

# Messenger

News to the churches • 31 August 2012 • Volume 117 • 18



## Local MP worships at Tottenham

**O**n 23 June, Tottenham Church held a special recognition service in which they paid tribute to members of the church and the community. Among the dignitaries present were representatives from the local fire and police services and a number of community leaders.

David Lammy, local MP, paid tribute to the church and charged everyone to continue the good work being done. He commented on the warmth of the church and recognised its value as a good place for young people to learn right from wrong. He mentioned five things necessary to build any successful family or church: education, employment, parenting, aspiration and community. He presented awards and posed for photos with those who received them.

In his sermon, Pastor Perry encouraged the church to say 'thank you' to all the unseen heroes that are a part of our lives, but also pointed out that, although we may not always be thanked here on Earth, there is a reward for us in Heaven.

All of this, combined with parading Pathfinders and good music, made the day a great success.

COMMUNICATION TEAM



# Megapixels of creation

## Fancy being published?

This macro picture of a spotted long-horn beetle was taken by Whitnell Anderson.

Please keep sending in your photos for *Megapixels of creation*. Pictures of nature – landscapes, wildlife, close-ups. You never know your luck, you may get in print.

Send them in to me at: [dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk).

Just remember to keep them 'hi-res'. Happy snapping!

DAVID BELL, MESSENGER DESIGNER

To see more of your images, go to: <http://adventistwebministries-uk.adventist.eu/megapixels>

- Those who said Sabbath relieved tensions and promoted feelings of calm and peace reported better mental health.
  - Religious individuals have fewer negative emotions.
  - Those who experienced an abusive home have more negative emotions. Those negative emotions predict worse physical health.
  - Divorced individuals had more depressive symptoms than non-divorced individuals, but divorced individuals who used positive religious coping had fewer depressive symptoms than those who did not.
- The three types of positive religious coping that were inversely associated with depressive symptoms are:



**Collaborative religious coping:** defined as forming a problem-solving relationship with God. Respondents identified a caring and powerful God active in their individual lives.

**Benevolent religious reappraisals:** problems are reinterpreted as part of a divine plan or as an opportunity for growth.

**Seeking spiritual comfort from God:** defined as engaging God through prayer or other devotional practices.

Other research findings from non-religious healthcare providers are now acknowledging the relationship between spirituality and health outcomes.

In a study on spirituality and health, Harvard professor Anne Harrington argues that spirituality is important to health because of the following:

- It promotes a healthy lifestyle and provides good community
- Contemplative practices reduce stress
- Belief is a healing power (Harrington, 2004).\*

\*Harrington, A. (2004) The Four Arguments. *Spirituality and Health*, February 2004, pp. 46-51.

**Keep the faith!**

## Enhancing Health

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

### Golden eight — part 8b Trust in God

#### The Adventist impact

The world-renowned *Adventist Health Studies* are long-term studies involving Seventh-day Adventists, which explore the links between their lifestyle, diet and incidence of disease. It is not surprising, then, that the faith aspects of Adventism have caught the interest of scientists and become a topic of study for several years.

Presently, more than 96,000 church members from the US and Canada are participating in *Adventist Health Study-2*, being conducted by researchers at the Loma Linda University School of Public Health. In previous research studies on Adventists, lower levels of stress were linked to their strong faith in God, active religious lifestyle and close community spirit. ([www.adventisthealthcare.com](http://www.adventisthealthcare.com).)

Now, however, in a recent study titled *Adventist Religion and Health Study (2006 – present day)*, the spiritual impact of the Adventist faith on health is being examined in more detail.

Here are some preliminary findings from the current study: <http://www.llu.edu/public-health/health/adventist-religion-health.page>.

- The advantage Adventists have over non-Adventists in regard to mental health is greater in older age groups than in younger ones.
- Individuals who engaged in secular activities on Sabbath had poorer reported physical health.

# editorial

## The crowd factor



Julian Hibbert  
Editor

'Murray, Murray, Murray . . .'. Centre court throbbed. Wimbledon has echoed loudly for decades, but never like this.

Andy was serving for the match of his life – for Olympic gold and this country's honour! Powerful first serves, deft backhand top spinners and forceful passing shots spiced his play. But it wasn't just about technique: Andy's demeanour was tangibly different – he had a winner's composure.

'Murray, Murray, Murray . . .'. 'Crowd noise' reached deafening peaks in that last game – around 140 decibels – the sound of a jetliner passing low overhead.

Then Murray aced his last serve . . . and the crowd won Olympic gold with their cheers!

#### The 'crowd factor'

Almost to a medallist, those who mounted the podium for Team GB marvelled at the crowd support during the London 2012 Olympics. Journalists called it the 'crowd factor', and although it was reputedly loudest in the Velodrome, those involved in the track and field events felt it too. Mo Farah, winner of the 10,000 metre men's gold, described the 'crowd factor' during this race as simply 'unbelievable'.<sup>1</sup>

Jamie Doward of *The Observer* called it 'the performance-enhancing substance that will never show up in a random drug test'.<sup>2</sup> Beautifully phrased, Jamie!

Jessica Ennis also recognised the power of this intangible force when she 'credited the stadium's 80,000 spectators with a personal best in the 200m. "Having this crowd behind everyone makes all the difference," she said.<sup>3</sup>

#### 'Go, Jules! Go, Jules, go!'

During our 12-year sojourn in beautiful Cape Town I became an enthusiastic (but very mediocre) recreational cyclist. For eight of those years I participated in the annual Argus Cycle Tour – 105 kilometres of sun and wind shared by thousands of cyclists.

The tour doubled during that time from 15,000 to 30,000 cyclists, but my best time never improved beyond 04:15:37, an average of 24.65 kilometres per hour.

