

Messenger

News to the churches • 6 January 2012 • Volume 117 • 01

January can be a rough month. The house is too quiet. The stockings are empty. The tinsel and lights are packed away. All the things you bought in December – at full price – are now ‘on special offer’. You don’t want to see another mince pie – ever! And all your zips, belts and buttons have a firmer grip.

Life feels grey. You stare at the news expecting to see a tsunami, quake or coup – or, at the least, confirmation that the double-dip recession is official!

That’s why early January is a time for encouraging, focused messages from our Church leaders – messages that inspire and orientate us for the challenges that lie ahead. Messages that lever us from our lethargy . . .

You’ve got messages!

2012 – it’s not about us . . .

Around 2005, I was in Australia ministering to teenagers at a camp meeting. Towards the end of the camp, I was invited to the teen leaders’ meeting, which became rather heated. Now I do not remember the details of the discussion or even who the participants were, but I will never forget the words of one of the leaders, who stood and made the impassioned plea: ‘Let’s remember, guys; it’s not about us, it’s about the kids!’

Suddenly, the heat dissipated as they realised that their personal agendas and opinions were subservient to the most important issue of all: their ministry to the teens.

With the arrival of 2012, permit me to take that statement from down under and

challenge every single Seventh-day Adventist in the British Union with this: ‘Let’s remember, sisters and brothers – it’s not about us, it’s about the lost!’

Please understand that I am not speaking about ‘the lost’ in any critical or judgemental way. I am just reminding us that the primary reason we were

over the house prices there as compared to the North. But I read a statement recently which challenged my house purchase criteria.

‘We see the great need of missionary work to carry the truth not only to foreign countries, but to those who are near us.

Close around us are cities and towns in which no efforts are made to save souls. Why should not families who know the present



called to become Seventh-day Adventist Christians is to reach the lost. I am convicted that none of us were called solely for our personal salvation, but that we might also introduce the Saviour to others.

I am planning to move to the South of England this year, but have been horrified

truth settle in these cities and villages, to set up there the standard of Christ, working in humility, not in their own way, but in God’s way, to bring the light before those who have no knowledge of it? When the Church shall truly have the spirit of the message, they will throw all their energies into the work of saving the souls for

You've got messages

whom Christ has died. They will enter new fields.' (Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, 29 September, 1891, 'Missionary Work').

Instead of bemoaning house prices in the South, I am challenged to ensure that my home becomes a mission outpost – wherever I am able to settle! The house purchase now is not about whether I can afford the same rooms and space as I enjoy in the North, but is now all about the lost!

My prayer and desire in 2012 is that . . .

- All Seventh-day Adventists will make reaching the lost (their friends, work colleagues, and so on) a major focus of their daily prayers and devotional routine;
- Every family will make reaching the lost a major focus of its family worship time;
- Every church board meeting will make its primary agenda item prayer for guidance as plans are made to reach the lost in our communities, towns or cities;
- Every Sabbath sermon will lead the lost to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour; and
- Every congregation will conduct an intentional evangelistic initiative of some kind.

My prayer for you is that 2012 will be 'all about the lost'.

PASTOR IAN SWEENEY (BUC PRESIDENT)

Hope for 2012

I would like to wish our members a happy new year and God's richest blessings for

2012. At the same time I want to reflect on our 2011 blessings. I give thanks for the way our ministers and laity have worked together to enlarge the Kingdom of God in the South England Conference. We have established three new churches and so far recorded 548 baptisms – but I'm convinced the numbers will increase far beyond this once all reports are in.

I am thankful to those ministers who retired in 2011 after years of valued service. Their places have been filled by five new interns and three senior pastors.

I want to express my gratitude for the continued faithfulness of our members. Despite these austere times the tithe increased in 2011 by 1.34%. We give God the glory for his continued blessings.

In the past year we have seen our society struggle with the bleak hopelessness which expressed itself in the riots in London and elsewhere, driven by the threat of increased poverty and soaring youth unemployment. As a community we can equip the youth by giving them volunteering opportunities to acquire skills to be used in the workplace. Let us do what we can to bring hope to the youth.

This autumn we saw people camped outside St Paul's, protesting against capitalist greed and abuse by the banking fraternity worldwide. This is an ideal time to share the hope and peace we have in Christ, and the freedom his love and grace bring to us. My brothers and sisters, this is a great time to bring hope. During 2012 let us build relationships, communities and churches that reflect the peace of Christ and share the hope we have in his soon coming.

As a conference we promise to provide training to equip the Church to be skilled in outreach. The Personal Ministry department is working on rolling out a School of Evangelism with a variety of training opportunities. The Communications & Media department is offering a media academy.

This year we celebrate the thirtieth SEC camp meeting, and I'm excited to announce that our main speaker will be Mark Finley. Last year many left their booking too late, and were sadly unable to attend camp meeting: so I urge you to book early for this year!

We cannot go through 2012 and miss the largest cultural party right on our doorstep – the 2012 London Olympics. Not all of us may be interested in sport, but we are ideally situated to make the most of this cultural celebration.

Many churches are close to the venues, and, although we will not be able to be active within the sports facilities, those areas around the stadia will also see an influx of visitors.

Furthermore, our variety of language-based communities and churches could serve us well. I urge you to be intentional in planning your outreach for July and August. The Conference will be providing suggestions for your church on how to utilise the opportunity for evangelism and community-building, and some larger events are being planned which would be ideal for friends and visitors, so please invite them. Our Evangelism expo on 15 January will provide more information.

My prayer is that 2012 will be a remarkable year, a year in which our churches grow both numerically and spiritually. Let us continue, as a people of hope, to draw closer to the heart of our Saviour Jesus Christ, that >6

Enhancing Health

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

Golden eight — part 3b

Abstemiousness: how balanced are you?

The word 'abstemiousness' generally refers to being temperate in eating and drinking. However, in most lifestyle programmes today, you will most likely hear the words 'balance', 'self-control' or 'temperance' used instead. Abstemiousness describes a lifestyle devoid of excesses, where emotional, physical, spiritual and social needs are equally met.

In the Wellbeing seminars that I run I have devised a tool called a *Transformation Worksheet*. This tool gives each person an opportunity to assess the level of balance in his or her life currently, and whether or not there are any obvious areas for concern.

Here's one evaluation from someone attending one of the seminars:

Mavis's testimony

'I had not realised how out of balance my life was until I undertook the exercise. I had so much on my plate and so many tasks to accomplish in a twenty-four-hour period that I was sacrificing sufficient rest and adequate sleep to get things done. Then, when I became ill with a stress-related disorder, I became impatient with God for healing. When my health deteriorated, it affected my spiritual life, as my capacity to pray, read the Bible and spend adequate devotional time was affected. Six weeks after implementing the action points in the *Transformation Worksheet* I saw significant improvement in my health. I rearranged my daily schedule to include times for reflection, rest and exercise and, as a result, I was able to spend time on nurturing my spiritual life. I see now how excess in one area can adversely impact another, and I don't want to go there again!'

Do you currently feel that you pay sufficient attention to your emotional, physical, spiritual and social needs without being excessive in any area, or are you looking for more balance in your life? Then here is a quick exercise to try.

Exercise

Using a blank sheet of paper, divide the sheet into four sections with the headings: Emotional, Physical, Spiritual, Social. In each of the segments write down all the activities you do that relate to that heading. This gives you an idea of where in your life you are placing the most emphasis. Think about the value you place on each activity, the time allocated to it and what outcomes you have observed from the frequency, duration and intensity of that activity. This will also assist you in ascertaining whether you need to pursue a more balanced lifestyle, or if indeed your current activities have produced good outcomes in each area.

Good health!

editorial

What would you write about if you were in my socks today? The short fuse fizzing above the Euro-bomb? Our concerns about UK pensions, job losses, youth unemployment and 'fuel' poverty? Tough call, isn't it?

Well, it's my call – so sit back and enjoy the read!

Late last year, while preparing to run a creative writing seminar in South Africa, I bought some of Roald Dahl's stories for illustrative purposes. Dahl remains one of the English-speaking world's most popular children's authors, and for good reason. His stories are entertaining.

One of the books I bought was his autobiographical *Boy: Tales of Childhood*. I was looking for tips on style and technique, but got more than I bargained for – in the chapter entitled 'The Headmaster'.

Headmasters

In Dahl's school days (and mine) head teachers were called 'headmasters', and they were a very respected group of people. Not the type of person, mind you, that the average young man wanted to meet too often.

During my first three years in high school, I visited the 'inner sanctum' of Mr Bazely's office only once that I can remember. Unfortunately, this visit was of a disciplinary nature. I was there to be caned!

I have long since forgiven old Bazely for doing his duty, and the 'cuts' (as we called them then) were probably well deserved.

