline HR and financial services,

7. Have stronger and closer leadership of pastoral staff, which also should provide for more effective support and monitoring.

In responding to the field leaders' desire and call for restructuring, three models will be considered in this paper – the 'fusion model', the 'rationalisation model' and the 'union of churches model'. The strengths and weaknesses of each model will also be examined in relation to the above terms of reference.

The fusion model

The fusion model envisages bringing the operations of the Union and its fields under one umbrella. The three separate charitable bodies – the British Union Conference, the North England Conference and the South England Conference – would be replaced by one charitable organisation. The major features of this model are:

- One registered charitable body,
- All department directors based at the Union,
- Increase in the number of local fields,
- Each local field to have a president and a board,
- All HR matters directed from the Union,
- All financial services provided by the Union,
- Secretarial support for presidents, to the extent that it is necessary, to be provided at the Union office,
- A number of administrators and directors released for frontline work,
- Steep reduction in support staff,
- Reduction in the number of Church administrative buildings.

The flowchart that follows illustrates how the fusion model could be organised:

See Fig. 4

While one cannot accurately predict the number of leaders that would be required to

operate the fusion model, the table below (Fig. 4) shows a total of twenty-six executive and department leaders, compared to forty-five shown in the earlier table that represents the current situation. (See Figs. 1, 2 and 3)

One registered charitable organisation

Currently the SEC, NEC and BUC operate as separate charities. The missions operate as part of the BUC charitable body. Separate reports are filed with the Charity Commission each year for the SEC, NEC and BUC. What is reported by the BUC is essentially the activities in the conferences and missions.

As independent charities the conferences are controlled by their executive committees, which may choose to buy into the overall strategy of the Union or come up with their own strategy.

Employees are considered to be working for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but are subject to varying employment practices and interpretations of policies across the three organisations.

One charitable body, covering the conferences and missions, would standardise employment practices and policy interpretation, eliminate reporting duplication and ensure that external bodies are able to relate to one organisation that represents the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as opposed to several. The element of competition between organisations would also be eliminated.

All department directors based at Union level

This may seem a daunting task for directors, but such a view would be based largely on the traditional way in which directors have worked over the years. Directors would not be required to be peripatetic preachers who go from church to church on Sabbaths to fill preaching slots. Their responsibilities would be three-fold – preparing resource materials, training pastors and lay leaders, and promoting the work of their departments. This would require directors to be specialists in the fields for which they have responsibility.

The British Union is a large field within the context of the TED, but in the context of the wider Church it is comparable to a medium-sized conference, both in membership and in geography. The Southeastern California Conference and the Southern California Conference have 69,000 and 43,000 members respectively. The Northeastern Conference in the Atlantic Union has a membership of 48,500, and the Texas Conference 46,000. Several conferences in South America, Inter-America and Africa would be even larger in membership than the figures quoted above. A field of 32,000 members would not be beyond the capacity of one set of department directors to serve.

To have one set of executive officers and directors serving the Church throughout the British Isles would reduce current numbers from forty-five to approximately thirty, twelve of whom will have pastoral assignments along with their executive responsibilities.

With modern methods of communication, in particular the internet, directors can be located in different parts of the British Isles. Currently two of our directors come into the BUC office only once a week, but this arrangement does not seem to impede their effectiveness and their availability to the entire field.

All areas of the British Union can be reached within two hours from Watford. When the current system of organisation was agreed by the Church it took days, in some cases, to travel from the Church headquarters to some parts of the territory.

Increase in the number of local fields

The fusion model envisages an increase in the number of local fields that currently exist. Number of members, geography and viability will eventually determine the number of fields that emerge from restructuring. However, what is considered to be of paramount importance is manageable units. If, as has been stated already, a local president's responsibility will be nurture and outreach, he needs to be given a team that is big

enough to care for the churches and impact the community in his territory, and at the same time small enough to allow meaningful support, monitoring and evaluation. Currently, the pastors in the missions enjoy a close-knit relationship with one another and the president as a result of being smaller ministerial teams. Between ten and fifteen ministerial workers might be a manageable number for a local president or field leader.

A possible division of the Union territory into smaller fields might go along the following lines:

- Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire,
- Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Sussex,
- Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire,
- Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex,
- North London, West London, Surrey,
- South London, East London, Kent,
- Cumbria, Northumberland, Durham, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire,
- Lancashire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Leicestershire, Rutland,
- West Midlands, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire,
- Scotland,
- Wales,
- Ireland.

I must emphasise that the above listing is merely an example of how the BUC territory could be divided into smaller manageable fields. The listing is not a proposal. With more thought it is possible to arrive at a better configuration. An alternative solution would be to work along the lines of the current area system model, though that might result in too many fields.

Some of the new fields might not be strong enough financially and numerically to operate as conferences, and consequently would have to be regarded as missions.

Each local field to have a president and a board

Some might prefer the term 'field leader' to that of 'president', but, as the role of a president in Adventist circles is widely understood, it might be best for field leaders to be called 'presidents'. In dividing the BUC territory into smaller units and providing each unit with a president, we are essentially proposing a system of team ministry in which the president is the leader of the team. In some other Christian organisations the local field president/leader, as being currently described, is called a 'bishop'.

The president, who will be expected to care for a local congregation along with his presidential duties, is the only executive officer that is being proposed for each sub-unit (conference/mission). Much like the missions currently, treasury and secretarial support will come from the Union. However, each sub-unit will have a board, which, with the president, would be responsible for directing the outreach and nurturing programme of the field and managing its budget.

All HR matters handled at the Union level

The HR area is one in which the Church in the British Isles needs to grow rather quickly. Having one charitable organisation allows one employment body and facilitates the setting up of an HR department, linked to the secretariat. Employees' welfare, employer's interests, training, monitoring and evaluation are important matters that the HR department would be required to address. The line manager for pastors would be the field leader or president, but technical HR support would come from the Union.

All financial services to be handled by the Union

The management of the pension plan, which is in cash terms the largest financial operation in the British Union, is already handled at the Union level. Once proper systems are established, the processing of tithes and offerings from various local fields, the payroll, the auditing of churches and all other accounting matters can be added to the pension management at the Union level.

Currently fourteen employees, not including secretaries, serve the Treasury departments in the BUC, SEC and NEC. Six of those are in the SEC and four each in the BUC and NEC. Having one accounting office for the Church in the British Isles would require an expansion of the number working in the BUC office, but the overall number of Treasury employees could be significantly reduced.

There might be a need for at least two assistant treasurers at the Union, in order to provide support for the various local fields and ensure that a Treasury representative is present at each meeting of a local field board.

A new plan would be required for the funding of local fields. This paper will not attempt to explain what that system should be, other than to stress that local fields would have control over their budgets and benefit, as they do currently, from the funds from their local churches. There would, however, need to be a different tithe-sharing system from that which currently exists in order to ensure that the Union is sufficiently resourced to function, service the fields and support the institutions.

Secretarial support for field presidents to be provided from the Union office

Most administrators and department directors do their own typing, facilitated by the versatility of a laptop or other computer. The dependence on secretarial support is not as acute as it once was. Secretaries are now used mostly for research, graphics work, formatting and despatch. Most, if not all, of this can be done from the Union office. It would be necessary to employ more secretaries than currently work in the Union office to ensure that local field presidents are supported. With the communication system provided by the internet, field presidents should not lose much in having secretarial support in the Union office.

Administrators and department directors released for frontline work

One of the major outcomes of the fusion model is the release of a number of senior

and experienced pastors from administrative and departmental work for service in local churches and local communities. There is a note of caution that must be sounded here, however. Local fields might not be able to absorb all the ministerial workers that are released from the offices. Therefore creative ways might have to be found to utilise the services of some workers.

Reduction of support staff

Interestingly, the number of support staff working in the BUC, SEC and NEC, excluding those who work for ADRA and the Adventist Discovery Centre, is approximately the same as the figure for administrators and department directors. The number is forty-four, which means that on average there is one support person for each officer and director. In reality, though, not every director has a support person. The Treasury departments in all three organisations have considerably more support workers than other departments. The nature of treasury work dictates the need for several support workers.

