Swansea Church demolished

by Pastor John Surridge, Welsh Mission president

n Tuesday, 31 March, the final section of the Swansea church was demolished. The process had begun just days before, but skilled workers from the Cardiff Demolition Company had made short work of reducing the building to rubble after 76 years of use by the Adventist church.

The Adventist work in Swansea began in 1898 when J. S. Washburn, together with a group of supporters, began preaching on the beach. One of the first converts was M. Hussey, who went on to become the leader of a small Adventist group in the town. For many years they met in hired halls and it was not until F. S. Jackson was sent to Swansea in 1937 that they gave serious consideration to acquiring a building of their own. This happened in 1938 at a cost of £900, and it was dedicated on 13 May 1939 with the Mayor of Swansea as a special guest and Welsh Mission Superintendent Pastor S. G. Hyde as the main speaker.

The first baptism in the church took place in June 1940, and on Sabbath 14 October 1944 Pastor H. W. Lowe, then president of the British Union Conference, spoke at a service to commemorate the events of 1844. Present at this service was an eight-year-old Brian Phillips, who would later become president of the Welsh Mission and to whom we are indebted for the historical information above.

During the 1980s it was noted that cracks in the front section of the building were widening, possibly due to a combination of poor foundations and heavy traffic on the Gower Road. Various options were considered; however, it slowly became apparent that a complete rebuild was necessary. Although there was nowhere near enough money available to think seriously about a rebuild, one important preparatory

action taken at this time was the purchase of the lease, which had only a few years left to run.

Two sizeable legacies finally made the project a realistic possibility. In 2010 land adjacent to the church was purchased for £90,000, allowing for the option of a larger building. Fund-raising by local members, further generous donations, and the careful management and allocation of other funds by BUC treasurer, Victor Pilmoor, eventually gave the Welsh Mission Executive Committee the confidence to start. In 2011 they commissioned Liddell + Associates, an architectural practice with a proven track record in church construction, to design and project-manage the total build.

Obtaining all of the legal permissions took longer than expected, and we are especially grateful to Darrell Jones and Stuart Ramsey of Swansea Council for their help in this regard.

The contract was awarded to R. & M. Williams, a Cardiff-based company with a regional office in Swansea. It was they who subcontracted the Cardiff Demolition Company to dismantle the old building.

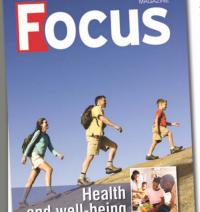
During most of the demolition process local minister, Pastor Jovan Adamović, was on site, taking photos and speaking to the many neighbours and members of the public who stopped to see what was happening. 'This was a great witnessing opportunity,' he said. 'In just a few days I've talked with more local people than in all of my previous seven years here!'

Pastor Adamović is committed to positioning the new church building at the very heart of the Sketty community. Having moved into a house near the church he wants to see the new building being used





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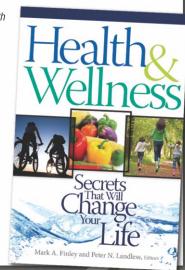


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Enhancing Health

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

Polystyrene fast-food containers and environmental health

An online petition launched by an environmental group called the Friends of Barry Beaches (FoBB) has appealed to the Welsh Government to ban the use of polystyrene fast-food and hot-drinks containers, which they say take centuries to biodegrade and are harmful to the environment.1

They are pushing for the ban across Wales because they feel there are biodegradable alternatives, like cardboard or cornstarch, which are environmentally friendly (biodegradable within days) and readily available on the market.

The group, reported to be 'sick and tired' of removing thousands of polystyrene containers littered across the beaches of Wales, is pressing for change, Councillor Rob Curtis, who is Chairman of FoBB and former Cabinet Member for the Environment and Visible Services at the Vale of Glamorgan Council, states:

'We now need the support of the people of Britain to finally put an end to this fast-food polystyrene madness. Our beach-cleaning volunteers are sick and tired of removing thousands of items of polystyrene from our beaches each year. These products are made from petroleum, a non-sustainable and heavily polluting resource.

'It is costing local councils millions to clean up this mess, week in, week out, but it is also costing our environment a lot more. Marine animals easily mistake polystyrene for fish eggs, these in turn are eaten by larger marine animals and the polystyrene is passed

Drawing attention to other trailblazers like the City Council of New

York (USA) who have unanimously voted to support a ban on polystyrene food containers, Councillor Rob Curtis states: 'It is now time for the Welsh Government to take a lead and vote to protect our communities, our countryside and our beaches from this

In the action to ban polystyrene cups (known as Styrofoam), New York's city council speaker, Christine Quinn, in addressing this issue reportedly said: 'The only thing in the world that lives longer than cockroaches or Cher is Styrofoam.'4

A WalesOnline 30 January, 2014, article by Graham Henry highlighted the actions of 100 other cities across the US, Canada and Europe and the financial benefits if the ban were accepted by the Welsh Assembly.5

Councillor Curtis highlights one successful transition from polystyrene containers:

'McDonalds used to have them and it was one of the major criticisms levelled at it. But it completely changed all of its food [containers] into the likes of cardboard and proper biodegradable packaging which degrades in between seven and 10 days."

We may not be eating polystyrene but it is choking our environment and wasting resources that could be better spent elsewhere

Good health!

¹https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/ban-polystyrene-eps-fast-food-and-drinkspackaging 2lbid. 3lbid. 4http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/campaigners-seek-

editorial

Some years ago I accompanied a youth group on a mission trip to the city of Maputo, capital of Mozambique. We were there to assist Maranatha Flights International with a number of their building projects and they kindly let us camp within the grounds of a school they were erecting for the local conference.

As with most mission trips it involved lots of hard work, rough living and good fun. There was also the opportunity to bond with the warm and enthusiastic members of the small church that occupied one corner of the property – part of which involved our taking the Sabbath service. Unfortunately, being the only pastor present, yours truly was quickly nominated as the preacher.

Fortunately, preaching under such conditions involves the use of an interpreter – sometimes more than one - and that drastically reduces the time that you actually speak. On the other hand, although you may say less, you are expected to say it with a lot more enthusiasm than the average Anglo-Saxon audience would be able to

To cut a long story short, the sermon that day will always be among my most memorable. Not because of my eloquence or its sparkling content . . . but because I put my foot through the pulpit floor . . . and would have gone a lot further had it not been for a steadying hand from behind!

Termites rule!

Yes, there are parts of the world where the termite has the last word. And that is probably the only Maranatha project where they have been forced to do running repairs to a baptistry cover because of boisterousness in the pulpit!

Why am I telling you this today? Simply because, on occasion, I have quietly wished a similar fate upon others, but without the 'steadying hand from behind'. And, strangely enough, such wishes have not been inspired by the preacher's age, gender, pulpit mannerisms, intonation, 'boring' delivery or my professional jealousy. They have been driven by something far more basic: that the speaker cannot (or will not) find his or her way to Calvary.