But Dahl could not forget

Roald Dahl, however, experienced something that he could not forget – the flogging of his best friend, Michael, by the headmaster of Repton Public School, near Derby.

'Michael was ordered to take down his trousers and kneel on the Headmaster's sofa. . . . The great man then gave him one terrific crack . . . there was a pause. . . . The cane was put down and the Headmaster began filling his pipe from a tin of tobacco. He also began to lecture the kneeling boy about sin and wrongdoing. Soon, the cane was picked



And Jesus said: 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.' Matthew 5:16, NKJV

'Flogging clergyman' leaves his mark



Julian Hibbert
Editor

up again and a second tremendous crack was administered upon the trembling buttocks. . . . This slow and fearsome process went on until ten terrible strokes had been delivered, and all the time, over the pipe-lighting and the match-striking, the lecture on evil and wrongdoing and sinning and misdeeds and malpractice went on without a stop. . . . At the end of it all, a basin, a sponge and a small clean towel were produced by the Headmaster, and the victim was told to wash away the blood before pulling up his trousers.¹

A sad, and hard to stomach, story, indeed. But there is more for Dahl to tell.

He was a 'man of God'

'Do you wonder then that this man's behaviour used to puzzle me tremendously? He was an ordinary clergyman at that time as well as being Headmaster, and I would sit in the dim light of the school chapel and listen to him preaching about the Lamb of God and about Mercy and Forgiveness and all the rest of it and my young mind would become totally confused. I knew very well that only the night before this preacher had shown neither Forgiveness nor Mercy in flogging some small boy who had broken the rules.'²

How would you have felt, if you were in his school shoes? Would you have been puzzled too? What lasting effect would such contradictions have had on you?

His headmaster crowns the Queen

Soon after these things occurred, his headmaster moved abruptly on to higher ecclesiastical office, and ultimately to a grand destiny as the Archbishop of Canterbury!

He was the man who placed St Edward's crown on the head of our reigning Monarch³ on 2 June, 1953, in Westminster Abbey before 'more than 8,000 guests, including prime ministers and heads of state from around the Commonwealth'.⁴

What would these dignitaries have thought, had the curtain of time slipped briefly from its rails to reveal young Michael's bloody and protracted flogging, just two decades earlier?

Dahl closes the chapter

Sadly, Michael's flogging left its scars on Roald too. For in 1984, half a century later, when he published these boyhood memoirs, this is how he closed the chapter entitled 'The Headmaster':

'So what was it all about? I used to ask myself.

'Did they preach one thing and practise another, these men of God?

'And if someone had told me at the time that this flogging clergyman was one day to become the Archbishop of Canterbury, I would never have believed it.'⁵

And now for the saddest comment of them all:

'It was all this, I think, that made me begin to have doubts about religion and even about God. If this person, I kept telling myself, was one of God's chosen salesmen on earth, then there must be something very wrong about the whole business.'⁶

Why am I telling you all this?

For the simple reason that it so classically illustrates the way professing Christians 'assassinate' God! God is 'dead' for too many of our countrymen (and women) because those who claim to follow him have stabbed him in the back! **We don't practise what we preach.**

Let one of Edgar Guest's better-known poems sum it up for us for 2012:

'I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.

The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear,
Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear;

And the best of all the preachers are the men who live their creeds,
For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.'

¹Boy: *Tales of Childhood*, by Roald Dahl, pages 145, 146, Puffin Books, 2008. ²Ibid, page 146.

³http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Fisher. ⁴http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/june/2/newsid_2654000/2654501.stm. ⁵Boy: *Tales of Childhood*, page 146. ⁶Ibid. ⁷Taken from 'Sermons We See' by Edgar A. Guest, quoted at: <http://www.inspirationalstories.com/3/369.html>.

What does your face say about you?



by David Marshall

‘Well into my ministry, my niece Joanne (then 6) said, “Uncle David, why were you angry when you preached the sermon?” I wasn’t, of course, but I took to heart that feedback from Joanne rather more than I have any other response to a sermon.’

A well-intentioned local celebrity visited my class when I was in primary school. Looking at the self-consciously ‘It Girl’ of the class, she said, ‘Your face will be your fortune.’ The problem was, only those of us sitting in her vicinity knew that the comment was made to her. The rest of the forty-strong baby-boomers – male and female – received her comment as a general observation about life. I recall some worried faces in the mirror that playtime.

When I arrived home that evening, I told the story. My father said, ‘Never mind, lad. Beauty’s only skin-deep – but ugly goes right down to the bone!’

Dad would launch into his favourite quotations – without always remembering how they concluded!

The truth is that my face is apt to register what’s going on behind it. When I was young that was even more so.

Once my headmaster sent me to be interviewed for entry into a very selective school for high flyers. When the interview in the oak-panelled study of another headmaster was over, he asked me to wait in the corridor for a letter. This letter was then dictated to his secretary. I couldn’t hear

much, but I gathered that all was not well. Eventually, the headmaster’s secretary handed me the letter in a sealed envelope marked with the name of my old headmaster.

When I returned to school, my old head opened the envelope. As he read the letter he shook his head ruefully, and said, ‘David, you are your own worst enemy!’ Having heard that many times before, I smiled broadly. The head responded, ‘Why could you not have done that in the interview? They have you down as “po-faced and supercilious”. What have you to say to that?’ ‘I was po-faced and terrified’, I said.

Well into my ministry, my niece Joanne (then 6) said, ‘Uncle David, why were you angry when you preached the sermon?’ I wasn’t, of course, but I took to heart that feedback from Joanne rather more than I have any other response to a sermon.

We have to take responsibility for our faces!

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, ‘The gods we worship write their names on our faces.’ One preacher, having approvingly read that quotation to his congregation, got a bit

personal. ‘I have seen more cheerful faces on iodine bottles!’ he told them.

During his final imprisonment, when Paul might have been forgiven for an angst-ridden letter, he wrote Philippians, ‘The Epistle of Joy’. Towards the end of it, he told Christians, ‘Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!’ (Phil. 4:4, NIV.)

Paul was saying something radical, but not something new. He was quoting one of the oft-repeated precepts of the Old Testament.¹

The Hebrew word so often translated ‘rejoice’ in the Old Testament was *simhah*. Its root meaning: *to shine*.

After Moses’ second encounter with God on Sinai (Exodus 34:29, 30) ‘... he did not know that his face was shining because he had talked with the LORD. When Aaron and all the people of Israel saw that Moses’ face was shining, they were afraid to go near him’ (New Century Version).

Psalms 34:5 (NIV) says, ‘Those who look to him [the Lord] are radiant’. They shine!

After an encounter with a man of God, Samson’s mother told his father, ‘He looked like an angel of God, very

awesome’ (Judges 13:6, NIV).

The New Testament carries the same idea when, in Acts 6:15, it describes Stephen on trial for his life in front of the Jewish ruling council: ‘All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel’ (NIV).

So when – from the death cell! – Paul exhorts the Philippians, and anyone else who might read his letter, twice, to ‘Rejoice in the Lord always!’ that is the long tradition from which he is drawing.

Simhah. Root meaning: *to shine*.

He is telling them to go for the Moses effect, the Stephen effect.

Those who have been with the Lord and are empowered by him – *are meant to show it in their faces*. That’s a big challenge for me, let me tell you.

Anticipating the mood of the congregations to whom his last prison letter would be read, Paul is saying, ‘Hey! Brighten up! Brighten up in the Lord always; and again I say, Brighten up!’

God wants to write his Name – signature, if you prefer – on our faces.

In fact, of course, a shining face has got to start on the inside. Proverbs 15:13 (NIV) says, ‘A happy heart makes the face cheerful’ (emphasis supplied). But what makes ‘a happy heart’? Verse 30 of Proverbs 15 implies that cultivating a cheerful expression can help to ‘make a happy heart’. Enlist your will first, the wise man is saying.

This ‘shining face’ idea: did anyone ever achieve the Moses/Stephen effect outside of Scripture?

Some have. Permit me to share a little of the evidence.

- Adoniram Judson was among the first Christian missionaries to Burma. When he arrived he was keen to preach the Gospel right away. First, however, he had to learn the language. It took him a long time. So long, in fact, that he became frustrated with himself. He took to embracing people he met on the street. Lots of Burmese people, on returning to their homes, reported that they had ‘seen an angel’. Some time before Judson became fluent in Burmese, he was known in his community as ‘Mr Glory-Face’.

- Alexander Maclaren was a great Scottish preacher. One day he noticed the city’s celebrity sceptic sitting in the congregation. The service over, he was successful in exacting an undertaking from the sceptic that he would attend church faithfully for four weeks. During that four-week period Maclaren presented all the major Christian doctrines in the finest sermons ever heard from his pulpit. The sceptic became a Christian. ‘Which of my sermons brought you to a decision?’ Maclaren wanted to know.

