

Messenger

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'We need to wake up and look at the reality!'

A report by Victor Hulbert,
BUC Communication director

'If we followed national statistics our membership would be over three hundred thousand', Pastor Ian Sweeney told South England Conference ministers at a gathering on Tuesday, 1 November – the third in a series that he has recently held with our ministers around the country.

As BUC president he wears his passion for evangelism and mission on his sleeve – and that passion is causing him to think about how Adventists are reaching out to the majority population in the British Isles.

While the UK Church has sent out many missionaries in the last century, and still does, the indigenous Church has lost ground over the past thirty years. BUC Church growth has come via immigration, followed largely by evangelism within the ethnic minority communities.

While hard statistics are difficult to come by, it is estimated that fewer than ten percent of our 32,000 members would be regarded as indigenous. In earlier discussions with the London ministers he noted that, within the 11,000-plus members in the London area, there are probably fewer than 200 who can be described as 'white British'!

'This is total role reversal in terms of the general British population, where fewer than ten percent are immigrants,' Sweeney stated, adding that *'in reality we have become a black majority Church within a white majority population.'*

In fact, for us to be in proportion with the general population would require a membership increase of ninety percent! Is that an impossible dream? Sweeney doesn't want us to think so: *'We need to wake up and look at the reality. We need to look for ways to make an impact.'*

The aim of the meetings that he has held so far with ministers in the North and South England Conferences, as well as with a number of local congregations, is not so much to provide solutions as it is to raise awareness of the enormous challenge and commission facing the Church.

Quoting E. E. Cleveland, Pastor Sweeney says: *'You can't finish the work without doing the work.'* He has pledged that the primary focus of the BUC executive committee will be evangelism.

However, it is at the local church level where the real impact is to be



'... within the 11,000-plus members in the London area, there are probably fewer than 200 who can be described as "white British"!'

made, and in his discussions our president is challenging every local congregation to *'take seriously its reason for being.'* According to him the aim of every board and business meeting should be, *'How do we reach the lost?'*

These meetings that he has held are only the start of a process to reach beyond the histories of the past and the challenges of the present, in order to allow God to do something amazing through our communities in this increasingly secularised country.

Pastor Sweeney has promised us a detailed article on 'Evangelism and Mission in the British Isles', exploring these ideas more fully in a future edition of *MESSENGER*. In the meantime, readers are welcome to comment on this report via his new blog:

<http://adventistwebministries-org-uk.adventist.eu/blogs/president/posts/2-revival-reformation-mission>.

Megapixels of creation

MESSENGER is currently running a four-part series over a twelve-month period entitled *Megapixels of creation*, offering our photographers the opportunity to have their nature photography published in their magazine.

So far we have covered the spring and summer seasons, and now I am inviting you to send me your autumn photography for our next spread.

This is not a competition, and the only reward will be to see your photography in print!

Please send your photographs (hi-res) to me at: dbell@stanboroughpress.co.uk, or upload them to me through www.mailbigfile.com.

Happy snapping!

DAVID BELL, MESSENGER DESIGNER

Enhancing Health

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

Golden eight – part 2b Sunshine – the healer

More than 150 years ago Ellen G. White wrote about the benefits of sunshine for both the body and the home environment. She states: 'Whoever sleeps in a sunless room, or occupies a bed that has not been thoroughly dried and aired, does so at the risk of health' (Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 275).

She also asserts that: 'Perfect cleanliness, plenty of sunlight, careful attention to sanitation in every detail of the home life, are essential to freedom from disease and to the cheerfulness and vigour of the inmates of the home.' (Ibid, p. 276.)

Today scientists continue to draw our attention to the health benefits of safe levels of sun exposure. Some of the emerging research suggests, however, that, due to previous health reports on

the dangers of sun overexposure, people have become frightened of getting skin cancer and so avoid sunshine to the detriment of their health (*Vitamin D News*, 18 October 2011). We must remember that our bodies require natural sunlight to make adequate amounts of vitamin D, giving us strong and healthy bones and supporting the immune system.

In a joint study, scientists from Norway's Institute for Cancer Research in Oslo and the US Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory report that the health benefits from some sun exposure are far greater than any risk from skin cancer (Oslo University Hospital). The lead researcher, Johan Moan, reported that, although certain foods contain vitamin D, the body's main source is from modest sun exposure – which yields greater vitamin D levels.

Dr Michael Holick, author of the book *The UV Advantage*, is recognised worldwide as a leading authority on vitamin D and the health benefits of natural sunlight. Some of his thirty-plus years of research is detailed at www.UVadvantage.org. He states: '... we started realising that people who live in higher latitudes are more prone to vitamin D deficiency and are more prone to developing common cancers and dying of them, such as cancer of the colon, prostate, breast and even ovaries. And we think that that's in part due to the body's inability to make enough activated vitamin D to help regulate cell growth and to keep cell growth in check.'

Sun exposure also helps regulate two mood-controlling hormones, melatonin and serotonin, which promote mental wellbeing, but which can be too low in those suffering from depression and Seasonal-Affective Disorder (SAD). Levels of serotonin dip particularly in winter. Biological psychologist Lance Workman's research at Bath Spa University suggests that more than ninety percent of people experience a lift in mood with periods of increased sunlight (*MSN Him*, 20 July 2011).

Good health!

editorial

Sometime today as I write this, 31 October (2011), the world's population should pass the 7 billion mark – that is 7,000,000,000 – according to the United Nations.¹

Population research tells us that whereas it took 'all of human history until around 1800' for the 'world population to reach one billion, the second billion was achieved in only 130 years (1930), the third billion in less than thirty years (1959), the fourth billion in fifteen years (1974), and the fifth billion in only thirteen years (1987).' In fact, it is quite sobering to realise that, during 'the twentieth century alone, the population in the world has grown from 1.65 billion to 6 billion'.²

This type of growth is called 'exponential', and it is not that easy to understand or visualise. In fact, one scholar put it like this: 'The greatest shortcoming of the human race is our inability to understand the exponential function'.³ Now, it might not be our 'greatest shortcoming', but do **you** understand how it works?

Rice on a chessboard

This legend is often used to illustrate the concept of exponential growth. A courtier presented 'the Persian king with a beautiful, hand-made chessboard. The king asked what he would like in return for his gift and the courtier surprised the king by asking for one grain of rice on the first square, two grains on the second, four grains on the third, and so on. The king readily agreed and asked for the rice to be brought'.⁴

The king thought he was getting a bargain, a magnificent item of craftsmanship for just a few small bags of rice. But he did not understand the concept of exponential growth either: that is, until the office of the exchequer informed him that his empire was about to be bankrupted by 'a chessboard'!