I never fell off, except once while still in the stalls – before the starting gun! Had a few punctures. Drank countless litres of water and energy drink. But never pushed my bike!

Those races were my first taste of the 'crowd factor'. Spectators lined the route and cheered us along. They sprayed us with water from their garden hoses to cool us down. Helped to fix punctures and give first aid for those who tangled with the tar!

During one of these tours I had a remarkable 'performance-enhancing' experience. While wearily grinding up one of the numerous heartbreak hills, I heard a bellow from the crowd: 'Go, Jules! Go, Jules, go!'

Someone had recognised *me*. Somebody was cheering *me* on. Immediately I sat high in the saddle. Waved my gloved hand. Punched the air. Shouted back my thanks. Then pushed the pedals with renewed vigour!

#### Paul knew about it too

The Apostle Paul must have attended Greek athletic contests before he met Jesus for they 'had long been popular throughout the Mediterranean world, and the illustration of chapter 12:1 would be familiar to every reader'.<sup>4</sup>

From his comments in Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV), it is quite obvious that he also understood the power of the 'crowd factor': 'Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.'

The 'cloud' of witnesses can also be translated as 'host of witnesses'<sup>5</sup> – in other words, a large crowd. The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* pictures the 'athlete making final preparations to run a race in an ancient stadium, with the spectators seated on benches rising tier above tier on all sides'.<sup>6</sup> From his crouching perspective they must have seemed like a 'cloud'.

#### The crowd

The 'race' is the Christian life. We are the athletes. Who makes up the crowd? Well, Paul had just finished telling us about the crowd in Hebrews 11. They form a shortlist of the Bible's men and women of faith. People whose lives cry out loudly: 'We ran too. We took wrong turns. We struggled, stumbled and fell often. We were cut and bruised by life's hurdles – and often out of breath! But we ran on regardless . . . and by God's grace we crossed the line!'

There is someone in that crowd who is chanting your name. Maybe more than one! Open your Bible and listen.

You may feel drained. Spiritually exhausted, unable to take another step towards the Kingdom. But before you give up, just listen to the 'crowd noise' again – someone from deep in God's Word is calling your name and shouting: 'Read my story . . . if I could finish, so can you!'

<sup>1</sup><http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/olympicsvideo/9454401/Mo-Farah-The-crowd-was-unbelievable-during-10000-metres-Olympic-final.html>  
<sup>2</sup><http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2012/aug/05/team-gb-medallists-credit-home-crowd> <sup>3</sup>ibid 'Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, page 480' <sup>4</sup>ibid <sup>5</sup>ibid <sup>6</sup>ibid

#### 'Go, Jules! Go, Jules, go!'



## What's your plan?

by Stuart Sly



As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away." This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!" When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee." (Matthew 21:1-11, NIV-UK.)

I'm sure most of us will have seen one or two triumphal entries (or exits) over the past six months. Besides the London Olympics, there has been a considerable amount of media coverage of the nation's celebrations of our Queen's Diamond Jubilee, with all the pomp and majesty that has gone with it. Of all the royal family, she is the one who retains the greatest respect of the nation for the way she has conducted herself over the past sixty years. It was interesting to hear the commentators talk of all the planning that went into the jubilee events, some of them taking up to three years of diligent work to achieve.

For the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem there also had to be preparation –

the donkey and the colt in the right place at the right time. But one wonders where they begin to organise such a royal celebration – the generation of ideas, the sifting of options, the sequencing, the timing, the security – the planning for the jubilee must have seemed endless.

At his brother's funeral, Senator Edward Kennedy quoted a remark John F. Kennedy had made a few months before his assassination: 'Some men see things as they are and ask, "Why?" I dream of things that never were and say, "Why not?" The world needs idea generators, because without them there would be no plans for a better future.'

The story is told that one day John D. Rockefeller popped his head into one of his offices, surprising the bookkeeper who sat hunched over his books. 'Get your feet off the floor and up on your desk!' commanded Rockefeller. 'Lean back in your chair and start dreaming!' Completely astonished by such an order coming from his boss, the bookkeeper wondered what in the world he was getting at. But when Rockefeller repeated his order, he gingerly swung his feet up onto the desk, leaned back in his chair and asked politely, 'What do you want me to dream about?' Rockefeller's terse answer was: 'Dream about how to make money for the Standard Oil Company. From now on, this is your job!'

What do you dream of concerning your future? What's your plan? Hopefully, it's more than Rockefeller's preoccupation with making extra money. Or does life keep you so busy that you don't have time, as it were, to dream? Do you take it as it comes and, like a leaf carried downstream by the current, simply wait and see where life takes you? Do we

simply react to what life throws at us, making up our route as we go along, or do we set a deliberate course for our journey through life. We plan for holidays, birthdays, Christmas and so on – how much more should we make a conscious effort to steer our lives in a particular direction! If you don't set an objective, your life will lack direction and purpose. Can you imagine the festivities of Christmas without some forethought, planning and prior action? Or a holiday without any preparation? When do we leave? Where are we going? How will we get there? What sort of jubilee

celebrations would we have had without clear and intense planning?

We need objectives to give us purpose, direction and a sense of progress as we achieve them in our home lives, our work lives and our spiritual lives. Can you imagine a household without some sort of cohesive planning and direction? The cupboards would be bare, the garden a jungle, and the people would be strangers to each other. Or can you imagine a company without a common purpose, objectives and a plan of how to achieve those objectives? Again, the people in the company wouldn't know what they were trying to do, where they were headed and how they intended to get there. A home or business without purpose or direction will only achieve a fraction of its potential and, likewise, an individual with no spiritual direction in life has little hope of growth in that respect.