More foolishness needed

Paul puts it like this: 'For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. . . . Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.' (1 Corinthians 1:18 and 22-24, NIV-UK, emphasis supplied.)

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892), that great Baptist preacher who filled the Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpit in London for

More foolishness needed - from the pulpit!



Julian Hibbert

38 years, is credited with this observation: 'Wherever you begin in your sermon, make tracks as fast as you can to Calvary.'1

Such counsel may sound elementary, but it isn't. Just take the time to reflect on the sermons and spiritual talks that you have heard recently, while bearing this question in mind: did they lead you to Calvary? Perhaps you, like me, are a preacher or teacher. If so, then ask vourself this question about *your* own orations: *are they* more likely to end at Mt Sinai or Mt Calvary? Sadly, I am not entirely happy with my own score in this regard!



'Christ crucified'

There is something we must not miss when we read Paul's comments quoted above, for he is describing a very particular form of preaching, a very special type of sermon. He is encouraging us to preach 'Christ crucified', which is 'Pauline-speak' for sermons that help our listeners understand how we are saved and by Whom.

In addition to that, 'Christ crucified' sermons will show that every biblical topic, life situation or earthly adversity is better understood or coped with as we personally grasp the meaning of Christ's sinless life, substitutionary death and saving grace. J. L. Shuler illustrated this concept in his 1958 *Ministry* article entitled 'The Evangelistic Preaching Wheel':

'What are the spokes of the preaching wheel? Spokes always proceed from the hub of a wheel. Since Jesus is the hub of the preaching wheel, the spokes that proceed from Him must be the doctrines of Jesus. As every spoke needs to be centred in the hub, so every doctrine we preach needs to be centred in the Lord Jesus Christ.'2

Too few termites

I have a sneaking suspicion that Ellen White may also have wished for more termite infestations: 'Many of our ministers have merely sermonised, presenting subjects in an argumentative way, and scarcely mentioning the saving power of the Redeemer. Their testimony was destitute of the saving blood of Christ. Their offering resembled the offering of Cain.'3

Now, before we rush off to wag a finger at our local preachers for not delivering the goods, please consider this. The word commonly translated as 'preach', 'herald' or 'proclaim' in New Testament Greek is *kérussó*, but its use is not limited to what happens in the pulpit.⁴ Take Mark's description of the healed leper's behaviour for example: 'Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news.' (Mark 1:45, NIV-UK, emphasis supplied.) Isn't that actually what all of us are called to do? Aren't we all tasked to 'talk freely' about Jesus and His saving grace?

So it seems to me that Jennie Evelyn Hussey got it right when she penned these words for the hymn 'Lead me to Calvary' . . . for all of us to sing (first and last verses, with emphasis supplied):

'King of my life, I crown Thee now, Thine shall the glory be; Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow. Lead me to Calvary.

'Fill me, O Lord, with Thy desire For all that know not Thee: Then touch my lips with holy fire, To speak of Calvary.'5

https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2007/12/but-where-is-the-lamb.html https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1958/ 08/the-evangelistic-preaching-wheel ³Ellen G. White. Gospel Workers, page 156 ⁴http://biblehub.com/greek/2784.htm 5https://www.hvmnal.net/en/hvmn/h/160

devotional



To the greater glory of God

about are daily deeds done despite

discouragement; hours spent in homely

wasted words; dedication to the task

with the spiritually starving; tea breaks

greater glory of God!

pursuits that help a hapless human being;

stormed and torn down; work done without

assigned; sacrificial service to share hope

postponed because we're too busy to stop:

quality of work put before quantity of ease;

cheerfulness in carrying out church activities;

talents used to teach the untaught about the

ditches of division filled in; walls of separation

by Anita Marshall

I love exploring cathedrals!

In fact I'd go so far as to say that they are the *most* fascinating buildings in the world.

It's not just the sheer *size* of cathedrals. It's what men found to fill them with. Stained glass windows so beautiful they take your breath away; vaulted ceilings you could break your neck looking at; creepy crypts; imposing pulpits; curiously carved choirstalls and chaste chapels of prayer; bold bell towers; intensely chilly tiled floors; needleworked kneelers; glaring, gasping, goggle-eyed gargoyles; items in brass perfectly preserved by caring curators; stone screens and seriously saintly statues; prayer books and beautifully bound Bibles . . . there's no end to the list.

Time stops

Hours can pass like minutes, until creeping gooseflesh reminds you that frostbite is imminent if you linger much longer.

Even then it's hard to hurry away. Cathedrals are not places for hurrying *in*. You either put your head in and withdraw quickly, or you're there for hours till the last little detail has been looked at and you've used up your store of wonder.

I have a rule that whenever I go into a house of God, however humble or huge, I speak to Him before I go searching out its secrets. As I meditate, the mystery of the place begins to move into my mind. The atmosphere of the ages soaks into the senses, and I'm aware once again of the awe-ful task which the men of the Middle Ages took on gladly: to build to the greater glory of God.

Edifices of such grandeur and with these high levels of individual craftsmanship are not as common today. Most of *our* monoliths will moulder before a single century has passed – if they last that long – but some of the great cathedrals have survived ten or more already.

To the greater glory of God

To the greater glory of God. We moan if our tasks take a minute longer than we'd imagined they would. Yet even the great-great-great-great-grandchildren of the men who built to the greater glory of God didn't always see the vision of their forefathers come to fruition.

Which calls to mind a question. When did you – when did *I* – last *build* anything to the greater glory of God?

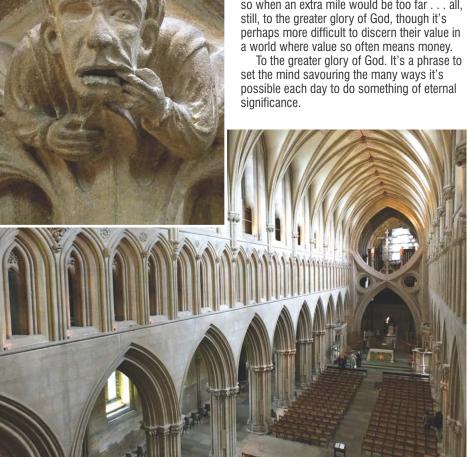
We have cathedrals enough. Holy places are not high on holiday lists. What I'm talking