Well, it works like this. A chessboard has just sixty-four squares. But if you apply the exponential growth requested by the courtier, then by square thirty-two – just halfway – you will already have a total of 4,294,967,295 grains of rice with an estimated mass of 100,000 kilogrammes!⁵

And, ultimately, by the time you reach square sixty-four you will have 18,446,744, 073,709,551,615 grains of rice – a heap 'larger than Mount Everest' and 1,000 times the global production of rice in 2010.⁶

According to the legend: the king lost his cool, and the courtier lost his head!

So that's how . . .

So that's how our human family has grown so fast – exponential growth. But how does that growth make you feel?

Are you afraid? Can't blame you if you are, because over-population leads to scarcity of essential resources (think fuel, food, water, flu

October 31 reflections

vaccines . . . and housing). And scarce resources are a legendary (and primary) source of conflict!

Are you disappointed? We can't manage to evangelise the present population of the world, and yet there are hundreds of thousands more to contact every week. It feels like mission impossible!

I was 'gobsmacked'!

Yes, at first I also felt afraid, and disappointed. But then, as I pondered the 7 billion, I was 'gobsmacked' by this thought: that even though more than 3 billion people (3,000,000,000) have joined the human family since I gave my life to Jesus, he still makes me feel that he is my Friend – just as deeply concerned about the little details of my life as before.

He has nearly double the human trouble he had back then, but he still finds enough time for me. He still infiltrates my thoughts with suggestions about how to live more like him. He still creates a feeling of discomfort within me when I have done something of which he doesn't approve – and he pesters me until I've put it right.

And do you know what? Even though all those billions of extra sinners have joined the queue, I still feel that my salvation is safe and secure, in his good hands!

He is just as concerned about you

Don't be afraid that you may have been crowded out of God's heart. He has that ability that my mother had – she made each of her four children feel special all the time. Each time another member was added to the family, my mother's heart had the extra capacity for it. But then, God's capacity to love and care is infinitely greater than hers ever was.

Don't worry. He is still good for these promises, and always will be: 'Come to me, **all you** who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.' Matthew 11:28, NIV (emphasis mine).

'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, **that whoever** believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.' John 3:16, NIV (emphasis mine).

It's good to be reminded that . . .

Exponential growth cannot curb his love. Neither can a burgeoning population dilute the potency of his saving grace.

¹<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>. ²Ibid. ³<http://www.jclahr.com/bartlett/>.

⁴http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exponential_growth. ⁵http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wheat_and_chessboard_problem. ⁶Ibid.



Julian Hibbert
Editor



A child's Communion

by Jacques Venter

Children of all ages often feel left out on Communion Sabbaths. Not only can the symbolism often appear to float above their heads, but the ritual may seem strange – even rigid. As adults we are sometimes at a loss to know what to do with the children, and we have our questions too! Will they be welcome at the foot-washing? Are they allowed to take part?

Seventh-day Adventists practise 'open Communion', which simply means that, no matter who you are, you are welcome to take part. With this in mind, our objective should be to help our children understand Communion.

I believe we as parents can help our children experience, understand, and value Communion through a simple pre-Communion or follow-up experience during the week. Its design is to evoke reflection and discussion, and ultimately, as they grow older, understanding. These simple activities will provide an opportunity for you to help your child reflect on the Communion that is going to take place on the next Sabbath, or that has just passed. Please feel free to vary them to suit your family circumstances.

Sunday: altar

Items: stones, glue, cardboard
First help your children to collect some stones. Read or tell them the story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River (found in Joshua 3:1-4:9). Help them build an altar on a piece of cardboard. Explain that every time the Israelites saw the pile of rocks from the River Jordan, they would remember what God had done. Ask what other things God gives people in the Bible to help them remember what he has done (for example, the Sabbath and the Passover meal).

Explain Communion to them, as best you can, and why we celebrate it. Ask the children if they can think of any things we see daily that can remind us of something God has done for us.

(The books *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 484, and *Desire of Ages*, pp. 652-661, by Ellen White provide excellent background reading for parents.)

Monday: foot-washing

Items: bowl, warm water, towel
Before picking your children up from school, put the kettle on to boil. Place the bowl and towel at the front door. When you arrive back, have your children take their shoes off. Take the water in the kettle, pour it into the bowl and wash their feet. Explain to them that in the Bible times, when people walked the dusty roads in open sandals, their feet quickly became dirty. Before reclining on their couches to eat, people washed both their hands and their feet.

A servant often performed this task. Tell them that the washing of feet is still significant in Asia and Africa where people wear open sandals and walk dusty paths. Explain to them that touching another person's feet is a sign of humility. To wash somebody's feet shows that you do not consider yourself better than that person. Tell them that before Jesus and the disciples had Communion he washed their feet.

Alternatively, you can prepare the same items for use when your spouse arrives after work. Then help your children wash your spouse's feet before you wash theirs.

Tuesday: upper room

Items: paper, colouring pencils
Read to your children the story of the upper room in Matthew 26:17-30. Help your children draw a picture of the upper room with Jesus in the middle and the twelve disciples around the table. Help them decide where each disciple sat. Let them also draw the lamb and bitter herbs and explain the meaning of this to them (to remind them of the Jews' 'bitter' suffering in Egypt as slaves).

Wednesday: the Communion scene

Items: raisins, big round or star stickers, coloured card paper, matzos/peanuts, glue
Help your children cut out a rectangular piece of coloured cardboard and stick it on a white piece of paper. This will form the table. Help them stick twelve stickers around the table for the disciples, and a different-coloured one for Jesus in the middle of the table. Help them stick the raisins on the table to represent the juice, and pieces of matzos/peanuts to represent the bread. Use this opportunity to speak to them about the order in which Christ introduced the first Communion Service – first the bread, and then the juice.

Thursday: the wine

Items: bowl, bag of red grapes, glass
Make sure your children's hands are clean. Help them squash the grapes so that they will form juice. Drain the juice into a glass

and let them drink it. Use this opportunity to explain to them why we use grape juice and not wine during Communion. Also use this opportunity to explain to them the meaning of the symbol (that Jesus' blood was shed for our sins, so that we could be saved).

