

Messenger

News to the churches • 16 March 2012

Volume 117 • 06



Give us the money!

by Pastor Ian Sweeney, BUC president

In 1984 the rock musician called Bob Geldof was moved by a BBC news report concerning a terrible famine in Ethiopia. He mobilised colleagues in the music industry and organised one of the biggest rock concerts the world had ever seen – called *Live Aid*. *Live Aid* was hosted simultaneously in the UK and the USA, with the BBC covering its entire sixteen hours.

During the broadcast, viewers were shocked into giving cash as Geldof, clearly moved by the horror of the famine, ordered viewers not to go out to the pub – and with an outburst of profanity cried: 'Give us the money!'

The viewers responded, and *Live Aid* raised some £30 million.

Every year, members and friends of the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout the British Isles have an opportunity to raise funds for ADRA-UK (the Adventist Development and Relief Agency in the United Kingdom) from the public.

While the ADRA Annual Appeal has not raised £30 million with one event, there are two special features of the ADRA Annual Appeal about which we should be reminded, and these will give us heart as to why we should support their cause.

Firstly, the Annual Appeal is now in its ninety-ninth year! Our 2012 appeal is not just a flash in the pan – this is our business! The public are often moved to 'give us the money' in the wake of devastating tragedies brought on by earthquakes, famines, floods, and so on. ADRA, however, does not simply respond to the latest crisis, but continually responds to the ever-present issues of poverty, hunger, education and abuse that are found across the globe. These issues don't always make the news headlines, but I am honoured to be able to support the work of ADRA in its daily quest to meet these needs for those less fortunate than myself.

Secondly, in appealing for your support of the Annual Appeal, I am reminded that ADRA-UK is not the only charity. . . . We are the 'charity' indeed. Charity is who we are!

When we think of the word 'charity' we often think of it, somewhat restrictedly, as benevolent giving. For some, the word 'charity' has even become something of a negative word. People say things like, 'I don't want to be a charity case.'

However, the word 'charity' has a deeper meaning.

The apostle Paul wrote (1 Corinthians 13:3, KJV), 'And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.' According to Paul, it is possible for donors to 'give us the money' without their charity! Collecting money, or giving money, is not necessarily biblical charity.

The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary defines charity as 'selfless love' – a translation from the often-quoted Greek word 'agapeu'.

As the King James Version translators used the word 'charity', it was often in reference to the love that we exhibit and have towards other people (for example, Romans 14:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Peter 4:8, 9).

Charity is the special love that we have for others.

The ADRA Annual Appeal is much more than 'Give us the money': it is our demonstrating to the public that we are 'charity' as we collect funds with our hearts full of loving-kindness for other people.

Charity is much more than just 'Give us the money'. It is about what we give, but also about the *nature of our hearts* as we do so!

It is my prayer that the ninety-ninth ADRA Annual Appeal, under the heading of 'help us to help', demonstrate that the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the British Isles are 'charity' personified. It is my prayer, as the public 'gives us the money' through door-to-door collection and the many other creative fund-raising strategies we employ, that we may exceed our fund-raising goals and expectations.



ADRA UK
Annual Appeal 2012

Annual Appeal 2012
31 March – 15 April
(extends to 22 April in London)



To DBS or not to DBS?

Des Rafferty, ADC director

Another way of making 2012 a most memorable year is the **Discover Bible School (DBS)** scheme.

With this being the year of the Bible Correspondence School, each BUC church can make a significant difference to its spiritual growth and that of the local community through the DBS scheme.

There are two pathways: **DBS 100**, for churches with a membership of over 100, or the **DBS 60**, for smaller congregations.

DBS 100

With the DBS 100 the local church can run a local Bible school by purchasing lesson supplies from the Adventist Discovery Centre. Furthermore, the local church will generate contacts within its community, mark its own lessons and keep its own records.

DBS 60

With the DBS 60 the local churches will still develop contacts from their own community, but the ADC will supply lessons free of charge for as many contacts as they have. The ADC will also mark the lessons and return them to the local DBS 60. This allows the local DBS to concentrate on maintaining links and developing friendships with its contacts.



Whichever scheme your church chooses, the benefit will be increased Bible study in the church and in the homes of your contacts. I am encouraging each church to register for one of the DBS pathways and provide an environment for members and non-members to engage in Bible study.

There are currently 134 churches registered on the DBS scheme, with eighty-four on the DBS 60 and fifty on the DBS 100.

This scheme is proving to be a blessing to many churches, and here are some reports:

Last year the largest graduation was conducted in the Plumstead church, where thirteen of the DBS 60 students received certificates after having completed the 'Focus on Prophecy' and 'Discover' courses. In this instance, the pastor and elders led the church in Bible study on a weekly basis and then celebrated the achievement in a graduation service. Elder Steve Okelo said, 'The Bible study was structured, and captured the imagination of our members, but, above all, it provided an opportunity for the church to study together and grow spiritually.'

A few months later the leaders of the

Year of the
Bible Correspondence School



Hanworth church rejoiced over the group of ten individuals who graduated from their DBS 60. Elder Ricardo Wright said: 'I am really happy that the students have completed the course of twenty studies and graduated. It is a success story. The course is a great way of getting to know your Bible and Jesus, and what He wants for our lives. I would encourage everyone to do this course of study.'

There are others we could mention, but space is limited.

To DBS or not to DBS? That is the question. What will be your answer? For more information on how to run a DBS in your area, please contact the ADC on 01923 672606, or email: adc@adventist.org.uk.

Enhancing Health

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

Golden eight — part 5c Exercise — What are you doing?

Let's begin with some questions: what types of physical activity do you enjoy? Do you follow an exercise regime? Can you improve on your current exercise — or lack of it?

Browsing through health journals and websites, I made a list of at least forty-eight various exercises that you can engage in. The list ranged from aerobics to brisk walks; from dance routines to low- and high-impact sports; and from gym workouts to wii games. There were exercises you could do at home; at your work desk; indoors; outdoors; in water; sitting, standing or lying down . . . the list was extensive, but none of them included the couch! The message was: do something to get moving — and enjoy it!

On 11 July 2011, NHS Choices Information put out a report highlighting the new exercise guidelines issued by the chief medical officer. The report established that: 'Adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each week.' This is the minimum required to maintain

good health. Also identified was that an optimum fitness programme should include cardiovascular exercise to maintain heart health, stretching exercises for flexibility and resistance exercises for muscle strength and endurance.

When embarking on or evaluating any exercise programme, three key elements to bear in mind are: frequency, intensity and duration. NHS recommendations on exercise from the Department of Health (www.dh.gov.uk) give the following guidance:

Frequency — for optimum fitness we should be exercising six times per week.

Intensity — the appropriate intensity varies in individuals and is dependent on age and medical condition. The exercise should be sufficient to raise your heartbeat and make you perspire. Your exercise regime should commence slowly and build up over a period of time.

Duration — Between forty-five and ninety minutes of exercise daily is most beneficial for health. However, if you undertake thirty minutes six times per week, positive health outcomes can still be experienced. Some individuals find that breaking the exercise time into ten-minute segments (morning, afternoon and evening) is more manageable, particularly in the early stages of commencing an exercise programme.

The UK physical activity guidelines published by the Department of Health (11 July 2011) presented evidence which demonstrates the link between physical inactivity and chronic disease. It was found that sedentary behaviour is an independent risk factor for ill health: so, give the couch a break!

Next issue we conclude with the NHS exercise guidelines for various age groups, and ask the question — are you getting enough exercise?

Good health!



editorial

It must have been one of the boldest sermons ever preached — and one of the costliest!

Jerusalem was in ferment. The apostles performed 'many signs and wonders'. Vast numbers from the 'surrounding cities' poured through its gates bringing their 'sick' and 'tormented' for healing — and nobody was disappointed. They 'were all healed'.¹

Incensed, as they saw power slipping from their clutches, the high priest and his fellow Sadducees were so 'filled with indignation' that they 'laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison'. But God had other ideas. Early the next morning these prisoners were led from their cells to the temple by an angelic escort, with instructions to resume their witnessing.²

Nothing seemed to quench their witness — not even a 'command . . . not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus'.³

False charges

Then it happened. Unable to match 'the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke', some former slaves from the Synagogue of the Freedmen falsely accused Stephen of blasphemy — the very thing that drove the Jewish leaders to kill Jesus.⁴

He was unceremoniously dragged before the Sanhedrin, the internal government of the Jewish nation, and challenged by the same high priest who had condemned Christ.

