

# Messenger

News to the churches • 5 June 2015 • Volume 120 • 11



## 'Reclaiming Hackney' – a Good Friday march

Many came out to support the Good Friday march hosted by Clapton Community Church on 3 April. The theme for the march was 'Reclaiming Hackney' from gun crime, unemployment and drug addiction. Among the marchers there were also two courageous mothers whose sons were victims of knife crime.

With their banners boldly bearing slogans like 'STOP the bloodshed as Jesus has shed His blood', the Clapton members, well-supported by the local community, followed the Holloway drum corps as they led the march from Clapton Community Church on Chelmer Road, along the 'murder mile' to the Hackney town hall on Mare Street. All along the way people peered through the doors and windows of houses and shops, or stood along the pavement, with many snapping photographs of the march. Many of these onlookers accepted leaflets and free magazines that the members were eager to distribute to them. Once they reached the town hall, Pastor David Burnett prayed over the community and all who had taken part in the march, after which the dynamic speaker, Ray Patrick, gave a short talk.

The march ended in a deprived estate hall where free refreshments were served, followed by a workshop on gang culture. Members from the community came in and joined in the lively

discussions as to why young people join gangs and turn to crime. There were numerous moving testimonies from the community, with one in particular from a man who had left church over 18 years ago but has now given his life back to Christ and is receiving Bible studies.

This is the first of many peace marches that Clapton Church will host in the future in order to help their local community.

LORI (CLAPTON'S COMMUNICATION SECRETARY)



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## with Sharon Stevenson

This feature will appear periodically in *MESSENGER*, giving Sharon Platt-McDonald, our BUC Health director, an opportunity to converse with various health professionals on topics that will interest our readers.

**Sharon Platt-McDonald, BUC Health Ministries director, interviews Sharon Stevenson, who is currently employed at Newbold College of Higher Education as Director of Student Services. She is a registered nurse with these qualifications: Diploma in Applied Science; Bachelor of Nursing; Master of Arts (Management and Leadership); and Certificate IV in Workplace Assessment and Training. She also has an extensive background in community and aged care management.**

### SPM: Sharon, what inspired you to enter the healthcare profession?

**SS:** Since I was little, I wanted to be a nurse, but as a student nurse I realised that instead of being in the health profession, I seemed to have entered the 'unhealth' profession, where it was usually my role to help people once they had become sick. I found this very challenging.

Then two things happened. Firstly, I heard an illustration about people who were injured when falling off the top of a very tall cliff. The authorities were appalled and argued over how best to deal with the problem. Should they put a fence at the top to stop people falling or place an ambulance at the bottom to deal with the injured? This really made me think that we devote extraordinary amounts of time and money to 'repairing' people instead of 'preparing' them to make healthy choices and live healthier lifestyles.

Secondly, as a student nurse I was shocked to learn that the cancer 'cure rate' is based on whether a cancer victim has survived their illness (and treatment) for five years. I felt that people were being tricked by statistics. In my naivety I saw a cure as just that . . . a cure!

These realisations had a significant impact on where I am today. I learned to look to simple health principles as the solution to many illnesses.

### SPM: What have been some of the highlights of your work?

**SS:** The people. I have always loved working with people. Learning from them; hearing their stories; noticing what worked for some but not for others; seeing their resilience; and being able to make small differences in so many lives.

### SPM: As a health educator, what are your keys for a healthy lifestyle today?

**SS:** Plan ahead. Sleeping, moving, being outdoors and eating well tend to happen more often if you plan for them to happen. Write down your plans. Keep track of your exercise, your sleep, food intake, supplements (if any), weight and little illnesses. Don't make this a chore, but in a simple way let these plans guide you in living a deliberate and healthy life.

### SPM: Excellent advice! Congratulations on your new role as CHIP/LMI Regional Co-ordinator (UK/Europe). What does this involve?

**SS:** Thank you. My role will be to promote and support the delivery of the CHIP initiative throughout the region. This includes training facilitators, making resources available and supporting where I can.

### SPM: What is the CHIP initiative and how does the repackaged version look?

**SS:** The CHIP initiative is an affordable lifestyle-enrichment programme that is designed to help participants reduce disease risk factors by practising better health habits and making appropriate lifestyle modifications.

The goal is to lower blood cholesterol, hypertension, and blood sugar levels and reduce excess weight. This is achieved by improving personal dietary choices, enhancing daily exercise, increasing support systems and decreasing stress. Collectively these will aid in preventing and reversing disease.

The CHIP, or Complete Health Improvement Programme, was formerly called the Coronary Health Improvement Project. The principles are the same, but the presentation and supporting materials have been given a fresh new design and feel, and updated according to the latest research.

### SPM: How does CHIP compare with other programmes currently on the market?

**SS:** People want something that is readily available, affordable and scientifically valid, and that makes a real difference. These are big demands and CHIP is able to answer all of them.

Most other programmes offer quick fixes, or promises, mostly for weight loss, but carry little concern for general health and well-being. Some are very expensive, with a few actually being detrimental to long-term health.

Good health is more than just physical looks, and the CHIP initiative encourages participants to live an optimal lifestyle that promotes good health from the inside out.

### SPM: What do you hope to achieve in your new role?

**SS:** My dream is to see lives changed for the better. This can be done with wide access to CHIP. I would love to see more facilitators in both our church and community sharing with people a health message that can make a real difference.

### SPM: Does CHIP have real outreach potential for our church?

**SS:** People need hope, which we believe is found through Jesus Christ. However, when people face ill health and other forms of distress they often become open and eager for solutions to their immediate problems. By providing them with the skills and tools to regain lost health, the church has the opportunity not just to give the gift of health, but to create friendships through which participants may be introduced to the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

The redesigned CHIP is an excellent initiative to run for the benefit of your local community. The material and content have been well thought out, which makes the programme's presentation a smooth process.

I really need to emphasise, however, that the CHIP initiative works best when it is offered with genuine care and concern for participants. It is not just an evangelistic tool.

### SPM: So, what advice would you give to our Health Ministries leaders or health professionals who may be interested in CHIP?

**SS:** Give it a try! This is a professional programme that was designed to be easy for church members to present.

### SPM: What about training for the newly repackaged CHIP?

**SS:** We are establishing a strategic advisory committee to support the roll-out of the CHIP initiative and we need health professionals with an interest in lifestyle medicine to serve on it. Those interested should email me an expression-of-interest letter, detailing why they would be of value on this committee, supported by a one-page synopsis of their relevant experience, using [ss Stevenson@newbold.ac.uk](mailto:ss Stevenson@newbold.ac.uk).

The next CHIP Facilitators Training Programme will be held at Newbold College on 19 July. Places are limited, so please book ASAP using the above email address.

### SPM: What an enlightening interview. Thank you for sharing with us and we look forward to supporting CHIP.

**SS:** And I look forward to serving the people of the United Kingdom and Europe through CHIP. Thank you, Sharon.



## Abraham shows the way . . .



**Julian Hibbert**  
Editor

handle the ones that do come our way? Are we up to them? Are we actually aware of them? Vested interests can be very hard to identify and extremely difficult to resist, so let's look at a few scenarios that may make things clearer.

### Scenario 1

You are the head elder of your church and you enjoy the position. A member loyal to your leadership lets you know, however, that some members are keen on a change. But you have serious misgivings about the suitability of the person they want to replace you with.

On the Sabbath morning set aside to appoint the Organising Committee you step up and call for nominations. Hands fly up and you quickly have five names, all duly seconded. It seems like a job well done. But you have noticed something no one else has: three of those nominated are related to you in some way. Ethically this arrangement is suspect, but it could assure your reappointment. What will you do?

### Scenario 2

Your church is about to begin a major renovation project. Your non-member brother owns a local builders' merchant and is willing to offer the church a 20 percent discount on any purchases, plus free delivery. He is also willing to give you a 10 percent 'finder's fee' if they accept his offer. You are the church pastor and the members trust your advice and objectivity. What will you do?