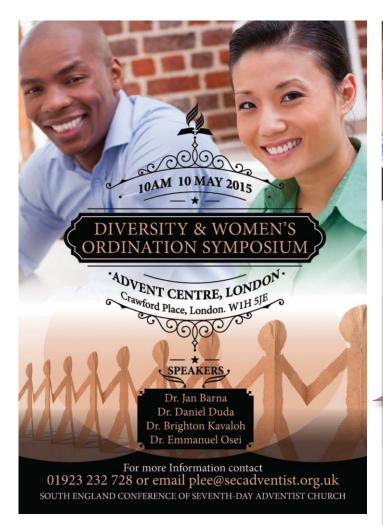
Limitless opportunities

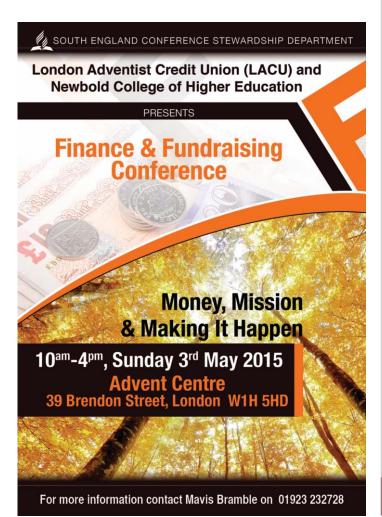
Every day is an opportunity to build for the Master Builder; to create bright new visions to inspire the uninspired; breed wonder where there was boredom; introduce people to the Prince of Peace: distribute books full of the beautiful, boundless grace of God the Father; face the world fearlessly despite doubts and dangers, safe in the all-sufficient arms of the Saviour of souls; keep His commandments, in a couldn't-care-less society that is searching for solace in all the wrong places; love the unlovely and wrongheaded without thought of reward; or, if that's too much, merely be kind - to the kind most likely to make you feel mean; spot in someone the image of their Maker when it's marred by the blemishes of human sinfulness . . . the list is endless, the possibilities prodigious, of ways in which we can build, each day, to the greater glory of God, not always seeing the outcome of our efforts, but willing to leave the finishing of our work to the Man who still holds the world in the palm of His hands.

Humbler holy places

And what about those humbler holy places? The tiny chapels and little-known wayside churches? So easily overlooked yet sacred to the memory of some Christian long deceased? They are there that we might not be overwhelmed by the great cathedrals or our inabilities and fears of failure. They are there to hallow the humble efforts of folk who knew a cathedral was not called for just there, or at that moment. The little deeds of dedication; work done willingly though the worker was weary: seconds taken to see someone through a miserable moment; an extra foot or so when an extra mile would be too far . . . all. still, to the greater glory of God, though it's a world where value so often means money.









Ever had questions about our faith, doctrines or practice that you want to see resolved? In each issue I'll be hosting Q & A in an effort to answer them.

Andrew Puckerin.

'Some of the Old Testament prophecies (for example, Ezekiel's vision in Ezekiel 40-48) never came about. Why?'

This is a big issue, because, while the prophecies made by false prophets may sometimes come true because the Lord puts
His people to the test (Deuteronomy 13:1-4), we can know that 'when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him' (Deuteronomy 18:22, NKJV). Scripture makes much of the value of accurate prophecies in confirming God's power and sovereignty (see Isaiah 45). In fact, the spot-on detail and accuracy of many biblical prophecies, such as Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2, could only result from divine revelation. Hence, if a prophecy from a recognised biblical prophet, speaking on behalf of God, hasn't come about, we need

to identify a reason.

There are several commonly postulated reasons, according to the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary – the 'modernist school of interpretation', which 'denies the predictive element in prophecy altogether'; the 'futurist school of interpretation', which contends that the prophecies concerning literal Israel are yet to take place; the 'British-Israel movement', which teaches the fulfilment of the prophecies through the Anglo-Saxon peoples; and the notion that the prophecies have application to 'spiritual Israel': that is, the Christian Church. The first of these, rather than solving the problem, dismisses God's power outright; the second and third are unlikely, for various reasons; and the fourth, though it 'may, at times, arrive at a valid application', nevertheless 'neglects the primary application of these messages to their historical setting', which 'does violence to the Scriptures'.1

Happily, there is a fifth interpretation. Of prophecies in Ezekiel the *Bible Commentary* says: 'Prophecies respecting a future glory of Israel and Jerusalem were primarily conditional on obedience. . . . They would have met a literal fulfilment in the centuries following had Israel fully accepted God's purposes concerning them. The failure of Israel made impossible the fulfilment of these prophecies in their original intent.'² Ellen White says: 'These promises were conditional on obedience.'³

Is this interpretation biblical? Of course – Jeremiah 18:7-10 tells us that both God's promised blessings and His threatened disasters were often conditional. The case of the Ninevites' repentance upon Jonah's prophecy of their destruction in 40 days is a case in point (Jonah 3). The subsequent non-destruction of Nineveh was no failure of his prophecy, because the prophecy was conditional. Deuteronomy 28 lists a whole slew of blessings conditional on obedience, and curses that would follow disobedience, applicable to the nation of Israel. We might ask, 'Didn't God know that the Israelites would fail to keep their covenant promises?' Yes, absolutely He did – and He told them as much, *precisely* so that they might know that their misfortunes were no failure on God's part, but because of their own unfaithfulness (Deuteronomy 31:16-21). We can learn a lot from them.

¹Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, pp. 25, 26 ²Idem, p. 703 ³Prophets and Kings, p. 704

Do you have a question you'd like to see answered in Q & A? Why not send it in to us at: editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk? If your question doesn't appear in the next issue, don't despair – we will deal with it in due course.

newbold college

The three-mile-an-hour God

What follows is a report by Helen Pearson, Newbold College, on the 10 February Diversity lecture presented by the Reverend Professor John Swinton.

'Sabbath locates us in the restfulness of God. It is a beautiful, slow and gentle picture of two people encountering one another; you can only do that in profound ways when you sit and look at one another. Looking and seeing properly requires a slow rhythm.... Being a witness to Sabbath is transformative, rebellious and really quite disconcerting to the wider society.... Learning to tell the time properly is one of the gifts we can give to a dark and difficult world.'

These were not the words of one of Newbold's Seventh-day-Sabbath-keeping Adventist theologians, but of a minister of the Church of Scotland, the Reverend Professor John Swinton. His lecture focused not on the timing of Sabbath, but on the quality of Sabbath time. He called it: Sabbath, Time and Faithfulness.

As a former mental health nurse and hospital chaplain, Dr Swinton, now a professor in practical theology at the University of Aberdeen, has spent much of his life thinking about and ministering to people with disabilities of various kinds. In relation to this, he quoted Jeremiah 22:16 – To defend the cause of the poor and needy is to know God.

Engaging with such people, indeed any people, requires that we 'take Sabbath moments'. Dr Swinton said. His lecture focused on the nature of God and the nature of time. This is a God, he reminded the largest ever Diversity lecture audience, who is 'timeless'. It is human beings who have created clocks and who focus on the use of time in a manner influenced by the left brain so as to grasp and manipulate the world. 'If we only pay attention to the world in grasping ways we will end up with a society remarkably like our own,' Dr Swinton said.