Then that sermon began — with Stephen eloquently outlining more than 2,000 years of Israel's apostasy and rebellion.

He was probably heckled to start with, but I like to think that the clarity of his argument and the passion of his presentation soon stilled the audience . . . until he mentioned

' . . . you made us feel like real people again!'



Spreading 'hope and a vision'

the unmentionable: 'the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers'.⁵

Within minutes Stephen was dead. He had suffered an unjust, shameful, brutal death — for his convictions!

Are you surprised?

Are you surprised that Stephen was treated in this way? You shouldn't be — for the simple reason that those who tell the truth for God will **always be in danger**. Those who do His will and share His word with the world will **always be at risk**.

Paul summed it up so well when he wrote about those who had gone before him: '*Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated — the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.*'⁶

Realistically speaking, the world is at odds with the Church, and we cannot expect the two to live in harmony with each other. In fact, when they do, we may find — to our dismay — that the Church has quietly surrendered to the world!

They got it right!

This is why I feel that the freshly released *Clearing the Ground inquiry: Preliminary report into the freedom of Christians in the UK: Executive Summary* is worth reading (see pages 8-9 of this issue). For, amid all the submissions and complaints about the raw deal that Christianity receives in the courts and from the media, they did not lose sight of this reality:

'Christians have experienced, and will always experience, tensions between their beliefs and the shifting values of the societies that they live in. To some extent the present tensions should be seen as an encouragement of faithful witness.'

Yes, it is great to have active Christian voices at Westminster, and sensitive judges in the Old Bailey, but we should not depend on these institutions of state and law to rescue our faith from its enemies. God still needs our simple talents to promote His cause in the UK. He still needs you to **speak out** for Him wherever you can, or **live it out**, if quiet action is your only option.

There are opportunities

Returning to the findings of the inquiry, I notice this insightful comment:

'The last century saw a privatisation of faith and the development of a sacred-secular divide through which Christianity lost much of its social and political influence. Now, too often the Church is defined by what it opposes rather than what it stands for. It is essential that Christians once again provide hope and a vision for society that goes beyond defending their own interests and includes the good of all.'

Are we as Adventists defined by what we 'oppose', or do we have the spiritual stamina to 'once again provide hope and a vision for society'? I believe that we have that stamina — you have it, and so do I!

Recently I visited Morrisons to make some purchases. After I had paid, and as I picked up my bags, the cashier responded to my 'Thank you. Have a good day!' with these magical words:

'You too! And God bless you!'

There was the gap! I turned quickly back to her and said: 'And God bless you too!' Loud enough for those around us to hear the exchange of blessings!

Two weeks ago, my church served its first regular meal for the homeless of Grantham. Our ladies put on a 'grand' English breakfast and we served close to twenty-five people.

Afterwards, as I sat on one of the church benches, I was joined by one of the homeless and we struck up a pleasant conversation. He was quick to tell me that of all the meals they receive during the week, from different service groups, ours made a special impact **'because the atmosphere was so warm and friendly, and you made us feel like real people again!'**

Let's get out there and 'provide hope and a vision for society that goes beyond defending' our 'own interests and includes the good of all.'

¹Acts 5:12-16 (NKJV). ²Acts 5:17-20 (NKJV). ³Acts 4:16-18 (NKJV). ⁴Acts 6:9-15 (NKJV). ⁵Acts 7:1-53 (NKJV). ⁶Hebrews 11:36-38 (NIV-1984).



Julian Hibbert
Editor

Land of lost content

by David Marshall

Discontent keeps a person from enjoying what he or she has.

Contentment is enjoying what life and God have given us.

A. E. Housman (1859-1938) had many great pluses in life: genius for one – he became a Cambridge professor. But he had one big minus: he lost his mother when he was relatively young. He made the most of his pluses, but he allowed that big minus to unhinge his whole life.

In 1896 he published *A Shropshire Lad*, a collection of sixty-three poems about loss and loneliness, all breathing discontent with life.

'Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills?
What spires, what farms are those?

'That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went,
And cannot come again.'

For a time I thought that was a poem of bitter old age. And some seniors *do* talk like that. It wasn't. It was the poem of a relatively young man who had chosen to let one sad event put contentment beyond his reach.

Philip Larkin called Housman 'the poet of unhappiness' – and that was a fair summary of his life. (I need to add here that Larkin was not a barrel of laughs himself; but Housman was such that he could not relate to any of those whom he taught. Away from high table* and aside from three family members, he could relate to no one.)

Here is a sharp contrast with Housman:

'... I've learned by now to be quite content whatever my circumstances. I'm just as happy with little as with much, with much as with little. I've found the recipe for being happy whether full or hungry, hands full or hands empty. Whatever I have, wherever

I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am' (Philippians 4:11-13, MGE).

Is this author a post-modern with every post-modern convenience, and an easy post-modern life at the tips of his digits?

Well, no. He was a writer whose letters have survived for almost twenty centuries and whose 'blue remembered hills' were those around ancient Tarsus. The quotation we have taken is one made toward the end of his life. Did he live to a contented old age? Well, no. He was beheaded, and was expecting the imminent truncation of both his body and his life when he wrote this last letter.

He had, you will notice, 'learned' the 'recipe of contentment'. Learned how? Where?

The man from Tarsus had a senior doctorate from the University of Hard Knocks, which is the University of Life. The knocks had often been blows to his person: so many that it is a miracle he survived them. In addition, there had been dangers and disasters aplenty (2 Corinthians 11:23-27). Before learning the recipe for contentment, he had had to learn to '... rejoice in [his] sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope' (Romans 5:3, 4, NIV).

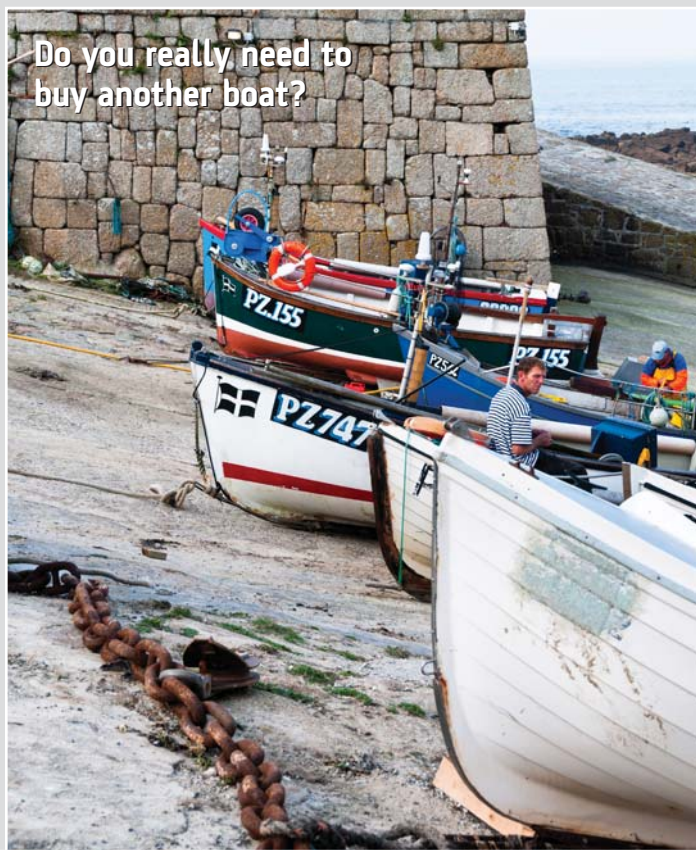
Paul of Tarsus was not the sort of man who would grumble at God if He did not keep him well supplied with creature comforts. He looked for lessons when he had to live through his rough patches. And, looking back, he could see that God had led him all the way. There had been, in fact, an energy or power within him which he knew could only have come from God. The human dynamo that was Paul was powered by God.