Friday: unleavened bread

Items: unleavened bread ingredients, grape juice
Take time to help your children make unleavened bread. Here is a recipe:
2 cups whole-wheat flour
½ tsp salt
7 tbsp oil (1/2 cup oil less 1 tbsp)
½ cup water

Whip the oil and water in a blender until the mixture turns white. Immediately add to the mixture of flour and salt, and knead for several minutes until the dough is elastic and ready for rolling. Roll out a thin (1cm) even layer directly onto a cookie sheet. Score into 2cm squares and prick each square using a fork or toothpick. Bake at 350 degrees for 12-15 minutes. Do not over-bake, for when it becomes too brown it tastes bitter. If the Communion bread is frozen, reheat for a few minutes at a low temperature before using.

While you make the bread, talk to them about Communion and what the bread means. Eat it with them while drinking some grape juice. By now you have explained the symbolism of the grape juice, so ask them to tell you the meaning.

These are just some simple ideas that I hope will encourage you to explore the idea of Christ's sacrifice with your children while sharing their spiritual journey, and watching their precious faith grow.

On being vile

by Pastor John Ferguson



'Behold, I am vile',¹ said Job. In other words, 'I am unworthy'.

Behold, I am vile.

Job said it. I can say it of myself. And you can all say it of yourselves. *Behold, I am vile.* Job 40:4.

Now, it's not every group of people to whom I can say that. I know I am in safe company here, because you are all worshippers at church. You come, regularly, to the services because you have an interest in things spiritual. You want to live right, and you are familiar with religious terms.

But it's not every group of people to whom I can say, 'Behold, I am vile, and so are you!'

Let me tell you about a group of people to whom I couldn't say that.

I have been going to a gym in town for a couple of mornings each week since the start of the year. I am usually in the gym by 7am, and on my way back home by about 8:15am.

In that gym is a group of regulars. I didn't know one of them when I first went but, bit by bit, we are getting to know each other.

However, I certainly couldn't say to them, 'Behold, I am vile, and so are you!'

For instance, one of them, who is almost as broad as he is tall, used the most foul-mouthed language a couple of weeks ago. What he said about a nurse in our local hospital was crude and vulgar.

He knows I'm a minister. He had been told it by one of the other regulars, who is a stonemason here in town. The stonemason's name is Simon and the foul-mouthed man is Tim, although it must be said that Simon knows how to blaspheme as well. They all do.

Simon is the friendliest of the bunch. A couple of months ago he asked me if I had anything special planned for the weekend. I told him about church, and he said he had guessed as much from the several conversations we had already had in the changing rooms. We are the only two who shower after we have worked out, and we usually chat for the five-to-ten minutes it takes us to dry off.

It wasn't long before most of the regulars had been told that I'm a minister . . . and then the banter started.

Barry, who must be 80 if he's a day, is one of the half-dozen elderly men who seem to just sit on the rowing machines, or leg presses, when I'm there. To be fair, several of them are recovering from heart surgery, so they only come in for a

'gentle stretch' at the start of the day, as well as a bit of a laugh.

Barry, since discovering that I am a pastor, has been blessing himself behind my back after I have left a piece of gym equipment. He slips onto the equipment I have just been using and, according to Simon, suggests to the others that the good Lord will look after him because I have just touched the apparatus!

Yesterday morning he joked that the gym owners had removed the 'offering basket' from the changing rooms. The gym owners had removed a wall-mounted hand dryer, and one of the old gents was asking why there were these gaping holes in the wall. 'Oh,' said Barry with a wink towards me, 'that was where the minister's offering basket used to hang!'

Pray for me, will you, because these men need to hear what I am sharing with you today. I want to share with them the great news of the Gospel, but I am proceeding gingerly, gently, cautiously.

I smile at their banter. I cringe, inwardly, at the foul-mouthed language that most of them use, but try not to show it on my face.

They are vile – but no more so, really, than you or me. And they need to hear of the One who covers our vileness, our filthiness, our unworthiness.

Pray for me, please. Pray that one day I will have the courage, and the opportunity, to say to the men in the gym what I share with you in closing.

This is from a morning devotional by the great preacher, Charles Spurgeon, on Job 40:4: 'Behold, I am vile':

'One cheering word, poor lost sinner, for you! You think you must not come to God because you are vile. . . .

. . . you shall leave this morning's devotional with all your sins pardoned; and though you awoke this morning with every sin that man, or woman, has ever committed on your head, you shall rest tonight accepted in the Beloved. . . .

'For "now", mark it, "now is the accepted time".

'If you "believe in him who justifies the ungodly you are saved."

'Oh! may the Holy Spirit give you saving faith in him who receives the vilest!'²

¹Job 40:4, King James Version.

²www.biblegateway.com/devotionals 6 June 2011.

with Andrew Puckering



Fidelity

We find one of the most touching stories of the Bible in Judges 19. The holy tribe, the Levites, don't have their own land, so one of them is wandering through Ephraim's territory with his girlfriend (Deuteronomy 18:1-8; Judges 19:1). The young lady cheats on him, and runs away to her father – but, instead of giving up on her, the Levite goes after her, speaking kindly to her to try to win her back (Judges 19:2, 3). He does so, and, despite several attempts by the woman's father to persuade them to stay, they eventually ride off into the sunset together (Judges 19:4-10, 14).

Their story doesn't end there, of course – in fact it becomes the backdrop for the sickening civil war in which Israel became embroiled immediately afterwards (Judges 19:22-20:48) – but it provides a valuable lesson in itself. Paul writes that all Scripture is inspired by God and very useful (2 Timothy 3:15, 16), and the Scriptures tell us about Jesus (John 5:39) – so what lessons can we learn here?

Well, this Levite was not the only holy man to be treated unfaithfully. God actually told the prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute (Hosea 1:2)! Like the Levite's young lady, she was unfaithful – and, like the Levite, Hosea took her back, promising her his own faithfulness and requiring her own (Hosea 3:1-3). The reason for this is also given in these verses: 'For the land has committed great harlotry. By departing from the LORD. . . . Hosea's acts reflected 'the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans' (Hosea 1:2; 3:1, NKJV).

The LORD wanted the Israelites to stop 'prostituting' themselves by worshipping other gods, which he saw as a spiritual form of adultery (Hosea 2:2-13; 9:1). They had, after all, promised themselves to him alone (Exodus 20:1-6; 24:3-8). Many times throughout their history they acknowledged that the LORD was the only God worthy of their worship (Exodus 15:1, 2, 11; 1 Kings 18:36-39), and their relationship with him was supposed to last forever (Deuteronomy 4:9-14) – just like marriage vows, they were to be exclusive and eternal, 'till death do us part'.