In that the number of support staff corresponds with the number of officers and department directors, one can assume that a reduction in the number of officers and directors will result in a significant reduction in the number of support workers, even taking into consideration the need to have more secretaries in the Union office to support field presidents. Reduction in support staff could save the organisation close to half a million pounds annually.

Reduction in the number of Church administrative buildings

Should the fusion model be adopted, the Conference offices would become surplus to the needs of the Church. Only one Church office would be required. Presumably, that would be the Union office. The Church would then need to decide the future of the two other properties. If suitable, the buildings could be used for other areas of the Church's extensive operations, or sold and the proceeds used in the wider interest of the Church. There would also be the added financial benefit of not having to operate three headquarters offices.

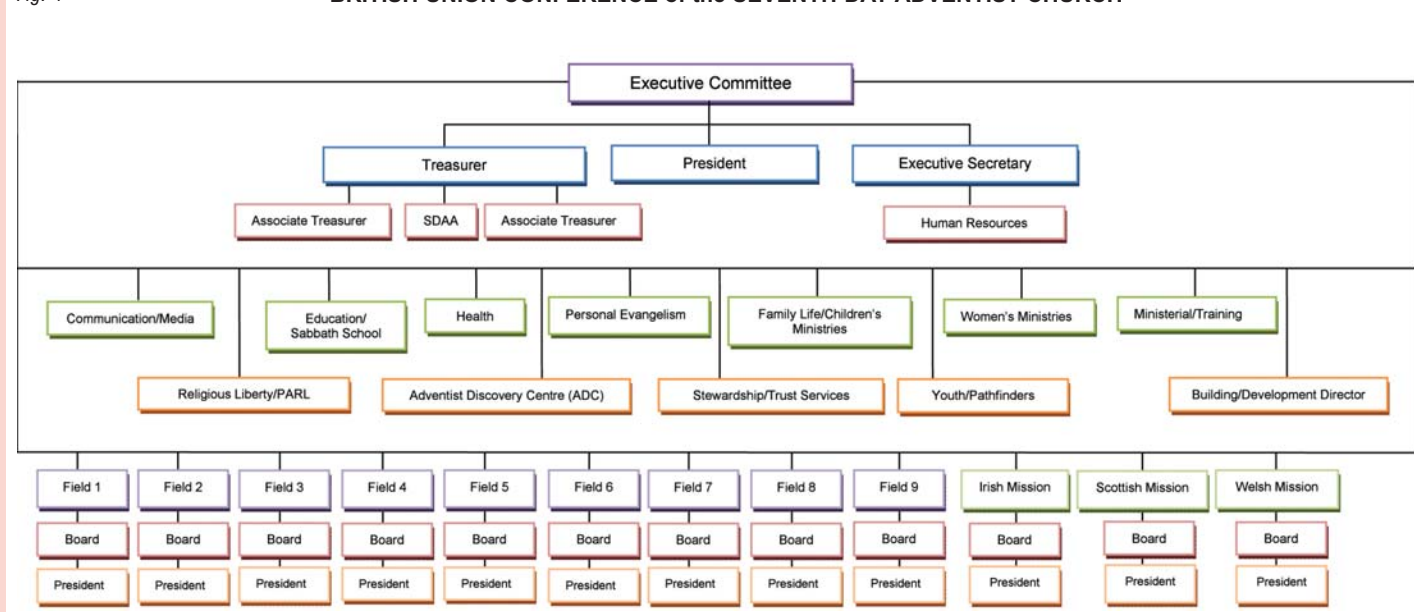
Rationalisation model

In a nutshell the rationalisation model is the retention of the current structure, with a reduction of personnel in certain areas and streamlining of some operations.

While it is convenient to have the counterpart of each department in the Conference level at the Union level and vice-versa, one needs to ask whether such an arrangement is essential. Each department director at the Conference level leads a particular ministry or set of ministries that impacts local churches. It is highly debatable whether another cadre of directors is required at the Union level to provide leadership in ministry in the same areas in which the Conference directors are serving. Both sets of directors essentially are serving the same constituency, the same churches and the same people. Some might conclude that the best argument for directors at the Conference having counterparts in the Union

Fig. 4

BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE of the SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH



is that it has always been done that way. The British Union currently has a group of highly motivated and committed department directors at both levels of the organisation. The rationalisation model, however, would see some redeployed in other areas of work. The model presupposes that there are separate roles for the Union and the conferences.

Role of the Union

The role of the Union can be viewed as six-fold: strategic development, resource development, policy formulation, leadership training, legal and paralegal matters, and those areas of church life that require national attention.

• Strategic development

At the Conference level it is difficult to be creative as one would wish to be. The proximity to local churches, members, pastors and schools means that there is always somewhere to go, something to do, some action to take. The Union can play a creative role, which often proves so elusive to those working at the Conference level. It can take a helicopter view of the work in the British Isles and work with local fields in developing various approaches to ministry. The current evangelistic programme in the British Union, dubbed 'Life Development',¹⁷ is an example of how the Union can focus on strategic matters while the local fields get on with the implementation of plans and strategies.

• Resource development

The argument for resource development to be handled at the Union level is similar to that for strategic development. Members need tools for witnessing and the Church in general needs effective nurturing tools. This could be an area of specialisation for the Union. One area of resource development that is needed in the United Kingdom and Europe is a media centre that produces material in English. The Germans have such a facility. North America and the South Pacific also boast state-of-the-art media centres. The strategic location of the United Kingdom, the expansion of the use of English in communication in Europe and the unique nature of European culture are three good reasons for the British Union to establish a media centre. This centre, in addition to producing resources such as DVDs and videos, could also be responsible for the Correspondence Bible School, an evangelistic tool that has proven reasonably successful over the years.

Operating a media centre is costly. Much of the cost, however, can be borne by the sale of items produced by the centre, in much the same way as other media centres in the Church have operated.

• Policy formulation

One role of the British Union that needs no alteration is that of the formulation of policies for the Church and employees. There are some who take the view that policies should be formulated at the Conference level. However, there is merit in the practice of having policies made one step removed from those for whom they are made. In that way

there can be greater objectivity in the process.

• Leadership training

Good church leaders, both lay and ministerial, are usually the result of good training. The British Union is well positioned to provide this support for the Church. Its new facilities, with several meeting places, lend themselves rather well to making it a training centre. In fact, a decision has already been made to do just that. On 16 February 2011 we launched a training programme for pastors and elders with a seminar on 'Being a Visionary Leader'. Twenty-eight pastors attended the day seminar while a similar number of elders attended the evening seminar. The plan is to conduct, on a monthly basis, relevant courses for church administrators, department directors, pastors, elders and other church leaders.

• Paralegal matters

The Seventh-day Adventist Association, which cares for the purchase and disposal of church properties and related matters, provides an important and necessary service for the Church in the United Kingdom. This is a function that is best operated nationally, in that it provides checks and balances for actions taken locally. The service is valued by local church leaders and members.

• Matters of national importance

There are certain areas of church life that can be classified as national in nature. One such is education, for which there are national standards and a national curriculum with respect to primary and secondary education.

Other areas of operation that merit national attention are religious liberty and parliamentary affairs. The Union keeps abreast of legislation that affects the Church, and uses whatever authority it has to try and influence law-making that impacts the Church in one way or another.

There are certain forms of outreach, such as the Bible Correspondence School and Life Development, that require a national engine. These are best run from the Union, as is the case currently.

Departments and services operating solely from the Union level would be:

- a. ADRA,
- b. ADC,
- c. Education,
- d. SDAA,
- e. Religious liberty and parliamentary affairs,
- f. Media,
- g. Chaplaincy.

Role of the Conference

The local fields in the British Union have done a commendable job in supporting pastors, local churches and members, which is essentially the work of a conference or mission. Support of pastors and local churches involves training, which conferences and missions have done with varying levels of success over the years.

As a matter of principle, as far as the rationalisation model is concerned, departments that train and nurture members should operate only from the Conference

level, and departments that relate to whole Church matters should operate from the national level. With this in mind, based on current departments, the following departments would operate only from the Conference level:

- a. Personal Ministries,
- b. Sabbath School,
- c. Youth, Teens, Pathfinders,
- d. Women's Ministries,
- e. Family Ministries,
- f. Health,
- g. Stewardship,
- h. Children's Ministries,
- i. Community Services.