Paul was the contented Christian even in the countdown to execution. He knew of no

Land of Lost Content.

Housman, by contrast, had deliberately abandoned God because of one hard knock early in his life. His output also suggests that he fought God all his life.

In our post-modern materialism there is apt to be the assumption that contentment only comes when your earning power equals your yearning power. That is as shallow as Micawber's equation: 'Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen [pounds], nineteen [shillings] and six [pence], result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds nought and six, result misery.' (Wilkins Micawber in Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*.) Your earning power – whatever it be – cannot give your life contentment. Contentment comes when you surrender your yearning power to God – and He redirects it.



Do you really need to buy another boat?



A rich industrialist was disturbed to find a young fisherman sitting idly in his boat. 'Why aren't you out there fishing?' he demanded.

'Because I have caught enough fish for today', came the reply.

'Why don't you catch more fish than you need?' the industrialist wanted to know.

'What would I do with them?'

'You would earn enough money to buy a better boat to catch even more fish and make even more money. You could build a bigger house, buy a fleet of big boats – and be rich, like me.'

'Then what would I do?' asked the fisherman.

'You could sit down and enjoy life.'

'What do you think I'm doing now?' the fisherman asked.

Contentment is enjoying what life and God have given us, and trusting in God for the rest. Contentment is trust.

*At Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin and Durham colleges – and other, similarly traditional and prestigious UK academic institutions (such as University of London; University of Manchester and University of Bristol – the High Table is a table for the use of fellows (members of the Senior Common Room) and their guests. The table is normally on a raised platform and at the end of the dining hall, although not always. On more formal evening occasions, dinner jackets are worn. It is also normal to wear academic gowns.' http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Table.

inbox

Communion

Dear Editor

Can I just thank Barry Gowland for his comments regarding children, communion and baptism. It is a real boost to us when the older generation supports the decisions of parents and children about whether the latter are ready to take part in these things. So many of our young people make a decision, at least in their minds, at a young age (research shows between the ages of 5 and 13) with regard to the future of their faith. As parents, we find it discouraging when church members suggest that our children are not ready for communion/baptism, when we are the ones who know our children best and know whether they have a basic understanding or not. We are very blessed because our local church in Cheltenham is supportive of our younger ones taking part in communion, if we feel they are ready for it.

MIKE BEAMISH

Dear Editor,

Heather Haworth's article titled 'Feed My lambs' (3 February 2012) refers.

While I accept that her intentions are noble, I believe her comments belittle, devalue and degrade a sacred and beautiful ordinance. She stated that her remarks are 'meant to uphold what we read in the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy', but there is a paucity or absence of supporting evidence.

On the basis of John 13, Seventh-day Adventists regard footwashing as a part of the Communion Service. What applies to the basin applies also to the table. In John 13:10, Jesus makes it clear that baptism is a pre-requisite of footwashing. In this verse two key Greek words are used – both translated 'wash'. The first word is used for bathing, and here it represents baptism. The second word represents footwashing. Ellen G. White says of this verse, 'The true version reads, "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet." ' (Review and Herald, 5 July, 1898.) Therefore, one who has not bathed is not made clean by washing only the feet; neither is an unbaptised person made clean by the ordinance of footwashing. Some want to open the Lord's Supper to everyone, but Scripture clearly stands on the side of greater restriction.

The ordinance of footwashing has baptismal significance and has been regarded historically as a 'miniature baptism', a renewal of one's baptismal vows. A typological interpretation of ancient

Israel leads us to understand the Passover as a type of the Lord's Supper.* Exodus 12:48 (KJV) records, 'And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.' Just as the Passover was replaced with the Communion, even so circumcision gave way to baptism. Ellen G. White states, 'The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper are two monumental pillars, one *without* and one *within* the church . . . Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.' (Counsels to the Church, p. 295, italics supplied.) The apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 12:13 (KJV), that we are 'baptized into one body' – namely, the Church. The expression of our commitment to Christ by receiving baptism is what qualifies us to partake in this special service.

Let us remember Paul's solemn warning in 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 against corrupting the ministration of this sacrament. If a child is old enough to partake of communion, why is he or she not old enough to be baptised? We should be very careful that we don't allow this solemn occasion to become common. There is a need to teach our children to have a loftier notion and correct understanding of, and attitude to, things holy.

PASTOR R. BROOKS

Editor's comment:

* The editor wishes to point out that, technically speaking, 'a typological interpretation of ancient Israel' does not lead 'us to understand the Passover as a type of the Lord's Supper' as cited above. Contrary to what the author says, the Passover is a 'type' of Christ and His death for our sins – He is the 'Antitype'. (See the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 1*, on Exodus 12.)

The two letters placed in the inbox for this week will be the last on the subject of communion for the foreseeable future. I think we have aired the debate and heard both sides in a fair manner.

Please remember three things about your letters to the editor: a. keep them as short as possible; b. make sure of your facts before writing them; and c. don't write them while you are angry. Have a cup of chamomile tea and a 'little talk with Jesus' before and after writing your letters – just to make sure that He is also happy with their tone.

The letters that appear in the 'inbox' section of *MESSANGER* reflect the views solely of our readers, and not necessarily those of either the *MESSANGER* staff or the BUC.

the Berean column

with Andrew Puckering



God's relentless love

Those who read through Jeremiah 7 may find it disturbing at first – Jeremiah is told by the LORD to preach a message of doom to a nation of people who 'steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods . . .' (Jeremiah 7:9, NKJV). They're told to see what happened to Shiloh when their fathers rebelled, and that God's been calling to them many times, but they've been ignoring Him (Jeremiah 7:12, 13). They are worse than their fathers (Jeremiah 7:26). What makes this passage troubling is that Jeremiah isn't talking to a foreign nation – he's talking to those of Judah who come to worship in God's house (Jeremiah 7:2). Since we who believe in Christ are spiritual Israel, this message has added poignancy for us (Galatians 3:7). Is there any message of hope here?

Jeremiah didn't think so. He wished his head were waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep for his people (Jeremiah 9:1). He wished he'd never been born – the message he gave was hated by everyone around him, and they cursed him for it (Jeremiah 15:10). It must have seemed like a fool's errand.

Here's the marvellous thing, though – God knew this. He told Jeremiah that no one would listen to him, or answer him (Jeremiah 7:27). God knew that His stubborn, wilfully ignorant children would stop their ears to His voice – and yet, out of mercy and love for them, He spoke to them anyway! What's more, He gave His mouthpiece, Jeremiah, strength to go on preaching this last-ditch message of love in the face of continued rejection (Jeremiah 15:19-21).

We see this loving warning given through the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel – 'Why should you be stricken again?' pleads the LORD to His people. 'You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints.' (Isaiah 1:5, NKJV.) The LORD knows His people will revolt, but because He doesn't want them to be stricken He sends messengers to them anyway – even if their ears grow tired of hearing them (Isaiah 6:10). Ezekiel was told to go to the Israelites, and God knew they would not listen to him (Ezekiel 3:4-7). Nevertheless, God gave Ezekiel the strength to preach to them the warning message that could save them – he was to preach it whether they listened or not (Ezekiel 3:8-11).

In Jesus' time, the warning message of love was still the same. Jesus sent out His followers 'as lambs among wolves' (Luke 10:3, NKJV). Jesus could see the thoughts of men's hearts (John 16:19), and He could see them from a distance (John 1:48): something that shouldn't surprise us, because He is the Alpha and Omega, the God who can see into your very soul (1 Samuel 16:7; Revelation 1:11-18) – and yet He still sent His disciples into cities where their message would be rejected (Luke 10:10-12).