The reply: ‘Your sermons, sir, were helpful, but they were not what finally persuaded me to become a Christian. A few weeks ago, as I was leaving church,

I noticed an elderly lady with a radiant face. Because she was making her way with difficulty along the icy pavement, I offered to help her. As we walked along together, she looked up at me and said, “I wonder if you know my Saviour Jesus Christ? He is everything in the world to me. I want you to know him, too.”’

Those words hit the sceptic with a force greater than any rational, even unanswerable, argument. When he reached home, he fell to his knees and received the Saviour.

The impact of one shining Christian face!

‘God once said, “Let the light shine out of the darkness!” This is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts by letting us know the glory of God that is in the face of Christ’ (2 Cor. 4:6, New Century Version).

This verse, along with the passage which it concludes, suggests that God himself is present in Jesus and that the glory of God shone in the face of Jesus. Paul had encountered the glorified Christ outside Damascus. God’s glory shining from the face of Christ had illuminated his once-darkened life ever since. The ‘god of this age’ (vs. 4, NIV) might ‘blind the minds of unbelievers’, but God has shone the light of Christ’s Gospel through the lives of believers. As the face of Christ reflects the glory of God, some of the glory God shines into the hearts of believers should show on their faces.

So, let the glory of Christ shine through.

¹See for reference: Psalm 32:11; Psalm 64:10; Psalm 104:34, 35; Joel 2:21, 23; Habakkuk 3:18, 19.

with Andrew Puckering



Authorities

The apostle Paul gave perhaps one of the most abused pieces of advice in all Scripture in the book of Romans – Christians should subject themselves to all governing authorities, because they are all from God; if you do good, you won’t have to be afraid of them, but they are God’s instruments to punish evil. This extends to big things and small things; decrees, taxes and basic respect (Romans 13:1-7).

Paul wasn’t speaking anything new, either – there is an extensive biblical corpus of counsel to obey the authorities, whenever we can do so in accordance with Scripture (Proverbs 16:13-15; Ecclesiastes 8:2; 1 Timothy 6:1, 2). We are forbidden from cursing them (Exodus 22:28; Ecclesiastes 10:20; Acts 23:5), but should rather humble ourselves in their presence (Proverbs 25:6; Titus 2:9). Scripture tells us to respect those in charge of us, and not to cause dissent (Proverbs 24:21), because it’s the job of those in authority to punish wickedness (Proverbs 19:12; 20:2, 8, 26). This is also applicable to Christian leaders – the Church, as the body of Christ, functions better when members of the body accept their roles, however unappealing, and remember that Christ is their Head (1 Corinthians 12:12-31).¹ Leaders in the Church should be honoured, because they can save those who hear them (1 Timothy 4:16; 5:17-19).

Does that mean that all leaders are perfect, or even good? Not a bit of it – the Bible acknowledges that some leaders sin (Leviticus 4:22; Jeremiah 2:8): they can be wicked and pay attention to lies (Proverbs 28:15; 29:12), and sometimes get things wrong (Ecclesiastes 10:5). Some leaders – even those who fulfil God’s commands (2 Chronicles 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1-4) – wrestle with angels (Daniel 10:13, 20), and some God will punish for their wickedness (Jeremiah 51:23; Micah 3). In fact, some authorities may force us to choose between them and God, who is the ultimate Authority, and who deserves our ultimate obedience (Acts 4:18-20) – and, when we reject them by serving him, God will often protect us from their wrath (Daniel 3; 6), until the time comes for us to wait in the grave for his return (John 21:18-23; Philippians 1:21-24). In either case, we shouldn’t fear merely human wrath when we’re serving God (Matthew 10:28).

Paul wasn’t ignorant of this – after all, the authorities had beaten him and put him in prison in Philippi (Acts 16:19-24), and the High Priest commanded him to be smacked in the mouth (Acts 23:2). The Romans, who ran things in his day, chained him up and put him on trial, and ultimately would do him far worse (Acts 25:13-15; 26:29). Why, then, did he persist in urging us to respect our higher-ups?

Let’s look at Peter and John – after they had been hauled before the ruling council of their day (Acts 4:1-22), they prayed to the LORD, acknowledging that he has made all things. Their rulers had committed the most heinous crime against Jesus Christ (Psalm 2:1, 2; Acts 4:23-27) – but this was in fulfilment of prophecy, and it was part of God’s purpose, the plan of salvation (Acts 4:28). God didn’t condone their evil, but he can and did use it to save us. Yes, the devil might well be the ‘ruler of this world’ (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) – but he can do nothing without God’s permission (Job 1:12; 2:6), and God works all things out for the best in the end (Romans 8:28). As Daniel 2:20-23 shows us, God is the One who puts leaders in their place, and he is ultimately in control.

- What should you do if your superior gets angry with you? (Ecclesiastes 10)
- Should we submit only to kind rulers, or to harsh ones as well? (1 Peter 2)
- Name three ‘good’ kings of Israel or Judah.
- What advice did King Lemuel’s mother give to him? (Proverbs 31)
- What did Jesus say about taxes? (Matthew 22)

¹Historians may be interested to know that the ‘body’ analogy was reputedly also used by Roman orator Agrippa Menenius Lanatus to convince recalcitrant soldiers to come down off a hill and get back to work – Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*, 27-25 BC.

You've got messages

our personal walk with him will transform us and our communities.

PASTOR SAM DAVIS (SEC PRESIDENT)

Untold riches in 2012

As we reflect on what has been taking place in our homes, communities and country – in fact the world – the word that sums up our plight is ‘economy’! The world is facing an economic meltdown. Phrases like ‘double-dip recession’ are being bandied about by economists and politicians. People are worried about money matters. More and more people are losing their jobs and their homes. Many are worried about the financial position they may find themselves in at retirement; hence the recent strike action over devaluing pensions. I heard someone say that even the rich are complaining about the state of the economy, never mind the poor.

From a financial perspective, these are indeed worrying times – and the forecasts for 2012 are not encouraging. But in spite of all the doom and gloom around us, I have good news for you. We can all enjoy ‘untold riches’. ‘How?’ you ask. ‘Premium bonds? Stocks and shares? ISAs? The lottery? A generous benefactor?’ Even though we may not subscribe to many of the aforementioned, the Lord could perform a miracle and bless us with monetary wealth. On the other hand, if your focus is only on monetary gain, then the following might not be such good news.

While at Newbold, during the early eighties, I remember Pastor Dwight Nelson coming to conduct a week of prayer. In one of his presentations he shared a story he had read in a local newspaper about a school teacher, Janette Lemon. She taught all her working life; she never married; all her relatives passed away; and eventually she did too.

She had no real friends and generally kept herself to herself. As there was no next of kin and no one to inherit her estate, the state took control of the matter. On entering the property where she had lived, they discovered that Janette Lemon had lived in abject poverty. The house was absolutely awful; dirty, with rubbish piled high. They discovered that she had not had running water or gas and electricity supplies for years. How she could have survived like this, nobody knew. Having rummaged their way through the mess and filth, they discovered an old bank book stub and visited the bank where the account was held. Imagine their surprise and shock when they discovered that Janette Lemon had a high-interest savings account, containing over £1,000,000. She had been living like a pauper, when she could have been living like a queen. It just didn’t make sense, living a pitiful and pathetic life, when she could have been living life to the full with all the comforts on offer.

Dwight Nelson drew a comparison between Janette and us. Could it be that you and I are living as spiritual paupers when we have the inestimable treasures of Heaven

available to us through our friendship with Jesus?

The key to that treasure is prayer. Then once you’ve prayed, open your Bible and make some withdrawals of your own. ‘Ask, and you will receive. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened for you’ (Matt. 7:7).¹ ‘Christ gives me the strength to face anything’ (Phil. 4:13). ‘. . . God will take care of all your needs with the wonderful blessings that come from Christ Jesus’ (Phil. 4:19).

So we have the option of moping, groaning and moaning through life. Yes, everything may be falling apart around us. Nothing may seem to work in our lives or go our way! Yes, we can drag ourselves through life, feeling sorry for ourselves, feeling sorry for the way our lives are falling apart. Then we would be like Janette Lemon, living with the cold, rubbish-filled darkness of worry and fear and faithlessness. But we don’t have to live like spiritual paupers – we were born to be princes and princesses. Jesus replied, “why do you say ‘if you can’? Anything is possible for someone who has faith” (Mark 9:23). Also, like Paul, ‘I pray that Christ Jesus and the church will forever bring praise to God. His power at work in us can do far more than we dare ask or imagine’ (Eph. 3:20, 21).

My wish for you during 2012 is that, despite the economic gloom, you may enjoy the untold riches of God’s treasury today and forever.