### Vigilance is required

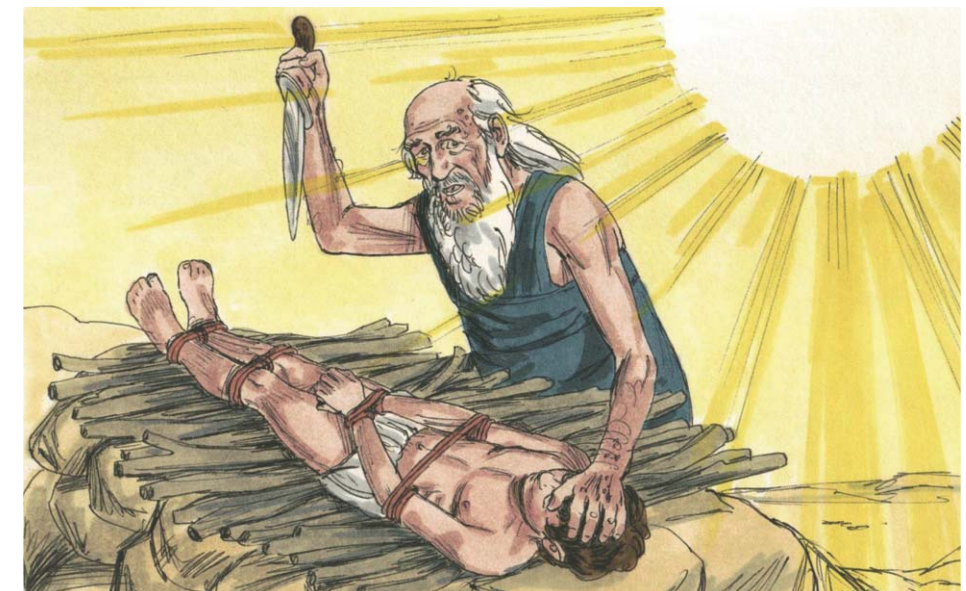
Most of us already know that life is complex, and that not everything that appears right is right. As the wise man aptly put it: 'There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.' (Proverbs 14:12.)

Our vested interests can be such a powerful blindfold, stopping us from seeing the true nature and direction of our lives. Just think about Judas for a moment. He knew the financial challenges Christ's ministry faced; the bills they had to pay. So when confronted by the scene of Mary Magdalene splashing a year's wages over the feet of Jesus, his reaction was that of a typical treasurer: 'Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.' (John 12:5.)

It is at this point, however, that John reveals Judas's vested interest in wishing to prevent such 'wastefulness': 'He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.' (John 12:6.)

Enough said . . . at some point you will have your face off with the forces of vested interest. What will you do?

\*All verses used in this article are taken from the *New International Version (UK)*.



In Genesis 22 we encounter one of the most bizarre events in biblical history. The ageing patriarch, Abraham, receives this instruction from God: 'Take your son, your only son, whom you love – Isaac – and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain that I will show you.' (Genesis 22:2.)\*

How does he react? In a way that defies all human logic. For 'Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.' (Genesis 22:3.)

Without hesitation the old man quietly prepares for a journey, the outcome of which will lead to the death of his long-awaited son. He doesn't question God's instructions. He doesn't discuss them with anyone else. He doesn't remind God that this is the 'promised' son for whom they have waited for decades, or jog His memory about Isaac's 'miraculous' conception. He just packs his bags and does by faith what God expects of him.

Is this why Abraham receives more detailed mention in Paul's hall of faith than even Noah or Moses? (Hebrews 11:8-19.) Quite possibly – that seems a reasonable conclusion to draw. There is one thing, however, that we can say with certainty regarding Abraham and his Mt Moriah experience: *that he is undoubtedly the Bible's best example of someone who avoided the trap of 'vested interest'*.

### What is 'vested interest'?

It is generally defined as a very strong reason, or set of reasons, that may influence us to act in preservation of our self-interest, even if such action is ethically or morally wrong. The fact that I may find myself, like Abraham, in a situation where I am torn between what is right on the one hand, and what appears to be in my best interest on the other, is not in itself wrong. The problem arises when I *choose to act in my own interests*.

In Abraham's narrative he is torn between **obedience to the actual voice of God** (the ultimate moral imperative) and the **preservation of his son's life** (his vested interest). In fact, on the side of his self-interest there is much more at stake: a) the negative effect that such an action will have on his future relationship with Sarah and the family; b) the gruesome prospect of personally slitting the throat of his cherished son, and the memories that will haunt him for doing so; c) the knowledge that his action will scupper God's plan for a chosen people; and d) the fact that his action will be in direct defiance of the sixth commandment (Genesis 26:5), thereby placing his eternal destiny in jeopardy.

### Are we up to it?

I doubt that we will ever have to face such a severe conflict of interest, but how do we





## Hallelujah!

by Pastor Sam Gardner

The word 'Hallelujah' is a very common term in many cultures, and I am

told that it means the same thing in every language. 'Hallelujah' is an expression that we use to convey joy or jubilation because of something achieved, or to indicate the receipt of some great blessing or good news. Sometimes when people are in church and the sermon or song resonates with their present experience they may be heard to exclaim, 'Hallelujah!'

### What does 'Hallelujah' mean?

In the Hebrew language *hallelujah* is composed of two words, namely, *hallelu* and *Jah* (or *Yah*).

*Yah*: This is a shortened form of God's name, *Yahweh*, and we find examples of its use in many Hebrew names such as Jonathan ('Yahweh has given'); Jehoshaphat ('Yahweh has judged'); Jehoram ('Yahweh is exalted'); and Joel ('Yahweh is God'). *Yah* designates God as the creative source of everything.

*Halal*: This is a verb. Verbs are action words, and the verb *halal* means 'to praise'. Therefore the word *Hallelujah* simply means 'Praise the Lord!'

In the word *hallelujah* this Hebrew verb, *halal*, is in the imperative mood, which means that it *commands* the desired action to take place. 'Johnny, sit!' Or 'Johnny, stand!' These are simple examples of the imperative mood. So *hallelu* in the word *hallelujah* is not just a request but a definite command, such as, 'Brother, you praise!' 'Sister, you praise!'

What is this suggesting? Basically, this: if the sun is shining, you praise; if the clouds are looming, you praise; when your boss gives you a raise, you praise; and even though things are going rough, you praise.

*Hallelu* is not just a normal imperative verb; it is an active intensive imperative. It expresses an action that is intensive, thorough, in-depth, rigorous or all-out. Therefore *hallelujah* means to praise with intensity.

How does one praise God intensively? We achieve this when our praise: goes beyond lip

service; is not just occasional, but continual; is not just emotional, but truly spiritual, impacting the psyche at the most intimate level; and is expressed with our entire being – head and heart.

So remember, from today you and I have been served with our summons to praise.

### Why have we been given this imperative summons to praise God?

We should use everything at our disposal to praise God because of whom He is.

### Who is this God?

**He is the mysterious personal Source of all that is; the eternal uncreated One. He has no beginning or ending.** He was before there was a 'was' – before the dawn of human time. He was there before beginnings began to begin. He forever was; forever is; and forever will be.

**Not only is God the Source, but He is the omnipotent Source of everything.** He is so awesome that Isaiah (40:12-14) creates this image of His power: He is able to measure the waters of the oceans in the palms of His hands.

Try to imagine the Great Potentate gathering the waters of the Indian Ocean (68,556,000 sq km); the Pacific Ocean (155,557,000 sq km); the Atlantic Ocean (76,762,000 sq km); the Southern Ocean (20,327,000 sq km); and the Arctic Ocean (14,056,000 sq km) in His hands.

In fact, in verse 22 Isaiah has Him sitting at the controls of the universe and stretching the heavens like a curtain!

So we praise Him because He is our Creator and Sustainer. Everything you do is by His power (eat, sleep, walk, talk, think, drive, and so on).

**We need to praise God not only for what He has done throughout history, but for what He is doing in our individual lives.** Our experiences may not be as dramatic as those of Daniel in the lions' den or the three young Hebrews in the fiery furnace, but the God we serve still works miracles in our lives every day.

The very fact that we are still alive; that we

have employment in these difficult times; that we are able to walk, talk, see and hear is miraculous – and cause for abundant praise.

We need to praise God for these things we so easily take for granted, but most of all we need to praise Him enthusiastically for His saving grace – the greatest of all miracles!

**Another reason to praise God is because it is one of the greatest weapons against the devil.** Along with prayer and Bible study you can add praise to your arsenal of spiritual weapons.

Let me illustrate using the experience of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:16-26), who were arrested and beaten because they cast a spirit of divination out of a female slave in Philippi. Besides being publicly stripped and beaten severely, they were thrown into prison. A command was given to the guards to place them in the inner cell. This inner cell was not only used for maximum security, but it was a place of torture. They were also placed in stocks, with their arms and legs clamped in an immobile position: all of which caused intense cramps.