Is this message still the same today? Apparently yes – the message given to Ezekiel is analogous to the one given to John the Revelator, who was shown visions of the last days (Ezekiel 3:1-3; Revelation 10:8-10). 'You must prophesy again . . .' John was told (Revelation 10:11, NKJV). Finally, the God who has no desire that the wicked should perish, the God who wants them to turn from their evil ways and repent (Ezekiel 18:23, 32), will in anguish cry: 'He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still . . .' (Revelation 22:11, NKJV), and, in spite of the last plagues, no more people will repent of their evil and accept Christ (Revelation 16:9, 11, 21). Christ, who died to reconcile us to God while we were still sinners (Romans 5:6-11), commands us to share this last hope with all around us (Mark 16:15, 16) – before it's too late.

- During the reigns of how many kings was Isaiah preaching? (Isaiah 1)
- Where were the Israelites to whom Ezekiel was preaching? (Ezekiel 1)
- When the disciples returned from witnessing, why did Jesus say they should rejoice? (Luke 10)
- Which prophet was preaching in Jerusalem when its citizens were taken captive?
- What happened to that prophet?

The One Project

by Japhet De Oliveira,
director of the Centre for Youth Evangelism, Andrews University



Almost Christian

The National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR), as analysed by Kenda Creasy Dean in her latest work *Almost Christian*, shares a silent reality already experienced in Europe and now being accepted in North America. There was a time when one was either a child or an adult. However, following World War II there emerged a generation in the middle called teenagers: an adolescent group of 13-16-year-olds with money and free time. Twenty-one is the new 16 (Dean, 2010). Youth professionals have started to adopt the term 'young adult' as a title to handle this phenomenon. Society has adopted business market trends to extend the adolescent years instead of going against the grain and encouraging maturity. Twenty-five-year-olds who handle million-dollar mutual funds during their working week are not yet seen as adults in their church, with maturity and wisdom to lead, but are qualified instead as 'young' adults. We are facing a steady conservative loss rate of 50% of this generation, not grasping that the less connected they are with a church, the less likely they are to stay with their faith community.

Add to the formula an inactive faith expression laced with the lack of authentic joy in the lives of many adults, and the results are all around us. The hard truth is that we have passed onto teens 'a well-intentioned but ultimately banal version of Christianity' (Dean, 2010, p. 15). In Europe, we have to go back to the core of Jesus and realise that the legacy from at least two previous generations has not been passed on. Secularism has taken root and the power and presence of Jesus is missing. We have a generation of people who are almost Christian but lack vitality in their faith.

Coin, sheep and son

Ten years ago, the late Jim Cress preached a message that helped to focus my personal approach to youth ministry. His understanding of Luke 15 gave me the framework to shape my practice around these stories that Jesus told: those of the lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son. These three stories represent three broad groups that are leaving through the 'back door' of the church.

The story of the lady who lost her coin represents those who stay but are disconnected. They attend every week, but are comfortable texting during services. For

all intents they look like they are engaged, but in reality they are lost inside the church. They have formal religion, but no heart. They have embraced intuitional customs with no movement and passion. The apathy level is high and the routine is mundane. They are bored and disengaged.

The story of the lost sheep represents those who simply wander away. They miss a couple of Sabbath Schools, they skip the occasional youth programme, and they accept appointments that take them away from moments of connection. They know Jesus exists, but one day simply forget to listen to His voice and wander away, just like the sheep did.

The story of the lost son represents those who have chosen to leave. They have weighed their options and made a choice to leave, to step away in an act of defiance and rejection.

Those disinterested who remain, those who wander, and those who leave are all disconnected from Jesus in some shape or form.

At our core

Stuck while clearing customs at Dulles International Airport in Washington DC, I had the privilege of talking to one of Mercedes-Benz's chief engineers. We discussed the collapse of Mercedes-Benz during the '80s and '90s, and their recent return to build the quality they used to be famous for in the '60s and '70s. The most interesting aspect of our conversation was that Mercedes-Benz are proud to have one engine for all their cars – but that one engine has more than 400 variations. These are for such reasons as fuel quality; weather variations; atmospheric salt levels; and government performance requirements. The key is that they all have the same starting point – the one ideal engine, a strong start.

Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, youth ministry is often seen as synonymous with Pathfinders. That, however, is not our one engine . . . that is simply one variation, especially when one sees the global factors that shape our application, such as culture, resources and needs. At our core we have one engine. We have one reason to exist and that should shape all of our 'models'.

Simon Sinek (2009), in his delightful work *Start With Why*, explores what he calls the golden compass: three concentric circles,

which start with 'why' in the centre circle, 'how' in the second circle and 'what' in the outer circle. He suggests that businesses that successfully follow the law of diffusion, and thus gain the early and late majority market share, answer the question 'why' first. Those that focus on 'what' they produce invariably have a weaker market presence.

Taking Sinek's theory into Scripture and laying it over a fundamental text like John 3:16 (ESV) provides us with this perspective: **Why** – 'For God so loved the world,' **How** – 'that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him' **What** – 'should not perish but have eternal life.'

What does that one engine look like? What is our 'why' and ultimate purpose of youth ministry?

For the One

Looking at Luke 15, we see that it offers some very practical solutions for these three broad groups. For instance, the shepherd would never have noticed one of his sheep was missing unless he counted. In youth ministry we should have accurate records of all our youth. We need to know when anyone is absent, and find out why immediately. But more interesting than all the tips embedded within this passage is the fact that they are all focused on 'one' – that is, for the one person who is 'almost' Christian and for the One Jesus Christ. The character of Jesus is the reflection of God.

Ellen White, in *Desire of Ages*, writes that God is with us through Jesus. Through her study of Scripture and through personal connection she encountered Jesus. She expressed that 'Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. "With His stripes we are healed." ' (Page 25.) Yet that image of God through Jesus is not as beautiful as it should be. The One we follow has been tainted by us.

Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch in *ReJesus, A Wild Messiah for a Missional Church*, draw our attention to Jesus the One! They argue that the Jesus of old is missing from our lives, and that what we need is not

reformation but 're-founding', a connection with the Founder, Jesus Himself.

For too long now our faith has simply become a 'moralistic therapeutic deism' (Dean, 2010, p. 29). Frost and Hirsch shared a quip from an archbishop who said, 'Everywhere Jesus went there was a riot. Everywhere I go they make me cups of tea' (Frost and Hirsch, 2009, p. 21). At some point we have to recognise that Jesus has a personal, local and global effect on us that is positively and radically against sin.

Options

Granted, we might all agree that Christianity has suffered a poor marketing campaign – and that, as a result, youth ministry faces an uphill struggle with inquisitive critical minds. Is there hope for a generation overloaded with information and nuances of truth, which does not trust anyone, is cynical, and has not grasped the history of this planet through Jesus? What can we do?

In July 2010, five simple Jesus followers (Alex Bryan, Japhet De Oliveira, Sam Leonor, Tim Gillespie and Terry Swenson) got together in room 602 at the Holiday Inn in Denver. We fellowshiped and prayed. We had planned this gathering for over a year, and after two days of prayer, fasting, communion and reflection, we acknowledged again that Jesus was Number One.

It sounds incredibly simple, but it was our 'ah-ha' moment. We accepted that Jesus should be Number One in everything we do. We remembered that the energy that started the Seventh-day Adventist Church was a deep desire to see Jesus return. Our movement was led by youth and adults, who, like the disciples, burned with a passion to know Jesus and make Him known.

We realised, as had Gabe Lyons in his new work *The Next Christians*, that we have 'to recover the Gospel, to relearn and fall in love again with that historic, beautiful, redemptive, faithful, demanding, reconciling, all-powerful, restorative, atoning, grace-abounding, soul-quenching, spiritually fulfilling good news of God's love' (p. 192), as expressed in Jesus.

We began as a movement with Jesus as its number one focus. In fact, our denominational name, which just passed its 150th anniversary on 1 October, 2010, is about the blessed hope in Jesus returning.

What if we gathered our Church's leaders from all over the world to celebrate the supremacy of Jesus? What if we focused on what it would mean for us on a personal, local, and global level? What if we held honest conversation about our Church's legacy, heritage and call today? What if we brought leaders, youth and adults together and simply soaked in Jesus again?