Without an objective there is no purpose.

Without a dream there is no passion for better things.

And without direction in life, those better things remain just a dream and the 'Why am I here?' question remains unanswered.

The declaration: 'Where there is no vision, the people perish' is true in many ways. Don't let life sweep you along like a leaf floating down a stream; take time out to create a definite plan, and then plan to follow that course with determination.

May our home lives and our work lives reflect a definite life plan – and may that plan include spreading the good news of the Gospel to the people of this nation.



## King Canute goes to church

by Victor Hulbert



King Canute was a religious man, so if alive today rather than in 1016 he would quite probably turn up in church. Yet Canute is remembered in the history books for only one thing: setting his throne on the seashore and defying the waves to come in. It was a battle he clearly and intentionally lost, trying to teach his courtiers a lesson on flattery and good advice: 'Let all men know how empty and worthless is the power of kings. For there is none worthy of the name but God, whom heaven, earth and sea obey.'

If Canute came to church today his battle might not be with the sea but with technology. What should or should not be allowed in church? I took a laptop into church for the first time in 1998. It horrified some of the members but they quickly got engaged when they found the sermon coming more alive by the use of PowerPoint. Go back to the days of our Adventist pioneers and the most technology they might have used would have been a Millerite chart of Nebuchadnezzar's image and the beasts of Daniel and Revelation. No PA system. No projectors. Few visual aids. Simply a Bible.

Today, I still carry a Bible to church, but my smartphone is full of apps that help with Bible study



King Canute could not stop the waves lapping around his feet, yet today he would probably have a smartphone in his hand telling him the tide times while he tweeted his message to the world.

– from the Sabbath School lesson to commentaries and *Strong's Concordance*. It may be that a 'church finder app' is what got me to church in the first place. Can those apps be a help or a hindrance to confirm or explain more fully what the preacher is saying?

I guess I could wait until I get home, but in the modern world learning is often undertaken in a mixed environment of lecture and technology. Trying to keep that technology out of church is much the same as trying to keep the tide from coming in. It is a battle that King Canute – and most of our pastors – would lose.

That is the interesting dilemma that Pastor Jeff Couzins recently raised in his *MESSENGER* article, 'To Tweet or not to Tweet?' (22 June, p 9). One visiting preacher recently sat in a Sabbath School class and decried the fact that nobody had their Bibles out – until he realised they all had their phones out with Bible apps open. Yet, equally, I have sat in church and watched an adult near to me openly playing a game during the sermon. Quite why was he there?

So do we legislate or educate and engage? The technology is there. People have it and they will use it. Perhaps the challenge of the preacher is to involve the congregation in such a way as to use the technology positively. There are pastors who encourage the congregation to tweet questions while they are preaching. It is a different form of interaction but it certainly works for streamed programmes like Newbold church's *Moor Close Talks*. It may even mean that the pastor may get more interaction from his teens than a muted 'Happy Sabbath' at the church door.

Smartphones are undoubtedly a distraction in many areas of life – not just church. But they are also a positive benefit. Used wisely, and to engage with the congregation, they can also be a blessing. King Canute could not stop the waves lapping around his feet, yet today he would probably have a smartphone in his hand telling him the tide times while he tweeted his message to the world.

## Wedding announcement

**Andrew and Julia.** Andrew Puckering, our *MESSENGER* proofreader, will have entered the blissful state of 'holy matrimony' by the time you read this. He and his bride, Julia Sabău, were due to be married in Romania on 19 August.

Along with you, our loyal readers, we wish the Puckerings God's richest blessings upon their relationship, and much happiness in the years to come.

Unfortunately, we cannot comply strictly with the injunction in Deuteronomy 24:5 (NIV-UK) that Andrew be given a year off 'to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married', but we are giving him a break from his Berean Column to get married and have a brief honeymoon!

EDITOR



Here is a recent photo of Andrew and Julia supplied by his mother.

## A president's perspective

Some members have written to the BUC president, Pastor Ian Sweeney, expressing their concerns regarding articles and news coverage about the London Olympics that appeared in *MESSENGER* and online in the BUC News.

We thought that his thoughtful response to one of the correspondents deserved to appear in *MESSENGER* in an edited format.



### The concern

The issue is summarised as follows, with a quote from one of those who wrote to Pastor Sweeney:

*'As the original games were*

*connected to a pagan nation that worshipped gods that really were no gods at all, is it then bad, or even SIN, for a Christian to participate in or even watch the Olympics?'*



### The response

I truly believe, as a Seventh-day Adventist, that we should not associate with paganism in either symbols or rituals, and yet many of us wear wedding rings, which I understand were a pagan custom, and there is no biblical command for them – but we use them in our church-sanctioned ceremonies.

I will be attending the funeral of a close relative in a few days' time and flowers will be placed on the grave. Your letter spurred me on to research this practice. I have since discovered that it was introduced as a way to appease the spirits of the dead!

I was recently informed about certain pagan symbols in use on money. The US dollar note, for instance, displays an eye over a pyramid. So in all seriousness, I ask myself the question, Should I refrain from using or holding US currency when necessity demands that I travel there?

