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Messenger

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BUC Session – 2016

This is a brief report on the nominating process that took place on the first morning of the recent BUC session. A report on other aspects of the event, such as the constitutional amendments and the quinquennial strategic plan, will follow in the next issue.

The 2016 British Union Conference Session opened on Thursday morning 30 June at Newbold College with over 300 delegates singing the hymn, 'Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah'. God heard their supplication and by the end of the morning they had elected those who will serve the BUC for the new five-year term.

BUC officers

President: Ian Sweeney (re-elected)
Executive Secretary: John Surridge
Treasurer: Earl Ramharacksingh

Mission presidents

Irish Republic/Northern Ireland: Dan Serb
Scotland: Paul Tompkins
Wales: Emanuel Bran

BUC department directors

Communication: Pastor Richard Daly
Education: Kathleen Hanson
Evangelism: Eglan Brooks
Family/Children's Ministries: Leslie Ackie
Health/Women's Ministries: Sharon Platt-McDonald
Ministerial Association: Emmanuel Osei
Youth/Pathfinder/Chaplaincy: Alan Hush

Executive committee

Ex officio members:
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BUC Executive Secretary (Secretary)
 BUC Treasurer
 SEC President
 NEC President
 Irish Mission President
 Scottish Mission President
 Welsh Mission President
 Evangelism Director
 Youth Director
 Stanborough Press Manager
 Stanborough Secondary School Principal
 Messenger Editor
 Newbold College Principal



BUC President, Pastor Ian Sweeney, flanked by Earl Ramharacksingh (BUC Treasurer) and Pastor John Surridge (BUC Executive Secretary)



Outgoing presidents, officers and directors



The new mission presidents: Pastors Dan Serb, Paul Tompkins and Emanuel Bran

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MESSENGER schedule update: Owing to circumstances beyond our control, the next issue of the magazine will appear one week later than scheduled – 5 August instead of 29 July. The publication dates for the rest of the year will be unaffected. *Editor*



At the close of this morning session Pastor Ian Sweeney invited those directors and mission presidents who were not returned to office to come forward. He then thanked them sincerely for their years of dedicated service, which was followed by a standing ovation by the delegates.

This group included Paul Lockham (Executive Secretary); Victor Pilmoor (Treasurer); Llew Edwards (Ministerial Association Director); Nathan Stickland (Youth/Community Services Director); Cyril Sweeney (Children/Family Director); Bernie Holford (Scottish Mission President); David Neal (Irish Mission President); and Anne Pilmoor (Education Director). Some of these employees are retiring while others are awaiting reassignment.

[SOURCE: BUC NEWS]

Lay members:
 Alison Awuku (SEC)
 Annette Hutchinson (SEC)
 Paul King (SEC)
 Malcolm Martin (SEC)
 Mfakazi Ndebele (SEC)
 Shelley Prince (SEC)
 David Santineer (SEC)
 Clement Morgan (NEC)
 Jackie Linton (NEC)
 Emily Tebbs-Ogutu (NEC)
 John Walton (SM)
 Joseph Donaldson, Jnr (IM)
 Crystal Knight (WM)

Pastors:
 George Kumi (NEC)
 Michael Mbui (SEC)
 Maureen Rock (SEC)
 Steve Thomas (SEC)

editorial

In the weeks prior to the 'Brexit' referendum I received an email enquiring as to whether I would be making any editorial comments on the matter. Until now, I have refrained from doing so – and for a good reason.

The issues over which the referendum was held have shown just how fundamentally the British differ among themselves over a number of critical issues, not the least of which is 'uncontrolled' immigration. This has understandably made many immigrants feel insecure, unwanted and very apprehensive about the future: a situation that will probably persist until the Government is in a position to spell out how it will handle the matter – hopefully with compassion and understanding.

The Adventist Church in the UK is truly a multicultural organisation – one that derives much of its present membership strength from abroad. This reality was on display during the British Union Session held this past weekend (30 June to 2 July), not just among the delegates, but also among those we chose to lead us for the next five years. Bearing this in mind, you will appreciate why I have felt it prudent so far to remain silent about such divisive political issues!

A time to speak . . .

King Solomon wisely told us that there was 'a time to be silent', but he quickly added that

A time to be silent . . .

there was also 'a time to speak' (Ecclesiastes 3:7, NIV-UK). Perhaps that moment has come – for all of us.

It seems that the vote to leave the European Union has been interpreted by some elements within British society as a mandate to show how grossly prejudiced they really are. Since the 'Brexit' vote there has been a noticeable increase in xenophobic incidents, particularly against Muslims, Jews and Poles. They have, however, not been the only ones to have 'Go back home!' and worse shouted at them.