For too long our focus has been on ourselves. Edwin H. Friedman in *A Failure of Nerve* suggests that it is not simply that we must fix our methods and all will be well. Rather, it is about being engaged honestly and emotionally in the future. Those explorers who discovered America did so because they simply were engaged and had the nerve to be first. They were compelled by something



Pastor Davis with Jadanna Huie, a Ministerial student at Newbold

The One Project inspires British Adventists

by Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist

A small SEC group joined 700 leaders and laity at The One Project in Seattle in February. The One Project is a gathering of Adventists who are passionate about placing Jesus at the centre of all we do in our Church. The aim of The One Project is: 'celebrating the supremacy of Jesus in the Seventh-day Adventist Church'.

This was the third One Project gathering, with attendance surging from seventy to more than 700 since the first meeting in Atlanta in February 2011.

British-born pastor, Japhet De Oliveira, the co-director for The One Project, made this comment: 'Focusing two days on Jesus in our past, present and future was simply the best thing to do. With more than 700 leaders from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Europe and the USA, it was really good to have so many from England: especially as Newbold College would like to host a One Project gathering in 2013. There are three gatherings a year: one in Australia, one in Europe and one in North America.'

Each of the ten presentations was followed by round-table dialogue about the centrality of Christ in all aspects of the Church and faith. 'These discussions are an integral part of the gathering', explains Pastor Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist, SEC Communications director, who has served as a table facilitator at the three gatherings. According to her: 'Each dialogue is unique to that table, but the Holy Spirit clearly guides in each group to similar thoughts and conclusions throughout the hall.'

SEC members were pleased that one of their pastors, Eddie Hypolite, was one of the selected preachers, and he drove home the need to 'rearticulate the way we speak to the world so that the world can hear.' He also reminded the gathering that the Adventist message doesn't need **defending** – it needs **living**.

Pastor Sam Davis, South England Conference president, was more than impressed with the quality of the sermons and presentations that served as a guide to get the round-table discussions started. British-born Pastor David Newman said: 'It renewed my faith in Adventism that Jesus will become central . . . I expect to see at least 1,400 at the next conference.'

Dan Sabatier from Stanborough Church expressed how this was what he needed in his faith journey, and he simply wished we had more of this type of church gathering in England: something that is currently under discussion.

greater – a passion unlike anything we have seen.

Making Jesus first in our lives will give us the nerve to try something different. With the nerve must come focus. Erwin McManus in *Wide Awake* makes the point that Peter, because of his lack of focus, ignored the visible Jesus, embraced the invisible wind and nearly drowned. Our option is to know Jesus and to stay connected with Him daily, in order to see all we believe and do through Jesus.

References: Belcher, J. (2009), *Deep Church: A Third Way Beyond Emerging and Traditional*, Dowers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. Dean, K. C. (2010), *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Friedman, E. H. (2007), *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*, New York, NY: Seabury Books. Frost, M. & Hirsch, A. (2009), *ReJesus: A Wild Messiah for a Missional Church*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. Lyons, G. (2010), *The Next Christians: The Good News about the End of Christian America*, New York, NY: Doubleday. McManus, R. E. (2008), *Wide Awake: The Future is Waiting Within You*, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc. Sinek, S. (2009), *Start With Why*, New York, NY: The Penguin Group. White, Ellen. (1898), *The Desire of Ages*, London: Pacific Publishing Association.

Clearing the Ground inquiry:

Preliminary report into the freedom of Christians in the UK

Executive Summary

Key finding

Christians in the UK face problems in living out their faith, and these problems have been mostly caused and exacerbated by social, cultural and legal changes over the past decade.

The inquiry

The Clearing the Ground inquiry was set up in the light of high-profile court cases and media reports suggesting Christians are marginalised in the UK. The inquiry sought to determine the extent of these problems, what caused them, and what needed to be done in response.

The aims of the inquiry were:

- To clarify the situation that Christians in the UK face in their everyday lives.
- To identify any particular challenges that Christians face – in particular, identifying what aspects of legislation have created these challenges.
- To identify what changes could be made to address these challenges.
- To encourage Christians to continue to make positive contributions to all aspects of society.

The inquiry was overseen by Christians in Parliament, an official All-Party Parliamentary Group, and the committee included MPs and peers from the three major parties and from a range of Christian traditions.

The inquiry took oral evidence in three sessions from key organisations, denominations and experts. Written evidence was submitted from a further forty groups

and individuals. The full report and all the evidence can be accessed online at: www.eauk.org/clearingtheground.

Context

- Christians in the UK are not persecuted. To suggest that they are is to minimise the suffering of Christians in many parts of the world who face repression, imprisonment and death if they worship, preach or convert.
- The recent wave of Christians in the courts does not, in and of itself, demonstrate that Christianity is badly treated.
- However, the frequency and nature of the cases indicates a narrowing of the space for the articulation, expression and demonstration of Christian belief.
- Some of the legal activity, associated campaigning and media coverage have been unwise and possibly counter-productive to the positive role that Christians play in society.

Religious illiteracy

- There is a high level of religious illiteracy which has led to many situations where religious belief is misunderstood and subsequently restricted. This comes from a social and cultural minimisation of Christianity in public life.
- Religious illiteracy has led to legal restrictions on the way that faith can be expressed. Recent changes have compelled Christians to provide services that they had never previously offered and which may be contrary to their beliefs.

Accommodation of religious belief

- It is evident that in some cases considerable effort is made to accommodate religious belief, with employers willing to make arrangements to ensure that employees do not have to participate in activities which would infringe their convictions.
- In many cases, there is a failure to achieve sufficient accommodation, and in some cases to even attempt to understand or accommodate belief and its manifestation.

Findings

- The experiences of Christians in the UK seeking to live out their beliefs and speak freely illustrate a very real problem in the way religious belief, and in particular Christianity, is understood and handled. The problem is a pressing challenge to our idea of a plural society.
- The way that the media cover many of the cases and the associated issues is often poor and contributes to perceptions of a polarisation between Christianity and public life.
- The inquiry made the following specific findings:
 - The Equality Act 2010 fails to deal with the tensions between different strands of equality policy.
 - Court decisions have relegated religious beliefs below other strands and effectively created a hierarchy of rights.
 - The place of religious belief suffers because companies, institutions and the Government do not take sufficient action to accommodate it.
 - The 1986 Public Order Act, and specifically Section 5, places the bar too low through its prohibition on insulting language.
 - The policing of the Public Order Act and other legislation demonstrates a lack of understanding of what is a legitimate expression of Christian belief.
 - Government departments handle religious belief in a complex and confused manner, and lack sufficient co-ordination.
 - Advice from government departments on how to handle religious belief in the public sector varies, and in many cases fails to grasp the nature and implications of belief.
 - Guidance from professional bodies on religious belief often fails to understand, and therefore safeguard, a role for belief in public life.
 - Across the UK, local authorities handle their relationships with religious groups in very different ways. Some authorities demonstrate excellent understanding and co-operation, while some authorities place unnecessary barriers to wider Christian contribution.

These findings form the inquiry's conclusion that there is a problem with how Christianity is understood and handled in Britain today. This problem is legal and cultural. It plays out on a national, local and

personal level through laws, policies and regulations that restrict the freedom of Christians to articulate and live out their beliefs.

Recommendations

There are specific and necessary steps which the Government should take, and national and local bodies should implement, to enable Christians and those of other faiths to have greater confidence in their freedom to express their beliefs.

The committee heard from many witnesses supporting the introduction of statutory guidelines for reasonable accommodation. This would mean that employers and service providers have to make an effort to accommodate religious beliefs in a similar manner as they currently do with disabilities. This sort of approach acknowledges diversity, and rather than promote a single universal resolution to a situation accepts that in different cases the response may, and often should, vary.