The nature of some departments might require that they exist in one form or another at both levels. Communication and Ministerial readily come to mind. It is necessary to have a whole Church communication strategy, but the need for a local communication strategy involving local churches and communities is equally strong. A similar argument can be applied to the Ministerial department. While continuing education and training are an integral part of the Ministerial department and seem a whole Church matter, ministerial workers often need one-to-one support, which would prove somewhat challenging for one person at the Union to provide for approximately 200 employees.

Merging of some services

There is a strong view that certain operations and services between the conferences and the BUC could be merged for greater efficiency and reduction of costs. Two that have been talked about frequently are financial services and HR.

Payroll for all employees could easily be done centrally. Equally, a number of other accounting operations could be handled by the Union. These include the receipt of tithes and offerings and the Gift Aid programme. As in the fusion model, the number of workers in the Treasury department at the Union level would require an increase to accommodate the extra workload.

In this model each conference would retain its own treasurer for strategic and executive decisions, but support staff in Conference Treasury departments would not be necessary. Thus, of the fourteen people currently working in treasuries across the BUC, ten could possibly be retained in the rationalisation model.

Ministerial office workers having local church assignment

Having established earlier in this paper the importance and centrality of the local church to the fulfilment of mission, a key element of the rationalisation model is that each ministerially-trained employee in the office would be asked to be involved in the life of a local church. This could take one of two forms – pastor of a church or associate pastor of a church.

There might be some resistance by department directors and administrators to being pastorally linked to a local church. The benefits, however, do outweigh the draw-

backs. The obvious drawbacks may be seen as a restriction of the movements of those affected, carrying a full load as a director/administrator and, in addition to such heavy responsibilities, having to provide pastoral care for a church. These are reasonable concerns and must not be taken lightly.

Set against the concerns are the following advantages:

- a. Local churches benefiting from the experience and knowledge of senior leaders,
- b. The director/administrator having a spiritual home,
- c. Having the opportunity to experiment with ideas in a local church setting before seeking to implement them conference-wide or nationally,
- d. Being regarded by members as having an experiential knowledge of initiatives to be implemented,
- e. Narrowing the perceived gap that exists between church pastors and office-based leaders, thus eliminating or reducing the 'them and us' stereotype,
- f. Practically demonstrating the belief that the local church is central to mission fulfilment.

There is already a pilot within the British Union of directors carrying a pastoral assignment. Despite the arrangement having arisen from the reduction of ministerial personnel in the NEC, due to financial constraint, it does show the way forward for the entire Union if the basic structure of the Union remains in place. Church members are pleased with this new arrangement and local pastors feel that it is one way of removing the 'them and us' perception.

With the description given so far of the rationalisation model, the flowcharts that follow show what the relationship between Conference and Union departments would be, should this model be adopted:

See Figs. 5-7

Union of churches model

The union of churches model was approved by the General Conference in 2007 as an alternative Church organisational structure. A union of churches is described by the GC as 'a united organised body of local churches within a territory, having similar status to a union conference or union mission, and a direct relationship with the division.'

In the union of churches model the Union

fulfils the role of the local conference: thus eliminating one layer of Church organisation. The Union essentially becomes one big conference, with the exception that it deals directly with the Division.

The commission set up by the General Conference to consider the union of churches model suggested the following benefits to the Church:

- a. It will help reduce the number of levels of organisation from four to three and will reduce the number of administrative units. Remarks are often made by church members about the heavy administrative structure of the Church when so many more pastors are badly needed in the field. Pastors who would normally be needed at each administrative level would be released to serve in needy areas.
- b. It will help redistribute financial resources to areas of the work that are currently languishing. Every administrative level of Church structure requires leaders, staff, travel budgets, and so on. A simplified structure contributes to an increase of financial resources for