In the *Seventh-day Adventist Students' Source Book* we read that the names of the days of the week that we use in English were derived from the Saxons, who used them to give honour to their own deities:

Day	Latin	Meaning
Sunday	<i>Dies Solis</i>	Sun's day
Monday	<i>Dies Lunae</i>	Moon's day
Tuesday	<i>Dies Martis</i>	Tiw's day
Wednesday	<i>Dies Mercurii</i>	Woden's day
Thursday	<i>Dies Jovis</i>	Thor's day
Friday	<i>Dies Veneris</i>	Frigg's day
Saturday	<i>Dies Saturni</i>	Seterne's day

Please understand that I am not trying to be clever or smart, but I am asking myself the question: *'Should I refrain from using the English names of the week in full knowledge of their pagan antecedents?'*

Some years ago, when I was preparing a new set of evangelistic sermons, I decided that I would preach exegetically, using the words of Jesus as recorded in the gospels. When it came to preaching on the subject of the state of the dead, I used the somewhat problematic parable that Jesus told of the rich man and the beggar, Lazarus (*Luke 16:19-31*).

Clearly, Jesus was not teaching that at death a person's soul went to either Heaven or hell, but I understand that Jesus was seeking to convey a truth to

a people who believed in this 'heresy' of soul immortality and separation at death.

I cannot speak for the South England Conference, but in all my dealings with their leadership over the past twelve months since assuming office, it is my understanding that they wanted to use the Olympics as an opportunity to witness to the assembled throng. I would hope that no article in *MESSENGER* was written to endorse the Olympics and its pagan themes, but rather to show how many members have engaged with the public to point them to Christ.

I was reminded of something by Ellen G. White regarding our attitude – as Sabbath keepers – towards Sunday. In the book *Maranatha* we find the following admonition from her, which I have quoted at length to give its context:

### Chapter 169 – Wisdom Needed by Sabbathkeepers

*'Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.'* *Matthew 10:16 (Maranatha, 177.1).*

*When the practices of the people do not come in conflict with the law of God, you may conform to them. If the workers fail to do this, they will not only hinder their own work, but they will place stumbling blocks in the way of those for whom they labour, and hinder them from accepting the truth. On Sunday there is the very best opportunity for those who are missionaries to hold Sunday schools, and come to the people in the simplest manner possible, telling them of the love of Jesus for sinners, and educating them in the Scriptures. . . . (177.2.)*

*At present Sunday-keeping is not the test. The time will come when men will not only forbid Sunday work, but they will try to force men to labour on the*

*Sabbath, and to subscribe to Sunday observance or forfeit their freedom and their lives. But the time for this has not yet come, for the truth must be presented more fully before the people as a witness. . . . (177.3.)*

*The light that I have is that God's servants should go quietly to work, preaching the grand, precious truths of the Bible – Christ and Him crucified. His love and infinite sacrifice – showing that the reason why Christ died is because the law of God is immutable, unchangeable, eternal. The Sabbath must be taught in a decided manner, but be cautious how you deal with the idol Sunday. A word to the wise is sufficient. . . . (177.4.)*

*Refraining from work on Sunday is not receiving the mark of the beast; and where this will advance the interests of the work, it should be done. We should not go out of our way to work on Sunday. . . . (177.5.)*

*When those who hear and see the light on the Sabbath take their stand upon the truth to keep God's holy day, difficulties will arise; for efforts will be brought to bear against them to compel men and women to transgress the law of God. Here they must stand firm, that they will not violate the law of God; and if the opposition and persecution are determinedly kept up, let them heed the words of Christ: 'When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.' (177.6.)*

### Chapter 170 – Sunday Missionary Work

*'Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching.'* *2 Timothy 4:2, RSV. (178.1.)*

*To defy the Sunday laws will but strengthen in their persecution the religious zealots who are seeking to enforce them. Give them no occasion to call you lawbreakers. If they are left to rein up men who fear neither God nor man, the reining up will soon lose its novelty for them, and they will see that it is not consistent nor convenient for them to be strict in regard to the observance of Sunday. Keep right on with your missionary work, with your Bibles in your hands, and the enemy will see that he has worsted his own cause. One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping*

*the peace by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance. (178.2.)*

*When we devote Sunday to missionary work, the whip will be taken out of the hands of the arbitrary zealots who would be well pleased to humiliate Seventh-day Adventists. . . . (178.3.)*

*Sunday can be used for carrying forward various lines of work that will accomplish much for the Lord. On this day open-air meetings and cottage meetings can be held. House-to-house work can be done. Those who write can devote this day to writing their articles. **Whenever it is possible, let religious services be held on Sunday.** Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour's love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience. You will thus learn much about how to work, and will reach many souls. . . . (178.4.)*

*The law for the observance of the first day of the week is the production of an apostate Christendom. **Sunday is a child of the Papacy, exalted by the Christian world above the sacred day of God's rest. In no case are God's people to pay it homage. But I wish them to understand that they are not doing God's will by braving opposition when He wishes them to avoid it.** (178.5.)*

*Wonderful scenes are opening before us; and at this time a living testimony is to be borne in the lives of God's professed people, so that the world may see that in this age, when evil reigns on every side, there is yet a people who are laying aside their will and are seeking to do God's will – a people in whose hearts and lives God's law is written. (178.6.)*

Please forgive my highlighting of certain sections above. However, I seem to see a principle that Ellen White is working with and it is this: we should use opportunities to witness, such as having church services/evangelistic meetings regularly on a Sunday. This is not to ascribe any sacredness to Sunday, but to use the opportunity.