He described how we think of time in financial terms – as

something we can buy, lose, make and save. It was in response to such a materialistic, grasping, oppressive system, created by Pharaoh and described by Moses, that God commanded people to take a Sabbath rest. 'How much more countercultural could God be?' asked Dr Swinton. 'And in our own day, when you look around, it is not difficult to see that time rules over people, [that it] has become almost demonic. It needs to be redeemed and put to its proper purposes. If we keep Sabbath; if we

realise that we live in God's time; in the time of a God who is timeless and unchanging; then we begin to recognise that time is a gift to be given away. Perhaps we will begin to go more slowly and pay attention to those things that the world considers trivial. 'If I can find Sabbath spaces, I see the world differently because I pay attention to the world differently,' Dr Swinton explained. He went on to say that, in the keeping of Sabbath time, God encourages people to focus on relationships, on encounters with God and with other people. 'Love takes time . . . the kind of society we have created makes it very difficult to love. You can't love on the run.' He also added a personal note: 'Where I am in the university, there are a lot of people who know about theology but not

Dr Swinton focused on the idea of a 'three-mile-an-hour God' discussed by the Japanese theologian, Kosuke Koyama. 'Love has its speed,' he said; 'it goes on in our lives at three miles an hour, it goes at the speed we walk, and therefore it's the speed the love of God walks.' Dr Swinton followed up with the thought-provoking guestion: 'If you are walking at six miles an hour and Jesus is walking at three miles an hour, who is following whom?' He commented, 'If you are impatient, you are in the wrong game.

Bringing his lecture right down to the everyday religious world, Dr Swinton challenged his audience to think about slow spirituality, and to think about what slow care looks like. 'What would it look like if we did church politics slowly and gently?' he asked.

John Swinton describes his work as 'to think through faith not as "believed", but as lived'. In thinking through Sabbath with a room full of many professing Sabbath keepers, there was much to provoke thought as well as to offer balm to the soul. It was indeed moral and practical theology.

For more information on Newbold's Centre for Religious and Cultural Diversity, and the free lectures it hosts, please visit www.newbold.ac.uk/diversity-centre.

NAP is launched

Kirsty Watkins, Publications Co-ordinator

Newbold Academic Press (NAP) was launched recently at a gathering of almost 70 theologians as part of the 2015 European Theology Teachers Convention (ETTC).

many people who know Jesus.'

Adventist teachers and scholars from 15 countries, representing every Adventist educational institution in Europe, including Russia and the Middle

East University, were gathered at Newbold College of Higher Education and NAP was launched during the convention's final evening, following five days of papers and discussion around the theme *Ecclesia reformata semper reformata* (A reformed church, always reforming).

Under the direction of Manfred

Lemke, chair of the NAP
Publications Panel and the
college's academic registrar, NAP
will specialise in the publication
of scholarly essays, papers,
books, and research. Its aim is to
further the college's objective of
providing quality learning and
teaching by publishing a variety
of titles from Newbold lecturers
as well as other internationally
respected Adventist authors.

NAP's inaugural publication was a Festschrift, or collection of essays, titled *Journeys to Wisdom*. It was produced in honour of Dr Michael Pearson, who officially retired at the end of 2013 after over 40 years with the college.

Twenty Adventist scholars and administrators, including a number of Newbold staff, alumni, and friends of the college, contributed to *Journeys to Wisdom* through essays on the matters of Christianity, spirituality and ethics. By demonstrating its impact on fellow travellers, the book attempts to mirror the breadth and depth of Dr Pearson's thinking, teaching and writing.

Dr John Baildam, Newbold's current principal and long-time friend of Dr Pearson and his wife. Helen, had the honour of presenting Journeys to Wisdom to the unsuspecting Dr Pearson. 'As a self-termed exponent of radical orthodoxy and as a critical friend of the Church. Mike is always at his best when students and staff can be themselves with him,' said Dr Baildam. 'Always a popular teacher at Newbold, Mike's methods were often unconventional. A class on existentialism may have found him teaching while standing on a desk – and a young student endeared herself to him when she famously claimed that "you are always at your most interesting when you get off the subject!"

Dr Pearson continues to teach at Newbold part-time, and was recently awarded the honorific title of Principal Lecturer Emeritus by the college.

NAP has a series of publications planned over the coming months, including Dr Bjørn Ottesen's (Head of Newbold's Department of Theological Studies) doctoral thesis, A Strategy for the Adventist Church to Reach the Increasingly Secular and Postmodern Danish Population, and the proceedings of the 2015 ETTC.

Journeys to Wisdom can be purchased as a printed book or an ebook via Amazon UK.

Book review:

Can We Still Believe the Bible? and does it really matter? by Bryan Ball

First published in 2007, Bryan Ball's *Can We Still Believe the Bible?* and does it really matter? was revised in 2011 to mark the 400th anniversary of the first publication of the Authorised King James Version of the Bible in 1611.

Ball first considers seven amazing claims the Bible makes for itself. Among these claims are: that it is a record of God's hand in history and in the future; and that it is the only book to describe how it is possible to have a life after death. These claims could easily be dismissed were it not for events that have taken place precisely as they were predicted by the Bible prophets.

Ball points out that the Bible must be the most remarkable book ever written. It has been scrutinised and ridiculed by sceptics, made illegal by governments, piled up and burned – but it remains the world's best seller.

It may be, however, that the amazing unity of the Bible is most likely to convince the sceptics that it is much more than just a remarkable book. The Bible is actually a collection of books, 66 in all, written by some forty writers over about 1,600 years. However, it is regarded as one book with one central theme: the redemption and reclamation of the human race by a loving God.

Historians once thought that the Bible was inaccurate because it told of places and people not mentioned elsewhere. If this were so, they concluded, the Bible could not be trusted in other matters. In their excavations, however, archaeologists have discovered cities long buried beneath the sands, many of which are named in the Bible. People such as Belshazzar were thought not to have existed until his name was identified in numerous cuneiform records of the time. These discoveries and many more like them confirm the reliability of the Bible.

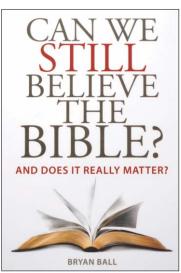
It is not only unbelievers who regard Genesis as being only for children or the very simple-minded; so do many so-called Christians today. They should read the penultimate chapter in Ball's book, 'The Genius of Genesis', where he discusses Genesis 3:15, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil by the greatest Being who ever lived on this earth, in the greatest victory the world has ever known.

Critics and unbelievers ask, 'How can a dead man claim anything at all?' Nowhere in the Bible does it say that Jesus was an ordinary man. Certainly His coming into this world was extraordinary to say the least, and so was His death. This is made very clear in Ball's final chapter. He quotes Isaiah 9 to show who Jesus really was: 'the Mighty God, the everlasting Father'. Many prophecies about Jesus are examined in this chapter. First the predictions are given, and then a description of their fulfilment. The accuracy of these fulfilments is astounding, especially when one realises they were predicted hundreds of years earlier. He shows how the prophecy in Isaiah 53 paints a splendid and accurate word picture of the Lord that is so compelling that this one prophecy alone has caused many people in non-Christian religions to believe that the Bible can be trusted.