Fig. 5

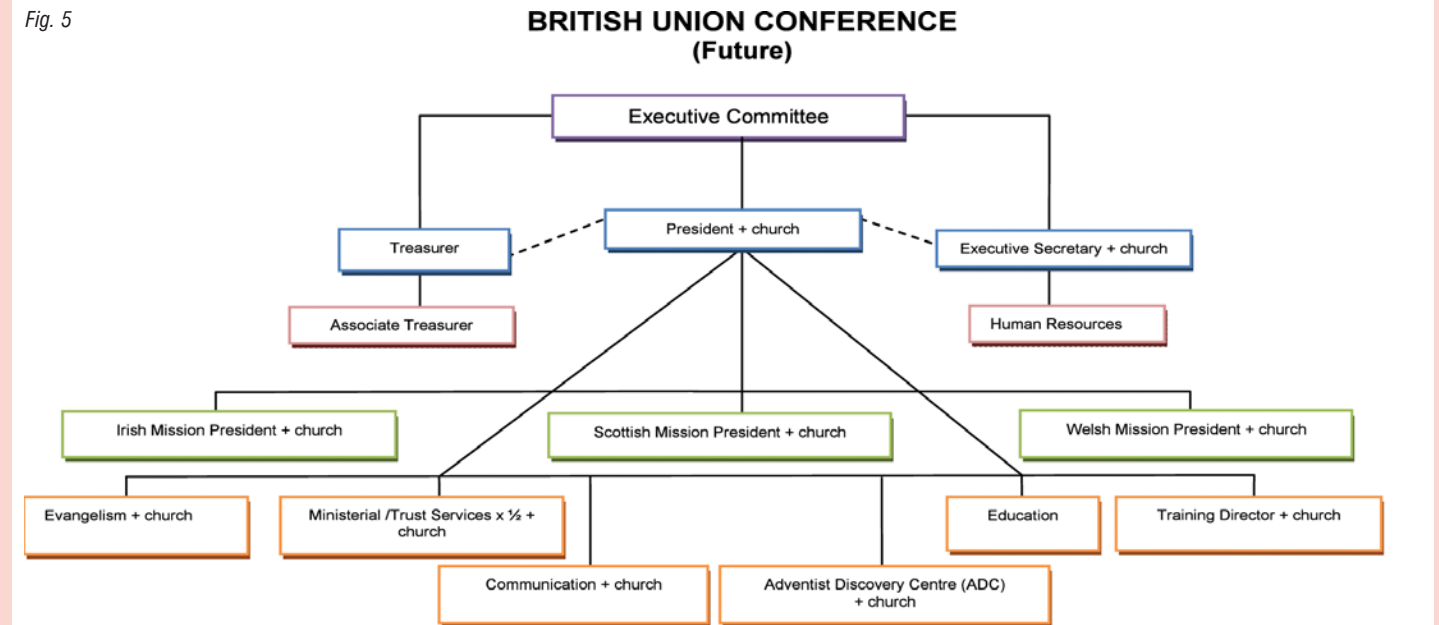


Fig. 6

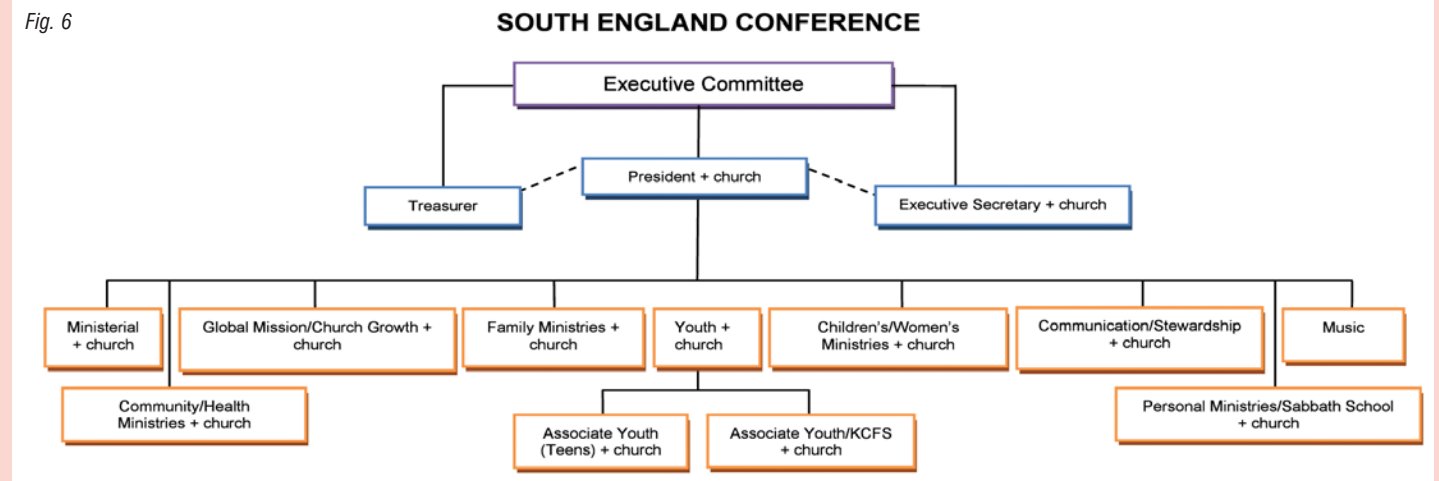
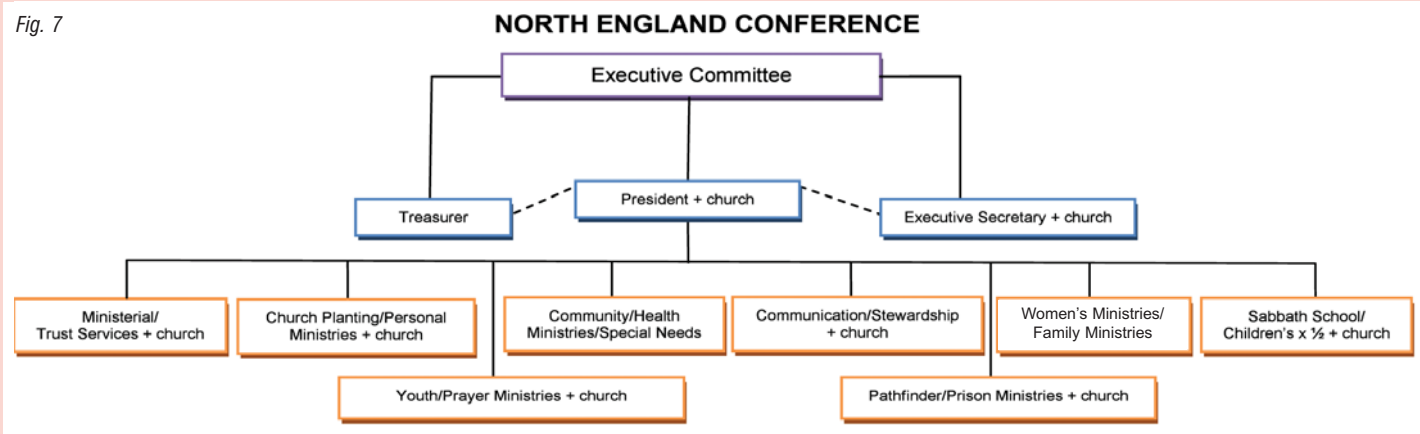


Fig. 7



evangelism and the support of local churches.

c. It will enable a redistribution of personnel, particularly providing additional pastors for local churches. Additional personnel in the field should help to revitalise some fields which need additional support to fulfil the Church's mission. This would be true particularly in areas where large numbers are joining the Church and where there is little infrastructure presently to support them.

d. It will enhance the Church's mission in specific areas. The possibility of contextualisation – focusing on language, tradition, culture and geopolitics – is improved when the Church is organised into strategic country units.

e. It will facilitate access to a country's legal authorities. A Church organisation with headquarters in a foreign country is seen by the legal authorities as a foreign Church. A union of churches and conference, or union of churches and mission, confined within the borders of a single country is better able to establish relationships with government bodies and is able to petition authorities on behalf of its members.

f. It will enable faster communication and more appropriate decision-making concerning issues affecting the work of the local church. A vote taken by a conference/mission may be required by policy to be approved by the union conference/mission, but when there is no conference/mission the action is implemented more quickly.

- a. Elimination of one layer of organisation,
- b. Having one set of administrators and directors in the field,
- c. Freeing up a number of senior leaders for work on the frontline,
- d. Reduction in the number of support staff needed,
- e. Reduction in the cost of maintaining administrative office buildings,
- f. Being able to use the equity in conference administrative office buildings in other important areas of the work,
- g. One administrative office that relates to the public, removing any confusion regarding Church headquarters,
- h. Merger of financial and HR services,
- i. Possibility of undertaking whole Church projects without local priorities getting in the way,
- j. Being able to redirect funds from system maintenance to mission fulfilment.

The list above is an impressive one, and provides much of that for which church members have been asking and that which seems to conform with good practice and careful management of the resources of the Church. However, there are a few drawbacks which might make the model less attractive:

- a. There is not much support for the local church,
- b. Supervision of local pastors is distant,
- c. While unions of churches in Europe (Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Italy, Portugal and Spain) have reduced administrative expenditure, they have not led to growth.

Any structure that does not provide for

Fig. 8

Union	Population	Membership	Organised	Churches	Inst.	Ord. Ministers
Austrian	8,151,000	3,716	1947/67	48	4	29
Bulgarian	7,741,000	7,739	1920	114	3	63
Italian	59,178,000	7,237	1928/72/82	100	6	53
Portuguese	10,576,000	8,683	1904/72/82	94	4	32
Spanish	43,587,000	11,742	1903/58/72/82	88	6	36
Danish	5,525,000	2,649	1880/1931/92	47	6	17
TOTAL	134,758,000	41,766		491	29	230
AVERAGE	22,460,000	6,961		81.8	4.8	38.3

Strengths and weaknesses of the three organisational models

All three models – fusion, rationalisation and union of churches – seem attractive when taken in isolation. In order to decide which model offers the maximum benefit to mission fulfilment in the British Union, an examination of their merits and demerits is necessary.

Union of churches

The advantages of this model are readily seen:

stronger support of local churches and ministerial workers is defective, and in the long run will not significantly aid mission fulfilment. Despite the financial benefits to be gained from adopting the union of churches, it does not do much to provide support for those involved in mission fulfilment. If it were to work in a field the size of the British Union, some form of intermediary structure between the Union and local churches would be required.

The following statistics give an overview of the unions of churches as they were in 2006 when the GC commission researched the subject:

See Fig. 8

What is instantly obvious from the figures in Fig. 8 is that the fields in our part of the world that have opted for 'union of churches' status are very small. Thus one can understand why they found the option attractive. From the verbal reports it appears that in nearly all cases in Europe the motive seems to have been reduction of costs. While the BUC should be concerned about cost reduction, a greater motive for restructuring must be mission fulfilment.

Since the introduction of the union of churches model a number of fields, especially in South America, have adopted this form of organisation – but largely for political reasons. Some countries saw the model as a means of giving them independence from other countries and providing them with national autonomy. In this connection it is worth pointing out that a union of churches is established along geographical lines, which in effect means along national lines. Thus, if the letter of the law were to be strictly applied, the