I may be incorrect in drawing this principle from the quotations above, but I am still on the road of learning. I also seem to observe this principle in Ellen

White's counsel with respect to Christmas trees, which are clearly non-biblical and pagan in origin and yet she wrote:

*In every church let your smaller offerings be placed upon your Christmas tree. Let the precious emblem, 'ever green,' suggest the holy work of God and his beneficence to us; and the loving heart-work will be to save other souls who are in darkness. Let your works be in accordance with your faith. I heard Eld. Butler read a touching letter a few days since from Eld. Whitney, of Europe. The good work is going forward there, but it ought to have been done six years ago. Let not this work be hindered. Let it advance. If all, both old and young, will forego giving presents to one another, and forego the selfish outlay of means in these coming holidays, there would be in heaven a most precious record of self-denial for Christ's sake. (RH, 9 December, 1884, par. 9.)*

Ellen White was not saying we should have Christmas trees for the sake of their decorative value, but rather as an opportunity to highlight the importance of mission in self-sacrifice, and so money should be placed upon the Christmas tree for that purpose.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your email. It seems to me that the facts behind the pagan origin of the Olympics are indisputable. I suppose my challenge on a personal level, as well as that of a leader, is where do I draw the line? I want to avoid pagan connections, and yet they seem all-encompassing.

You asked the very important question, *'Where do I stand?'* My answer is that I stand for using every opportunity to proclaim the gospel message to a largely ignorant world. If this should not have been done during the Olympics, then I will seek God's forgiveness and, as always, I seek His guidance.

Blessings,  
Ian Sweeney



Dear Editor  
I totally agree with the sentiments expressed by Pastor Sweeney in the BUC News, no. 791, 10 August.

I think it is rather sad, however, that he had to spend valuable time writing a reply to what is, I believe, a narrow-minded view that some church members seem to have. The response throughout the country to the Olympic phenomenon has been so positive, with people seeing something good to focus on for a change.

The churches in the SEC have been able to use the event to witness in all sorts of ways. Who knows what good has been done? We have so much negativity in the news media. What's so wrong with seeing happiness expressed?

RAY MORRIS

Dear Editor  
At the entrance to my vet's surgery is a notice: 'Do not use mobile phones beyond this point.' Why? The simple answer is that they will interfere with the electrical equipment in the surgery.

When we enter church, whether it be a cathedral-like building or a humble barn-like structure or even a hired room, we go to worship God, to sing praises, to listen to His Word. A congregation usually consists of people of all ages and different backgrounds. Nothing should occur that would hinder the blessings available to those present. The use of mobile phones to tweet or play games is best left to after the service, and this applies as much to older folk as to our younger members. . . .

AUDREY FULLAM

### Thank you

The principal of the Adventist Discovery Centre acknowledges with sincere thanks an anonymous donation of £100 for the 'Gift Bible' project, received in August.

# Ancient methods bring success

by Brenda Mays

Two years before we landed in Albania as missionaries for Adventist Frontier Missions (AFM), God had put the people of this little country on our hearts. We prayed for the people who had suffered under the brutal dictatorship of Enver Hoxha for nearly five decades. He had outlawed God in Albania and then put himself in God's place through a careful plan of control, propaganda and fear. When he finally died, many of them came to realise that the one they had idolised for so long had deeply deceived them.

The atheistic brainwashing had been very effective. Satan's fingerprints were all over this tiny nation. Our prayers began to focus on asking God to heal them and give them a longing to know Him and an ability to trust Him.

## A different approach

We didn't hold evangelistic meetings or hand out tracts when

we arrived. Instead, we set out to understand their hearts. We studied their history, culture, felt needs and worldview but, most importantly, we spent time listening to them, genuinely sympathising with them and getting to know them as our close friends.

We didn't go door-to-door or speak memorised lines. Since we were to live in this community for a long time, we needed to learn the natural Albanian way to make friends. Authentic relationships build trust, and since trust is the key to the heart, we began there.

*'I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.'* (1 Cor. 9:22, NIV.)

Perhaps some would consider our approach unconventional, but in reality we are attempting to get back to the original New Testament model of evangelism. When it comes to the Bible, the ancient can be thoroughly modern and relevant.

We asked God to show us who was searching for Him, even if they didn't know what they were looking for. Since we would be investing a significant amount of time and energy into our friendships, we wouldn't be able to spread ourselves too thinly. We needed God to direct us to the people in whom He had already been working.

Including brief comments about God or spiritual topics in our conversations with them encouraged them to think more deeply about spiritual matters and question us further about Him. This approach didn't turn them off or cause them to feel like hunted prey. They knew that we would still care about them as friends, even if they never accepted our beliefs. This has freed many of them to question what they believe, rather than putting them on the defensive. Most of our new friends turned out to be Muslim, with varying levels of secularisation. We also have several Orthodox friends. Then God directed us to a man of peace. In fact, it was a household of peace.

## A household of peace

Three generations lived under one roof. The elder of the family was a retired Muslim imam, although we didn't know it at first. His son, Mustafa, became like a brother to my husband. Sean helped him set up his wife's clothing shop at the bazaar every morning except Sabbath. This also included sitting in the café with Mustafa's circle of friends every morning except Sabbath. This is the way Albanian men make friends and strengthen bonds.

This went on for several months and Sean was slowly accepted as a member of this close-knit circle. Questions about Sean's faith often came up. They didn't know into which category Adventism fell, but they thought it must be close to Islam, because Sean didn't drink alcohol like the Christians they knew. When he revealed that he also didn't eat pork, they became even more convinced. Mustafa's father, the imam, was very warm and accepting of us. He told Mustafa that the Adventists have loving hearts and that was the most important quality in any kind of true believer.

One day, Mustafa's son came running to the bazaar to call his father to the hospital. They had found the imam on the floor, conscious but unable to speak or move. Sean went to comfort his friend at the hospital and asked Mustafa if he could pray for his father who had had a massive stroke. Mustafa agreed. After that prayer, the old imam managed to speak his first words since the stroke. He asked to be taken home to die in peace.