To be sent to prison in our day is like sentencing someone to the Hilton hotel when compared to the prisons of Paul's day. The prison had the resemblance of a dungeon: a dark, stench-ridden place with no waste disposal facilities or comforts of any kind.

So you can imagine how Paul and Silas must have felt under the enemy's attacks: bruised, battered, bloody and in severe pain. They were in a dark dungeon, in stocks, nauseated by the awful stench of human waste and subject to the dreadful sighs and cries of other prisoners throughout the night. They were under enemy fire!

Such circumstances would have been enough to crush even the bravest of believers, but Paul and Silas fought back with the weapons at their disposal, prayer and praise! The Bible tells us that about 'midnight' – after hours of agony – they were heard 'praying and singing hymns to God'. At midnight – their hour of deepest need – they fought back using the weapon of praise. *Hallelujah!*

God responds to the praises of His people; He dwells in an atmosphere of praise: but when the melody ascended from that dark prison it immediately had God's ear and the response was swift. He shook the prison with an earthquake, bursting open its locked doors, breaking open its stocks and smashing the prisoners' chains. They were all freed and the old devil was on the run because there is power in praise!

Irrespective of your type of bondage or the nature of the things that shackle you down, praise can set you free. Now is the time to let your hallelujahs be heard!

### Re: atheism

Dear Editor

I would like to add a few thoughts on the article, 'Why I am not an atheist' in the *MESSENGER* of 30 April.

I would say to the atheist:

1. Do you think in this enormous universe there could be people superior in intelligence to mankind? Then take this idea to the ultimate level. When you think of what man has been able to accomplish in just the last 100 years, don't you think it is possible for a superior being to be able to create man and other living creatures?
2. If there were a multiverse, as many atheist scientists believe, then all universes would be possible, including one in which there is a superior being who created us and loves us.

For me it takes more faith to be an atheist than to believe in God.

JOHN MCGOLDRICK (BRADFORD CENTRAL)

### Swansea memories

Dear Editor

Reading the article in the *MESSENGER* (8 May) about Swansea Church being demolished brought back memories of when I was a child aged 5 years old.

My parents, Bill and Phyllis Cady, came into the church after a campaign run by Pastor George Emm. Pastor Emm could tell a children's story by just using his eyes. He would come to our house to give my parents Bible studies, but first would tell us children a story.

On the inside of the church wall in bold letters painted gold and red were the words, 'Reverence My Sanctuary. I am the Lord.' These words always

reminded us children that we were in God's house and shouldn't run in church.

Sabbath was held in the upper room (the only room in the church upstairs, thus the name). Auntie Morgan would take us children for Sabbath School. We would go through the lesson story and sing songs. But in those days we had the Picture Roll that had a picture of each lesson for us to look at. We also had memory verse cards that we received if we knew our memory verse. When the lesson was finished we would have our Sabbath School colouring book and colour in the picture for that week. Auntie Morgan had a special colour pencil for us to colour in Jesus' garments.

We used the upper room for lunch – as we lived so far away from church that we stayed for lunch. Sometimes other children would stay as they thought they were missing out! Auntie Morgan would give us each a fig roll biscuit, when we had finished our sandwiches. On our birthdays there was always a sugar fish sweet.

After lunch we would go for a walk to Singleton Park – where there were hothouses with tropical plants – and a banana tree – there were lovely flower gardens too. Or if there was time we would go to Brynmill Park – where there were monkeys to look at and other small animals to watch.

On our return to church it would be young people's meeting. I also remember Pastor Neuland coming with his squeeze box (accordion) and singing songs with us. One I remember: 'This little light of mine'.

When it was our birthday, he would send Bible text cards to us.

Yes, they were happy days in Swansea Church.

PAM DAVIES (CADY)



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 Puckering

### 'Has anyone ever seen God?' William Johnston

There are good grounds for asking this question. Some texts, such as John 1:18 and 1 John 4:12, categorically state that 'No one has seen God at any time' (NKJV). On the other hand, the Lord was said to have spoken to Moses 'face to face' (Exodus 33:11; Numbers 12:8, NKJV); and not only Moses, but also Aaron and his sons, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel 'saw God, and they ate and drank' in His presence (Exodus 24:9-11, NKJV). What's going on?

Well, the very chapter that describes Moses as speaking with God 'face to face' (Exodus 33:11) also says of God, 'You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live' (vs. 20, NKJV). God had to hide Moses in a rock and show him only His back, or Moses would have been killed by His glory (Exodus 33:21-23). Numbers 12:8, which also uses the expression 'face to face', says he saw 'the form of the LORD' (NKJV) – according to the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 'not the actual being of God but some visible form that a man could see and appreciate. The word here rendered "similitude" [KJV] is sometimes translated "likeness" (Deut. 4:15, 16 . . .).'<sup>1</sup> 'Some have witnessed the glory of the divine presence (see on John 1:14), but, except in vision, none have seen the divine person (cf. Isaiah 6:5).'<sup>2</sup> According to Ellen White, the seventy elders 'did not behold the Deity, but they saw the glory of His presence', and even that they could not have endured without being 'awed to repentance' and 'contemplating His glory, purity, and mercy'.<sup>3</sup>

However, the *Bible Commentary* says, 'It was the Son of God, the Second Person of the Godhead, whose glory they saw upon this occasion.'<sup>4</sup> White goes further, saying, 'All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel . . . and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face.'<sup>5</sup> This explains how Moses could approach God – the unmediated greatness of the Father would have consumed him, but he could come through His Son Jesus Christ, who was glorified with Him before the world began (John 17:5, 24).

As Christ said to the apostles, 'No one comes to the Father except through Me. . . . He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, "Show us the Father"?' (John 14:6, 9, NKJV.) We look forward to the time when 'the tabernacle of God' shall be 'with men', and 'He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God' (Revelation 21:3, NKJV). Until then, the divine Jesus Christ is the manifestation of God, our access to the Father.

<sup>1</sup>Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 861 <sup>2</sup>Idem, vol. 5, p. 905 <sup>3</sup>Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 312 <sup>4</sup>Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 632 <sup>5</sup>Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 366

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.



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15-21 SEC Camp Meeting

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## Her ministry . . .

**Ellen G. White (1827-1915) was a woman of remarkable spiritual gifts who lived most of her life during the nineteenth century, yet through her writings she is still making a revolutionary impact on millions of people around the world.**

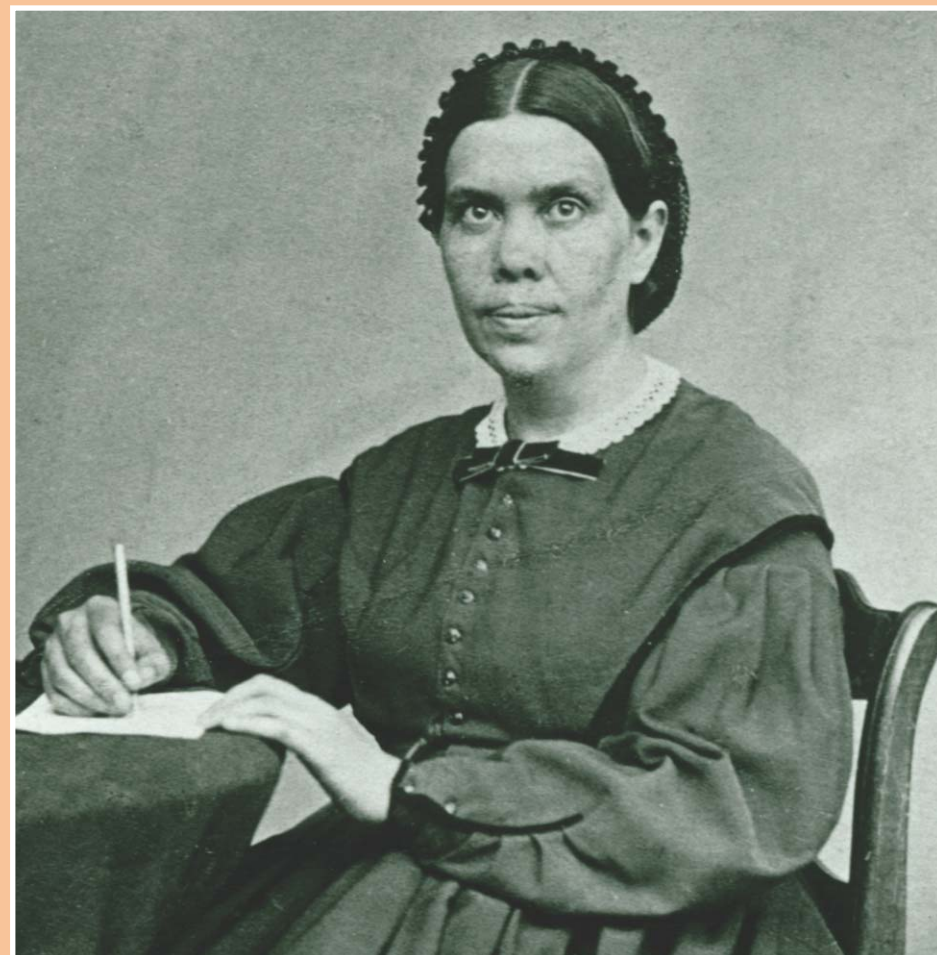
During her lifetime she wrote more than 5,000 periodical articles and 40 books; but today, including compilations from her 50,000 pages of manuscript, more than 100 titles are available in English. She is the most translated woman writer in the entire history of literature, and the most translated American author of either gender.