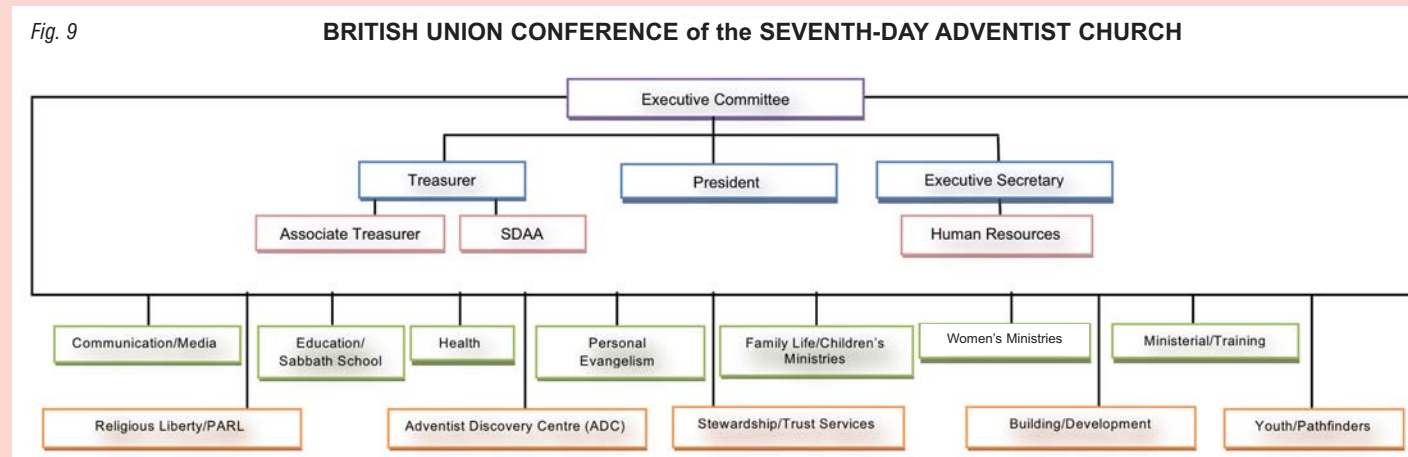
Republic of Ireland could not be a part of the British Union of Churches or a United Kingdom Union of Churches.

Whatever the merits of the union of churches model, it must be noted that the General Conference has retreated from it as a form of Church organisation. At the GC 2010 annual council the following action was taken regarding this form of Church organisation:

'The union of churches structure will only be considered for use in unusual situations. Division administrations shall consult with General Conference administration prior to any proceedings intended to review the possible formation of a union of churches within the division's territory. Such consultation shall review the unusual circumstances (such as slow church growth/development, challenging geopolitical situations, or peculiar administrative challenges) and how these can be addressed most satisfactorily in available organisational structures.'¹⁸

The flowchart that follows illustrates the organisational shape of the British Union, should the union of churches model be the direction chosen and approved by the TED/GC . . .

See Fig. 9



Rationalisation

The basic administrative structure in the British Union would remain the same as it is currently, but with some streamlining. The major benefits of this model would be:

- a. Retention of a structure with which workers and members are familiar,
- b. Support for local churches and frontline workers,
- c. Release of a limited number of directors for frontline work,
- d. Streamlining of financial and HR services for greater efficiency and cost-cutting.

Some salient points against the rationalisation model are:

- a. Retention of an expensive and top-heavy organisational system,
- b. Retention of three separate charitable organisations representing the Church in the UK,
- c. Retention of the operation of three

headquarters offices and associated costs,

- d. Challenge in undertaking whole Church projects due to competing priorities,
- e. Expense of maintaining three administrative office buildings,
- f. The missions not being covered by certain departments, in that they do not exist at the Union level,
- g. Attempts at rationalisation in the past were less than successful due to the fact that organisations reverted to type after a relatively short period. In 1996 a decision was made to operate Communication and Education nationally. Since then both conferences have appointed a Communication director and the SEC an Education director,
- h. The system is liable to break down where leadership at the local level disagrees with decisions made by a director at the national level, who in effect is also the local conference director.

The rationalisation model seems to offer the fewest benefits. It will maintain a system that many feel has passed its sell-by date and will be merely tinkering with the current

- g. One administrative office that relates to the public, removing any confusion regarding Church headquarters,
- h. Merger of financial and HR services,
- i. Possibility of undertaking whole Church projects without local priorities getting in the way,
- j. Being able to redirect funds from system maintenance to mission fulfilment,
- k. Being able to manage the new diversity and cultural needs in the Union that cross geographical boundaries.

The downside of the fusion model is seen to be:

- a. Church leaders having to learn new work patterns and strategies,
- b. Executive officers being required to be present at numerous board meetings of local fields,
- c. Greater responsibility for department directors,
- d. Job losses for some employees,
- e. Centralisation of 'power' at the Union,
- f. Possible confusion as to the role of the local president and board.

There are two major differences between the union of churches model and the fusion model. The first is that the fusion model pays

special attention to the support of local churches and pastors, and provides for close supervision and monitoring. The second is that it gives more opportunities for leadership development, in that it provides for the appointment of local field leaders/presidents.

The fusion model

The benefits of the fusion model are, for the most part, similar to those for the union of churches model:

- a. Eliminate unnecessary duplication,
- b. Reduce expenditure on executive/departmental leadership,
- c. Provide more resources (financial and human) for local churches, where the mission of the Church is carried out,
- d. Position leadership closer to members and their communities,
- e. Operate the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK as one charitable organisation,
- f. Streamline HR and financial services,
- g. Have stronger and closer leadership of pastoral staff, which also should

provide for more effective support and monitoring.

Should the terms of reference be accepted as a basis for change, it seems that the model that comes closest to expectations is the fusion model.

Norway's experience

The fusion model has been in use in Norway for a number of years. Former Norwegian president, Tor Tjeransen, said that it has significantly reduced expenditure on the administration of the Church and has streamlined operations, but warned against not defining clearly the role and powers of the field president and the local field board.

Implementation process

The process to change from the current system of organisation in the British Union is a rather complex one and cannot be carried out in a hurry. An understanding of how the Church operates suggests the following steps:

- Decision by BUC executive committee for change (a unanimous action was taken by the BUC executive committee on Thursday 10 March 2011 for organisational change, favouring the fusion model. The action included placing the matter on the agenda for the forthcoming Union session and consulting with the members of the Union),
- The TED is to be informed of the intent to effect organisational changes and its approval sought to do so,
- Mandate from a Union session sought for organisational change,
- If a mandate from the BUC session is obtained, SEC and NEC are to seek similar action from their respective constituencies,
- Should the BUC, SEC and NEC secure a mandate for change from their various constituencies, a special committee is to be appointed to work on a detailed plan for the new structure, including a new constitution. This is to be presented to the three executive committees for approval,
- BUC, NEC and SEC to call special constituency meetings to dissolve themselves,
- Constituency meeting to be called of

representatives from across the British Isles to form a new Union, in line with the new constitutions, and elect new executive officers and directors.

Possible timeline for change

- March, 2011 – Action by BUC executive committee,
- May, 2011 – Action by TED executive committee,
- July, 2011 – Mandate to develop a model for change by BUC session,
- September, 2011 – Mandate to develop a model for change by SEC session,
- November, 2011 – Mandate to develop a model for change by special NEC Session,
- December, 2011 – Appointment of special committee to work on details of new structure,
- June, 2012 – Special committee reports back to BUC executive committee,
- June-September, 2012 – Consultation with various stakeholders,
- December, 2012 – Decision by BUC, SEC, NEC committees re: organisational model, if decision is to go ahead,
- March, 2013 – Dissolution of BUC, SEC, NEC,
- July, 2013 – Formation of new Union, adoption of new constitution, election of new leaders. (Union leaders may have to act as interim leaders between March and July so as to avoid a leadership vacuum.)

Should the rationalisation model be the structure chosen, the process for change would be simpler. It would be a matter of agreement between the BUC and the conferences as to which departments and services should be retained and at which level.

Conclusion

Not all the questions regarding organisational change are answered in this paper. It is hoped, however, that sufficient information has been presented to persuade the reader of the need for such a change in the British Union. The evidence that Church structure in the British Union is top-heavy and costly is incontrovertible. Discerning church members have been asking for change and would most likely welcome any structure that retains

support for local churches, protects the mission of the Church and slashes the cost of over a hundred people working in our Church offices and the maintenance of three administrative buildings. The current structure of the British Union is very much geographically based, and was introduced at a time when there were severe travel limitations compared with today's reality. Additionally, the virtual proximity of our world, thanks to the internet, has made the hierarchical transference of information and ideas antiquated and unnecessary. The whole world is at our fingertips!

Change will not take place without resistance from some quarters and without 'birth pains' as we transition from one system to another. None of the three structural models discussed is without weakness, but one option that should not be considered is that of retaining the status quo. To do so would result in several members losing interest in the Church, and becoming disenchanted with Church leadership and what they would describe as a waste of funds. Opting for the status quo might also condemn us, for years to come, to being a very small religious organisation in the British Isles that is more concerned with serving itself than with engaging in a major way with the wider society and sharing the Good News about One who is able to transform lives for the better.