The next day we visited the home and found Mustafa's father on the couch with all his sons and their families around him. He was dying, and the family was obviously distressed by his suffering. The old man was restless, and Sean asked Mustafa, once again, if he could pray for his father. Mustafa couldn't grant permission now without the consent of his brothers. They went into an

adjoining room to discuss the matter and then gave their approval.

Sean's prayer was simple. He held the old imam's hand and asked God to grant him rest and comfort. Immediately, the imam became silent. The brothers rushed to their father's side, pushing Sean out of their way. We were worried. Had the imam died at the moment a Christian had prayed for him, it would have been tragic timing. But very soon, one of the brothers exclaimed that he was alive and his breathing was normal. We breathed a sigh of relief and went home. The next day, Mustafa called to let us know that his father had passed away in the night. 'He was able to sleep peacefully after your prayer, and we are so grateful to God for that.'

The funeral was held that very day. It is Albanian tradition to have a meal together after the burial. In stricter Muslim families, the women don't go to the burial but have a meal together instead,

and then the men eat together when they return from the burial. Sean and I were surprised and honoured to have a place reserved for us at the family table at both dinners. In fact, Mustafa had reserved the place at his right side – the place of honour – for Sean.

## Mustafa makes a decision

One evening, months later, Mustafa and his wife asked us to meet them at a restaurant, as they had something to discuss with us. It didn't take long for Mustafa to get to the point. 'I know that you are on God's road, and I want to walk beside you on that road.' He asked Sean to teach him the Bible and pray with him each morning. After some time, Mustafa and his wife, son and daughter decided to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour and they were baptised in a nearby river. Since then, Mustafa has become a deacon in the church and has begun to share Jesus with his friends and relatives.

There have been a few more baptisms since then and there are sometimes close to twenty people worshipping together on Sabbath in our living room.

We have decided to build a public meetinghouse – a church building just outside our city. Our members and even a few visitors have volunteered the labour. This will certainly enhance the feeling that this is their church – an Albanian church. It will also give added status to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this region.

We have raised nearly enough funds to purchase a suitable plot of land and we are confident that God will provide a way to build

an attractive and comfortable centre to which members will want to invite their friends.



# celebrations

## 50 years of independence & faith

by the editor

On 4 August, the Great Brickkiln Street church celebrated 'fifty years of Jamaican independence and fifty years of faith' in its own unique way. The core focus of the Sabbath programme was 'the Jamaican contribution to the growth of Adventism in Wolverhampton'.

The Sabbath was packed with a variety of memorable activities directed by Pastor Steve Palmer, Eseata Steele and their committed team, starting with a very lively Sabbath School discussion.

Eseata summarised the development of the Adventist church in the Wolverhampton area, showing how one congregation had given birth to another as the work grew. This was followed by a thought-provoking sermon on faith preached by Dr Herbert Griffiths, a leading authority on UK Afro-Caribbean history.

The afternoon programme started with the presentation of a cheque for £635 to the Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Support Project by Sister MacIntosh, on behalf of the church.

### Then it was my turn

Then it was the writer's turn to interview five local members concerning their experience of adopting another country as home. What was the church like back home when you left Jamaica? How did you find it here? Has it changed over the years, and how?

Their frank answers were a source of great entertainment – and food for quiet reflection. Of particular interest were the stories of how they became Adventists. One lady, Mother Smith, said: 'I was a Baptist till I came to England. I was invited to an Adventist meeting by the person I boarded with.' And she stayed, of course!

George Amore was another who found a new faith under these northern skies: 'I came from Kingston and don't remember Adventist churches there. But as soon as I got here I was invited to the Adventist church by a co-worker – a tailor. He kept me going week after week, answering all my many questions.'

Speaking about her religious culture shock, Mother Adair said that 'the atmosphere in the church was dull at first, but when we started doing things like in Jamaica it was good!'

### The next generation

Then the next generation got their chance to talk about what the church life in Wolverhampton had meant to them. This was done through the contributions of four 'forty-to-fifty-something' members who paid tribute to the positive role that worship, Sabbath School and youth activities had played in their young lives.

One of them said this – and it summarises the sentiments expressed by the others: 'The church was built on our families. We were

always busy – church was our life. Our friends and our relationships were all based upon the church.'

### It's a tough task

It's a tough task to pack the joy and tears of fifty years into one day, but the Great Brickkiln Street church did a superb job of it. And in the doing thereof, I, the child of another culture, was made to feel 'adopted' by them – as if they had granted me the privilege of 'Jamaican-ness' for that special day!



## Out of many, one people



by Katie Ramharacksingh

It is a time of celebration for Jamaicans. Not only has the Olympics confirmed their pedigree as the world's fastest runners, but for the past fifty years, citizens of this proud Caribbean nation have progressed in their journey of independence.

Thus, on Sabbath 4 August, more than 1,400 Jamaicans from across the British Isles gathered together at St John at Hackney church, East London. Under the theme 'Out of many, one people' they celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of Jamaican independence.

The packed programme was organised by a group of Jamaican Adventist professionals called 'JAWorks', which includes Pastor Richard de Lisser, Steve McKenzie, Andy Peynado, Larry Simpson and Joan Reid. This first event for the newly established group was to celebrate Jamaicans coming together

and their work for the Church in the UK.

The powerful sermon for the day, 'God Reigns', was given by Glenn Samuels, Personal Ministries, Sabbath School and Ministerial department director in the Jamaican Union Conference. In the words of Pastor Richard de Lisser: 'It was a very special day of fellowship for Jamaicans from all over the UK. Fifty years in the making! We are already looking forward to coming together again next year, at the same time, for a second Jamaican day of fellowship.'

The day included a video presentation on the *Windrush* and Jamaicans' entrance into, and contribution to, the Adventist Church in the British Isles. Karen Clarke also interviewed Miss Myrtle Roole, MBE, a church member recognised by the Queen for her service to her local community in Stratford.