The inquiry recommends:

- Reasonable accommodation is a concept that has merit and warrants further consideration. If proved viable it may help prevent legal cases where religious activity is unduly restricted.
- Areas of the law that permit the arrest of individuals for insulting behaviour need to be significantly amended or reinforced with guidance that permits freedom for preaching and the public articulation of Christian beliefs.
- Guidance for local authorities on how to deal with faith groups needs to be strengthened.
- Professional bodies need better guidance relating to religious identity, activity and freedom.
- Better guidance for government departments and professional bodies to help accommodate religious belief and the way it works itself out in everyday life.
- Clear guidelines should be provided to local authorities to reaffirm that children can be adopted and fostered by people with religious beliefs.
- Better co-ordination is needed of policy relating to religion in and across government, and urgent effort is required to address religious illiteracy.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission should be reviewed and restructured to better include and represent religious beliefs.

The problems that Christians face are far from universal, but they do represent a trend towards a reduction in the space given to belief in public life. As a result this leads to an assumption that religious belief should be a private activity.

Christians in Parliament intends to use the findings and recommendations in this report as a basis for dialogue with other faith groups on the broader question of religion in public life. The report will also be discussed with the Government, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and other groups to see how we

can find a way to resolve these complex but important issues.

How the Church should respond

- Many of the challenges identified are not wholly the responsibility of the Government to resolve. There is a growing need for churches and Christian organisations to take responsibility when their actions may have contributed to a perception that the scale of the problem facing Christians is greater than it is.
- Christians have experienced, and will always experience, tensions between their beliefs and the shifting values of the societies that they live in. To some extent the present tensions should be seen as an encouragement of faithful witness.
- Ahead of bringing cases to court, Christians need to consider the potential impact their actions might have on politics, public opinion and the confidence of other Christians in their mission.
- The last century saw a privatisation of faith and the development of a sacred-secular divide through which Christianity lost much of its social and political influence. Now, too often the Church is defined by what it opposes rather than what it stands for. It is essential that Christians once again provide hope and a vision for society that goes beyond defending their own interests and includes the good of all.
- For many Christians, public life is seen as a way of living out their beliefs, and across all denominations there is a growing awareness of the need to respond to the challenges that face our communities, nation and world. This shift is already transforming many, often deprived, parts of the country; however, there is much more that remains to be done in demonstrating this vital role of faith.
- Christians need to take seriously their historical role in leading and serving in public life, and church discipleship needs to account for this role – because the Gospel is good news for society.

'We are a Christian country. And we should not be afraid to say so . . . the Bible has helped to give Britain a set of values and morals which make Britain what it is today. Values and morals we should actively stand up and defend . . .

'I believe the Church – and indeed all our religious leaders and their communities in Britain – have a vital role to play in helping to achieve this.' (Rt Hon. David Cameron, Prime Minister – 16 December 2011.)

The Clearing the Ground committee of inquiry was administered and sponsored by the Evangelical Alliance for Christians in Parliament.

Membership of committee

Gary Streeter MP (chair)
Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose
Baroness Brinton of Kenardington
Lord Edmiston of Lapworth
Fiona Bruce MP
David Burrowes MP
Jim Dobbin MP
Gavin Shuker MP

Christians in Parliament

Christians in Parliament is an official All-Party Parliamentary Group. It is comprised of MPs and peers from across the political spectrum.

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Contact information

For more information about the inquiry and Christians in Parliament, and to request additional copies of the report, please email: christiansinparliament@gmail.com, or phone 020 7219 2414.

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'I believe the Church – and indeed all our religious leaders and their communities in Britain – have a vital role to play in helping to achieve this.'

*Rt Hon. David Cameron,
Prime Minister*

From your editor . . .

I think we have all been concerned about the manner in which some UK Christians appear to have been penalised for acting in accordance with their consciences. Fortunately, this concern has led to some action – an inquiry, the summary of which appears on these pages.

I have chosen to feature this on our 'issues' pages because I sincerely believe that it is a document that deserves our attention – both individually and corporately.

To me, it seems to provide a list of key areas where we can make a positive impact for Christ – especially under the headings 'Findings' and 'Recommendations'. So, I challenge you to discuss it, reflect on it, and let the outcomes be positive.

Money, stewardship and your child

by Jacques Venter

As a pastor, I have found the mirror analogy has become ingrained in my thinking: *'The law is like a mirror. It cannot wash our sins away, but it does point them out.'*

Now, as a parent, the mirror analogy has taken on a new meaning, for I am now the mirror that my child looks into. Suddenly I find myself in a position where my child, and any other child whose life I significantly influence, forms his or her image of God in the context of his or her relationship with me.¹

Whether we like it or not, consciously and unconsciously, parents and guardians communicate their images of God to their children. It means that when your children look at you, it is as if they are looking into a mirror that shows them what God is like.

This process is so natural that we are often unaware of the things we actually teach our children. Have you ever sat back for a moment and thought of your own habits and attitudes? To what extent do these strengthen or contradict the values that you want to establish in your child?

Let's take it a step further. Have you recently considered what your attitude is toward financial stewardship and how your child perceives that? In an unstable, capitalist economy, like we have today, financial stewardship based on sound biblical principles is one of the most important skills you can teach your child.

As a parent you teach your child how to work with money – whether wittingly or unwittingly. Children acquire money values and habits through the decisions, habits and attitudes of their parents. These have a particular influence, not only on the way in which your child handles his or her money, but also on their stewardship of God's money.

Here are some practical tips on how you and your church can engage in this matter:

Set an example. To teach children how to be good financial stewards, you have to set the example. They often complain that parents tell them what to do, but do not follow their own advice. For example, if you want your child to give tithe cheerfully it has to start with you.

Discussion and training. Churches can support parents by offering them training on the topic of helping their children to become good financial stewards. Several resources are listed at the end of this article.

Establish financial habits. We practise our financial habits without thinking – until we

become aware of a problem. Nowadays children have more money to spend, and they develop a financial style at a much earlier age than their parents' generation did. Before you know it, children have already acquired problem habits that can last a lifetime.

Pocket money. I left the most contentious matter for last. There are pros and cons regarding pocket money, and parents need to talk this matter through thoroughly. They need to agree on the principles and methods for giving pocket money. Remember that, by the age of 6, your

children have observed, and probably unconsciously adopted, your financial habits – and they have also been introduced to the workings of money at school. Pocket money provides the opportunity to establish good stewardship habits, such as tithing, saving and supporting good causes generously.

It is important to keep the following principles in mind from the beginning:

- Children's intellectual and social development varies, and this will influence their ability to manage their money and to be generous with others.
- Children's temperaments are different: thus their natural attitudes towards money will be different.
- The way in which you communicate with your children has a great influence on the values they choose to adopt.
- Consistency plays a big part in influencing a child's choices and behaviour.
- The level of **active** and **practical** learning you provide for your children in the area of financial management plays a significant part in helping them to develop good financial habits.

Let's summarise by using the well-known trio of faith, hope and love:

- **Faith.** Trust God for the creativity and skills



to intelligently increase and sensibly spend His money, and to show to others the central position He occupies in your life.

- **Hope.** Live ahead, see opportunities, and rise above the situation by opening new possibilities for others, thereby helping to make the community whole again through giving and sharing.
- **Love.** Give yourself, give back to your community, and serve others by providing for their needs and filling their lives. In this way you will be giving thanks to the Lord who gave you these skills.

If you can help your child to integrate these three concepts into his or her approach to money, and into the world of buying and spending, you as a Christian parent will have laid the foundations for a future Stewardship Champion of God, who can make a difference for Christ.²

Further resources:
<http://www.quidzin.org.uk>
<http://www.kidsmoney.org>

¹Catherine Stonehouse, *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith* (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI), pp. 129, 130. ²Susan Kroon, *Entrepreneurial Skills for Your Child: Guidelines for parents* (Lux Verbi, BM, Cape Town), pp. 93, 94.

Footnote: If you are interested in this topic please feel free to contact Pastor Jacques Venter at: Knopkierie.uk@gmail.com or on 07868546941.



From left to right: Rosalind, Pastor Vontzalidis, Melissa, Pastor Boyle, Matt, Wook-hwan and Pastor Paul Clee.

Four baptised at Stanborough Park

Sabbath 3 December was a happy day for Stanborough Park members – four new members were added to the church family.