Her writings cover a broad range of subjects, including religion, education, social relationships, evangelism, prophecy, publishing, nutrition, and management. Her life-changing masterpiece on successful Christian living, *Steps to Christ*, has been published in more than 140 languages.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that Mrs White was more than a gifted writer; they believe she was appointed by God as a special messenger to draw the world's attention to the Holy Scriptures and help prepare people for Christ's second advent. From the time she was 17 years old until she died 70 years later, God gave her approximately 2,000 visions and dreams. The visions varied in length from less than a minute to nearly four hours. The knowledge and counsel received through these revelations she wrote out to be shared with others. Thus her special writings are accepted by Seventh-day Adventists as inspired, and their exceptional quality is recognised even by casual readers. As stated in *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .*, 'The writings of Ellen White are not a substitute for Scripture. They cannot be placed on the same level. The Holy Scriptures stand alone, the unique standard by which her and all other writings must be judged and to which they must be subject.'

(*Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .*, Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Washington DC, 1988, p. 227.) Yet, as Ellen White herself noted, 'The fact that God has revealed His will to men through His Word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Saviour, to open the Word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings' (*The Great Controversy*, introduction). Visit <http://library.ellenwhite.org/content/article/early-years-battle-creek-1827-1862> for a more detailed account of the life and work of this remarkable woman who,

meeting all the tests of a true prophet as set forth in the Holy Scriptures, was one of three people who helped found the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



### Can we have confidence in the prophetic gift today?

by Dr Armando Juárez

#### Ellen G. White passed away 100 years ago. Can we still regard her writings as inspired?

'So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets,



commandments of God', but will 'have the testimony of Jesus Christ'. Revelation 19:10 (NKJV) tells us that 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy', the Holy Spirit in His role of bringing prophecy to God's people. So we should expect to find the genuine prophetic gift among God's last-day people.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God has given this gift to them through the prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White. We also believe that God is not limited to this one prophetic voice. If He chooses, He can raise up others. We want to 'believe His prophets', but how can we know that a person who claims the prophetic gift is a genuine messenger for God? After all, Jesus warns us to 'beware of false prophets' (Matthew 7:15, NKJV, emphasis supplied).

The Bible gives us certain tests to evaluate those who claim that God is speaking through them. We have applied these tests to Ellen G. White, and we must apply them to any others who claim the gift of prophecy. Today we will review some of the ways in which Ellen G. White meets the Bible tests of a true prophet, and these will help to illustrate what we should look for when others arise making similar claims.

#### The tests of a true prophet

There are four major tests described in the Bible.

##### I. Agreement with Scripture (Isaiah 8:20).

'To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them' (New King James Version, here and throughout). In its context, this is referring to receiving communication from the supernatural realm. The messages of God's true prophets today, who claim to be speaking for Him, must be in agreement with God's law and with the prophetic testimony of the whole Bible.

This is one of the things that is most impressive about the writings of Ellen G. White. They exalt the Bible and uphold its teachings, including those that most of the Christian world ignores or rejects. They call for people to obey God's law, yet they teach that Christ, not law-keeping, is what saves us. These writings are saturated in the Word of God. They increase the reader's respect and love for the Bible. *They pass the first test, agreement with Scripture.*

##### II. Fulfilled prediction (Deuteronomy 18:21, 22).

'And if you say in your heart, "How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?" 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.' This tells us that the predictions of a genuine prophet will come true. The Bible also indicates that some prophecies from God through His prophets are conditional and will not be fulfilled if people or conditions change (see Jeremiah 18:7-10 and the Book of Jonah). But fulfilled prediction is a test, and we should expect to see fulfilled predictions

in the work of a true prophet, even though predicting the future is not necessarily the main work of a prophet.

Ellen G. White is not known primarily for predicting the future, though she did so with profound accuracy. Her ministry focused on guiding and helping the remnant church to fulfil its mission. Nevertheless, there are some predictions that have been fulfilled and others that are in the process of coming true, while others still await fulfilment. While a number of her fulfilled predictions relate to the Seventh-day Adventist movement and its work, some address events in the wider world.

For instance, in 1890, when theologians were teaching that the world was getting better and the millennium of peace was approaching, and evolutionary teachers were claiming that man was evolving upward, Ellen White wrote that 'the tempest is coming', and that, among other things, 'thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions' (*The Signs of the Times*, 21 April, 1890; also in *Messages to Young People*, pp. 89, 90). These and other terrible events she mentioned began to be fulfilled about 25 years later in World War I and met still greater fulfilment in World War II.

Another fulfilment of prophecy in our times may be found in the fact that Protestantism in the United States has taken the initiative to mend the breach between the two religious groups – Catholic and Protestant. In the nineteenth century Ellen G. White wrote: 'The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience' (*The Great Controversy*, p. 588). Even 50 or 60 years ago, this was unthinkable and absurd, but on 12 November, 1997, something unexpected happened. As *Christianity Today* magazine reported, for the first time in 450 years, evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics publicly had come to mutual agreement regarding their understanding of salvation. A document called 'The Gift of Salvation' was released, expressing theological agreement between Catholics and Protestants on this fundamental issue that has divided them for so long. The signatories of this document were 16 Catholic leaders and 19 prominent Protestant leaders of various churches and institutions.<sup>1</sup> There are other elements we could mention, but what we want to emphasise is the fact that Ellen G. White prophesied this in the decade of the 1880s, when such unity seemed impossible.

##### III. Acknowledging Christ's incarnation (1 John 4:1, 2).

'Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God.' It is important to mention that this declaration demands more than a simple confession of

Christ's humanity. The principle behind this statement is that a true prophet will tell the truth about Jesus. This will involve upholding Christ's pre-existence, divinity, incarnation, sinless life, atoning sacrifice, resurrection, ascension, priestly ministry, and second coming.

It is well known that in *The Desire of Ages*, among her other writings, Ellen G. White exalted all aspects of Christ's work, guiding the reader to a deep and personal relationship with the Saviour. *The Desire of Ages* presents the life of Jesus, His teachings, His character, and His divine-human nature in a most persuasive and appealing manner.

#### IV. Bearing good fruit (Matthew 7:15, 20).

'Beware of false prophets. . . . By their fruits you will know them.' Jesus tells us that an important test of the prophetic gift is its fruit. What kind of fruit do we see in the life of the person who claims to be a prophet? We do not expect perfection of any human being, but we should expect to see a life committed to God and centred on Him and His work in the earth. And beyond the individual who claims the prophetic gift, what kind of fruit do we find in the lives of those who adopt this person's teachings? Do they follow Scripture more closely? Do their lives show growth in the likeness of Jesus? Are they interested in what Jesus is interested in – winning a lost world to Him? What kind of fruit do we find from this person's ministry? A survey among Seventh-day Adventists in 1980 showed a distinct difference between those who were regular readers of Ellen G. White's writings and those who were not. The readers were more sure of their salvation, more involved in witnessing, more positive about their church, and showed other important 'fruits'.<sup>2</sup> Mrs White also revealed the fruits of genuine Christianity in her personal life, as her neighbours and others who knew her testified.