God's people, however, were unfaithful, just like the Levite's girlfriend and Hosea's wife (Jeremiah 31:31, 32) – and we can get a no-holds-barred account of how God saw that betrayal in Ezekiel 23:1-21. God, on the other hand, was, and is, faithful, and pleaded with them to return to a love relationship with him (Hosea 2:14-17; 14:1-4). Most beautiful is the promise, 'Then I will say . . . "You are my people!" And they shall say, "You are my God!"' (Hosea 2:23, NKJV).

The Christian Church is 'Israel' in a spiritual sense (Galatians 3:7-9), and Jesus continues to relate to us as a Lover in the Gospels, calling himself the Bridegroom (Matthew 9:14, 15; Mark 2:19, 20; Luke 5:34, 35): a fact that John the Baptist also recognised (John 3:29). He's invited his faithful lovers to his wedding feast, and given us wedding clothes to wear (Matthew 22:1-14; Revelation 7:14; 19:7-9) – and our honeymoon? Revelation 21:2-10 says that that will take place in New Jerusalem!

- What parable did Jesus tell so that we can get ready for the Bridegroom?
- Can you find other passages in Scripture where God wishes to be our God, and for us to be his people?
- How has Jesus washed our wedding clothes?
- What state would our 'clothes' (our righteousness) be in if they weren't washed in this way? (Isaiah 64)
- What do the Spirit and the bride say? (Revelation 22)

An African adventure



by our editor

Swirling leaves; sagging grey skies; birds bickering over fat balls; pyramids of blue de-icing fluid – winter's calling cards are on display. So turn up the central heating; make a cuppa of your favourite brew; and let me spirit you away for a warm African adventure.¹

Day one

Let's join the volunteer group on their first day in Mozambique. They are there to build twelve one-day churches in partnership with *Maranatha Flights International*, a much-respected supporting ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The group is travelling in four vehicles, each with a trailer. The back roads they have chosen through Gaza Province are dusty and deserted. But this is a small inconvenience in exchange for the capital's congested suburbs and dreaded roadblocks.

A diesel leak

Suddenly the lead vehicle slides to a halt. The driver gets out and fiddles under the Land Rover. We tumble out of our cramped seats in time to catch the words: *'Diesel is leaking. A stone must have snapped off the nylon screw.'*

Someone uses a mild-mannered four-letter word: *'Drat!'*

The Land Rover driver scratches in his toolbox. The Prado driver scratches his head.

The absence of wisecracks like, *'Anyone got chewing gum?'* makes me realise that everyone knows the gravity of the situation.

The toolbox search draws a blank. I pray silently: *'Lord, we are on your mission, and in your hands. Please do something.'* Others were doing the same.

It blew us away!

What happened next just blew us away! One of our young men, the driver of a contractor's pickup that we had borrowed, stepped forward. He had found a nylon screw in his vehicle's messy glovebox – **a surplus toilet seat screw, to be precise!**

'Could this work?' he said quietly. It was a perfect match!

We prayed a thankful group prayer and moved on through the Mozambique bush.

(And we now knew one of Heaven's 'trade secrets': **God doesn't source all his replacement parts from the dealerships!**)

It was so close

What happened next – within thirty minutes of that prayer – nearly ended our mission trip,

and the lives of some of our youth.

As our little convoy of vehicles cautiously entered the town of Chokwe, what our pickup driver thought was a roundabout turned out to be a 'sign-less' stop street – where a 'brakeless' five-ton truck smacked into his vehicle and careened on till it lost momentum further down the street!

Grande problema

It was still day one of our trip. We faced a *grande problema* – but, thank God, no one had been injured.

Surrounded by hundreds of market-goers and excited children, we stayed calm and focused. The pickup load was transferred to the other vehicles. Volunteers were crammed into every available space – luggage on their laps, provisions under their feet.

The men hoisted two 5-kVA generators onto the Landy's roof rack, and rearranged the luggage up there till it looked like a Friday afternoon 'chicken bus'.²

'What should we do now?' was the question on a number of lips.

'We came to build churches', was my firm reply. *'That hasn't changed – and the devil won't stop us! Leave immediately, set up camp as best you can, and start putting up the first church after breakfast, as planned.'*

In police 'company'

We were now alone in a foreign country, surrounded by a language barrier, and in the grim company of the local police!

The driver, three of our young men and I remained behind. After we parked the badly damaged vehicle at the central police station, we were taken to a police post on the outskirts of town.

It took almost five hours to complete the accident report, and two one-page statements! Mainly because of the language barriers – but the mosquitoes didn't help either.

The truck driver was anxious to avoid any possibility of a court appearance because his South African-registered vehicle, with handwritten registration plates, had no brakes.

We shared his desire to avoid Mozambique's legal system and an agreement was reached that each party would take care of its own repairs.

The police were not that eager to see the end of us though, requiring that we be back at 7am to pay an 'admission of guilt' fine.

In fact, at one point there was the inevitable probing question: *'How much of a fine can you afford? £150?'*

Not being a novice in such things, I made it politely clear that *if* we had to pay a fine it would need to be **a very small one!**

Day two

Thank God, our friends fetched us – and we had a few hours of sleep.

While our brave team built their first steel church, two of us returned to Chokwe and waited for the red tape to unravel at the police HQ. We waited for the typist; who waited for the official who had the receipt book; who waited for the one who set the fines; who finally took us to the man who had the only official stamp in the building!

And so, after five hours and a £30 fine, we trundled off slowly to freedom and friends.

Eight churches in five days

God was good. Despite the awful start to the trip, we managed to complete eight one-day churches in five days, have a swim in the Indian Ocean – and load our battered pickup and trailer onto a truck for their long trip home!

It had been a real adventure, packed with new experiences for the volunteers. It was quite sobering to think that it could have ended disastrously in Chokwe, but gratifying to know that it didn't – and that there is reason to have faith in these ancient words: *'The LORD will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.'* Psalm 121:7, 8, NIV.

¹The events upon which this brief report is based took place between 2 and 14 July 2009, and involved a group of twenty-four volunteers from South Africa.

²'Chicken buses' is a term used to describe the overloaded buses that ply some of Africa's rural routes. They are usually loaded (on the roof) with every conceivable item of household goods and furniture, brightly coloured plastic containers, bicycles, goats and chickens!



Above: Finishing touches to one of the eight churches.



Above right: The bush camp in the early morning mist.



Right: One of the teams poses during a break from the blistering sun.

Below: The beautiful beaches of Bilene Lagoon, Mozambique.

Below right: The battered pickup, destined for 'scrappage' – it was a narrow escape.



Have you thought of planning a 2012 mission adventure for your church?