Wook-hwan Bae is a student at Stanborough Park Secondary School. Through the influence of his teachers and his sister Minyoung he decided to follow Jesus and be baptised. Pastor Clee, the Park minister, studied with him.

Mrs Rosalind Kaczmariski, an aunt of Peter Walton, studied with Pastor Aristotle Vontzalidis. In her youth, Rosalind worked at the Hydro and Granose Foods.

Matt Small and Melissa Hall were influenced by the *Tuesday Talk* series, which Pat Walton has run for the past few years; they studied with Pastor Patrick Boyle.

PATRICK BOYLE



The 'worst of sinners'

'I used to think that Seventh-day Adventists were the worst of sinners, but now I know that they are lovely Christians!' This comment was received at the Christian Resources Exhibition in Exeter, when a gentleman visited the Seventh-day Adventist stand. He confessed that he had the wrong impression at one time, but, after staying at a friend's house where he met a Seventh-day Adventist, he realised that we believe in the saving love of Jesus and His principles. Thank you to that member who portrayed the love of Christ, which broke down the barriers this gentleman might have perceived! This is one of the reasons why we wanted to have a stand, so that people could talk to us about our beliefs and receive our positive witness.

Pastor Lorek obtained a stand and Pastor Rafferty, Adventist Discovery Centre director, very kindly sent professional-looking displays and a selection of cards to distribute. There were a number of free books, DVDs and *LIFE.info* magazines on display as well. These were given out by Annie Buckle, Ruth Morris and Helen Savage from Torquay, and Michael Bowden and Stella Jeffery from Exeter, over the two days of the show. One retired Methodist minister told Pastor Lorek how much he had appreciated the free *Ministry* magazine, which he used to receive through the post on a regular basis.

There was a warm atmosphere at the exhibition between exhibitors and the public, and we pray that the seeds sown will bear fruit as we await the Second Coming of Jesus.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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Baptism of Joape Suluaqalo

On Sabbath 4 February, Joape Suluaqalo was baptised at Grantham Seventh-day Adventist Church by Pastor John Ferguson. Joape, a young Fijian serving in the British Army, was initially introduced to the Adventist message by his aunt, Lithe Tagiteu. Last year he married an Adventist girl in Fiji, Maikale, who faithfully studied the Bible with him.

His baptism was witnessed by his aunt and cousins, as well as friends from the Fijian community at one of the nearby military bases.

ELISABETH CARNELL



To the manor born again

The baptism of seven young people – Jeremiah Jordan, Jasmine Philip, Camille Philip, Becky Pollard, Joshua Berry, Aaron Yesudian and Zain Waite – was wonderful for the Manor Seventh-day Adventist church in Sheffield. Pastor Trevor Thomas preached, and Pastors Andrew Rashford-Hewitt and Bob Rodd took the service. We thank God for these young people's commitment, and encourage them to go about their Father's business!

ANDREW YESUDIEN



Adventist and Baptist children share Sabbath School classes together

On Sabbath afternoon 24 December 2011, Netherfield members were treated to an enthusiastic performance of the Nativity story by both Seventh-day Adventist children and the children from the Baptist church where Adventist members worship each Sabbath.

Since 2001, the children from both churches have studied the Sabbath School lessons together, and each thirteenth Sabbath they present a programme to the church. In addition, they are active in reaching out to the community, holding table displays at community events, distributing literature, visiting a local retirement home and singing.

This is all enabled through the very dedicated work of AnnMarie Norman, children's leader, Shirley Dixon, Val Jones (the Baptist elder's wife) and Doreen Grundy (a Baptist deaconess).

Through the mouths and example of our united children, God's love is being proclaimed.

SHIELLA WILKINSON



The Ezra Etchells Memorial Garden

Reading Central held the official opening of The Ezra Etchells Memorial Garden on 31 December, in honour of Ezra Etchells, a devout member who passed away in 2008 and left his estate to the church to further God's work. His kind gesture is greatly appreciated by the church. Brother Etchells served the church wholeheartedly in various capacities for more than sixty years. He was well known for his relentless door-to-door collecting for different charities, most notably for Ingathering.

ITUMELENG OSUPENG



Burns night at Crieff

On Saturday evening, 28 January, Crieff Church celebrated a Burns supper, organised by Malcolm Logan, with the Selkirk Grace, bagpipes and haggis; which was addressed in traditional style by Robert Grinton. Traditional music was performed by Steve and Jennie Logan and Gordon and Yvonne Bauwens.

CHRISTINE BAUWENS



Helping kids learn

On 19 November 2011, children at the Great Brickkiln church participated in a Sabbath School programme themed on our Church's pioneers, including Ellen G. White. The children were tested on Bible teachings, and they seemed to enjoy the occasion.

DELVA CAMPBELL



Wimbledon International Church opens doors for homeless

Wimbledon Church, in connection with the YMCA and a group of churches in Merton, pioneered a scheme for seven churches to aid the homeless for five weeks in January 2012. The church hall was opened up on Saturday evenings, and the guests would leave on Sunday morning – then, on Sunday evening, they would go to another venue.

Twelve guests at a time would be given dinner and companionship, play table tennis, and watch TV or a DVD – the guests had showers, which were a real blessing to them. One of the guests said this restored his faith in humanity. In the morning the guests were given a cooked breakfast.

When one guest arrived, he simply said, 'I am hungry' – this moved Wimbledon members deeply, because they realised he had nothing.

The church has become more known in the community, and on a number of occasions Wimbledon members were able to share their faith. Too often we have been known for things we can't do – we need to show that we love people as Jesus did.

If you have any questions about the scheme, please call David Souch on 02085 426268.

DAVID SOUCH

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Deacons' ordination

On 17 December 2011, Kettering Church celebrated the ordination of Ian Woods and Piotr Nikiel as deacons. Church members past and present attended the service, conducted by Pastor Lloyd Lambert (Kettering) and visiting speaker Pastor John Ferguson (Grantham) to bestow God's blessing on them in their roles. It is good to see men answer the call to serve!

COLLEEN BRYANT



Investiture day at Stoke Newington

On Sabbath 19 November 2011 Stoke Newington held a second investiture, in which Pathfinders led out all day, including the church's newly formed drum corp. The investiture ceremony was conducted by Pastor Paul Tompkins, Trans-European Division Pathfinder director, assisted by area co-ordinator, Natalie Simons. Honours and awards were presented to Pathfinders ranging from Busy Bees to Guides. After the charge, read by Pastor Tompkins, the Stoke minister Pastor Michael Anim closed the ceremony with a prayer. In the evening Pathfinders performed a play written by Aaliyah Doyley, who was invested as a Ranger.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Kindergarten favourite 'Nanny Wyn' reaches 90

'Nanny Wyn' Snailham, who was a much-loved Kindergarten Sabbath School teacher at Stanborough Park for more than twenty-three years, celebrated her 90th birthday on 5 February. She has enjoyed making small souvenirs for all thirty children, reminding them of each week's lesson. Christmas and Easter also meant a hand-knitted gift for each child. Many kept these treasured items for years afterwards.

When reduced mobility stopped her climbing the stairs to their meeting room, 'Nanny Wyn' continued her craftwork. She has made an estimated 44,000 items over the years, and is currently knitting chicks for each child for Easter!

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

obituary

Pastor Robert James Surridge, PhD (1957-2011) d. 17 December.



Robert Surridge was the eldest son of Pastor Ronald and Mrs Rachel Surridge. He was born in Tacoma Park, near Washington DC, while Ron was studying at Washington Missionary College, and hence was eligible for American citizenship – something he made use of later in life.

Five of Robert's childhood years were spent in West Africa, where his father served in a missionary capacity, and the adventures that Robert had during this time, together with his brother John, had a profound impact on him.

Robert's secondary education was completed at Stanborough School, where Doctors Hugh Dunton and David Marshall were particularly influential, as were the sometimes radical ideas and methods of John Peacock.

Robert particularly enjoyed attending the Stanborough Park church, where he was mentored by pastors such as Viv Llewellyn, Dalbert Elias and Barry Gane. It was here that he felt his first call to ministry, and for a number of years he was an active volunteer with the street witnessing group. In fact his first 'sermons' were preached from a soapbox to passing members of the

public in Hemel Hempstead, St Albans and Welwyn Garden City.