¹George Knight, *Atoday*, May/June 1995. ²Acts 13:1-3, NIV. ³Acts 13:1, 2, KJV. ⁴C. C. Crisler, *Organization – Its Character, Purpose, Place and Development in the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1938), p. 39. ⁵E. G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 97. ⁶Gospel Order', *Review and Herald*, 6 December 1853. ⁷Gospel Order', *Review and Herald*, 20 December 1853. ⁸Gospel Order', *Review and Herald*, 27 December 1853. ⁹C. C. Crisler, *Organization – Its Character, Purpose, Place and Development in the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, p. 55. ¹⁰Oliver Barry David, *SDA Organizational Structure – Past, Present and Future* (Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1989), p. 67. ¹¹Ibid, pp. 67-131. ¹²See *GC Bulletin*, 1901, p. 513: 'Before the conference closed, arrangements had been made for organising the six General Conference Districts into Union Conferences, each organisation to be complete in itself, having an executive committee, with a president, secretary and treasurer, and auditor, and each to take the entire oversight of the work in its territory.' ¹³*GC Bulletin*, 1901, p. 25. ¹⁴Ibid, p. 25. ¹⁵George Knight, *Atoday*, May/June 1995. ¹⁶Life Development is a five-year evangelistic programme which the BUC has led out in developing, in harmony with the Trans-European Division and its local fields. It's a relationship-based programme that is designed to lead secular and unchurched people to commitment to Christ through a seven-step process. ¹⁷*GC Annual Council Minutes*, 2010.

Vacancy: Administrative secretary

An exciting and demanding role requiring good secretarial skills, office experience and commitment to the Church's mission. The successful applicant will be well organised, flexible, able to work under pressure and handle confidential material.

Responsibilities include routine secretarial/data-entry tasks associated with the work of the BUC secretariat, and the preparation of reports and workshop/seminar materials requiring competency in the Microsoft Office suite of software applications. Regular denominational employment policies apply. Salary: £20-22.9k.

Closing date for applications: 30 May, 2011.

For a job description and application form, write to: Eric Lowe, Executive Secretary, British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts, WD25 9JZ. Email: elowe@adventist.org.uk.

Corrigendum

The editor wishes to thank those who commented on the camp meeting meal advert which appeared on page 16 in our 4 March issue of *MESSENGER*. The 'chicken' that found his way into the menu has been 'caught' and removed. The revised menu appears in the advert to the right.

Book now for your meals at this year's camp meeting

The NEC/SEC camp meeting 2011 will be in Prestatyn, North Wales, 13-19 June. The Sophisticated Catering Company will be working out of the Beachcomber Restaurant (on the Pontins site) to provide food throughout the whole week.

A good, wholesome selection of vegetarian meals will be on sale, to be eaten in the restaurant area or as take-aways.

If you are planning to come down specifically on the Sabbath, there are facilities in place so that customers can book and pay for their food in advance, to ensure that after the morning church service their hot meals will be waiting for them – redeemable with a unique Sabbath voucher.

Please email: sophisticatedcatering@gmail.com or call Kevin Sterling on 07092040907 for further details.

news

300 youth witness in Liverpool

Local and visiting youth shared their faith in the Toxteth community in Liverpool on 12 March, causing such a stir that they were soon being monitored by the local police helicopter! This street witnessing and door-to-door exercise was the culmination of the eleventh School of the Prophets training and witnessing weekend, held at St Hilda's School in Sefton, Liverpool, and run by the NEC Youth department in conjunction with the Liverpool district of churches.

After only sixty minutes on the street thousands of homes were reached, with fifty-two persons requesting Bible studies. One local resident was so excited about studying the Bible that he insisted that someone return that evening at 6pm to start formal Bible studies with him.

Kevin Sears, the assistant director of Global AFCOE and a former convict who now leads people to Christ, led out over the weekend, and over 450 people attended Sabbath services. The local district leader, Pastor Ebenezer Daniel, and his team have much following up to do.

'This and other experiences show me that our communities are truly ready to be reached with the Gospel', commented Pastor Alan Hush, NEC Youth director. 'There are souls desperately searching for answers to life's perplexities, and we are commissioned to get out there and meet their need.'

PASTORS ALAN HUSH & JEFF NICHOLSON

'Write on Target'

The Adventist writers and editors' conference, held at the BUC head office on 20 March, drew together seventeen aspiring writers for a day of stimulating presentations on the art of good writing.

The conference was run by Cathy Boldeau, assisted by Sharon Platt-McDonald (BUC Health Ministries director), who provided a biblical mandate from Habakkuk 2:2 – '... Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.' (KJV).

She was followed by Pastor Julian Hibbert, *MESSENGER* editor, who was tasked to speak on 'The Power of the Story'; Pastor Victor Hulbert, the BUC's 'Mr Communication' (Communication director), who spoke on 'BUC/MESSENGER News Reporting and Photography', and Andrew Puckering (*MESSENGER* proof reader, the fresh young face among the presenters), who gave a lecture entitled 'From Rough Draft to Final Copy' and a practical test of the delegates' skills.

Anne Pilmoor (BUC Education director) lectured on the production of the children's picture book, while Pastor Des Boldeau (BUC Youth director) talked about reaching youth through the *Encounter* magazine.

The aspiring writers then spent the afternoon together planning the road ahead, and they hope to recruit new members: so, if you are interested in developing your writing skills, please contact Cathy Boldeau at: catherine.visionsolutions@googlemail.com for more information.

Special thanks are due to the BUC and SEC administrators for their support in making the event such a success.

JULIAN HIBBERT
MESSENGER EDITOR



'Chance to Change'

Twenty-one-year-old Yvonne Bauwens, who loves to compose music and write lyrics, was commissioned to write the theme tune for the recent BUC youth congress held in Telford from 21 to 25 April.

Yvonne transformed her room into a recording studio, and numerous hours later 'Chance to Change' was born.

She wrote her song to complement the theme of the youth congress and to share how God can help you be the change you want to see in the world.

If you would like to listen to the theme song, you can hear it online: <http://youth.adventistchurch.org.uk/buc-youth-congress-i-change>.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY, CRIEFF CHURCH



Left: Andrew Puckering. Top: Cathy Boldeau and Sharon Platt-McDonald. Above: Anne Pilmoor.

Ten souls saved for Christ!

Holcombe Road members rejoiced on Sabbath 26 March, when ten souls gave their lives to the Lord through baptism – this followed the youth week of

prayer, taken by Pastor Ray Patrick, entitled 'Discover to Recover'.
Baptismal candidate Sherice Malcolm said:



Tackling childhood obesity

In the UK, around 27% of children are now overweight, and research suggests that the main problem is a continual reduction in the amount of exercise children take.

Health professionals are becoming concerned, and, in response to this concern, the NEC is delivering training in 'Children's Health Expos'. The concept has been developed as a way to present health principles to children attractively and constructively. The Children's Health Expo explains the NEW START principles at expo stations: Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, Temperance, Air, Rest, and Trust in God.

- First, the children discover the eight natural laws with the help of banners and games.
- Second, the children receive age-appropriate information (the expo is designed for 7-to-11-year-olds) to help them apply the laws to their lives.

The Children's Health Expo can be carried out in:

- Schools
- Churches
- Shopping centres and other commercial spaces
- Summer camps and camporees.

Adults who took part in the NEC training on 6 February in Nottingham enjoyed themselves while participating in the children's activities: take a look at the pictures!

If you are interested in children's evangelism, then become involved in the Children's Health Expos: you will be greatly rewarded.

GRACE WALSH



Children's Health Expo trainees 'step up' to the task!

'I found youth week of prayer an amazing experience. Like most, at first I was reluctant to give up my evenings, but I can definitely say that it was worth it. Being baptised was an amazing experience. I was filled with every emotion possible. After coming out of the water I felt a huge weight being lifted from my shoulders. I had never felt so happy.'