PASTOR CYRIL SWEENEY (NEC PRESIDENT)

¹All Bible quotations in this article come from the Contemporary English Version.

New year: new faces

As I travel around the fifteen or so churches that we have here in the Welsh Mission, I always take along a special list. It contains the names and addresses of all the members and contacts associated with the particular church I am visiting. There are various reasons for this. One is that my memory is not too good and I occasionally need a bit of help reattaching a name to a particular face. Another reason is so that I can tell who is missing – lost sheep and all that. Yet another good reason for having the list is so that I can keep our contact details up to date – you’d be surprised at how many people move house, get a new mobile phone, or change their email address in any given quarter.

But the most exciting thing of all is when I spot someone in the congregation who is NOT on the list. This is the person who gets my first handshake at the door. This is the one who I am most keen to find out about. ‘What’s your name? Where do you come from? Are you living in the area now? Would you like to be on our mailing list?’

Of course I enjoy the company of people I know well. They’re the ones I look forward to sharing lunch with, to having a conversation with – about the old times, about church politics and about their hopes for the future. Established members are like your favourite slippers – warm and comfortable.

We couldn’t do without them and church would be miserable if they weren’t there. The

new faces, though, they are the ones that get the adrenaline going. Because we are in the business of finding new faces.

Now, many of the new faces that I come across are visitors from other churches, and there’s nothing wrong with that. Wales is a great place to visit and we welcome many holidaymakers each year. Some of them even decide to stay after they’ve seen how beautiful the countryside is and how friendly our members are. But when you find someone who has never been in an Adventist church before, or someone who hasn’t attended for many years, or someone who goes out for a smoke in the car park – well, that’s something really special.

The great thing is that we can all share in this exciting adventure. Next time you’re in church you too can play the ‘spot the new face’ game. Look out for these special people, chase after them when they make a dash for the door after the benediction, get their number, follow them up – because if you do the Kingdom of Heaven will be full of such people.

In conclusion, my 2012 wish is that each of our members in the Welsh Mission will play a full and active part in God’s plan for reaching the lost. It’s the most exciting and rewarding activity we can possibly get involved in this year.

PASTOR JOHN SURRIDGE (WELSH MISSION PRESIDENT)

‘First-footing’

‘We used to work on Christmas day like any other day’, an old Scot told me recently. ‘Many Scots did not have a Christmas holiday, but chose the Hogmanay New Year as their feast to celebrate.’

As a child, my larger-than-life Scottish uncle Hugh would tell me about the Hogmanay traditions of his childhood. ‘We would go “first-footing” after midnight – visit the neighbours’ homes and give them a lump of coal, bread and some salt. I’d signed the temperance pledge,’ he said, ‘but others would share a wee dram of whisky. The first person to come into the house in the New Year brought these symbols of warmth, food, flavour and good cheer. They were intended to bless the household for the year ahead.’

The most famous custom the Scots have given the world is that of singing the famous song ‘Auld Lang Syne’ after the clock strikes 12 to mark the New Year. They sing the poem written by Robert Burns (Scotland’s national poet) in 1788. I’ve always found its meaning rather vague, but it is generally thought to be an encouragement to remember long-standing friendships.

As a teenager attending New Year parties with other Adventists, we would always follow the singing with a prayer for God’s blessing on the year ahead.

So to all the members of the British Union, the Scottish members would like to wish you, not just God’s blessing of warmth and food, flavour and good cheer for 2012, but God’s power and presence in your life. We thank God for the blessings of friendship, and pray, as the lights of fireworks pierce the darkness of the Hogmanay night, that Christ will help us

all to bring his joyful light and truth into this world for 2012.

PASTOR BERNIE HOLFORD (SCOTTISH MISSION PRESIDENT)

‘Bewitched’

‘Bewitched’ – not the most positive word to start the new year with, but the apostle Paul will use strong language when he feels it necessary. In Galatians, Paul is deeply upset that some of those who had experienced new freedom in Christ are slipping back into religious bondage – in fact, he’s furious about this, as it seems that all his work of preaching the Good News about Christ is coming apart. Some are saying that he’s a false prophet, not to be trusted – and that the truth he shares is only partly true.

‘Who’s cast a spell over you?’ asks Paul in so many words. ‘You’re not thinking straight; you’re under an influence – and it’s one that’s not holy.’ Now and again, I meet lovely people who are convinced that they can gain acceptance with God through the things that they do. ‘There’s just one more thing I need to give up, and then the Lord and I will be alright.’ I want to say ‘bewitched’, but for their own sake I hold back, because the judgement for some would be too painful to bear; others would be in denial, and yet others would react by telling me to put my own house in order. Lord have mercy on us if our conversation with each other is ever similar to the one Paul had with his church. And yet I wonder if, with some people, in some places, that’s exactly the conversation we need to have, for the mission of our Church to go forward.

How long will it take us to understand the beauty and truth of the Gospel? Is there a possibility that we can begin the faith journey in the Spirit, only to continue, like the Galatians, in the perfection of the flesh? Paul more than hints at this possibility (Galatians 3:3). He goes on to make clear a few lines later that no one is ever – ever – ever put right with God through the law, not in the past, not in the last days, not in the time of the end, nor even in the time of great trouble. ‘The righteous shall live by faith’ is his great hymn of praise (Galatians 3:11).

Now that our study of Galatians has come to an end, what’s the effect? A shrug of the shoulders and a desire to move on? The old year has gone, but does the same old self remain? Will we continue to live in the flesh? Will the power of the Gospel continue to remain limited in our lives? Or could it be that we allow ‘the Spirit’ to take full control of us, so that we may enjoy the holy freedom he brings?

‘For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.’ (Galatians 2:19, 20.)

My 2012 wish is to live out these ancient words which Paul used to help his church understand the truth and power of the Gospel. I hope it is yours too, and that of the members I serve.

PASTOR DAVID NEAL (IRISH MISSION PRESIDENT)

issues

Foot-washing and Communion for children?

By Pastor Islwyn M. Rees (retired)

This is a contribution to the conversation on child participation in foot-washing and the Communion Service in *Ministry*, *Adventist Review* and *MESSENGER* in recent times.

My concern – unity

When a new minister arrives in a parish and has a different view on these services from that of his predecessor, it can be very confusing for the congregation. Divided opinions and the removal of an established practice introduced by a predecessor can lead to tensions, and absences may result.

I don’t think it can be left to individual parents to decide whether their child may participate or not. Everything we do in church liturgy and practice should have an underlying theological basis. The Church should give, and has given, guidance.

Open Communion

The 2009 *Minister’s Handbook*, page 169, tells us that ‘Seventh-day Adventists observe open Communion.’ This means that adults who feel they have committed their lives to Christ can participate. . . . ‘But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink this cup’ (1 Corinthians 11:28, KJV). And the children? ‘The Seventh-day Adventist Church has collectively agreed that children are entitled to participate actively in the Communion Service when they have made “clear commitment to Jesus in baptism”.’

The *Church Manual* (2005) states that ‘All who have committed their lives to the Saviour may participate. Children learn the significance of the service by observing others participating. After receiving formal instruction in baptismal classes and making their commitment to Jesus in baptism, they are thereby prepared to partake in the service themselves’ (p. 85).

The foot-washing service precedes the Communion Service

In the Bible, in Ellen White’s writings, in the *Minister’s Manual* and in the *Church Manual*, the foot-washing ceremony is inseparable from the Communion Service and precedes it. In both, the individual commits him or herself to the Church’s oneness in Christ. Referring to the foot-washing service, Ellen White says, ‘This ordinance is Christ’s appointed preparation for the **sacramental service**’ (emphasis mine). After listing the sins our fallen dispositions may have engaged in, and the change or renewal of heart needed before participating in the Lord’s Supper, she says, ‘As the lesson of the preparatory service is thus learned, the desire is kindled for a higher spiritual life. To this desire the divine Witness will respond. The soul will be uplifted. We can partake of the Communion with a consciousness of sins forgiven’ (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 650, 651).

Foot-washing and Communion for unbaptised children

An inset to an article in *Ministry*, February 1987,¹ p.13 stated: ‘Just as Seventh-day Adventists reject infant baptism, we disavow “infant Communion” and “infant foot-washing” as well.

‘Christianity, as it is portrayed in the Scriptures, is a believer’s religion. To enter into union with Jesus Christ through the rite of baptism, an individual must be old enough:

1. To understand the truths of the faith (see Matt. 28:20),
2. To make an intelligent commitment to Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour and Lord (Acts 16:30, 31), and
3. To repent from sin (Acts 2:38).