After sitting his A-levels Robert left home and worked for three months on an Israeli kibbutz, but upon his return he declared his intention to become a minister, like his father.

Robert enjoyed the academic challenges of Newbold College, where lecturers such as Jan Paulsen, Harry Leonard, and Mike Pearson encouraged him to explore in depth the beliefs he had accepted on faith.

Robert also had an active social life at Newbold College, and it was here that he met Dawn Noorbergen, who would later become his wife. They were married in July 1982 and began their ministerial life in Norwich, where Robert was the assistant pastor. Shortly afterwards he took on the Gorleston church, and a little later, together with Jonathan Gallagher, he helped to plant the church in Bury St Edmunds.

Robert then served in the South England Conference office where he developed and ran a number of evangelistic programmes, mainly based

around trips that he made to Israel, Turkey and Egypt. In addition to the practical evangelistic material that resulted from these trips, Robert was also inspired by the ruins of ancient Laodicea to resume his academic studies, eventually gaining a PhD in New Testament from King's College, London.

During his final years of ministry in England Robert pastored the St Albans and Waltham Abbey churches, where, for a time at least, he had the privilege of having his former Newbold College principal, Dr Jan Paulsen, as one of his members.

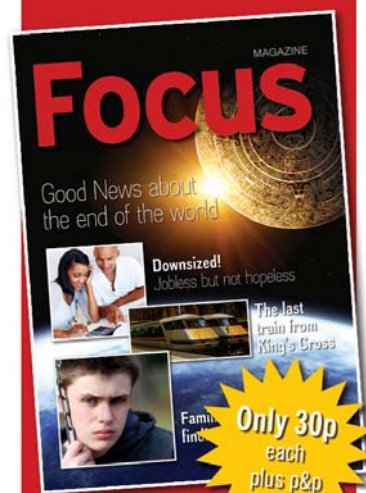
In 1999 Robert and Dawn, together with their two children, Martin and Jack, moved to California where Robert began eight years of ministry in the Elmshaven church. This was followed by four years in Yuba City.

Despite living in America Robert made frequent trips back to the United Kingdom, where he spent time visiting his family and friends. He retained a deep concern for the Adventist work in the British Isles, and at the time of his death from a sudden stroke Robert had actually been planning to return to ministry here.

Doctors Zdravko Plantak and Jonathan Gallagher, both close family friends, conducted a memorial service for Robert in the Elmshaven church, California, on Tuesday 3 January 2012, and a further memorial service was held in the Newbold College church on Sunday 5 February 2012.

The members of Robert's family have received a great deal of support from their wider church family during this difficult time. They would like to express their heartfelt thanks to all of those who have helped them to cope with the pain of separation, albeit temporary, from their loved one.

PASTOR JOHN SURRIDGE



FOCUS on hope

The first FOCUS magazine of 2012 has been published and is now available for purchase! This issue focuses on the issue of hope – hope when jobs are scarce, hope when the future seems bleak, hope in the Bible and the glorious hope of Christ's return.

There will be three more issues of FOCUS this year – we hope that you will be blessed by them all, and share them with your friends and neighbours.

Take this opportunity today by speaking to your Personal Ministries secretary, or phone the ABC on 01476 539900 from 8am to 5.30pm, Mondays to Thursdays.

For a short Scottish Highland break in an Adventist-owned hotel, call 07830 377599 for more details and special offers.

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Vocalists needed: Carl Ferguson is seeking singers to help him record Sabbath songs in every possible language. This is part of a project to raise awareness of Sabbath hymns and spread the Gospel of the Sabbath to all the world. Carl currently has more than 100 Sabbath songs. To find out more, or to help through musical ability or financial donations, email: CSCSFerguson@hotmail.co.uk.

Nature Park Southern Black Forest, Germany: Holiday flat to let, summer and winter (cross-country skiing, 2-6 persons. Tel.: 0049-7704 923600, or email: Andrea-Zoellner@gmx.de.

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JUNE 1-4 2012

for more information contact
kjohns@secadventist.org.uk



Do Maths 4 Cash, 31 March – 22 April 2012: Can the children and grandchildren in your family do a total of at least two hours of fun maths exercises within two weeks? If they can, £2.50 will be donated to the ADRA 2012 Ingathering Appeal.

To register or for more information, email: info@cash4maths.com, or telephone 0207 1128336 and mention ADRA, or register online at: www.cash4maths.com. Registration opens 1 March 2012. All fundraising maths must be complete between 31 March and 22 April. Children should be aged between 5 and 16 (or 16 to 19 but doing NVQs or GCSEs).



The Winning Way
11th - 17th June
SEC CAMP MEETING 2012

30th Anniversary



Mark Finley
Former General Conference Vice-President
Main Speaker



Roy Adams
Previous Associate Editor at the Adventist Review
Bible Study



Carlton Byrd
Pastor at Oakwood University Church
Youth Speaker

with Pastor Ian Sweeney & Pastor Sam Davis as the Teens' Speakers

Pontins, Brea Sands Holiday Park, Burnham on Sea, Somerset, TA8 2RJ





Adventure in Egypt

During half-term week, twenty-six children enjoyed a 'trip to Egypt' in the hall of the Weston-super-Mare Seventh-day Adventist church – transformed into an Egyptian landscape with murals of pyramids and palm trees, a royal residence, and an oasis (refreshment area) for the Pyramid Rock Holiday Bible Club. The children spent the mornings learning about the Bible story of Joseph. Deep appreciation needs to go to the team members; some used annual leave for the programme.

Of the twenty-six children, only nine were from the church. The remainder had been invited by the church children. God blessed the team of helpers with an attendance beyond their expectations!

Asked what she had learned, one child responded: 'I have learned that God is a Helper, Planner, Provider, Forgiver and King.' Another said: 'I now know that God is with me, wherever I am, even though I might not realise it.'

On Sabbath morning, the children demonstrated songs and Bible verses they had learned during the week. It was encouraging to see so many non-Adventist parents in attendance. Their response was overwhelmingly positive, saying they would be more than happy to send their children again. The children too wanted to know when another Bible club would take place, and they have been invited to come to Sabbath School!

CYNTHIA SOUTHCOTT

Get fit to serve
Do you wish to make a difference in other people's lives? Would you like to become equipped and empowered to be a transforming agent in society for Christ's sake? Then this programme is for you!
The International Institute of Christian Ministries (IICM) is offering a Certificate course at Newbold College this summer, 19-26 June 2012.

The main presenters are:
May-Ellen Netten Colón, director of Adventist Community Services International and assistant director of the General Conference Sabbath School & Personal Ministries department;
Jonathan Kuntaraf, director of the General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries department; and
Sung Kwon, national executive director of Adventist Community Services in the North American Division.

The course topics include:
• Theological, Historical and Ethical Concepts of Holistic Ministry • Community Assessment and Social Capital • Programme Development • Performance Measurements for Effective Ministry • Ministering Across Cultures • Organisational Leadership & Team Development • Volunteer Engagement/ Human Resources • Finance and Accountability • Fundraising Fundamentals • Grant Proposal Writing • Biblical Concepts of Urban Ministry • Risk Management & Legal Issues • Volunteer Engagement • Ministering Across Cultures • Essentials of Church Disaster Preparedness & Response.

Registration fee: £110; Early-bird registration fee: £95 (by 15 April). Other costs: accommodation and meals at Newbold College are offered at an additional cost.
Registration deadline: **15 May 2012**.
For more information, please contact Heidi Kamal Kendel, Trans-European Division: hkamal@ted-adventist.org

New book of the week
The Road I Travel
C. Raymond Holmes

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LESLENE PEAT-BROWN

Messenger
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Sunset
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	Lond	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Mar 16	6.08	6.20	6.11	6.19	6.30
23	6.19	6.32	6.24	6.34	6.44
30	7.31	7.43	7.37	7.48	7.57
April 6	7.43	7.55	7.49	8.02	8.11

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