Christmas Book & Food Sale

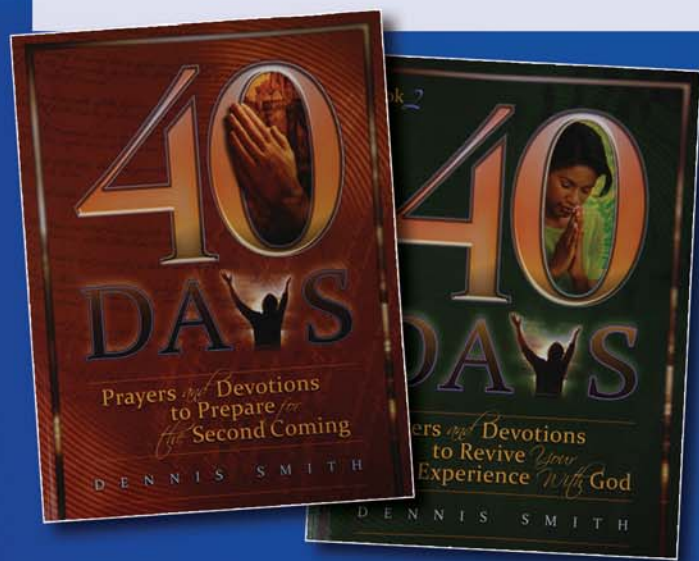
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Sunday 18 December 2011, 9am to 4pm

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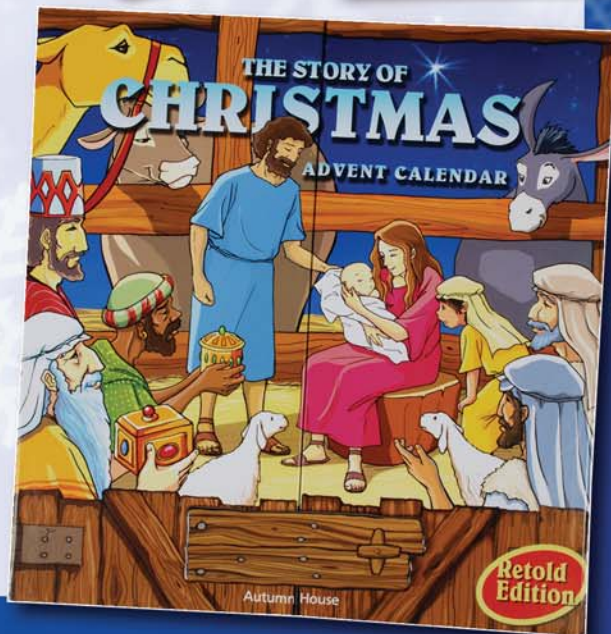
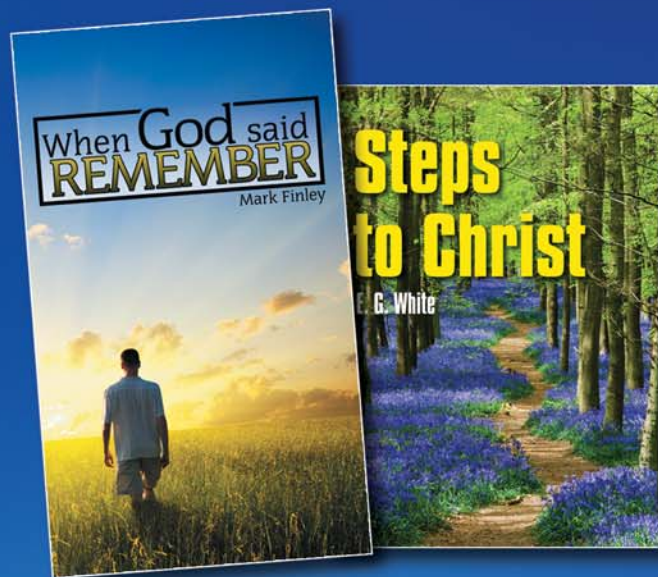


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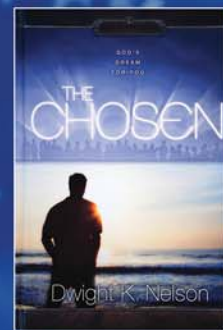
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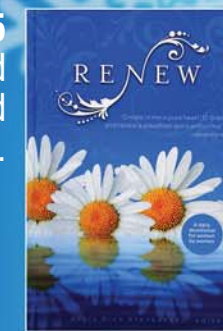


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Miracle and baptism in Birmingham

The baptism of Mr and Mrs Bajbai, both of whom come from a Sikh background, took place recently in Langley, Birmingham. Elder Boota Nayar and Noel had been visiting and praying with them. Mr Bajbai, in spite of his eye problems, was instructed by God to start reading the Bible – and now he thanks God, because he can see! The husband and wife gave their lives to Jesus, and are now very committed members of the church.

R. SUBRAI



Baptism at South Shields

August 6 was an historic day at South Shields Church! Shauna Cartledge from Sunderland, who had been attending church with her family (who are baptised Adventists) decided to give her life to Christ and was baptised. Shauna, 25, is now active in the church with her mother Colleen and brothers Liam and Connor.

Please pray for this section in the North-East so that towns like South Shields and cities like Sunderland can be reached!

CONNOR CARTLEDGE



Prayer line ministry available

Chanda Mulenga of Chelmsford Church is currently running a prayer line for broken homes, praying for deliverance, restoration, and healing the pain. This is an ongoing prayer line that will be available every Sunday between 8 and 8.15pm. The prayer line number is 08448 360 360 (calls cost 2p a minute on a BT line).

Alternatively, email: healpainandrestoration@gmail.com, or attend in person at the church: 43 Roman Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 0HA (every Thursday between 6 and 7.30pm).

Nine baptised at Northampton Central

Sabbath 24 September was a 'high day' at Northampton Central, where at least 200 people gathered to witness Pastor Bruce baptise Yvonne Tuffield, Lydia, Margaret Knight, Elizabeth Rangarira, James Sterling, Gabrielle Sterling, Ethan Sterling, Yaw Okyere (the youngest candidate, only 11 years old), and Edward McMenamin. The candidates came from Rugby Church, Harlestone Road Church, and Northampton Central Church. Now their eyes are focused on Jesus.

ANASELIA MORRIS, REISS MOTHERSILLE



mini-feature

King of the convoy

Brother (Hubert) Smiley regularly offers transport to church events for members across the Midlands. MESSENGER staff decided to lift the lid on his enterprising ministry . . .

Andrew: Brother Smiley, when did you start organising coaches?

Brother Smiley: Our first trip to Grantham took place in 1972, in an 'old-timey' Bedford bus – we've been going for nearly forty years!