Another baptismal candidate, Jason Julien, said:

'I could feel the Spirit of God entering my body and talking to me. By the third night, after much thought, I made my decision: I was going to get baptised, as I wanted to learn more about Christ and be saved. When I got baptised it was an experience I

will never forget; my heart began to beat stronger than I could ever imagine and I was filled with joy, peace and happiness. It was as if a burden was lifted from me and I was a new person; I went down unclean and came back up feeling pure. Even though I look the same and I am me, my feelings and outlook on life have changed deeply. Also, the fact that my father and I were getting baptised together brought even more joy to my heart, knowing that we could move forward and be saved together.'

Moved by the Holy Spirit during the baptism, two more souls decided they couldn't wait any longer and gave their lives to Jesus!

ADAIA BWOGA

Literature evangelism in Manchester and Liverpool!

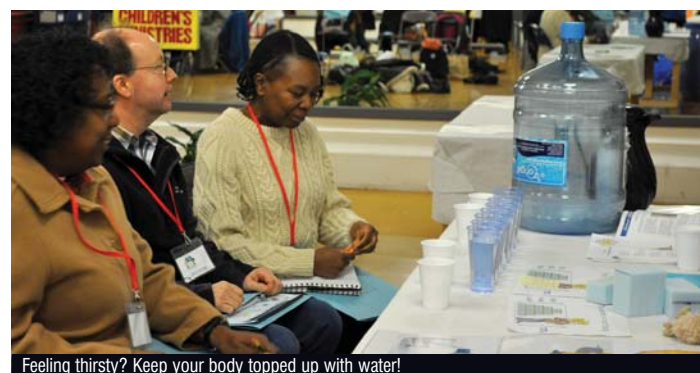
Fourteen young people joined Pastor Peter Sayers for training and encouragement at the Manchester South church on 12 March, before going out into the community in twos the next day to sell Adventist books as literature evangelists! Dr Isaac Keengwe provided them with *Health Power* books, and most of the group said they were willing to repeat their successful ministry in the future!

Over the next weekend, Pastor Sayers and a large group distributed free literature on the Sabbath, near the Stonecroft church, and several groups of two went into the community selling books the next day. A young man called Shawn sold a *Health Power* book to a local doctor, and John Stephenson, a former NEC Publishing director, said that he was truly encouraged by the witness he had seen.

PASTOR PETER SAYERS



Trainees complete some puzzling puzzles.



Feeling thirsty? Keep your body topped up with water!

Heaven rejoices

Nine people were welcomed into fellowship in the Slough church on Sabbath 5 February. The youngest baptismal candidate on the day was Sean Khoza, who, at the tender age of 12, is determined to work for God. Also baptised were Arnold Williams, Mary Takavarasha and Eve Wade. Monica Chuchu, Catherine Palmer, Oana Geta, Kevin Weir and Craig Martins were also welcomed into fellowship. Imagine the joy in Heaven!

NOZI CONNOR



Twice the joy in Plumstead!

Bridget, Christina and Andrea couldn't stop smiling as they were baptised into the Plumstead church on 15 January! Their joy in the Lord was further augmented on 26 February, following a week of revival led by the SEC president, Pastor Sam Davis, when Olusegun Ajanaku, Zulu Mafu, Sikulekile Olatunji, David Nkrumah-Buansi, Nigel Chiteme, Keera Dutfield, Hazel Manungo, Princess Johnson and Khonzani Sibanda were also baptised. Plumstead members pledge to nurture, love and encourage all twelve new members.

PLUMSTEAD COMMUNICATIONS



Stanborough students raise £420 for Comic Relief

'Do something funny for money' was the motto for Red Nose Day, and Stanborough students took it to heart! On Friday 18 March, students and staff came to the school wearing fancy dress and red noses, each donating £1 for Comic Relief.

The school's drama club delighted all with a play entitled 'The Three Questions', an adaptation of a fable by Leo Tolstoy. The students took care of all cos-

tumes and scenic design as well, led by Mrs Annick McKie, the club's co-ordinator.

The spirit of creativity and giving was palpable throughout the day. Two students in Year 8 said nothing the whole day so that their 'sponsored silence' could give those less privileged a more audible voice. The proceeds, £420, went to Comic Relief.

VANESSA PIZZUTO
PHOTO: DENNIS EDWARDS



Excellence in Exeter award

Fourteen-year-old Kerry Angila, who attends the Exeter church, received an Excellence in Exeter award for sporting and artistic endeavour from the University of Exeter in Exeter Cathedral on 18 November, with 100 other young people from six secondary schools in the city. Kerry had gained a similar award for her school paper on the Second World War.

STELLA JEFFERY



COLIN BARKER

ADRA-UK song competition



Poverty affects everyone. It ruins individual lives and affects entire communities. To increase awareness of poverty, its causes and its effects, ADRA-UK plans to release a new music video to promote its work.

Young UK musicians are invited to write a new, modern song (with lyrics) that reflects the work that ADRA-UK does. The competition is open to young artists/bands/groups (18-35 years). The deadline for submissions is 30 September, 2011.

More information about this competition is available from the ADRA-UK website. Alternatively, write an email to info@adra.org.uk and we will send you the details.

BERT SMIT, CEO, ADRA-UK

Art auction raises thousands for charity

On Saturday night, 26 February, a unique art auction in aid of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA-UK) was held at the Wimbledon International church. Laurent Grisel, a WISDAC member who has worked with Disney and Spielberg, donated more than thirty paintings that took hundreds of hours to paint. The paintings sold for well below market value, but the auction was packed with eighty-five people on the final night, including many from the local community.

ADRA-UK Appeals co-ordinator, Godwin Benjamin, impressed many with ADRA's work. Godwin was 'most impressed by Laurent,' adding that 'he had devoted over 500 hours of his time to do these paintings'.

Godwin thanked Laurent, and also David Souch and the ADRA team at Wimbledon.

Got a fundraising idea for ADRA-UK? Contact them on their website, www.adra.org.uk.

ADAM IBRAHIM

Growing the LE work in the NEC

Local churches can promote literature evangelism by:

1. Setting up Publishing Ministries Councils (PMCs) according to the *Church Manual*. (Membership: pastor, PM leader, PM secretary and others elected by board; chairperson: PMC leader.)
2. Placing the ABC product catalogue and price list with the PMC so that they can recommend the purchase of suitable literature for the church.
3. Working through the PMCs to set up LE training seminars and literature bands to work for the saving of souls.
4. Planning to have special area LE promotion days at the churches.
5. Allowing the PMCs to encourage the departments to support evangelism through the literature ministry.
6. Encouraging our youth to give their time (either part-time or full-time) to the literature ministry.
7. Encouraging the communication departments to send news about their literature evangelist successes in the community.
8. Linking the publishing ministries with the conference and pastoral evangelism programmes.
9. Strengthening links with The Stanborough Press Ltd and the conference to improve the literature work in the NEC.

PASTOR PETER SAYERS, NEC PUBLISHING SPONSOR.

Double baptism sets example

Following a wonderful baptism on 20 March by Pastor Palmer, newly baptised Keneca Almaya Cherie Sewell and Irma Gordon were joyfully welcomed into fellowship at the Great Brickkiln Street church, Wolverhampton.

Keneca is an active Pathfinder, and her mum, Casslene, is also involved with the Pathfinder club; Keneca and Casslene are the daughter and wife of Andrew Sewell of The Stanborough Press. Little Keneca pledges to be a good influence to others of her own age, to stay in God's family and to serve spiritually to the best of her ability.

Irma says it was an 'enormous struggle' to give up worldly pleasures, but Bible studies removed her doubts, and she hopes her 6-year-old daughter will follow her example.

DELVA CAMPBELL



Left to right: Irma, Keneca, Casslene.

Girls just wanna have fun!

Eighteen teenagers from London, Luton, Portsmouth and Southampton learnt how to have fun at the first SEC Young Women's Retreat, held at King's Park Conference Centre, Northampton, 21-25 February. This event was sponsored and run by the SEC Women's Ministries department.

The 12- to 18-year-olds discussed self-esteem, careers and life goals, dating, social networks, and health and body image. The workshops and worships were undertaken by the SEC Women's Ministries director, Malika Bediako, along with two SEC representatives, Khyeihwah Bediako and Sandra Golding.