Additionally, there is the fruit of her ministry in the life of the church. From the beginning of Mrs White's prophetic ministry in 1844 until 1915 (more than 70 years), evidence of divine guidance is seen in its results in the Adventist Church, which continue even today. In the early years there was only a small group of believers, but her counsel and direction have helped the church to grow, until today it numbers more than 18 million baptised members. Her guidance in the area of health has resulted in establishing 175 hospitals and health centres supported by the Adventist organisation, in addition to numerous institutions run by self-supporting ministries.

Ellen White's vision of a publishing work led the church to start such an effort. It has grown from nothing to consist today of 63 publishing houses around the world, printing in many languages. The Adventist church that started in the northeastern region of the USA with a few churches is now established in 210 of the 230 countries in the world. Ellen G. White's counsel in education directed the church to establish its own schools, until today we operate close to 7,800 schools worldwide, from primary schools to major universities.<sup>3</sup> All of these accomplishments and many others



are thanks at least in part to the divine direction given to her. When one considers her limited academic education and her poor health, it is clear that these accomplishments could never have been achieved outside of divine grace working in her.

We can truly confirm that the Bible's tests of a true prophet have been fulfilled in the ministry of Ellen G. White. But some today criticise and even mock Mrs White as 'that old lady', thinking that she is a hindrance who keeps the church from being 'relevant' in our society. They seem ashamed of her ministry. Fortunately, in relation to the entire membership of the church, their numbers are not large. But sometimes they may influence others to be reluctant or suspicious about her writings. However, those who give these writings an honest reading will find several things happening:

**1. The writings of Ellen G. White bring a person closer to God.** So many people have found that these writings have brought them comfort and have energised them. These writings have been a means through which they have come to know God better. Her writings have helped to motivate them to serve the Master and to dedicate everything they have and are to His service.

**2. The writings of Ellen G. White help us love and understand God's Word.**

Though Ellen G. White wrote no commentaries on the Bible, she wrote about Bible subjects with a depth of understanding that is often breathtaking. Her major books that deal with significant portions of Scripture include the Conflict of the Ages series (*Patriarchs and Prophets, Prophets and Kings, The Desire of Ages, The Acts of the Apostles, and The Great Controversy*), *Christ's Object Lessons, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, and the first portion of *The Ministry of Healing*. These books, and others from her writings, offer spiritual help in knowing God and deepening our love for Him, while they give us a more comprehensive knowledge of God's plans for the world, His church, and ourselves. By pointing us repeatedly to the teachings and themes of Scripture, the writings of Ellen G. White encourage us to make the Word our study, and they enhance our understanding and appreciation of it.

**3. The writings of Ellen G. White help us find answers to questions and deal with doubts.**

As a youth I received my early education from evolutionist and Marxist teachers. Suffering and death were difficult subjects for me to understand. But when I began to study her books they helped me understand the great controversy between Christ and Satan, and I became a Seventh-day Adventist. The great controversy theme is an important contribution of Ellen G. White to the theological world. Although others have recognised this theme, no one else has presented it with the comprehensive scope that she has, starting with the problem of evil in heaven and proceeding through the ages and into the eternal kingdom of God in the future. This was a divine revelation to the

# MTTC: Bristol

## Bristol Central visitors' day – 'the return'

Sabbath 25 April was an important day in Bristol Central's calendar, as the church welcomed friends, relatives and acquaintances to a special visitors' day. Planned as part of the Mission to the Cities programme of events for Bristol, a concerted effort had been made to pray for and contact people who had links with the church.

From the launch of Mission to the Cities prayer cards had been given out to members and regular visitors for them to record the names of people they knew and pray for them. Together with the hard work of the organisers, some 71 personal invitation letters were sent out, and in the end 30 visitors attended throughout the day. Included among them were former members, partners and spouses of members, other family and friends.

You could see the happiness on the faces of people as they greeted friends they hadn't seen for some time. Everyone was made to feel appreciated, and special welcome packs containing small gifts and literature were given to the visitors.

A special Sabbath School programme was put on, with the lesson being brought to life by 'interviews' with the disciples of Jesus. This reflected the theme of the lesson, which was the 'Call to Discipleship', and was followed by a moving audio-visual presentation on the cost of discipleship.

The speaker for the day was Pastor Ray Allen, regional director for Adventist World Radio, who was brought up in Bristol Central. Before he presented his message, he said that he was 'so glad to come home'.

A catered lunch was provided for the visitors and supporting members, and the church hall and grounds were packed, as people became reacquainted with many laughs and smiles to prove it.

The afternoon programme offered something a little different, as Pastor Allen spoke a bit about his work for AWR. The children then took part, including some Pathfinders, as the Bristol Central Drum Corps marched into church, to the delight of many. The afternoon was rounded off with a very popular wordsearch quiz, led by one of the organisers, Brenda Sabadin.

All in all, it was a very special day for visitors and members alike, and the church hopes to continue this contact and invite these friends back for future events.

IAN SABADIN

remnant people and it provides a better understanding of God's remedy for the problems of sin, evil, pain and suffering.

**4. The writings of Ellen G. White provide helpful counsel for Christian living.**

In such books as *Steps to Christ* and *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, we find valuable instruction on how to become a Christian and live out one's commitment to the Saviour. *Steps to Christ* especially has brought countless people to a saving knowledge of Jesus and shown them how to live the Christian life. Books like *Christian Service, Gospel Workers, Colporteur Ministry and Evangelism* have helped both ministers and laity know how to share their faith. *The Ministry of Healing* and *Counsels on Health* contain Ellen G. White's major instruction on healthful living, leading many to more vibrant health and longer life. *The Adventist Home and Child Guidance* give helpful counsel on having happy, Christ-centred homes. In so many areas of life, Ellen White's writings point the way to a life that not only meets our own needs, but honours God and blesses others. Those who have given these writings a fair chance in their lives have found that they can say with Jehoshaphat, 'Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.' (2 Chronicles 20:20, KJV.)

### Conclusion

So we may believe that Ellen G. White is inspired by God because:

1. She fulfils all the biblical tests of a true prophet, and
2. We have evidence of the God-given value of her ministry in:
  - a. Her timely messages for the church, for its leaders and members alike;
  - b. Her positive influence in helping the church become involved in areas such as healthcare, education, publishing and missions;
  - c. Her specific advanced instruction in many areas of life, such as nutrition, health, and education, that indicate her divine inspiration;
  - d. And not least, the impact that she has had in the lives of so many. Her writings have led millions to a deeper love for God and a commitment to His service.

Therefore let us praise God and celebrate the centenary of this special 'gift of light' He has given to the Advent movement.

<sup>1</sup>*Christianity Today*, 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together: A New Initiative', by Timothy George, 8 December, 1997, pp. 34, 35; 'The Gift of Salvation' document appears on pp. 35-38  
<sup>2</sup>For a description of the survey and its results, see Roger L. Dudley and Des Cummings, Jr, 'Who Reads Ellen White?' *Ministry*, October, 1982, pp. 10-12  
<sup>3</sup>Data taken from the 2014 Annual Statistical Report of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, available online at [documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics/ASR/ASR2014.pdf](http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics/ASR/ASR2014.pdf)

## Praise witness comes to Bristol

On the afternoon of Sabbath 2 May around 20 adults and children ventured into Broadmead Shopping Centre in Bristol, to witness in the form of praise. Although rain had been forecast all week, God answered our prayers and it was fine and dry.

The 'praise witness' event was positively received by onlookers as they soaked up the mixture of Christian music that was presented. In fact, many expressed their appreciation for the beautiful voices that echoed through the centre. It led to several conversations and some good contacts were made, with one young man saying that he had been looking for a church to attend, while others were so impressed with the singing and music, and indicated that they would also like to come to the church. A young mother also expressed her thanks for our presence because it 'uplifted her heart to hear such beautiful music'.

The event was organised by the Bristol Joint Evangelism Committee as part of the Conference-sponsored Mission to the Cities programme for Bristol. Various Bristol churches were represented at the event, as were a number of special invited guests from London, Gloucester and Yeovil taking part. This helped to provide a variety of different music and worship styles, which was no doubt a key to the success of the event.

The children's choir made a particularly powerful impression on the shoppers and it brought a smile to the faces of the many who stopped to listen. They obviously appreciated the simple message in the children's music, as they sang songs such as 'This Little Light of Mine'. Besides witnessing in song and music, the event had been planned as an opportunity to give out books and literature to the passing public. In all, over 300 copies of the brand-new *Steps to Christ* (Bristol edition) were given out, together with the leaflets *Jesus: Who Is He?* and *Who are the Seventh-day Adventists?* Again, the children were a particular inspiration and example to the adults, as they gave out the majority of the literature, with some of the children even witnessing to the passers-by.