‘Like baptism, foot-washing is a believer’s ordinance – as is the Communion Service, a ritually worked-out reaffirmation of the believer’s faith in Jesus Christ. The focus of the Communion meal is not really on family togetherness (father-mother-child or husband-wife). Rather, this service emphasises the believer’s profession of faith in his Redeemer and union with like believers who compose the Church – Christ’s mystical body. . . .

‘Although unbaptised children should not participate in the ordinances, parents can begin to instruct them in their meaning (see Deut. 6:6, 7). Even this instruction does not mean a child is necessarily ready to take part in the ordinances, however. Just because a teenager comes to understand something about love, it does not follow that he is ready for matrimony! Nor does the fact that a small boy can guide the family automobile down the street while he sits on his father’s lap mean that he is ready for a Buick instead of a tricycle. Pushing into a child’s experience what is designed for more mature years is not healthy. Reserving the privileges that attend church membership for the time when the child becomes spiritually mature enough to be baptised is in harmony with nature and the Scriptures.’

Conclusion: decisions of Church in session vs local church interpretation

I think it wise for the local church not to ignore the decisions and instructions provided in the *Church Manual* and *Minister’s Handbook* by the world Church ‘in session’. The delegates will surely have considered the significance from Scripture of these services and all the concerns and issues that surround the services from the wider experience of the world Church.

¹This issue may be viewed online as a PDF at: <http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archives/1987/MIN1987-02.pdf>

Cyber-news



Julian: Victor, I appreciate you taking time for this interview about *BUC News* – especially knowing just how busy you are! Firstly, please tell our readers a bit about the publishing of an online magazine or newsletter.

Victor: The joy of online news is its ‘immediacy’ and its ‘reach’. When I click ‘publish’, it is there to be viewed by our readers in the UK, and a large audience worldwide. It also gives a considerable non-Adventist audience access to Adventist news, including the media and those on the fringe of the Church – those who still want to maintain some kind of connection with us. By ‘immediacy’, I mean that the news needs to be fresh, and of interest to more than just a limited local audience.

My real joy, though, and the reason I slog away at it week after week, is that through the news some members gain new ideas about evangelism; others are encouraged by seeing how God is working elsewhere in the country; and those outside our faith community can almost ‘look through a window’ and get a picture of Adventist life and belief. And, Julian, that external audience is one of the reasons why I try and keep *BUC News* as free from Adventist jargon as possible.

Julian: Not all our readers are familiar with that term, ‘website’. What is a ‘website’ exactly?

Victor: A website is an electronic collection of related web pages containing images, videos or other digital assets. All publicly accessible websites collectively constitute the World Wide Web (www). Ninety percent of the British public now access the internet on at least a weekly basis – either on their home or work computers, or increasingly on their smart phones. As they do this – it is called ‘surfing the web’ – they are looking at websites of one form or another.

As the web has developed, so has *BUC News*, which is now not just emailed to

The *MESSENGER* editor interviews Pastor Victor Hulbert about the success, challenges and unique role of our own electronic news magazine, *BUC News*.

several thousand each week, but also available on the BUC website¹ and hundreds of other websites. It can also be sent as an RSS feed² straight to the news feeds on our computers and smart phones.

Julian: Victor, I am amazed at two things when I read the *BUC News* – firstly, as you have already mentioned, the immediacy of the news items. Most of it is pretty fresh. Stuff that has just happened! Secondly, you seem to have a wide spread of news from across the UK and Ireland – even from outside the BUC. How do you achieve this?

Victor: I am very dependent on local Communication secretaries, as well as the Conference and Mission Communication directors and sponsors, for the flow of good stories and photographs. These land in my inbox on a daily basis and are then edited into an MS Word document. There are guidelines for writing on our website, and I take care to ensure that all submissions are readable and follow good journalistic rules. Obviously I also keep my eye on the news, and often pick up on stories that appear in local or national media. In addition, we attend and cover significant events – and I will even contact people to prompt them to cover stories that I think should be reported.

Julian: So can just anyone send you news, or must they be ‘accredited’ by their church to do so?

Victor: Anyone can send news, but they should follow the guidelines for *BUC News* and *MESSENGER* on our website.³ Following the guidelines gives a much higher chance of

being published! Most stories come from our Communication secretaries, but all stories will be looked at. The most urgent need is for them to put the most important, interesting, and eye-catching information as the first sentence of the story – and in the next two or three sentences to answer those questions: *who, what, why, where and when?* They can then expand the story as they choose within the limits.

Julian: Do you have weekly deadlines for the news?

Victor: Yes! Wednesday, 6pm. You would be astonished at how many people will send a story ten minutes before I am about to publish and think that I should still put it in! Sadly that will not happen unless it is of massive significance. I start on the next week’s news almost as soon as this week’s edition is published, but come 6pm on Wednesday the actual process is as follows. I write and edit stories from Wednesday night till Thursday morning 11am. As there is a 6,000-word limit on *BUC News* this can be quite a challenge – we get as much as 8,500 words of copy at times. Once this is done, I send it to be proof-read by my extremely eagle-eyed secretary, Mary Kapon. Even when I think I have produced excellent copy, I am surprised and grateful that she still manages to improve it!

This process usually takes about three hours. During that time I am busy selecting photos for the news, updating the photo gallery, and ensuring that all the galleries and links are in place and working. When Mary has completed her task, it is sent back to me for another three hours of work to add the

photos, format for the various types of media, upload to the websites and email to subscribers.

Julian: Victor, I personally appreciate that you take the trouble to email me the *BUC News*. Is this just a little perk – something for editors only? Or do you do it for others too?

Victor: I would do it just for you, but there are many others who receive it by email too. Anyone can subscribe to *BUC News*, in either the illustrated PDF format or the simple plain text format, by sending a blank email to bucnews_pdf-subscribe@adventist.org.uk for the illustrated PDF version, or bucnews_txt-subscribe@adventist.org.uk for the plain text version. If they visit the www.adventist-news.org.uk website they can also read the news there, subscribe to the RSS feed, embed *BUC News* in their own website or find us on Facebook or Twitter.

Julian: Victor, is this what is called the ‘social media’?

Victor: Yes, and, as the British public now spend around one third of their leisure time online, and within social media, it is important for Adventists to have a presence there. Our *BUC News* Facebook page also gives people an opportunity to interact with us, and both our Facebook and Twitter feeds give added value with extra stories. At times like a Conference session the news feed will keep members continually updated with breaking news and allow a larger community to feel part of the event.

Julian: I understand that you can tell exactly how many people visit the *BUC News* website each month – is that true?

Victor: Yes; for instance, in the month of October we had 176,286 visits to our website.⁴ Of these, 21,969 were directly to our news page and 13,352 to our news feed.

This is, of course, in addition to the roughly 3,000 people who receive *BUC News* by email, some of whom then also forward it on via their mailing lists, or in some cases post it to their own blogs or websites.

However, it is not the number that is so important to me, but the fact that we are touching people’s lives. I am constantly surprised by the positive feedback I get from members. Our stories also get picked up by other Adventist media in Europe and around the world, allowing the witness of our members to travel even further and touch more lives.

Julian: Well Victor, on behalf of our readers I want to thank you for this informative interview. In addition to which, thank you for incorporating an electronic link to each online *MESSENGER* into your news. We value this highly. God bless!

Victor: Julian, *MESSENGER* and *BUC News* are

two sides of the same coin and complement each other. The online version of *MESSENGER* is particularly useful to expatriate Brits around the world wanting to keep up on the news. It is also a fantastic resource when searching back through the archives for a particular article or news item. May I take this opportunity to wish your readers well for 2012!

¹<http://www.adventistnews.org.uk>
²RSS (originally RDF Site Summary, often dubbed Really Simple Syndication) is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated works – such as blog entries, news headlines, audio, and video – in a standardised format. An RSS document (which is called a “feed”, “web feed”, or “channel”) includes full or summarised text, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorship.

³RSS feeds benefit publishers by letting them syndicate content automatically. A standardised XML file format allows the information to be published once and viewed by many different programs. They benefit readers who want to subscribe to timely updates from favourite websites or to aggregate feeds from many sites into one place.’ – from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS>.

⁴<http://www.adventistnews.org.uk/messenger/guidelines.php>
⁵www.adventist.org.uk

Share video news . . .

As well as text and photographs, *BUC News* also publishes occasional video news reports which are archived on the www.hopetv.org.uk website. These reports also bring the life of the Church to a larger audience. With the sharing technology available on the website, members can also easily share these stories (and any Hope Channel UK content) with their friends via various social media.