Karen Clarke enthused, 'I was very honoured to be able to interview Miss Roole;

it was very important that we recognise her for her work. We're privileged, because we saw her mission work as we grew up, and seeing that meant we've been that much closer to her and her goals. We really do consider her to be a torch-bearer in her own right!'

Coincidentally, during the evening concert with performances by The Moodies, Lennon Brothers, Mark Bunny and others, there was even more cause for celebration as it was announced that Jamaican athletes, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and Veronica Campbell-Brown, had taken gold and bronze, respectively, in the women's 100 metre finals at the nearby Olympic Stadium.

A 1998 archive radio interview with Myrtle Roole, the summer she was awarded her MBE, is now available from the BUC Media archive. The video created for the day can also be seen on YouTube.



## Croydon 'Revive and stay alive'

The Croydon church held this series from 18-26 May under the ministry of Pastor Brent St Jean from the Dominican Republic.

It resulted in fifteen baptisms: some were siblings and two were engaged to be married – to each other!

According to the writer: 'Many of the candidates were already engaged in Bible study with members of the church prior to the Revival series.'

BASED ON A REPORT BY ANDREW IFILL



## Natasha jumps for the children

Dear Editor

On Tuesday 24 July I participated in a skydive for Dreams Come True, a charity that seeks to make special things happen for children and young people with long-term and terminal illnesses.

I have always wanted to do a skydive and as I was booking the place at the North London Skydive Centre I decided to do it as a sponsored event. I chose Dreams Come True, because I work with children and young people who face the difficulties some of the Dream children face.

Thanks to the support of my family, friends and members of the Grantham Adventist church, I raised £515 for Dreams Come True.

NATASHA COX



## Former Rock 'n' Roll musician visits Leicester Central

Leicester Central church enjoyed a series of presentations on 'Revival' delivered by Pastor George Kumi, 7-13 July. This was followed by an outreach series entitled 'Life After Rock 'n' Roll' by Pastor Louis Torres, former bass guitarist with Bill Haley and the Comets. In this series he recounted his show business experiences with Bill Haley – the father of Rock 'n' Roll – sharing his gripping personal journey as a Rock 'n' Roll star, the problems of the drug scene and how he survived it to become a Christian.

Pastor George Kumi said, 'We were delighted to have Pastor Torres share his amazing story of transformation with us – a story of hope for all.'

There was much rejoicing as the series culminated in a baptism of twenty-three candidates, who had been prepared through baptismal study groups, KIDS in Discipleship and Sabbath School experiences – where there was time to explore what the Adventist Church believes, and come to a personal decision.

Pastor Louis is the president of the Guam-Micronesia Mission and has a wealth of experience as an evangelist, international lecturer, musician and writer. He has written a number of books, including *Gaining Decisions for Christ*, *Great Stories for Gaining Decisions*, *Bothersome and Disturbing Bible Passages* and *Left Behind or Sincerely Taken*. He and his wife, Carol, are co-founders of the Mission College of Evangelism, from which have sprouted other schools, such as ARISE, Amazing Facts School of Evangelism, Switzerland Mission College and Josia School of Evangelism.

PHILIP HERBERT



## Harrow enjoys diversity

The Harrow church celebrated a successful international day of fellowship on 5 May, showcasing the diverse nature of their congregation.

The heart of the programme was a series of presentations about how God is working in the homelands of those present and how some of them became Adventists. Some of the countries represented were India, France, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Romania.

The Romanian choir, renowned for their mastery of brass instruments, performed a range of items, including special pieces from their homeland. Pastor Petrof, the main pastor of Harrow church, closed the event with a sermonette. All of this was followed by an 'amazing' banquet of international delicacies.

IDRIS LAMINA



## 1,000 doors and more

Rugby church's recent outreach involved distributing 400 DVDs and 600 books (*The Great Hope* and *When God Said Remember*) in preparation for an evangelistic series Pastor A. Bruce will present in October this year. There was a good response from the community, with many requesting further contact. The youth and children were also involved and seemed to enjoy the outreach as much as the adults.

ROBERTO DA SILVA



Left to right: Zhane Simpson, Phumi Simelane and Godfrey Olotu

## Baptism at Great Brickkiln church

On Sunday 29 April there were blessings in abundance at the Great Brickkiln church. The congregation witnessed three people – Godfrey Olotu, Zhane Simpson and Phumi Simelane – being baptised by Pastor Palmer and welcomed into the fellowship of the church.

Zhane and Phumi, both active members of the Pathfinder club, had Bible studies with the Youth ministry leaders, Karen Campbell and Helderberg Jackson. Phumi invited several of her school friends to witness the event.

Godfrey explained how he had once walked with God but somehow had fallen away when he left his home town in Africa. He had migrated to the Western world, seeking wealth and fortune. However, he expressed gratitude to his wife who had prompted him to return to the faith. Godfrey's Bible studies with an elder of the church, Algie Henry, brought him to his decision for baptism.

DELVA CAMPBELL

## Dedication at Sheffield Manor

We are used to big baptisms – but how about a 'big' dedication? Sheffield Manor tried this recently under the leadership of caretaker-pastor, Peter Jeynes.

They dedicated ten children and one parent! This heart-warming ceremony was largely due to an excellent community visitation programme under the leadership of two elders, Carlton Lee and Andrew Yesudian.

PETER JEYNES

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### Baby dedication for Grantham

Kevin and Amber Cox (and family members from both the UK and USA) recently dedicated their first child, Ainsley, during a service at the Grantham church on 23 June. Ainsley's grandfather is Graham Cox, former employee at the Stanborough Press.