Many who took the time out to listen told of their belief in God but that they lacked a close relationship with Him. The Holy Spirit certainly began His work in the hearts of men and women that day. It was a very positive witnessing event, and those who took part also felt particularly blessed. Already, plans are being made for other such events in the future.

LEANDRA PHILIP AND IAN SABADIN – PHOTOS: NELSON KHONJE

## Nigel does it again!

On Sunday 26 April the Shakespeare Stratford-upon-Avon Marathon was held on what was a cool day, providing ideal conditions for one of Leamington Spa Mission's members, Nigel Clark, to run for ADRA-UK as part of the Annual Appeal. This is an event that he has run several times in the past and provides him with a perfect opportunity to turn a hobby into a way of helping raise money for ADRA through the generous sponsorship of the Mission members and others.

It certainly is a motivator to have the support and donations of the church members, especially in those last 4 miles when things start to hurt a little (or a lot), and this year was no exception to that.

Nigel managed to finish the race in 3 hours





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and 36 minutes, thereby raising approximately £600 in sponsorship money, making it well worth the effort. He would like to thank everyone for their support, and challenges others to think of doing the same around the country.

DIANA CLARK





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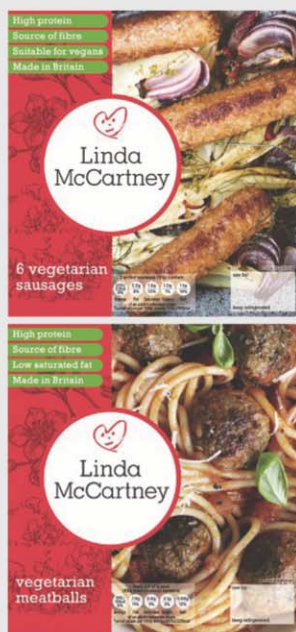
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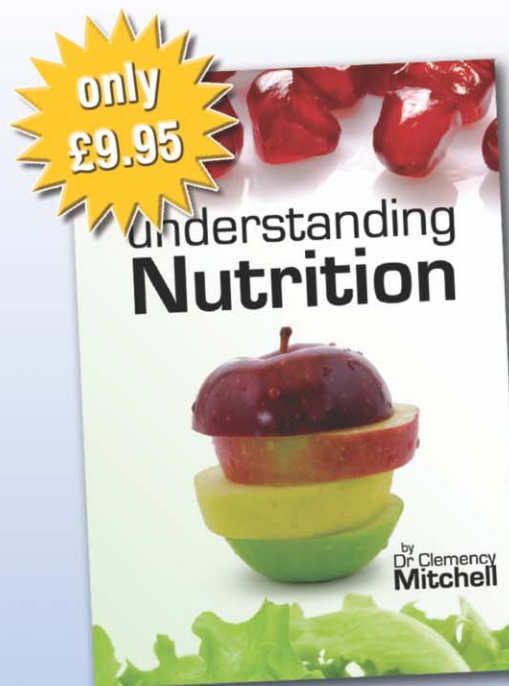
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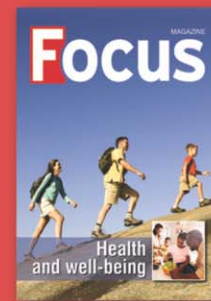
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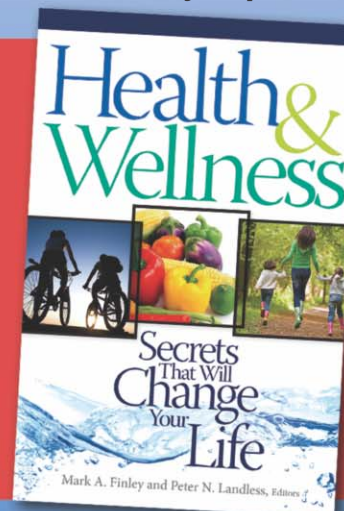
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# church growth . . .



## Grace overflows in Dundee

Two bright young people, Naomi Eutionnat and Mervyn Owusu-Ayim, stepped forward at the Dundee church on Sabbath 25 April to be baptised by Pastor Marcel Ghioalda. Naomi, who came from France to study psychology at a university in Dundee, quoted from Revelation 22: 'Behold, I am coming soon' – as she and her father gave a testimony in a mixture of French and English. Mervyn, who is applying to study medicine, said he understood his life is not his own because he is often in hospital, and that he owes it to God. He recognised his need for God, who understands and forgives, to rescue him. He quoted Psalm 103 (NIV): 'Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name . . . forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases . . . and crowns you with love and compassion.'

In his address Pastor Ghioalda emphasised that our lives should showcase what goodness looks like. Many youngsters gathered round the baptismal pool to witness the beautiful service. Our prayers of grace follow the young candidates as they move forwards on their spiritual journeys.

PROFESSOR JOHN C. WALTON



## Ashford International's joy . . .

Seven precious souls were baptised on Sabbath 25 April at Canterbury Church by Pastor Israel Williams. The young people received Bible studies for a year prior to the event and will become members of Ashford International Church, Ashford, Kent.

The Canterbury church was packed to capacity with well-wishers, family and friends. The Pathfinders in full dress uniform stood to attention when each young person entered the pool and was baptised. At the conclusion of the service, three more precious souls expressed their interest in having Bible studies and being baptised. To God be the glory!

A huge thank-you goes to Brenda and the members of Canterbury Church for the use of their baptismal pool and for their hospitality on the day.

PAM MILLINGTON (ELDER, ASHFORD INTERNATIONAL CHURCH)



## Lodge Causeway baptises three

Three people were baptised at the Lodge Causeway church, Bristol, on 14 March, initiated by Pastor Rudy Puskas. The service was attended by the candidates' families and friends, visitors and members. The new additions to God's family are Lucy Smith, Shona Mullen, and Dale Lewis, who were prepared by months of study with Des Mills.

The ceremony drew mixed reactions from the candidates: Shona said, 'I'm so nervous,' but still managed to face this moment with the support of the audience.

It was different with Lucy. She said, 'I'm very excited. I've never done this before.' She was very energetic throughout the service, and those present could see how delighted she was.

'I felt more complete as a Christian.' These were the words from Dale. This ceremony helped Dale to realise his deep need of God in his life.

The entire church seemed filled with the Holy Spirit as the family and friends, visitors and church members celebrated the event.

VALENTINA ARAMA

## . . . and faithfulness

### A Camp Hill member for 50-plus years!

Magnol Thompson celebrated her 92nd birthday on 3 April 2015 and was presented with a pretty flower arrangement at Camp Hill Church. She has worshipped there for over 50 years!

In her short appreciation, Magnol, who originates from Barbados, testified that God has been her sustainer and the church has been her life.

JACQUIE HALLIDAY-BELL



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Reflecting Christ, p. 121

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## Glasgow's revival

Glasgow Church recently held a week-long revival campaign (11-18 April). The event was full of enlightening health talks, inspirational messages and beautiful singing, with the speaker being Pastor Stephen McKenzie from London.

On the first Sabbath of the campaign there was the dedication of Sisanda and Tinotenda Maguranyanga, while on the last Sabbath Eliana Mendez was dedicated. This was followed by the baptism of seven candidates by Pastor Rory Mendez: Musa Goremucheche, Desire Sonder, Micheal Njuguna Gitongu, Thabitha Stephen-Njuguna, Vimbiso Hapazari, Thobekani Ngwenya and Anastacia Miller-Geza. What a wonderful end to a revival week!

BEVERLEY MAKWAKWA



## We need more . . .

Yes, we need more couples like D. H. Clarke and his wife, Joy, who recently celebrated 50 years of faithful marriage. Congratulations. D. H. is the first elder of Brixton Church.

KELLEE HALLIBURTON

## Tamworth ordination

On Sabbath, 21 March, Pastor Milan, assisted by his head elder, Sunny Mullings, ordained Heather McIntyre as an elder of the Tamworth church. We wish her well in her new role.

PAULINE NEWTON



## Gloucester ordination

On 18 April the Gloucester church witnessed the ordination of Errol Westcarr by Pastors Osei and Namuchana. Errol, now first elder in his church, was not always an Adventist. In fact, he had been searching for many years for the truth in other

denominations and belief systems. He had a desperate desire to see 'the Bible come alive' – to see it being lived out in the lives of believers. It was this that eventually brought him to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and led to his baptism in 2002.