Ball writes, 'Christianity could have been stopped in its tracks, before it even got off the

ground. That it wasn't is almost entirely due to the repeated, convincing, unchallenged proclamation of the resurrected Jesus.' Finally he makes this statement: 'The accumulated evidence presented in this entire book tells us that the Bible is true. We can believe what it says. Could anything matter more than all this? It is extremely hard to think of anything that could.'

Available from the ABC on 01476 591700 (Monday-Thursday, 8am-5.30pm) for £9.95, plus £2.95 for postage and packaging.

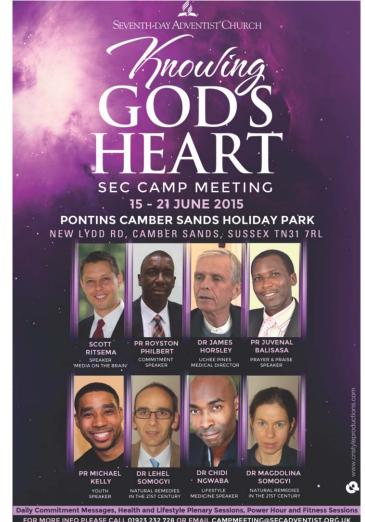




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REBUILDING THE WALLS - REBUILDING PEOPLE | REBUILDING RELATIONSHIPS | INSPIRING EXCELLENCE



feature

A photo finish . . . for Paul Hammond

by the editor

aul Hammond – until recently the manager of the Stanborough Press Ltd – was honoured by the British Union Conference during an official retirement celebration on Sunday, 12 April, at Stoke Rochford Hall near Grantham.

The event marked the end of a long and eventful publishing career – one that started back in Watford on 14 October 1957, when Paul signed up for an apprenticeship in the press bindery. By 1 January 1960 his apprenticeship was over and he was re-classified as a qualified bindery worker. Paul retained this position – but for a year's break at Newbold College – until he was made a charge hand at the beginning of 1968.

At the beginning of 1971 he was promoted to bindery foreman and held that position for the next decade. The next significant career adjustment came in 1981 when Paul worked as both bindery foreman and assistant treasurer for a year, at the end of which his transition to treasury was complete. There he remained until July 1984, when he was appointed as the North British Conference treasurer.

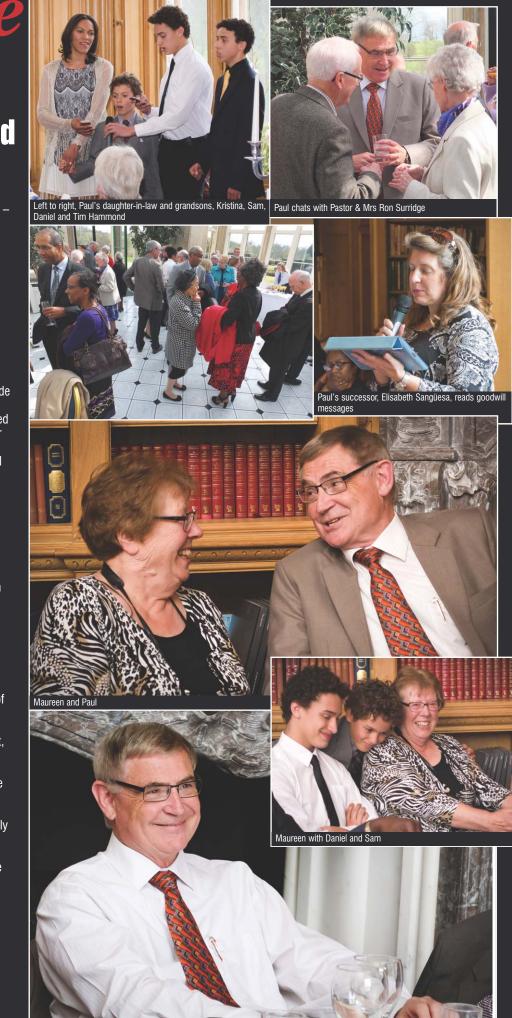
This was a very brief career move, because within six months he was back at the press as the general manager. From then onwards the entries on his service record remain unchanged until the end of last year, when he retired after 30 years as general manager, which is, in all probability, a denominational record!

Achievements

Holding down the post of general manager of a printing and publishing company for three decades is a singular achievement in its own right. There was one other achievement, however, that was highlighted by some of those who paid tribute to him on 12 April: his success in promoting the products of the Stanborough Press to the international Adventist book market.

To achieve this he has travelled extensively and frequently, often to the detriment of his health and the concern of his colleagues. Hopefully, as expressed by some who spoke at the function, retirement will provide him with the incentive to pack his suitcases (into the loft) and spend more time at home with Maureen, his wife. On behalf of all our MESSENGER readers we wish them both a wonderful and gentle-paced retirement together.

We trust that you will enjoy the accompanying 'photo finish' of Paul's retirement celebrations by Andrej Valko and our Messenger designer, David Bell.



news



Fletewood treats Plymouth congregation

Fletewood School's students and parents recently joined the Plymouth congregation to celebrate a special Easter service. It started with some well-known hymns. These were followed by a lively film, 'Welcome to Our Church'

Led out by Mrs Grey, a small chorus of seven students treated the church to five songs, including 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' and 'The Lord God Bless You and Keep You'. Halfway through the programme the children sang 'Praise the Lord Together' and taught the church to sing it as a four-part found. Fantastic!

In between items Pastor Herman talked about God's love for us and how Jesus died to save us from sin. He shared stories of how everyday



people have expressed their love and compassion for others in the simplest ways and in some outstanding ways too, including bringing someone back to life with a personal defibrillator. The children helped him by sharing Bible verses such as John 14:6 (NKJV): 'Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." '

Sadly, some of the children could not make it to the church, but during the week they had all worked on illustrating the children's story. They drew pictures depicting the resurrection of Jesus and presented them with narration as a film.

The congregation were thrilled to have the children taking part in the service and enthusiastically joined in with them as they closed with the school song, 'Side by Side'. Afterwards the students and parents joined the church for fellowship lunch. A great time was had by all.

'Wind-up Penguin' group runs workshop

The Stanborough College of Music, located in the Stanborough Centre at Stanborough Park Church under the leadership of Jiae Ahn, organised a special treat for music-loving local children in the form of an Easter workshop run by the 'Wind-Up Penguin Theatre Company'. This group is composed of singers, instrumentalists, composers and theatre technicians, and has its origins in students from the Guildhall School in London who enjoyed performing to under-privileged children. Katy, who teaches flute at the Stanborough College of Music, has been a member of the group for three years and was more than happy to bring six of her colleagues to run the music and drama workshop for more than forty children up to the age of twelve.