GRAHAM COX

### Thirteen baptised in Jubilee Going for Gold celebrations

On 17 March, members, relatives and friends gathered at the Welling church to witness the baptism of thirteen people at the end of a two-week series of meetings conducted by the evangelist Gary Harrison, with the theme: 'Going for Gold – in the year of Jubilee'. Night after night the church was filled to capacity as Harrison covered topics such as: 'Back to Eden', 'What Is Sin?' and 'If the Dead Could Speak'.

At the start of the campaign Pastor Bernard Akakpo offered a prize of a Family Bible and a cake to whoever brought the most people to the meetings. Liz Pickart won both prizes for bringing sixteen people to the meetings on a regular basis, seven of whom were among the thirteen people baptised!

Pastor Bernard Akakpo conducted the baptism, which was the first one to be held in the Welling church.

The candidates were: Natalie McLaren, Alfie Morris, Sophia, Sian, Cheyenne and Sapphire Faucher, Liam Hunte, Olivia Celestin, Theodore and Jason Samuel, Gavin Bowger, Michel Dantzie and Bridgette McDonald. Welling members would like to thank the North Wembley church for the loan of their portable baptism pool.

On this historic day, in the year of the Jubilee and the Olympics, the new members signalled that 'Going for Gold' as found in Jesus is better than obtaining the praises of men.

BETHENE WITTER WHITE

(Picture supplied, but of too poor quality for publication.)



Dr Beardsell (centre) with Pastors Charles Watson and Fred Thomas next to the mission plane

Dear Editor  
When the news of Dr Derek Beardsell's death reached me, I was looking through some slides I took when he was president of the Tanzania Union. Under his leadership they were busy developing a new head office complex that overlooks the city Arusha. This is a timely reminder of the special role played in other parts of the world by our British missionaries like Derek.

JACK MAHON

# Your voice makes a difference

by Pastor Victor Hulbert, BUC Communication director

'What difference can I make? I'm just one voice.' How many times have you heard that said? Yet we live in a democracy. MPs look to serve their constituents and also look to get re-elected, which means that they do listen to their constituents' views.

This is scaring the Conservative Party at the moment. Prime Minister David Cameron is pressing ahead with plans to deliver same-sex 'marriage' by 2015, despite reports that the issue is causing a drop in grass-roots membership of the party. That drop – according to the pressure group Christian Concern – could impact the next General Election. Back bench Tories are joining with senior party members to warn Mr Cameron on the issue.

One of those back benchers is Dr Phillip Lee, MP for Bracknell. He was contacted by one of his Adventist constituents back in March during the Government consultation period on 'same-sex marriage'. His reply was polite but ambivalent. Since then his stance has changed.

The *Daily Mail* quotes him as admitting that the 'vast majority of people' were against the plan. He wrote: 'With the strength of opposition from so many of my constituents, I have had to review my own position.' Subsequent correspondence with Dr Lee has also been positive, causing him to think on the implications for sex education in schools should the legislation change.

This is just one example. Bolton pastor, Jeff Cousins, is among a number of other Adventists who have shared their views with their local MP. He writes, 'If more people expressed their outrage and dismay at the way the Government is handling the proposal to redefine marriage then we may get a good outcome.'

While the result may not always be positive, as seems to be the case following the consultation in Scotland, the opportunity to write and express your view in the hope of change is surely better than the alternative.



### Life without limits

Pastor Michael Kelly of California, USA, conducted the highly successful 'Life Without Limits' evangelistic series at Croydon church (14-28 July), assisted by Tiffany Campbell-Dailey, ('Life Without Limits' singing evangelist from Toronto, Canada).

Kelly's preaching was contemporary and forthright, but his frankness clearly didn't put people off, as night after night saw a completely full church and an ever-increasing number of viewers on Croydon's Livestream channel.

Sabbath 28 July saw the series conclude with one of the most memorable baptismal services the Croydon church has ever seen. Pastor Kelly encouraged the congregation to clap, cheer and 'amen' as loudly as they could for each candidate because, after all, there was a party going on in Heaven. All twelve candidates arose from the pool to loud cheers and applause that were both uplifting and genuine: truly a fitting end to a successful evangelistic campaign.

GEORGINA BENJAMIN

### Hymn singing festival

Halifax Church invites you to their hymn singing festival on Sabbath 6 October, between 10am and 5pm.

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ALSO visit the Hope TV UK website for on-demand programming and exclusive BUC News reports and features: [www.hopetv.org.uk](http://www.hopetv.org.uk)



# back page

## Barnsley health course

Following on from the national vegetarian week outreach, the Health department of the

Barnsley church recently presented a six-week NEWSTART course, both for the public and its



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own members. It consisted of illustrated talks about various health topics and how to live a healthy lifestyle, together with cookery demonstrations and an opportunity to taste a variety of nourishing vegetarian meals.

Recipes of all dishes used and a brief outline of each presentation are posted on the Barnsley church website. The course proved so popular that monthly meetings are planned after a summer break, as well as weekly 'relaxation classes' in the autumn.

All those who came along to the meetings expressed the view that the course had been instructive and helpful. They also had a good time tasting the food! One member of the public who was present at every meeting has already attended church twice since then and expressed the desire to 'visit again'.

HAZEL SCHOLES, COMMUNICATION SECRETARY



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## Messenger

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### Sunset

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

	Lon	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Aug 31	7.48	8.01	7.55	8.09	8.17
Sept 7	7.33	7.45	7.38	7.51	8.00
14	7.17	7.29	7.22	7.32	7.42
21	7.01	7.13	7.05	7.14	7.24

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