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**Closing date for applications is Monday 1 June 2015.**





### Aberdeen's overseas outreach

On Wednesday 11 February, Pastor Njabulo Ndlovu (Aberdeen Church) joined Victor Igwe, Helen Fronda, Taliika Sullivan and NEC taskforce worker, Eddie Tache, and began their journey from Aberdeen to Bansud, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines, to proclaim the Gospel.

This trip, wholly funded by the Aberdeen district of churches, was in response to an invitation from Pastor Nephthali Manez, president of the North Philippine Union Conference, who had spent time at King's College, Aberdeen University. Thanks to the Personal Ministries department, headed by Devon Searchwell, the plans finally materialised.

According to Pastor Arnel Gabin, president of the South Central Luzon Conference, who met us at the airport, we were the first European missionaries to come to that part of the Philippines!

Arriving in Bansud, we were greeted by a

welcome parade of children from the Malaya Adventist elementary school.

Soon we met committees that had been working tirelessly to prepare for our reaping campaign.

Using funds that had been sent four months ahead by Aberdeen Church, the Bansud district of churches had employed three laymen to give preparatory Bible studies, and together with the local pastor and other initiatives such as dental and medical work, 60 souls were awaiting baptism before we arrived.

During the campaign, the Aberdeen team supported a children's and music ministry; gave nightly health talks; and took care of the preaching, which was done by Pastor Ndlovu. His messages were also translated into Tagalog, a local language.

The Aberdeen team held a combined week-of-prayer series for several Adventist educational institutes in the district in addition to their work each evening. Mid-mornings and early afternoons mainly involved visits to

interests along with a variety of other missionary activities.

The Lord rewarded the united effort of our visiting team and the extraordinary efforts of the local church members with the baptism of 149 souls, who were baptised in the sea by Pastor Ndlovu and seven other pastors!

Further funds were donated to the Bansud church building, and plans for nurturing each of the newly baptised members were put in place.

All of this was made possible by the wonderful generosity of Aberdeen members, who raised over £5,000 for this project. But our work is not complete, as we want to inspire the members of the Aberdeen district of churches and the Scottish Mission at large to engage in domestic community-based outreach initiatives and to realise such results here at home, too.

Let's not forget that we are all called to be missionaries wherever the Lord has placed us!

TALIKA SULLIVAN

### MTTC: York

After an official launch on 14 March, York Church's Mission to the Cities began on 29 April with a health expo at the local community centre in Tang Hall. With the skills and enthusiasm of the health professionals among the members, and the rest of us who were eager to assist, we spent the afternoon providing health advice to the local community, as well as getting to know them a little better.

Those who visited the expo were treated to free health checks, bottled water and good advice on healthy living. There was even a relaxing massage for those who wanted it. The event was supported by a Stanborough Press book and health food sale, and demonstrations of delicious cooking by the ladies of York and Hull churches. The visitors loved the expo and found it very beneficial, with many expressing a desire for more in the future, assuring us that they would promote it to their friends, family and their customers.

We certainly hope that this health expo will have been the first of many to come, alongside further community outreaches as part of York's Mission to the Cities.

CLAIRE HALL (COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARY, YORK)



### Plymouth family camp

For the first time in years, Plymouth Church held a family camp at Chapel Porth, Cornwall. From 17 to 19 April a group of 25 of its members met on the windy caravan site to fellowship together.

After work on Friday we met at the camp to enjoy food prepared by our fabulous camp cook, Ophelia Herman, and an evening worship on the theme of waiting for God's timing and not our own by Pastor Clifford Herman (organiser of the event).

We woke to a very windy campsite after a chilly night but were soon warming up in worship. For Sabbath we were also joined by friends from Bodmin and St Austell and were blessed with a special guest speaker, Pastor Sam Davis (SEC president). His message led on from the Sabbath School discussion, 'Who is Jesus Christ?'

After a good lunch we walked through beautiful scenery to Wheal Coates Tin Mine, a classic landmark for the area. To keep all ages entertained we collected wild flowers to identify back at camp.

Everyone participated in evening worship with specially prepared items: skits, solos, poems and devotionals. To finish the day we all gathered around the campfire and toasted marshmallows and dough balls.

On Sunday, after a full cooked breakfast, we played a variety of games, with rounders being the favourite. The weekend ended on a high with hopes for more camps in the future. It was a great way to get to know our church family.

JENNIE HALL



### Lowestoft youth outreach

In the past eighteen months Lowestoft Church has been running a youth club for 8-14-year-olds, as there appeared to be a vacuum in town for activities for this age group. Around eight young people, mainly contacts for our Holiday Bible School, attend fortnightly on Thursday evenings for two hours. The majority of these young people are from foster family homes and they have heard very little of the love of Jesus, which makes it very important for us to be careful about how we introduce them to spiritual things. We make this a matter of prayer because we need God's help and wisdom in working with them. We have, however, seen an improvement in attitude and behaviour among them. The youth enjoy a simple cooked meal each visit as part of the evening's events and we pray that this club will be of benefit to these young people.

PASTOR RIO ESPULGAR

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rsamuel-ouadjo@secadventist.org.uk

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(Area 6)

**WHEN: Saturday, 19th Sept. 2015**  
9:30am - 6:15pm  
**Sunday, 20th Sept. 2015**  
10am - 3pm

**WHERE: Wolverhampton Central**  
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**GUEST SPEAKERS:**  
**Clair Sanches** (TED Children's & Family  
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Contact NEC Children's  
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**TRAIN** ...up a child in the way he  
should go, and when he is old  
he will not depart from it.  
Proverbs 22:6



## Area 1 DOF and Plymouth sponsored walk

Sabbath 25 April saw the seven churches of SEC Area 1 meet together for their biannual day of fellowship. This year the day was hosted by Bodmin Church in The Shire Hall. Though the weather was overcast and dull the fellowship was warm and welcoming.

The day's preacher was Pastor Llew Edwards, who spoke about 'Core Values', encouraging the audience to love people and not just claim to be Christian. The theme song, 'God Loves People More Than Anything', reminded us that we too should love people unconditionally, applying our 'core values' to encourage and bless the people around us rather than condemn them or make them feel uncomfortable.

The afternoon programme began with praise and worship that included special music from several of the district's churches, one of which was a song beautifully rendered in several African languages and English at once. Our speaker then gave us more experiences demonstrating how we should live by Christ's example, loving and serving our fellow man. A fantastic day was had by all.

A small group from Plymouth Church met the next day (Sunday 26 April) to walk 12 miles from Wadebridge to Padstow and back to raise money for a Romania mission trip taking place in August. Our group of seven young people are raising funds to help with community projects in Romania over a ten-day period this summer.

After a drizzly start we arrived in Wadebridge to find the weather just as beautiful as the scenery. Setting out in high spirits the first stretch flew by, but I think we all found the return journey a struggle towards the end. All for a good cause though!

JENNIE HALL

## Flower arrangement at Holcombe Road

During March, the Women's Ministry department of Tottenham Holcombe Road organised a four-week flower arranging course. It was attended by women and young girls from both the local community and the church. Some men came to observe the ladies' creativity each week but they chose to remain spectators and 'judges'. The church benefited from the lovely arrangements on display every Sabbath.

The programme was designed to introduce the participants to the techniques of classical and contemporary floral arrangement. It was taught by local florist Thelma, of Thelma's Flowers, and participants were able to learn to create arrangements for special occasions in the home and elsewhere. The arrangements included bridal bouquets, candle arrangements and aqua packets.

SUBMITTED BY CAROL YOUNG



# obituaries

## Ronald Alber Ellis (1925-2015) d. 3 March.

Ron Ellis was born in Kent and had one sister. As a young boy his family moved to London, close to Westminster Cathedral. His father was the caretaker of an office block and the family lived in the top-floor flat. Ron loved playing in beautiful parks such as St James and Green Park, but not without adventure, for he once got locked in at dusk.

Ron later put his boyhood experiences to paper, adding a moral ending, and had them published in magazines for young people. Ron was called up for service in the Second World War and suffered both gunshot and bayonet wounds, but God had plans for Ron and he survived. Following the war, God spoke to Ron when he attended some meetings in London. There he heard that God loved him and that Jesus would come a second time and put an end to all wars. Ron accepted Jesus as his personal Friend and Saviour and was baptised in 1952.