So on Easter Sunday afternoon 40-plus children aged 5-10 years arrived at the Stanborough Centre for some fun — many of them from non-Adventist homes. The theme was Easter and the children were divided into two groups. The under-7 group had a story about Easter. The children for this group didn't have to play any instruments during the session as they focused more on rhythm work through the activities

The other group consisted of children aged 8-12 years who were trying to show the meaning of life from birth to death. 'For the first thirty minutes they had a similar session to the younger group, and then they formed four groups. In the space of one hour they created two or three scenes and then they performed them to the parents. Each scene had two or three actors and the rest of the group made background music while they were acting.





The theatre group performed free of charge and their expenses were met by the SPCM. They obviously enjoyed themselves and posted the following on their Facebook page: 'Seven of our members led a music and drama workshop today at Stanborough Park College of Music. Both parents and children were delighted.'

Ms Ahn is hoping they will return for another session at the end of the year, a view shared by many of the parents and children.

JUNE COOMBS



DIY approach to health

Stanborough Park Church has been holding monthly health meetings as an outreach activity for a long time. However, the March meeting was certainly one with a difference. Upon arrival the attendees were greeted with an extensive array of DIY tools, wood, flowerpots, propagators and potting compost, all part of registered dietitian Karen Hubbard's practical session on growing and using herbs for



This is Karen's rationale: 'As a dietitian I am aware of the well-documented evidence that those with mental health problems and on low incomes do not eat enough fruit and vegetables, are often socially isolated, take anti-depressants and laxatives, and so on. We used to be a nation of home-growers of fruit and vegetables; now it is a rarity.

Karen is following in the footsteps of her uncle, the late Lionel Acton-Hubbard, as a health educator and believes passionately in the role of herbs and vegetables in promoting health. The session provided her with an opportunity to show how easy it is to grow them on a windowsill. She adds, 'Small children can grow seedlings. The elderly and disabled can grow herbs and water plants.

After a brief introduction the audience was given the choice of making wooden windowsill planters or planting seeds in pots to plant out later, and the room was soon a hive of activity, with some sawing, drilling and assembling planters while others occupied themselves potting up seeds. Questions and problems were dealt with by on-hand 'experts', including gardeners and former Stanborough School woodwork teacher, Terry Menkens.

Onlooker Emily Ricketts commented, 'I think it was amazing: strangers of all ages, races and abilities getting stuck in, asking questions, learning and mainly having fun doing something productive.

ADRA-UK trainee programme

ADRA-UK is offering the opportunity for someone to work with our office for a one-year period (starting summer 2015). The ADRA-UK trainee programme will offer the successful candidate the opportunity to work within a high-profile NGO in programme development. The programme is designed to give individuals practical experience in different locations around the world in preparation for a possible career in international

The trainee will be involved with supporting ADRA-UK's implementing partners on proposal development for DFID and the EC, donor compliance, monitoring and evaluation and donor reporting.

During the year the trainee will be based primarily at our Watford office with short-term placements overseas with our partner offices in developing countries.

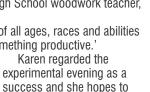
ADRA-UK will provide access to professional training at various levels in international development during the year.

- A Bachelor's degree or NVQ in a relevant subject;
- A strong interest in relief and development issues;
- Excellent analytical, verbal and written communication skills;
- Fluency in English:
- The right to work in the UK prior to submission of the trainee application:
- · Being able and willing to travel to challenging areas of the world;
- A passion for serving hurting humanity;
- Being an enthusiastic motivator;
- . Sympathy with the aims and ethos of ADRA-UK.

ADRA-UK is offering this position as a one-year contract. Possibilities to extend the trainee programme to a career path may be available upon successful completion of the trainee period.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 30 June 2015.





repeat the activity in the future.

JUNE COOMBS

Baptism at Bilston Church

Bilston church members had their second baptism in their new building on 28 March. The candidates were a married couple, Glen and Carol Lewis, who were baptised by Pastor J. Nicholson, who had studied with them during his ministry in Wolverhampton several years ago.

Following her baptism, Carol gave her testimony and it was full of thankfulness for her acceptance into the local church family. E. VICKERS AND C. CROSDALE



Baptism at Milton Kevnes

On 28 March Alin Chilaru was baptised by pastor Michael Anim. But the story really begins in his native Romania, where the predominant religion is Eastern Orthodoxy. As he grew up he sensed an absence of God, both in his life and in the religion he was exposed to. During this period he obtained a book called Journal of Happiness, written by a Jewish convert to Christianity. and some of the Bible references made an impression on him.

He was attracted initially to an Evangelical church, but that did not satisfy. At the same time his father was drawn to Seventh-day Adventism, and after Alin's fall-out with Evangelicalism he decided to see what Adventism had to offer. It made a sufficient impression on him and he started attending church at the end of 2011. He was impressed by their peace and manner of living, though he did differ from them sometimes – they were from a different generation – he simply found a congregation more in his age range and continued to worship with them. In 2013 he came to England and, courtesy of the internet, located the Milton Keynes Central congregation as being nearest where he would live. He pays great tribute to the members for all their kindness and encouragement. BARRY GOWLAND





Reclaim: God wants you back

The theme of the Youth Week of Prayer was 'Reclaim: God Wants You Back', and the Camp Hill and Yardley churches joined forces at Camp

The youth leaders. Leonie Stephen and Anolin Stevens, under the quidance of Dr Patrick Herbert, put together a programme through which everyone was richly blessed. One of the particularly memorable nights was entitled 'Let's Party', during which Pastor Herbert delivered a contemporary narrative of the Prodigal Son story. He had everyone on their feet in a party mood as the prodigal came home.

The week climaxed at Camp Hill in a courtroom setting in which the youth depicted things to come. Dr Gina Miller posed this guestion during her sermon: 'Who Do You Think You Are?'

An interesting twist on the theme 'Reclaim' came the following day when President Lorance Johnson chaired a constituency meeting for Areas 5 and 6. The meeting was to discuss Harper Bell School and we were joined by the chair of the IEB, Rosemary Campbell-Stephens. During her discourse she turned and referred to a word on the youth day slogan, 'Reclaim', stating that as Seventh-day Adventists we need to 'reclaim' our school.

We were all delighted to learn that Harper Bell is no longer in special measures, but now we all need to work together for the best interest of our children and for the future of the school.

PS: The school has 17 places in the nursery section and 17 in the reception class. NATAILE SUTHERLAND

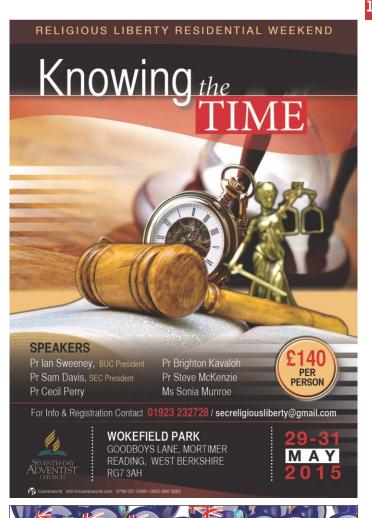


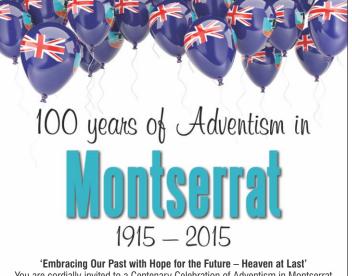
Bournemouth's women's day

On Sabbath, 7 March, for the third year running, Bournemouth Church participated in the international Women's World Day of Prayer, Using the material produced by the international committee representing the Christian women in the Bahamas, our church members dressed in bright colours for the occasion. The theme this year was 'Do You Know What I Have Done to You?' which focused on the Last Supper, when Jesus washed His disciples' feet.