Andrew: Where do you go?

Brother Smiley: We take members from twenty-eight churches across the Midlands to camp meetings, and to church outings at Llandudno, Blackpool and Southport – but the one thing we look forward to most every year is the Stanborough Press open day!

Andrew: What's the largest convoy you've organised?

Brother Smiley: A few years ago Ben Carson came to the open

day, and we took six coaches, including a double-decker – we had to watch out for low telegraph poles! That year it rained so hard the windscreen wipers stopped working.

Andrew: Have you had many problems over the years?

Brother Smiley: In 1973, after taking everyone back home, I fell asleep at the wheel and broke my hand – and this year my poorly leg stopped me from driving. In all those years, though, we've never had a puncture or a breakdown.

Andrew: Thank God for that! What's next on the agenda?

Brother Smiley: We're hoping to organise coaches from London for next year's open day at The Stanborough Press – only one came this year, and I hear many more people would come if only they had transport.

Andrew: Thanks for your time sir, and may God continue blessing your ministry. ANDREW PUCKERING



Brother Smiley on the left, with Brother Alliane, who drove this year.

Twins baptised at Hemel Hempstead

On Sabbath 8 October, Sarah and Katherine Padley were baptised at Hemel Hempstead Church, confirming their decision to follow Christ. Their older brother Jonathan was baptised in April. Pastor Daniel Thompson baptised the twins. He has left Hemel to pastor the churches in Bournemouth and Weymouth, but had prepared the girls for baptism, and was happy to return with his wife Hilary.

Dejan Stojkovic preached a sermon called 'Super Heroes' (Jesus is our Super Hero), and after lunch the twins cut a special celebratory cake.

JOHN BUTTERS



Tara McCormac and Kayla Leeson.

Special touch for Area 5 day of fellowship

The Area 5 day of fellowship, which took place at The Globe in Reading on 17 September, included the Reading Central Special Needs Ministry team's presentation of the story of Jonah – in the form of a children's play. The play built on the success of a similar event last year, and showed how using sight, sound, touch and smell can help people with special needs to learn about the Bible. Virginia Williams, Special Needs Ministry leader, said: 'Every first Sabbath of the month we have a Sabbath School programme for people with special needs. We turn Bible stories into plays.'

One little boy said he would like to come to church every week because the children's story was the best he had ever seen! Paulette Francis, who has a daughter with special needs, said: 'There should be lots more plays like this.'

ITUMELENG OSUPENG



Coventry Central welcomes seven new members

On 7 October, Coventry Central Church welcomed newly baptised members after a two-week campaign. Some family members who had come to witness the occasion also decided that it was a good time to choose the Lord Jesus, and we hope to celebrate their baptism in the next few weeks! The campaign was conducted by Pastor Ouadjo and the baptism was carried out by Pastor Liburd. COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT



Back row, right to left: Pastor Liburd, Zanele Mhlanga, Elder Mkoba, Elder Govathson and Elder Mhlanga. Front row, left to right: Charmaine Moyo, Spencer Mpathe, Chifundo Nyirenda, Mthuthuzeli Maseko, Elder Blake, Dineo Masiane, Vimabai Marimanzi.

Garden baptism

On 23 July Kayla Leeson and Tara McCormac were baptised in the beautiful garden of Winchester Church members, Keith and Lorna Nightingale. The girls, neither of whom are yet in their teens, shared their day with family, church friends and school friends.

It's an amazing privilege for a father to baptise his own child, and members could see Dougie's joy and hear the angels singing!

WENDY BRADLEY



Evangelism – music to our ears!

All four Portuguese-speaking churches in London recently gave former Adventists and others a gift ticket to attend a first-class concert called 'Reencontro Imperdivel' (Unforgettable Reunion), which was held at 'House on the Rock' on 15 October. More than 800 attended and more than forty people made the commitment to come back to church through a revived passion for Jesus Christ!

The inspiration came from Pastor Costa, GC Communications director, who used his holiday last year to deliver nineteen first-class concerts throughout the north of Brazil, appealing to former Adventists to return to their first love. This first series had 70,000 attendees, and more than 5,000 surrendered to Jesus.

Perhaps successes like these show that music should become once again a definitive method of evangelism!

ARNALDO OLIVEIRA



Pathfinders' banquet at Newport

Newport Church, after a morning baptism, held a Pathfinders' banquet on Sabbath, 15 October.

The Welsh Mission helped the organisers to prepare, and about fifty people, of whom thirty-two were young people from Newport, Cardiff Central and North, Ystrad Mynach, London and Llandrindod Wells, enjoyed a five-course meal courtesy of Randolph Joseph. DAVID RANCIC



ASNA – ten years of changing lives

The Adventist Special Needs Association (ASNA) held its ten-year celebratory banquet on 8 October at the Oxford Belfry Hotel, near Oxford. ASNA is a user-led charity (inspired by the birth of Matthew Nicholls, who has multiple disabilities and special needs), developed to give spiritual, social, emotional, and physical support to people living with disabilities and special needs. ASNA also works with churches to enable the Gospel to be accessible to all.

ADRA-UK, along with the SEC, have been key partners for ASNA in the UK. More than eighty volunteers have supported ASNA over the past ten years, and their contributions and undying commitment were recognised with the award of certificates for their continued ministry.

The banquet was the highlight of the annual ASNA carers' weekend, during which unpaid carers from all over the UK come together for spiritual, social and emotional support. Marilyn Baker, a blind Christian singer, and Tracey Williamson, a deaf Christian writer and speaker, enabled carers to contemplate the love of Christ and his leading in their lives.

The annual UK-wide disability co-ordinators' training conference was held in the Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel, Abingdon road, Oxford on 13 November.

For further information about ASNA, or to volunteer or make a contribution to the work, please visit the website: www.asna.info, or send an email to: info@asna.info.

SOPHIA NICHOLLS (ASNA CO-FOUNDER AND TRUSTEE)



Joint youth day at Harlestone Road Church

The Central, Harlestone Road and Rugby churches congregated in Northampton for a joint youth day on 17 September, with a congregation of roughly 250 people. Lucy and Reiss, overseers for the youth, created their own programme on the theme, 'The Power of Influence'.

They realise that young people have varied social needs, which should be met at church as well as at home; otherwise, neglected youth may be caught up by the world. Most importantly, the young need to be informed about the Lord and given learning opportunities to enable spiritual and intellectual growth.

Naomi Mothersille led out in Sabbath School, helped by Clarissa, Ezra, Marijke, Tawanda and Taylor, and Daniel's team (Joshua, Damien and Dr Nganunu) led the Divine Service.