Through mutual friends, Rita and George Fordham, Ron met Barbara (Joyce) Kirby and they were married in Lowestoft Church in 1956. They worked in Watford for Granose and the Stanborough Press for a short time, but they then moved to Lowestoft to be close to Barbara's family. Their only daughter, Karen, was born in 1961. Ron was a good father and proud of his daughter, and worked hard to support his family.

Ron was very creative and devised many programmes in the church, including musicals about Bible stories interspersed with songs from our church choir performing at the Lowestoft church and The Dell Rest Home. He also wrote several short stories, which appeared in the church's magazine. Ron served in most offices during his time in the church, becoming an elder in 1986. Karen also married Andrew Richardson in that year. Two granddaughters were born: Laura in 1988, and Hannah in 1991. Due to work commitments Karen and Andrew moved to Bedfordshire in 1997.

Ron suffered a stroke in 2009 and this, together with the onset of Alzheimer's for Barbara, prompted them to move to a home in Bedfordshire to be near



Karen and family. Sadly, Barbara died in May 2013. Ron bravely endured his problems and difficulties cheerfully, continuing to trust in Jesus to take care of him.

He fell asleep peacefully on 3 March 2015. After the funeral service in Lowestoft Church he was laid to rest with his wife to await the coming of his Lord and Saviour, Jesus. The service was conducted by Pastor M. Walker, who gave a comforting message to family and friends, reassuring us of the hope of the resurrection, and we eagerly anticipate that great day when partings will be no more.

J. SAMPSON

## Margaret Patricia Vine, 'Peggy' (1920-2015) d. 31 March.

It is with sadness that we record the death of Margaret Patricia Vine (fondly known as Peggy) on 31 March 2015 in a Bournemouth nursing home. She was 95 years old.

Peggy was born in Belfast on 25 March 1920. Her mother, Agnes Barron, was from Northern Ireland, and her father, Herbert Perceval Graves, was from Southern Ireland. Sadly, he died when Peggy was just two years old from wounds he suffered in World War One. She was raised by her mother, who became an Adventist as a result of evangelistic meetings in Ulster Hall, Belfast.

Peggy and Agnes moved to Switzerland for her mother's health, and later to Bournemouth, where Peggy grew up. As a teenager she trained as a Bible worker at Newbold College in Rugby, and then worked in Bristol with Pastor O. M. Dorland. She married Raymond Douglas Vine in Bournemouth and joined him in his ministry in wartime Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. In 1947 they moved to Watford, where Ray became Sub-Editor at the Stanborough Press. For the final years of their ministry they worked in the Oxford-Swindon district. After Ray's death in Oxford in 1992, Peggy retired to Bournemouth in 2007. There she was cared for by her family and the NHS. The funeral service at Bournemouth Crematorium on 20 April was led by Pastor Daniel Thompson, who preached from Psalm 23. Conference officers from the



BUC and SEC kindly attended. Donations from mourners were sent later to the Adventist Discovery Centre in harmony with Peggy's wishes. The whole family thank their friends for their support in so many ways at this time.

Peggy will be remembered for her unselfishness, hospitality and steadfast love for God and His people. She is greatly missed by her three children, Richard, Robert and Monica, and their spouses; her nine grandchildren and their spouses; and her seventeen great-grandchildren. She was truly a 'mother in Israel'. We know that we shall meet her on the glad Day of Resurrection, when Jesus comes again.

RICHARD L. VINE (ELDEST SON)

**Edith Ackerman (1924-2015) d. 25 April.** Edith Griffiths was born on 2 July, 1924 in Manchester, England, and died this year in York, PA, USA. She was a member of the York church (PA, USA). She was employed for 30 years as a proofreader at the Review & Herald Publishing Company and with Home Study International. Edith was a nurse in World War Two, after which she married Orva Lee Ackerman of Kantner, PA, in 1950.

She is survived by her daughter, Brenda-Jean Lemkelde (PA, USA) and her sister, Brenda Simnett-Pratt (TX, USA). She was preceded in death by her husband (d. 2007) and her infant son, Barry Lee Ackerman (d. 1955). KENNETH & BRENDA-JEAN LEMKELDE

## Can you help?

### Children's felts for Sabbath School

If anyone has any they no longer require, please contact Phyllis Ebanks by phone on: 07950 556212 or email: [peebanks@hotmail.com](mailto:peebanks@hotmail.com). They would be put to very good use. Thank you for considering this request.

### Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary

A serious young Bible student is looking for a used set of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. If you have one that is no longer in use and would like to donate it for this good cause, please contact the editor at [editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk) or phone 01476591700.

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## First family prayer retreat

Horley Gatwick Church's prayer warriors felt that their church family (and that of their sister church – Redhill) needed a bonding and restoring experience.

The idea of holding a prayer retreat themed 'God Restores' was hatched with a target attendance of 100 people, including children and non-Adventist family and friends.

The aim was for the whole church to take ownership of this retreat by being involved in the planning. A special logo designed by the children was used on the bright orange T-shirts, name badges, and so on, to ensure that they had a part too.

The prayer retreat (3 to 5 April) took place in the beautiful setting of the Horsley Park De Vere Venues in Leatherhead – an

old mansion surrounded by 700 acres of woodland and a lake! Adult attendees numbered 61, including four non-Adventists and three hotel guests who occasionally popped in to the sessions. There were also six non-Adventists among those in the children's section.

The focus was on prayer from the moment of registration, and people were encouraged to submit their requests for prayer by the prayer group members at the beginning and end of each session. There were inspiring workshops and sermons on 'forgiveness' and 'praying', led by visiting pastors Linda Mukwada and Ray Patrick and supported by our own, Pastor Matthew Herel.

In order to draw us into the lovely woodland and bring us closer to nature and God, we had



a children-led prayer walk, with stopping 'stations', to pray, sing, or discuss a particular topic from Exodus.

The prayer walk drew very positive feedback and for some it was one of the retreat highlights!

Attendees were encouraged to make use of the hotel's many leisure facilities: swimming pool, sauna, gym and mini indoor football machines!

A 'family fun night' was scheduled for Saturday evening

after a 'banquet-style' dinner, attended by all.

As it was the Easter weekend, the hotel staff very kindly organised an Easter egg hunt for the children, while the adults each received a plastic egg from the prayer group leader. Inside these there was a paper on which to write a prayer request, which could be changed when necessary.

*SIBUSISWE MUTAMBARA AND MARILYN LE FEUVRE (HGC PRAYER MINISTRY)*

## Huddersfield gets creative

Children's Ministries Day, Sabbath 28 March, was an active one for the children at the Huddersfield church. The theme centred around the Bible character Joseph with the title, 'God made us a family'. Invitations went out weeks before to the parents of those children who attend Sabbath School. Normally these parents don't stay for church, so it was lovely to have them there for the whole day.

After presentations from the children in Sabbath School and singing from their praise team, Auntie Pastor Patricia delivered an interactive sermon in which the children were fully engaged. The Community Services team laid on a lunch for them, which was followed by Creative Church – a new experience for our older members and friends, but one that was warmly embraced. Using the Joseph theme, we were all encouraged to paint, draw, colour, glue, and be as creative as time allowed. Thank God for 'Auntie Pastor Patricia's' appealing ministry, her time and effort put into each programme, and the encouragement she gave to the whole church.

*CHRISTINE POWELL*



## Messenger

Volume 120 • 11 – 5 June 2015

Editor: Julian Hibbert  
Design: David Bell  
Proof reading: Andrew Puckering

COPY FOR No. 13 – 11 June 2015

Copy should be sent to the Editor, *MESSANGER*, The Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL. Tel: (01476) 591700.

Fax No: (01476) 577144.

Email: [Editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:Editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

Send high-resolution pictures to:

[dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

ABC Sales line: (01476) 591700

Mon-Thurs only, 8am–5.30pm.

[www.stanboroughpress.com](http://www.stanboroughpress.com)

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

For general enquiries, email:

[info@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:info@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

Printed in the UK.

Visit the BUC website at: [www.adventist.org.uk](http://www.adventist.org.uk)

ISSN 0309-3654

### Sunset

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	Lond	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
June 5	9.12	9.24	9.24	9.52	9.53
12	9.18	9.30	9.30	9.58	9.59
19	9.21	9.33	9.34	10.02	10.03
26	9.22	9.34	9.35	10.03	10.04

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