Our Health Ministries leader, Dr Dina Borges, delivered a compelling message about prayer. She had invited the former mayor and mayoress of Bournemouth to join in our service, having met them at our health-screening event in 2013, which they wholeheartedly supported. Two of our children presented them with a bound copy of The Desire of Ages and a bouquet. We were delighted that they enjoyed the service and remained for the fellowship lunch, which was, once again, prepared and served by the gentlemen of the church.

JOY ELLIOTT (CHURCH CLERK AND WOMEN'S MINISTRIES LEADER)





You are cordially invited to a Centenary Celebration of Adventism in Montserrat at the 15th Annual Monserratians and Friends SDA Day of Fellowship Guest speaker: international evangelist Pastor J. Wilmoth James from the United States Virgin Islands

Saturday 23 May 2015, 9.30am

at The Conference Centre, 70 Thomas Street, Aston, Birmingham, B6 4TN

Please bring a packed lunch. Alternatively, you can pre-order a meal on www.mountzioncc.org.uk/online/sda-fellowship-day-meal/

- For further information please contact:
- William B. Riley (Birmingham): 07914 954113
- Marcelle Riley (Birmingham): 07806 434072
- Cuthbert 'Ned' Cassell (Camp Hill B'ham): 01212 513758
 - Andy James (Leicester): 07852 911380
 - James Rvan (London): 02088 082211
 - Robert Allen (London): 07949 750232 Minetta Allen (Luton): 01582 610118
 - Anita Allen (Manchester): 01613 420032
 - Thelma Gage (Milton Keynes): 07949 068398 Peter Kirwan (Preston): 01772 510366







'Songs for Hope' a success

Seventh-day Adventist choirs from Galway and Cork raised in excess of \in 800 on 21 March when they staged a benefit concert in Galway to support the work of COPE, a local charity that seeks to address homelessness in the city.

The magnificent cathedral on the banks of the River Corrib, generously provided by the Catholic Church, was a perfect venue for this event. The programme featured a variety of traditional and contemporary Christian songs. Anna Boishko, a talented musician based in Galway, conducted the choirs. She also featured in several beautiful solo performances. Amerson Silfor, a guitarist and vocal artist from Brazil, who writes and performs many of his own songs, also featured in the programme.

Technical assistance was provided by Ivars Zubovs from the Newmarket Seventh-day Adventist church.

The concert was promoted under the title, 'Songs for Hope'. 'It was an apt title,' according to Tony O'Rourke, pastor of the Galway

Seventh-day Adventist church. 'In 2014, over 700 households in Galway city were affected by homelessness. This included both single people and families. As a congregation we were concerned by the plight of those affected. We began working with the helping agency, COPE, which provides emergency shelter and food around the city.

'This concert is the latest of our support efforts. Last Christmas church members organised a large food collection but felt they should do more to alleviate the suffering of those who have no home. It resulted in this very successful concert.

'This is only the beginning of several upcoming efforts,' says Pastor Tony. 'We are busy planning a concert for Cork in the near future, and also for Dublin.'

If this weekend's performance is anything to go by, the upcoming concerts will also be a great success. One lady from the community expressed her gratitude and said she would go on the Galway radio station to tell others about the vision and kindness of the Seventh-day Adventist church members.

BETTY O'ROURKE

'Special mums' day'

In today's world, where we strive for perfection and image is a key value, it is easy to forget those unsung heroes, special needs parents. Many parents battle daily to maintain an acceptable quality of life for their children and to access facilities in the community that will stimulate their learning and development.



It was with this in mind that Reading and High Wycombe Disability Ministry teams held a joint mothers' day programme in Reading on 14 March. For this the 'special mums' were presented with daffodils in handcrafted pots made by the young adults. This was followed by a multi-sensory play and a special poem by Montel Dublin (below):

M is for meek and mild;

0 is for obedient:

T is for tired hands and feet:

H means a heart of pure gold:

E means everlasting love;

R means rubies.

Put together they spell MOTHER.

Pastor George Asiamah is very proud of his DM team: 'They are leading the way in inclusivism in the church and the community. I can see that many from the community here today are involved and we are making a difference. I say a special prayer every day for these mothers; they are very special to me and precious to God. Thank you for your ministry.'

The day was rounded off by DM families and the community sharing a meal together. PAUL THOMPSON (DM READING)

Promoting Special Needs Camp

On 14 March the Special Needs Camp reunion group received a very warm welcome in Hereford Church. Pastor David Rancic, Hereford's pastor and a member of the camp committee, introduced them, then handed over to Pastor Curtis Murphy, who has been the camp's padre for several years. He and Richard Gray then led out in a selection of the songs that have become camp favourites. A short history of Special Needs Camp as both a BUC and an ADRA project followed. After the children had handed the church's mothers each a gift of daffodils, Pastor Murphy preached the morning message.

After a lovely lunch prepared by the Hereford members, the room was arranged in a more informal way and some of the visitors told of their camp experiences. A question-and-answer session followed before the day closed with camp songs and prayer.

The Special Needs team were then invited to attend the youth congress at Chalfont, St Giles, over the Easter weekend in order to promote their mission by having a display and talking to people. Some of the team were attending the congress and were happy to share their passion for the camp with others. It was interesting to notice how many of the children of those who had served in the team over the thirty-six years of the camp's existence expressed a wish to become involved themselves.

The team are very grateful to the members of Hereford Church, and to Pastor Nathan Stickland and his secretary, Natalie Davison, for making these events possible. They have been able to raise awareness of their mission and recruit several new staff members.

If you would like to share Jesus with people who have special needs during a fun-filled holiday, please contact Joy Bussey at <code>js.bussey@ntlworld.com</code>, or 01923 461044. You can also check out their website and download staff application and reference forms at <code>www.specialneedscamp.co.uk</code> (camper application forms can only be obtained from Joy Bussey).



Youth brighten community's day!

March 21 was a special day for Adventist youth around the globe and a fantastic day for Cambridge Church and its community. The Sabbath service was youth-led, with the emphasis on the theme of the week, 'Reclaim! God wants you back!' In the spirit of Global Youth Day, Cambridge youth chose to be the sermon as they hit the streets and the retirement home after lunch.