Banbridge baptism marks 120 years of Adventism in Ireland

Irish Mission Communication department/Weiers Coetser

The Banbridge official church record contains the following statement: 'A meeting of the Seventh-day Adventists of Ireland was called by Elder D. A. Robinson on Sunday, 5 July, 1891. The meeting was held in Parkmount House, Banbridge, there being representatives from Banbridge, Tandragee, Clones, Coleraine and Belfast.' On the weekend of 24 September 2011, the Banbridge church celebrated these 120



Emmanuel baptisms

The 'When the Bible Speaks' revival series held in the Emmanuel church by Donald Yearwood was a tremendous success.

The series climaxed on Sabbath 15 October with the baptism of six candidates in front of a packed church! Afterwards, the candidates were welcomed into the fellowship of the church. Pastor Wilfred Blake has certainly had his prayers for revival answered!

Praise be to God!

SORRAINE HIBBERT



From left to right: Sister Sonia Greenidge, Elder Solomon, Pastor Wilfred Blake. Centre – baptismal candidates: front: Nicole Louis, Marcia Carby, Maureen Buchanan, Leena Faucher. Back: Gerald Graham and Greg Lynn. Right: Donald Yearwood and Elder Christian.

New opening times

Your Adventist Book Centre would like to draw your attention to new opening times for its shop in the BUC headquarters – the Watford-based shop will now be open from 12.30 to 5pm on Monday through Thursday, and from 10am to 2pm on Fridays.

years of history. 'We need to be stewards, not only of the present, but also of our past', says Pastor Weiers Coetser, who has discovered many colourful characters in the story of the Irish Church.

This celebration also coincided with the thirty-year anniversary of the current Banbridge church building, built by Maranatha Frontier Missions in just fifteen days: a feat that drew attention in the *Belfast Telegraph*, the *Irish News*, and the *Banbridge Chronicle*!

Two former pastors attended, Pastors John Ferguson and Ron Edwards – Elder Michael Hamblin notes that Banbridge has had a series of good ministers. On Sabbath Rachel Donaldson, a third-generation Seventh-day Adventist from Banbridge, was baptised – her grandparents were converted to Adventism shortly after their marriage.

A document outlining the history of Banbridge and the Church in Ireland can be accessed on the Irish Mission website: <http://irish.adventistchurch.ie/about-us>.



Pastor John Ferguson.



Weiers Coetser baptises Rachel Donaldson.



Church-plant bears fruit in Huddersfield

For the first time ever, the Huddersfield church hosted the baptism of four candidates from neighbouring church-plants on 17 September 2011. More than 100 people witnessed the baptism of Marjorie Bellanfante and Beverley Henderson-Fleary from the Fartown company, and Celso Pinto D'Assuncao (19) and another individual from the Rochdale church-plant.

An accident on the M62 delayed the arrival of Pastor Fred Mapp to conduct the baptismal sermon; however, prayers were answered when Pastor Paul Haworth, the NEC secretary, unexpectedly walked through the door. Pastor Haworth spoke about God's unchanging law and love, and Pastor Mapp was able to conduct the baptism.

One of the candidates said, 'The welcome of the church . . . touched my heart deeply; for it was my most memorable day.'

COMMUNICATIONS DEPTS, FARTOWN AND ROCHDALE



Community Ministries Day at Holcombe Road

October 29 was Community Ministries Day at Holcombe Road, with the theme, 'Reach Out and Touch Somebody's Hand'. Local ward councillor Lorna Reith thanked members for their help during the recent riots, Pastor Kevin Johns spoke about prayer and praise, and Adaia Bwoga and True Harmony gave praise in music.



CAROL YOUNG

Six people baptised in Newport

At Newport Church on Sabbath, 15 October, six young people from Hereford and Newport Churches were baptised together!

The church was full: some visitors came to church for the first time to support their school friends.

Benjamin Oboh (33) had been baptised a Roman Catholic as a child; then, however, he learned about biblical baptism and wanted to become a true Christian. He visited several churches, but, once he was invited to visit Newport Seventh-day Adventist Church by his friend, he knew that this was the church where he wanted to stay.

Jack Snell (24) had travelled almost 8,000 miles to Malaysia to do humanitarian work – God led him to the Seventh-day Adventist school, where he learned about Jesus and became a Christian. Imagine Jack's joy as he found our closest church in Hereford was close to his home!

Asheigh Muza (17) was inspired by Matthew 28:19, 20 to follow Jesus' invitation and become one of his disciples.

Amanda Ndebele (14) had started singing Christian songs on the bus, and the passengers thanked her, helping Amanda to realise that she wanted to witness.

Erlson Maison (15) had been influenced by Pathfinders and by friends who were 'cool about being Christians'.

Finally, Elphine Ndebele (17) recognised God's grace while taking his exams.

Pastor David Rancic and the elders of Hereford and Newport Churches welcomed the candidates into membership, and members pray for more Sabbaths like this in the future.

DUSKA RANCIC



Left to right: Jack Snell, Benjamin Oboh, Pastor David Rancic, Erlson Maison, Elphine Ndebele and the two girls, Amanda Ndebele and Ashleigh Muza.

Bible Land tour – 20-27 February 2012

Take the trip of a lifetime on a tour to the Holy Land. Walk where Jesus walked, and see the Bible come alive!

Among other attractions, see:

- Mount Carmel, the Mount of the Beatitudes and Mount Moriah • Har Megiddo (Armageddon) • Qumran, En Gedi and the Valley of Elah • Nazareth, Cana, Lake Galilee, Bethsaida and Capernaum • Lazarus' tomb and house in Bethany • Jericho, the Jordan River and the Dead Sea • Jesus' empty tomb and the Upper Room • Jerusalem, the Kidron Valley, the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives • Hezekiah's tunnel, the Pool of Bethesda and the Pool of Siloam • Joppa, Caesarea and Masada.

For more details, phone Pastor O. P. Chackochen on: 07748 417 460, or email him at: chacko@onam.co.uk.

Sabbath awareness march in Sydenham

Emil Day, the 19-year-old Youth leader at the Sydenham church, was the brainchild behind a successfully organised street march in London on Sabbath 29 October to proclaim the seventh-day Sabbath.

Emil did his research and got police, local council, and church board approval, and a budget to purchase placards, a megaphone and literature to distribute.

On the day sixty marchers put on specially designed T-shirts and their walking shoes. They had a police escort; a large banner with Exodus 20:8 written out in full and the words 'Saturday is the Sabbath'; the Lewisham church drum corps; and additional placards promoting the Sabbath and Jesus. Emil stated, 'It exceeded my expectations! The response from the public was great, and I felt like one of the early pioneers of the Adventist Church.' Some people actually applauded what they were doing. People were holding out their hands to receive our Sabbath tracts and DVDs. More than 900 were handed out.

People out there are still looking for the truth, and 'they are willing to listen. . . . People are still telling me of people who witnessed the march and the impact it has had on them.'

Cherie McKenzie, designer of the Sabbath DVD, says: 'It didn't feel strange, it felt like we were really spreading the Word of God. And people were so willing to take the leaflets and DVDs. I was amazed at how many people slowed their cars down to take a leaflet. When we join together in unity, great things can be done.'

LEONIE JOHNSON



Worcester baptism

On 12 November, three precious souls – Priscilla Nyatanga, Dorian Simmonds and Desmond Pedyo – were baptised into the Worcester church, witnessed by friends and family members (including one from Zimbabwe!)

Pastor Edgerton Francis preached about the great joy of being 'born again' and following Jesus, our Saviour.

DORIS J. LACK





More than a double helping of shoeboxes!

Last year, Loughborough Church decided to ask for community support for the ADRA shoebox appeal. A local school, a WI group and the children who attend the church's monthly Bible Stars Club were all delighted to help by filling boxes to send to Mali.

Loughborough Church usually collects around thirty boxes from its small membership, but this year, support from the local community has enabled the church to send seventy-five boxes! People were really pleased to have the opportunity to give. 'We've always wanted to do this, but never knew where we could take a box to', said one parent.

'My daughter has really enjoyed choosing things to send', said another. 'She was amazed that some children do not have the things we take for granted, like a toothbrush and soap.'

This year, church members plan to enlist the help of even more members of their community and see if they can double the seventy-five!

VIVIENNE BARRATT-PEACOCK (REPORT AND PHOTOS)



It's all a bit fruity!

It's not often that you would describe a church service as fruity, but the North Bristol children's day on 22 October was themed 'The Fruit of the Spirit'.

The Phoenix Hall was brightly decorated with large, colourful fruits and displays showing what the children had learnt. Both morning and afternoon programmes were led out by the children, who showed no signs of nervousness in front of a packed church.

Darnell Ford (10), Siobhan Burton (8) and Christian Baker-Wright (7) captured the attention of everyone with sermonettes on spiritual fruit. The morning service was concluded by a children's march to the tune, 'Fruit of the Spirit'.

In the afternoon Talia Smith (aged 2!) gave a wonderful performance of 'Jesus Loves Me, This I Know'! A special mention should go to Cherie Ford, who worked tirelessly in organising the programme.