The AYS was led by Reiss and his team (Ainsroy, Reuben, Gyles and Ezra), and the topic was 'The Armour of God' (Ephesians 6:11).

ANASELIA MORRIS, REISS MOTHERSILLE



Sutton-in-Ashfield festival and classes

The Sutton-in-Ashfield church had its harvest festival on 17 September, and passed on the food to contacts of the church who are in need, and the Salvation Army, with whom the church works closely in humanitarian work.

Members have also been holding cooking classes for four evenings, attended by twelve people from the community. They plan a health programme for the near future.

EUNICE MASON



Opportunity knocked for Nottingham Central

Nottingham Central members were thrilled to run the children's health expo at Cotgrave Candley Lane School on Friday 21 October. The opening was made by Devon Elliot, who works at the school, and Edgar Wallace organised the event, assisted by Orlene Dunkley from the NEC.

Each child was given a sheet to stamp at each station, the children were split into eight groups, and each group was instructed to remain at its health station until a bell rang to let them know it's time to move on to the next station. The stations, as at every children's health expo, were based on the eight NEWSTART principles: nutrition, exercise, water, sunlight, temperance, air, rest, and trust in God.

When all the children at the expo had completed all eight stations, they were gathered together and asked questions about each station to see how much they had learned! To end the programme the children sang the song they learned at Station Trust and received their certificates.

GRACE WALSH

Stanborough Primary School harvest festival

On Wednesday 12 October, Stanborough Primary School and Nursery children celebrated their harvest festival with songs, drama and poetry, presenting their items with confidence and style. The Year-5 class delighted the audience with a 'Harvest Samba', while Year 6 sang 'Streets of London', which reminded the audience of the many people in need on our streets.

This led into the presentation given by Ian Masters and Rob Edmonds from the Watford New Hope Trust, a charity which helps the homeless in the Watford area. They shared with the children some of the realities of living on the streets, and illustrated this by dressing up a volunteer in the many layers of clothes that a homeless person may wear to survive a cold night without a roof over his or her head. Prior to their visit, the school had received a 'shopping list' from Watford New Hope Trust, and many children brought in toilet rolls, porridge oats, sugar and a variety of tinned food items. These donations, together with a collection totalling £302.50, were presented to the charity. The school community is very happy to make a difference to needy people in the local area. Many parents were able to share this occasion and join in offering thanks and praise to God.

MRS ANGELIKA HORWOOD



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Pathfinder rally day

On 10 September the NEC held a Pathfinder and Adventurer rally day for Areas 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 at Cathedral House in Huddersfield.

The colour party, Pathfinders, Adventurers and drum corps entered, and the rally day was declared open!

Pastor Barry Stoke of the Huddersfield church welcomed all, including the deputy lady mayor. In her response the lady mayor gave words of encouragement to some 1,500 Adventurers, Pathfinders and supporters.

The Huddersfield Pathfinders and the Pathfinders band from Nottingham Central gave praise, as did two Adventurers with their violin duet. Burngreave Pathfinders dramatised the theme 'Crossing the Finish Line', saying: 'The Christian race is not for the swift, but for those who endure to the end.' Leakey Mbaya shared the Word with conviction and authority.

The 1,500 Pathfinders, Adventurers and supporters were guided by a friendly police team in an afternoon parade through Huddersfield. Thousands of tracts were handed out, and the procession joined up with the Pathfinder band for praise to Jesus.

HENRY CHANNER



NEC PF & ADV RallyDay Huddersfield 10Sep2011 Photo By :HenryChanner©



NEC PF & ADV RallyDay Huddersfield 10Sep2011 Photo By :HenryChanner©



NEC PF & ADV RallyDay Huddersfield 10Sep2011 Photo By :HenryChanner©

Photos printed as supplied

Investiture at Walesby

On 2 October the 2010-2011 Pathfinder Leadership Award (PLA) candidates and Master Guides gathered at the Walesby training and camping centre to be invested after a one-year (five-camping-weekend) programme of intense but enjoyable training.

The North England Pathfinders have in recent years, with Pastor Trevor Thomas as director, experienced tremendous growth – giving rise to an unprecedented demand for trained staff throughout the region. Wendy Watson-Teague (PLA) and Shirley Parnell (Master Guide) have delivered a most excellent programme through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Alan Hush has now taken on the directorship, and wishes to take the Pathfinder ministry to even higher levels.

Before Pastor Hush repeated the charge, he highlighted the generic use of the term 'men' in the following passage to mean Christian leaders:

'The greatest want of the world is the want of men – men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who



NEC Master Guide & PLA investiture@Walesby 2 Oct 2011

will stand for the right though the heavens fall.' – Ellen White, Education, p. 57.

Candidates with their families, well-wishers and trainers all repeated the charge with Pastor Alan Hush, who then congratulated and admonished the candidates to lead the youth to Christ.

HENRY CHANNER

obituaries

John Gwyn Gregory (1929-2011) d. 2 September. Gwyn was born on 11 May 1929 and was always a person who did what he could for those in need. Gwyn grew up in an Adventist family that was always associated with the Barry church in South Wales. In his early twenties, Gwyn was baptised by Pastor S. G. Hyde in Cardiff. A young intern straight from college, by the name of Charles Watson, made a deep impression on Gwyn's life. Just a few years later Pastor John Freeman brought new life into the Barry church following a series of meetings at the Memorial Hall. A number of young people, who were to be life-long friends of Gwyn, joined the church. Gwyn and his new-found friends would often travel to the youth meeting at St Pauls, the Seventh-day Adventist church in Cardiff. All the young people enjoyed each other's company until they went their separate ways.

It was in 1956/57 that Pastor Matthew Murdoch began a series of meetings at the Memorial Hall in

Barry. His Bible worker was Miss Dorothy Hayhurst. Pastor Murdoch would say later that he did not think they would lose a Bible worker in Barry. On 19 July 1959 Gwyn and Dorothy were married. They were to have three children: Julie, David and Richard.

Gwyn passed away in hospital on 2 September 2011. He was laid to rest in Barry Cemetery after a service conducted by Pastor Jeremy Tremeer and the writer. We remember Dorothy in our prayers, Julie and her family, David and Richard, and Gwyn's sister Iris and her family.

DR B. P. PHILLIPS



Eva Llewela Marjorie 'Della' Phillips (1920-2011) d. 10 September. Eva was born in Nelson, Glamorganshire on 10 November 1920. She fell asleep to await the call of the Life-Giver on 10 September 2011 after a short stay in hospital.