Half of the group of young people led a sing-along of well-loved hymns and choruses to cheer the elderly. They were met with the warmest reception and asked to come back soon. The other half of the group went into the city centre, giving out treats to anyone who would receive them and bags of goodies to the homeless. These treats brought smiles to the faces of passers-by and gave them a chance to know about the church.

The youth were unanimous that this kind of community service should be done regularly.

CHIOMA CHIGBO (YOUTH LEADER)





Rhyl Church holds ADRA concert

Rhyl Church in North Wales recently hosted an ADRA fund-raising concert by Leslie Riskowitz and some of his pupils.

Pastor David Foster introduced the musical extravaganza, which included young Emily Dickson ('Fanfare Finale'); 10-year-old Tyler Davies, who played alone and with Leslie; Mr Tomos Jones, a plumber, wrestler, motorcyclist and regular fund-raiser, who played Chopin; Dr Eamon Jessop, head of surgery at Prestatyn, who sang two folk songs to his own guitar accompaniment; Marek Williams (Chopin's 'Raindrop' prelude); and Leslie, who played pieces by C. P. E. Bach, Chopin and Granados, followed by a stunning performance of Chopin's 'Fantasia Impromptu'.

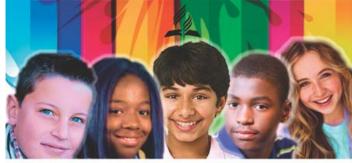
Credit also goes to Tony Griffiths (videographer) and the ladies who provided refreshments.

The evening raised £86 for the 2015 ADRA Appeal.

BARBARA GRIFFITHS

PHOTO: TONY GRIFFITHS











Among the Jews the twelfth year was the dividing line between childhood and youth. On completing this year a Hebrew boy was called a son of the law, and also a son of God. He was given special opportunities for religious instruction, and was expected to participate in the sacred feasts and

observances. It was in accordance with this custom that Jesus in His boyhood made the Passover visit to Jerusalem. Like all devout Israelites, Joseph and Mary went up every year to attend the Passover; and when Jesus had reached the required age, they took Him with them.

Desire of Ages p.75

This service is not a bar mitzvah (for boys) or a bat mitzvah (for girls), but it is a time to recognise an important milestone. Taking the time to pray, share, instruct and affirm. It is a time to praise and consecrate their lives to God.





A Cooking Course with a healthy difference **Intensive 1-week Cooking School** Community Cooking Hub (Level 2)

May 17th -21st 2015 9.00am - 4.00pm

- Understand how to cook
- to boost health & nutrition for mind, body and spirit.
- Use healthy cooking & nutrition for health evangelism in the community.



Course located at Daylesford, a 2,350-acre award-winning organic farm in Gloucestershire.

COST AND SUBSIDIES

This cooking school is subsidised by the BUC Health Ministry department. Cost of cooking course is £375 per person (including cooking course and accommodation). Closing dates for payment and application 4 May 2015. Only 14 places available.

Place confirmed on payment.

CONTACT Angelette: More info on BUC events. createnutrition@gmail.com or 07548 736 592





Plymouth youth service

Every quarter for the last year the youth at Plymouth Church have taken a Sabbath morning service. This guarter's service fell on Global Youth Day. The theme of the day was 'Be the Sermon', so we planned a busy day of outreach and invited friends to join us for the day.

The Sabbath School focused on worship as one of the key forms of evangelism. We pointed out that there are many forms of worship and that everyone has different preferences. We then played a 'Skitguys' video that illustrated our point perfectly. Some of the group then shared some of their favourite songs by Christian artists such as Tenth Avenue North and Philippa Hanna and explained why those songs were important in their lives. We noted that often it is the rhythm/tune of a song that first captures our attention and then a few listens later the words take on more meaning. Most people don't realise what they are singing until it suddenly clicks one day. Imagine the good just a few chart-topping Christian songs would do for our country.

Both services had a wide range of hymns and worship songs, both old and new, to suit all ages.

The main service began with a lively welcome skit leading the congregation into the service. The children's story reminded us to trust in God because He will always want the best for us. Next young Marcia took to the microphone and sang 'Still' beautifully. The main item of the service was a skit on evangelism in which two salespeople discussed their products: one, cars; and the other, everlasting life. The car salesperson couldn't believe that what the other was selling is free! Why doesn't everyone want to share in such a great gift?

After a good fellowship lunch a group of us headed out to two local nursing homes to say hello and sing some well-known hymns for them. They were happy to see us and many joined in, singing along to the songs they knew. We took with us some small gift bags that contained soaps and handkerchiefs with a Bible text card. They asked if we could come back and see them again, so we hope to return in the near future.

The whole day was a big success and we look forward to more outreach projects in the future.

Parents attend courses

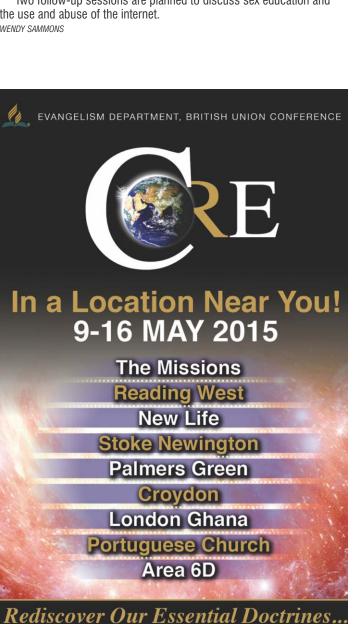
On 7 March twelve parents from the Newport Seventh-day Adventist church in Newport, South Wales, received certificates from Pastor David Rancic.



They had participated in six modules (from September to March) of the 'Positive Parenting' and 'How to Drug-proof your Kids' courses, which were sponsored by Care for the Family in Wales. Their facilitators were Wendy Sammons and her colleague, Christine Miles. Parenting styles, keeping your child secure in a changing world, peer pressure, and how to raise a child while encouraging choice and spiritual values, were some of the topics covered. A specialist drug counsellor was invited, which led to a very productive session in which the youth of the church were included.

The comments from members indicated how valuable they felt it had been to take time to evaluate the joys and challenges of being parents. The participants all agreed that parenting can be an overwhelming experience, and that the discussion groups had enabled them to learn from each other.

Two follow-up sessions are planned to discuss sex education and the use and abuse of the internet. WENDY SAMMONS



While not forgetting the Christ-Centred

elements of each doctrine...



Pastor Paul Haworth, and included demonstrations by Heather using healthy ingredients to make delicious meals that also help to prevent certain ailments. These were followed by talks given by Pastor Paul on food and health-related issues. Over the four weeks the following subjects were covered; carbohydrates, sugars, fats and proteins. Pastor Paul's talks were thought provoking and much appreciated by the audience. Scrumptious tasters were provided after each demonstration and these went down well with everyone! This was an outreach success for Sutton and our visitors have promised to return for the next programme, called 'New Start', which begins in May. MORAY STEWART (COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARY)













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Sunset

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