SHILOH HARMITT, COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARY

Annual disability conference

The fifth annual joint national disability co-ordinators' conference, organised jointly by ASNA and the BUC, took place on 13 November 2011 at the Oxford Four Pillars Hotel. Twenty-five delegates were blessed by the message from Pastor Terry Messenger and workshops from Nigel Nicholls, Pete Winmill and Grace Walsh, and Marie Bensley led worship with flags and ribbons.

Grace Walsh encouraged delegates to reach out to those suffering with mental illness, and Nigel Nicholls assured everyone that God created all of us – not one of us is an accident. Pete Winmill spoke about communicating well and the importance of making ourselves understood to those with disabilities.

It was a wonderful day for gaining new insights into mental health issues, learning more about ministering to learning-disabled people, and enjoying a sweet and colourful worship.

This year's conference will be held in November.

ANITA SAUNDERS AND SOPHIA NICHOLLS



Mission impossible

The Burngreave church members needed to finish widening the entrance to their Sanctuary before 9 October, when it would host a wedding ceremony – but a week before the nuptials, the workmen found dry rot in the floorboards, which another company would have needed two weeks to remove!

Faced with the time constraint of the upcoming nuptials, Pastor Victor Marshall and Elder R. Prime put together a true 'Mission Impossible' team (Brother Powell, Brother J. Kumar, Brother Barry, Brother C. John, and Brother Kenneth Richards) and tasked them with making the necessary repairs within just fifteen hours to ensure that the entrance could be widened on the following Monday morning.

Early on Sunday morning 2 October they met, and worked tirelessly until 7pm, fed by Sister M. Williams.

Joseph Kumar had worked the night before, and came directly to church for the task at hand, labouring until it was time for him to return to work again the following night. He did not leave until the work was fully completed!

RAY CARRAPATOSO



Preparation for Olympic outreach in Cambridge

The Cambridge church recently became the first of eight churches engaging in Olympic outreach to be granted 'Gold Church' status. On 19 November the church held a special programme celebrating the 250-day countdown to the Olympics, challenging members to engage in health outreach.

The Cambridge pastor, Colin Stewart, gave the sermon: he also represents the Adventist Church on the 'More than Gold' executive committee, which is a gathering of Christian churches and organisations planning Christian outreach during and after the Olympic Games.

Cambridge members later enjoyed a sports social after sunset, planned by the students studying sports, in conjunction with Cambridge Youth leader, Natasha Powell.

There are just over 200 days to go until the Olympics now, and it's not too late to prepare! So get planning and celebrate the opportunities God has provided.

COLIN STEWART



Concert with charity in Cannock

Members of Cannock Seventh-day Adventist Mission held another quarterly concert on 12 November, attracting more than eighty local residents with communal singing, an impressive professional performance and testimony for Christ, and free refreshments. Mervyn Bryan, the manager of the charity Ecolife4u, gave a brief talk, and invited those present to join the Cannock members in worship each Sabbath morning – and at least one accepted the invitation!

The concerts take place on the sixth Sabbath of every quarter, starting at 7pm. The next concert is on 12 February. Aspiring musicians may contact Mervyn George Bryan on 07789 512301 or visit: www.jesussays.co.uk or: www.ecolife4u.co.uk.

The church has recently changed worship times to Sabbath morning, 10am. They meet at the Methodist Church, Mill Street, Cannock, WS11 0DR. Visitors are always welcome.

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



The Torquay church has a 2/3 bedroom flat available for rent. For more information, please contact Pastor Ian Lorek on 07713 457593. References will be required.



Scottish women's autumn retreat

Scottish women gathered again for their retreat in the Atholl Centre, Pitlochry, from 14 to 16 October, to hear Isobel Webster speak about 'The Place of Living in the Christian Life'.

Uplifting early morning worship, praise sessions, the Sabbath afternoon walk and the prayer sessions all led them to feel the presence of God; and the Saturday evening social was a chance to let their hair down!

JUDITH MARTIN, SCOTTISH WOMEN'S SPONSOR

All boxed up

With the help of Stokesley Primary School, Middlesbrough Church sent just under 400 shoeboxes to ADRA last year for the children of Mali. God sends us opportunities every day to share our faith with others, as he did with Judy H., who explained the shoebox appeal to a casual acquaintance at the supermarket – her friend checked out the ADRA website and then delivered three shoeboxes to the church, saying that she would get her family and neighbours involved next year!

MIDDLESBROUGH COMMUNICATIONS



Miraculous escape inspires rock-solid faith

In 2008 Mrs Diamond Sathe went to India on maternity leave with her 5-year-old daughter Simren and 6-week-old baby girl, Sanjana. This is her story:

'We were driving home in the dark when we hit some large bricks in the road, lost control and smashed into a tree. The locals left us for dead until my mum started crying for help. They helped my daughters out, and then us, but it took one hour to get my dad out. We went straight to intensive care, and we all needed operations. We were in hospital for a long time.

'Back in England, my husband was shattered but could not leave as we had been burgled the day before. However, God looked after us in other ways: local newspapers reported our "miraculous escape", stating that my baby daughter had been "saved by angels".

'I lost my job as a staff nurse due to my disabilities, but I have been moved to testify of the Lord's saving grace – his love for sinners like me. Our trials have given us a much closer walk with God.

'To all those reading this article: be strong in the Lord, and trust him in good times and bad. If he brings you to it, he will bring you through it. God is not done with you yet.'

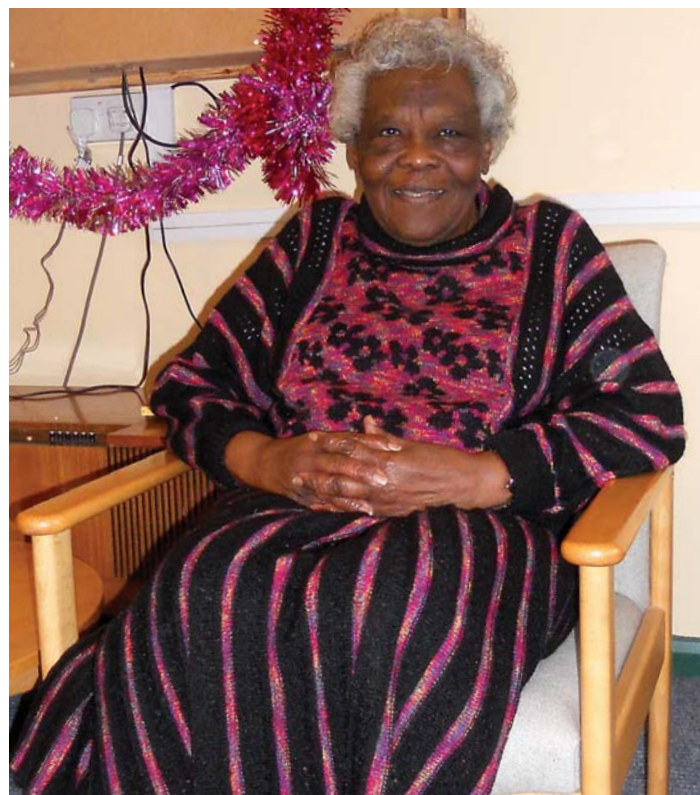
DIAMOND SATHE



Birthday celebration at Leicester Central

Congratulations to Sister Olga Clarke, who celebrated her birthday at Leicester Central on 19 November 2011 – still sharp and alert at 91.

PHILIP HERBERT



Four golden wedding celebrations

Congratulations to Brother and Sister Maynard of the Leeds Central church, Gladstone and Dorothy Evans at the Manchester South church, and Ruth and Frank Blewitt and Jim and Gill Huzzey of the Stanborough Park church, who all celebrated golden wedding anniversaries recently – Jim and Gill on 3 September, Gladstone and Dorothy on 1 October, Brother and Sister Maynard on 21 October, and Ruth and Frank Blewitt on 29 October. Their respective churches recognise their unwavering love and dedication to each other and to the Lord, and wish God's continued blessings on their marriages, which are a testament to God's gift of marriage in Eden.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS



Brother and Sister Maynard of the Leeds Central church.



Gladstone and Dorothy Evans of the Manchester South church.



Ruth and Frank Blewitt of the Stanborough Park church.



Jim and Gill Huzzey of the Stanborough Park church.

obituary

Ivy Thompson (1919-2011) d. 11 October.



Ivy Knowlson was born in 1919, at York. Along with her mother and brother she accepted the Adventist message after attending a campaign. Her brother Christopher was later to become a pastor – suggesting a more-than-usually active church family. The Second World War brought Ivy south, to the Nottingham Chilwell Army Barracks. She started attending the Nottingham Sherwood church, and this is where she met

Cyril Thompson, the man later to become her husband.