Like many girls in the South Wales valleys in the inter-war years, she left home to be in service to a family in London. Returning to Wales, she joined a group of young people who travelled around as entertainers in the community. She married Bill, one of the young men in the group, in August 1944. The family grew quickly, with two sons and then triplets. It was at the end of 1953 that an event took place that was to affect Della and the family for the rest of her life.

A series of meetings conducted by Pastor George Emm and 'Ted' Marshall led Della to commit her life to the Lord and join the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Members of her family joined with others to form the Aberdare church. Throughout the years a number of ministers and their families found a welcome in the Phillips' home. When visiting Della and her husband Bill they often spoke of the family – Ray, Peter (who, sadly, passed away in 2005), Nicky, Lesley and Nigel – of whom they were justly proud.

In later years Della joined the Ystrad Mynach church. She was always interested in the young people and often spoke words of encouragement to them. She loved and was

loved by Alvin and Anthea Fielding, who kept a caring eye on her and brought her regularly to church. Many of her friends from the local community in Aberdare will miss her. Many attended the service held to commemorate her life.

At the service Pastor Jeremy Tremeer, the local minister, welcomed relatives and friends, and Pastor Brian Phillips gave a glimpse into her life and spiritual journey. Many were touched by the poem read by Anthea Fielding, and Pastor John Ferguson, a family friend, compared the life we are living with the life that is to come. A former minister at Aberdare, Pastor Ron Edwards, spoke at the graveside of the joy we will have at the Resurrection. What a smile of recognition we will expect to see from Della on that resurrection morning. We remember Ray Phillips and his wife Lynne and their family, Nicky Phillips and his wife Glynis and their family, Nigel Phillips and his wife Karen, and Lesley Peters and her husband David and their family in our prayers.

Della will be remembered as a pillar of support here on Earth, and a living witness to the commitment she made to her Christian faith all those years ago.

DR B. P. PHILLIPS

BUC retirees gather at Newbold

Sunday 9 October was the day 120 former employees of the BUC met at Newbold for fellowship and saw special guests, Dr Bert Beach (who served for twenty-five years as Education director and then as secretary of the Trans-European Division, before moving to the General Conference) and his wife, Eliane.

The day was organised by Pastor Martin Bell and his wife Sheila – but, due to Martin's illness, Pastor Alan Hodges and his wife, Thelma, hosted the event.

The day included a tour of the Roy Graham library (led by librarians Per Lisle and Linda Baidam), an introduction to the college principal (Dr Phillip Brown) and his wife Sharon, lunch in the college cafeteria, and an address by Dr Beach in the Moor Close Chapel. As a church leader for more than fifty years, Dr Beach shared experiences from his life of ministry.

This event was one of the largest attended by retirees in recent years.

ALAN HODGES



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Newport Church's health fair

Dr Chidi Ngwaba, a GP and orthopaedic surgeon, told about thirty people at the Newport Health Fair the first signs of a heart attack – not shortness of breath or chest pains, but a lack of rest, consumption of junk food, and stress!

The health fair, an autumn fixture in the Newport church's calendar, was enriched by Adventists from across Wales.

The Welsh Mission has recently set up a country-wide Health team, which had a training session on how to run health outreach events only the previous week: so, even though this was a Newport event, some of the desks and stalls were manned by members from Cardiff, Swansea, and Carmarthen, and even Peterborough and

the West Midlands.

The fair, held on 18 September, included cholesterol and blood-pressure checks and assessment of emotional intelligence and lifestyle – the offer was fairly holistic. There were also cookery demonstrations, and, yes, some tasting.

A couple of days later, one lady expressed her gratitude – 'Thank you for doing something for the local community, for raising awareness about health and for the most delicious meal I had in years.'

At least one person is known to have established ongoing contact and enquired about cookery classes. Who knows what journey that person will walk between now and Health Fair 2012? *ELDER VICTOR MBVUNDULA*



On 11 September Great Brickkiln Church members welcomed visitors at their family fun day, held at the historic Bantock Park Museum Centre, Wolverhampton. Much interest was shown by both adults and children in the evangelist workshop displays, and the music concert was well attended.

Among the various activities were the drumming and drilling parade by the Pathfinders, the bouncy castle, and face-painting and cartoon portraits by Great Brickkiln artists, along with relay games.

Large queues appeared for the free snacks and refreshments.

This event was very successful, and the outreach conducted here may reap eternal rewards.

DELVA CAMPBELL

Great Brickkiln family fun day with community outreach



Join the London Male Voice Choir, Hampstead Gospel Choir, Diadem, Golden Chords, and the Hampstead Brass Ensemble for a

Festival of Praise

Saturday 3 December, 7pm at
The Rock Tower,
49 Tufnell Park Road

(Tickets – adults: £10;
senior citizens and under-14s: £5)

Norwich vegetarian outreach

On Sunday 11 September the Norwich church opened its doors to all locals to show them how to prepare vegetarian food.

Everybody enjoyed the cooking demonstrations, and would like to come again for another course. Pearly, Beryl, Marty and others worked very hard to make this a great success for the church, and it also opened people's minds to vegetarian foods.

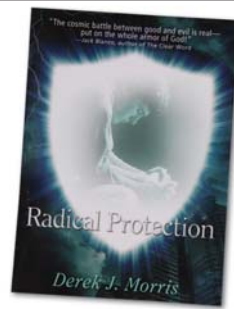
WENDY GRADY

Ordination of elders and deacons

Elder Nigel De Vos and Elder Lloyd were ordained by Pastor Bruce on Sabbath 24 September at the Harlestone Road church in Northampton. Elder Murray was charged to escort Nigel to the front of the church, and Elder Welsh escorted Lloyd Sterling.

Elder Joseph Woodburn was escorted for ordination by Elder Murray Fuller, Brother Reginald Goodwin (deacon) was escorted by Elder Adedayo Falade, and Brother Paul Tocitu (deacon) was escorted by Elder Frimpong. They were ordained on 1 October at Central Church in like manner.

ANASELIA MORRIS, REISS MOTHERSILLE



New book of the week *Radical Protection*

Derek J. Morris

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9am-1pm, Friday

11am-3pm, Sunday

Advent Centre

Mondays & Wednesdays, 6.30pm-8.30pm

Sundays, 11am-3pm

Messenger

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Sunset

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	Lond	Card	Noff	Edin	Belf
Nov 25	4.00	4.12	3.58	3.51	4.09
Dec 2	3.55	4.07	3.52	3.44	4.02
9	3.52	4.04	3.48	3.39	3.58
16	3.52	4.04	3.48	3.38	3.58

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