On Thursday morning the young women went skating. For some, just making it around the rink without falling down was a great achievement!

The young women all said that they would be inviting their friends from both church and school to come along next time.

SANDRA GOLDING



NEWSTART cooking school

Inspired by Ellen White quotations, Sharon Scott and Sheryl Lee launched the Ladywood church's first cooking class on 15 January, with a focus on engaging the community. The programme ran for four weeks, and ended with a health party prepared by Pathfinders.

The presentations were centred on everyone's need for Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, Temperance, Air, Rest and Trust in God: NEWSTART.

On average, ten individuals from the local community attended each programme.

RUTH IRISH



Faithful stewards

Over the weekend of 11-13 March, 218 treasurers from the North and South England Conferences gathered for the bi-annual treasurers' retreat at Staverton Park, Daventry, under the theme: 'Stewards of a Faithful People'.

Besides lectures and workshops from Victor Pilmoor and other treasury staff, there were excellent spiritual messages from Pastors Ian Sweeney, Sam Neves, Richard de Lissier and Raafat Kamal.

One of the main issues discussed was the roll-out of the electronic tithe and offering programme, but matters such as the Seventh-day Adventist Association, Adventist Risk Management (insurance) and the work of the local treasurer were also covered.

A video of the weekend's proceedings can be seen on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXM-IEGUYGY>.

RICHARD DE LISSIER

Evangelistic area retreat

During 4-6 March an evangelistic area co-ordinators and trainers' retreat was held at Denham Grove, Denham. The SEC Personal Ministries and Church Growth departments have been forming a team of people who can train evangelists effectively alongside pastors at the local church level. Following a British Union initiative, evangelistic area co-ordinators have been appointed to co-ordinate the work at district level. This retreat equipped and empowered the co-ordinators and trainers. The SEC aims to train and equip them on a regular basis.

Pastor Aris Vontzalidis, Church Growth director at the SEC, shared how to set up small groups and the concept of the 'simple church' as a powerful means of reaching secular people. He went on to explain the basic steps in church planting. Aisha Wije, who is part of a 'simple church', explained their ministry to the homeless. She explained how lives were being touched, simply by meeting peoples' needs and lending a listening ear. Pastor Eglan Brooks, Personal Ministries and Church Growth director at the BUC, explained the role of evangelistic co-ordinators, emphasising the great need for more effective evangelism in the UK. He also shared the vital role of the 'Interest co-ordinator' in the local church. Pastor Terry Messenger, Personal Ministries and Sabbath School director at the SEC, explained the concept of the evangelism cycle, stating evangelism is a process rather than an event. He linked it with the Relay 2012 initiative which will see 'relay' evangelism from districts 1-8 during 2012. The effectiveness of consistent door-to-door ministry was explained, and Pastor David Burnett said this ministry is a 'sleeping giant' just waiting to be awakened. On Sabbath afternoon, four people requested Bible studies.

TERRY MESSENGER



As of 1 September 2011, Harper Bell Adventist School will operate as a voluntary aided school. There will be no charge of school fees for admission to classes from Reception through to Year 6. We are now accepting applications for limited places, on a 'first come, first served' basis. The nursery will remain independent and subject to school fees. The school is, however, registered to receive government funding towards the cost of early years (ages 3 and 4) education.

Harper Bell Adventist School is located in a quiet cul-de-sac, a stone's throw from Birmingham city centre. Catering for children aged 3-11, the school adheres to a Christian ethos, integrating faith throughout the curriculum. This ethos is underpinned with an emphasis on respect, discipline and hard work. Its latest Ofsted judgement was good, with the inspectors highlighting the genuine Christian culture throughout the school and curriculum. The mission of Harper Bell Adventist School is to help each child receive a balanced intellectual, social, cultural, emotional, physical and spiritual education. The school continually enjoys academic success, with a high percentage of pupils annually transferring to grammar schools. Our latest academic results are compared below.

	KS2 SATs results: 2009/2010 Pupils achieving level 4 or above:		
	English	Maths	Science
HBS	92%	92%	92% (TA)
Birmingham (08/09)	76%	75%	-
National	81%	80%	- TA = Teacher Assessment

Now it is more than affordable to be a part of the success of HBS.

To avoid disappointment, contact the school urgently for the new admissions policy and application forms:

0121 693 7742 or

harperbellschool@hotmail.co.uk

In Christ I Rise

You are invited to the eleventh Montserratians and friends' Seventh-day Adventist day of fellowship!

Guest Speaker:

Pastor Eglan Brooks

(BUC Personal Ministries, LIFEdevelopment and Evangelism director)

Saturday, 28 May 2011, 9.30am
New Life Church, The Ridgeway Centre,
Featherstone Road,
Wolverton Mill South, Milton Keynes, MK12 5TH

Please bring a packed lunch

For further information please contact:
William B. Riley (Birmingham) 0121 2417318
Samuel Jeffers (Camp Hill, Birmingham) 0121 242 6729
James Ryan (London) 0208 808 2211
Robert Allen (London) 0208 292 8174
Manita Allen (Luton) 0158 261 7812
Anita Allen (Manchester) 0161 342 0032
Peter Kirwan (Preston) 0177 251 0366
Thelma Gage (Milton Keynes) 07949068398
Andy James (Leicester) 0116 276 5723

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Touring the holy land

Rose Gomez

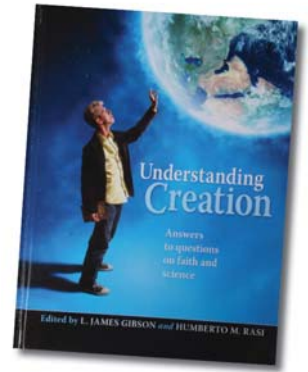
NEC members from Leeds and Nottingham joined Area 2 members from Bury, Blackburn, Manchester South, Manchester North, Manchester Southern Asia, and Manchester Longsight for a Holy Land trip during February 2011. The group, led by Rose Gomez, comprised of thirty-nine adults and six of the 'best-behaved children in the NEC'.

The group took along their own Patriarch, Frank Baron, who testified: 'I'm thankful to God that at ninety-six, I was able to fulfil a lifetime dream to visit Israel.'

But most courageous of all was Diamond Sathe, who did much of her sight-seeing from a wheelchair. For her the trip highlight was her anointing service in the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem.



Diamond Sathe



New book of the week
Understanding Creation
Edited by L. James Gibson and Humberto M. Rasi

All your questions about Creation can now be answered – by a host of scientists backed up with cutting-edge research! *Understanding Creation* can help you respond to the sceptic and seriously boost your faith.

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15 Sheffield 10am-2pm
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(Closed for lunch 1pm-1.30pm)
9am-12pm Friday.
Closed Sundays

Advent Centre

Mondays & Wednesdays, 6.30pm-8.30pm
Sundays, 11am-3pm

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JUNE 15 - 19, 2011

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and across

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Speaker/Director, It is written

Ted N. C. Wilson
President, General Conference

WWW.ASI-EUROPE.ORG

£200 CHIP grants available!

To assist local churches in health evangelism, and for a limited period, the Adventist CHIP Association UK & Ireland will award a grant of £200 per church when participant packs are ordered for your *first* Coronary Health Improvement Project programme. To benefit from this limited offer contact ACA secretary Beverley Ngandwe to place your order. Tel: 07801 062417, email: bevjean@btinternet.com.

For information on introducing CHIP to your church or to arrange for a CHIP leadership training workshop in your area, email: info@chipuk.org.uk or call the national training co-ordinator, David Hatch: 07878 532788.

Allow three months for CHIP orders and six weeks for MicroCHIP orders. Certificates for both programmes should be ordered two weeks prior to the graduation service.

ACA UK & IRELAND,
INFO@CHIPUK.ORG.UK

Messenger

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Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by HM Nautical Almanac Office.

	Lon	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
May 13	8.42	8.55	8.53	9.15	9.19
20	8.53	9.05	9.04	9.28	9.31
27	9.02	9.14	9.14	9.39	9.42
Jun 3	9.10	9.22	9.22	9.49	9.51

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