Ivy Thompson was proud that she sang in the Stanborough Park and New Gallery choirs in the 1950s – not that Ivy was a proud lady; Ivy was known as 'the quiet girl' at school. Her care for the young people whom she taught in Sabbath School, and for older members, revealed quiet grace, wisdom and an ability to encourage people for God.

Married life carried the couple from Nottinghamshire first to Watford and then back to Nottinghamshire, to the Sutton-in-Ashfield church. Cyril was the elder and

Ivy was the pianist, watchful for talented young members whom she felt could be nurtured into playing the piano to God's glory. By then their three children had grown up: Ian, who worked at the Stanborough Press for many years and now works at the NEC office; Krystal, who lives in Australia; and their youngest son Philip, who continues to care for his father, having cared for both his mother and his father for many years.

As Cyril and Ivy aged they moved to the village of Lowdham, where Ivy turned her hand to helping out the Methodists in the village with her musical abilities. Increasing infirmity brought a slowness to life. She loved to walk, to draw and paint, and to read and write, but due to her diminishing eyesight was unable to enjoy these activities in later years. Ivy died on 11 October 2011.

The funeral, held in the Primitive Methodist Chapel in the village, was attended by family, friends, church friends from Newark, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Grantham, and Methodist church members. The service was conducted by Pastor Peter Jeaynes; the newly elected NEC president, Pastor Cyril Sweeney, also officiated at the service, along with Pastor Melvyn Ellis. Those who knew Ivy and know their Lord are assured of meeting Ivy again.

The family express their thanks to those who have given them support with cards, messages of sympathy and phone calls. Philip Thompson's response to the sadness has resulted in a closer walk with God. We thank God for his work in the family.

PETER JEYNES (PASTOR)

Double celebration at Manchester South

It was delayed by two years, but on Sabbath 5 November the Manchester South church finally celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a thanksgiving service, which also officially re-dedicated the church to the Lord following its renovation.

Pastor Cyril Sweeney, NEC president and former intern at Manchester South, charged members to open their arms to everyone, and that they should look like they have been in the presence of the Lord. Another former minister, Pastor Richard Brooks, and current minister Pastor Mapp also participated, as did Lorna Hewitt, who had been involved when the Adventist Church in Manchester began in the 1930s!

For more information and photographs, visit: manchestersouth.adventistchurch.org.uk.

NEBULA NORMAN, COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARY



Manchester South, members and visitors.



Pastor Cyril Sweeney presents his message.

Injustice and violence denounced in Enfield

God deplores injustice and violent crime, and both were condemned at the Dugdale centre in Enfield on 5 November. The Edmonton Church Drama group put on a play about overcoming slavery and discrimination, and the Metropolitan Police gave a powerful presentation on the horrors of knife crime. May the Lord preserve us all from these evils.

TREVOR JOHNSON

Milestone in Torquay

Seventh-day Adventists have been worshipping in Torquay since the 1920s, and on 22 October they celebrated the seventieth anniversary of the dedication of their church in Warren Road. Members of all ages and nationalities celebrated, including Dr Harry and Christine Leonard, Margaret Shipton and Anna Sanders, Charlene Kehoe, Don Antoni and Oslyn Clarke and her three daughters, and Mrs Doreen Clement, the oldest member at 97.

JEN READ



IASI CONVENTION
UK 10-12 Feb 2012

'Evangelising Secularised Britain'

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Benefit spiritually and socially along with other professional and business persons at Staverton Park Hotel, Daventry.

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- 1 night's accommodation = conference, dinner, bed & breakfast, lunch – £63.50
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- Day delegate (Sabbath) = conference, lunch – £25 (including dinner – £35)
- Children 0-4 – no charge; ages 5-12 – half adult rate; ages 13-plus – adult rate

Bookings/more information:

Jim Cunningham (president) – j.cunningham.323@btinternet.com
Christine Manners-Smith (secretary) – manners_smith@yahoo.com

Notice is hereby given of the
NEC 'Bible Bowl' Quiz Competition

The final rounds of the North England Conference Bible quiz for 2012 will take place at the 2012 camp meeting on 24 June in Wales.

- The participants, who must be between the ages of 13 and 30, should be selected by preliminary rounds to be run by local congregations.
- Two representatives from each local church may enter the district-wide competition, to be held on 25 February.
- Two representatives from each district may enter the area-wide competition, to be held on 28 April at 4.30pm.
- Two representatives from each area may enter the conference-wide competition, to be held at camp meeting.

The quiz questions, to be provided by the NEC, will be asked on the books of Genesis, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Daniel and Revelation, and on the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Daniel and Revelation.

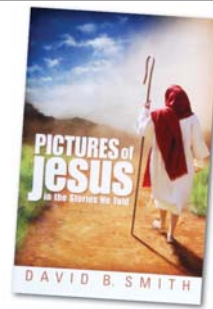
The winner will receive an Apple iPad, loaded with the NKJV Bible and other Bible study resources. Prizes will also be given to runners-up.

For more information and venues, please contact Miss Yvonne Weekes at the NEC office, or Pastor Nicholson: 01159 606312.

Bible weekend at Hill House

Seventeen friends came to the Hill House Christian Centre near Bridgwater for a Bible weekend last year for the sixth year running. They studied 'The character of God' in four studies from Friday night to Sunday morning, focusing particularly on his divine, and sometimes correctional, love.

ROBERT AND VIVIENNE VINE



New book of the week
Pictures of Jesus
in the Stories He Told
 David B. Smith

Enjoy these lively, modern-day takes on some of your favourite stories of Jesus! The author is well qualified to unwrap the classic parables; as former head sermon writer for the Voice of Prophecy radio ministry, pastor and author of the *Bucky Stone* Christian adventure series for teens, he writes about our Saviour with a refreshing simplicity, clarity and depth.

Contact ABC Sales on
01476 539900
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 at £12.25 plus p&p.

ABC BOOK SALES

January
 14 Sutton-in-Ashfield 5pm onwards
 29 John Loughborough 10am-2pm

ABC Shops
Watford, BUC
 12.30-5pm, Monday-Thursday
 10am-2pm, Friday
Birmingham Aston-Newtown
 11am-4pm, Wednesday
 4pm-8pm, Thursday
 9am-1pm, Friday
 11am-3pm, Sunday

Advent Centre
 Mondays & Wednesdays, 6.30pm-8.30pm
 Saturdays, 5-8pm, Sundays, 11am-3pm

The NEC Youth, Sabbath School & Children Ministries brings ARME Bible Camp to England

Thursday, 5 – Monday, 9 April 2012



Yarnfield Park Training & Conference Centre
 Yarnfield Lane, Yarnfield, Staffordshire, ST15 0NL

- Options**
- 1 - £85 per room which can hold up to two people
 - 2 - £130 for a family of 6; which has two adults 18+ and four children ages 0-17 [two rooms]
 - 3 - £15 Sabbath only [Registration, lunch and supper will be provided]

A special children's programme "Heir Force" will be provided for children ages 4 to 12.
 Web: www.ARMEBiblecamp.com

Please visit or call
www.necadventist.org.uk/youth | Tel. 0115 960 6312
 to book and for further information

Scan me for info



It's what you stand for

Pastor Holder and the elders of Holloway Church invited David Adams and Pastor Herel to be ordained as elders on Sabbath 29 October 2011.

Pastor Holder said that being available as elders constitutes 'a demonstration of wisdom, not a flash of intelligence; it's not where you stand, but what you stand for.'

ANESHA WEST

New NEC Ministerial secretary

Pastor Richard Jackson was appointed to serve as the Ministerial secretary of the NEC on 3 October, taking over from Pastor Edgerton Francis, who has held this position since September 2008. Pastor Francis will continue to serve as director of Trust Services for the NEC, as well as pastoring the Bulwell church in Nottingham. We appreciate the dedicated service of Pastor Francis over the last three years, and request continued prayers for his health and his wife Cynthia.

Pastor Jackson is working with Pastor Francis during the transition, and will continue to pastor his local congregations.

NEC COMMUNICATIONS

Messenger

Volume 117 • 01 – 6 January 2012

Editor: J. G. Hibbert
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 Design: David Bell

COPY FOR No. 03 – 12 January 2012

Copy should be sent to the Editor, MESSENGER, The Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL. Tel: (01476) 591700. Fax No: (01476) 577144.

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

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

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

Printed in the UK.

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

Sunset

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

	Lon	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Jan 6	4.08	4.20	4.04	3.55	4.14
13	4.17	4.29	4.14	4.07	4.25
20	4.28	4.40	4.26	4.20	4.37
27	4.40	4.52	4.39	4.34	4.51

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 Cost to members supplied in bulk to churches £6.
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