How should we react in the face of such abuse? The Welsh first minister, Carwyn Jones, eloquently emphasised what our response should be: 'It is incumbent on all of us, no matter how we voted last week, to stand up to anybody who thinks they now have licence to abuse people of different races or nationalities.'¹

The right to be respected

Christians should be foremost in highlighting and protecting the right that all men and women have to be treated with respect. Let me cite my basic reason for making this assertion – with which I hope you will concur.

Humanity is a family and when Paul made that stirring speech in Athens (Acts 17) he cut to the chase regarding our interrelatedness:

'The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth . . . he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. **From one man he made all the nations**, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. . . . "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "**We are his offspring.**"' (Verses 24-28, NIV-UK – emphasis supplied.)

Paul does not let Babel's legacy of diversity and diaspora define us, as many do. Instead, he takes us back to our common ancestry in Adam and Eve. Gone, brushed aside forever in Paul's mind is the idea that some are more equal than others in God's sight. God has no favourites, and no stepchildren. '**We are [all] his offspring.**'

The only thing . . .

Edmund Burke is credited with this well-known line: 'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.'² I regard this as a challenge to each of us personally, to our congregations and our Church leadership today. If we consider ourselves to be on the side of good, why should we stand idly by as hate-driven individuals abuse immigrants and deface their clubs and holy places? Perhaps the time has come for us to counteract their influence by visible demonstrations of kindness directed at their victims.

The cards, posters, flowers and other symbols of support that the Polish community of Hammersmith received when their club windows were recently sprayed with paint, profoundly touched me. Surely there could be no better way to show our utter disapproval of prejudice and xenophobia than with similar acts of support. Just imagine the positive impact it would make if a squad of uniformed Pathfinders helped remove the paint from a targeted mosque or synagogue. Just imagine . . . then join with other good men, women and children and do it!

We are in this together

Our politicians will have to grapple with a range of difficult and sensitive problems during the Brexit experience that lies just ahead of us and they need our prayers. They also need us '**to keep calm and carry on treating everyone with respect**' – irrespective of where they come from, how they worship (or not), the languages they speak or the colour of their skin.

Let's remember . . .

'**Don't abuse or take advantage of strangers; you, remember, were once strangers in Egypt.**' (Exodus 22:21, *The Message*.)

¹<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jun/27/sadiq-khan-muslim-council-britain-warning-of-post-brexit-racism>
²<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/e/edmundburke377528.html>



Julian Hibbert
 Editor

Enhancing Health

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

Are you in pain? Part 1 – an overview

It has often been said that pain is the body's signal, informing us that something is wrong and, as such, we should pay attention to it. However, it is easy to pay more attention to relieving the pain than to what is really causing it. In part 2 we will look at why pain occurs and the diverse approaches to addressing it.

Let's begin with an overview.

In 2012 I wrote an Enhancing Health article entitled, 'The Problem with Pain', which looked at the negative effects of the overuse of multiple medications in our attempts to treat the various types of pain we experience. Subsequent issues highlighted the varied natural remedies for pain relief and the evidence-based research that supports their use.

The latest UK research has highlighted the extent to which pain affects our lives. For example, a recent report in *The Guardian* that was published on 21 June 2016 carried this headline: "Silent epidemic" of chronic pain affects nearly 28 million in UK, study suggests'.¹ Study author, Allen Fayaz from Imperial College, London, states: 'Pain is really under-represented in terms of the public awareness of it. . . . Nobody ever talks about chronic pain, it is like a silent epidemic.'

The researchers used data from 19 studies that included almost 140,000 adults and were carried out by researchers from Imperial College, London; Arthritis Research UK; and the University of Aberdeen.

Listing the research data from the study, the BBC Health News² outlined the following findings:

- 43% of the estimated 65 million population experience some form of chronic pain and 14% of UK adults live with chronic widespread pain.
- 8% of UK adults experience chronic nerve (neuropathic) pain.
- 5.5% live with fibromyalgia – a long-term condition that causes simultaneous pain in many different parts of the body.
- Women were more likely than men to be affected by chronic pain, irrespective of age or pain type.

The following comment is found on NHS Choices: 'Living with chronic pain has a negative impact on quality of life. It can affect mobility and limit daily activity, affect employment, social and personal life, and affect mental health (e.g. depression). . . . There are a number of treatment options available on the NHS for people struggling with chronic pain, such as physiotherapy, pain management courses, and counselling.'³

For more information on how to get help from the NHS for your pain, visit: <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Pain/Pages/Longtermpain.aspx>

In the next issue we investigate the causes and treatment options for pain.

Good health!

¹<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2016/jun/20/silent-epidemic-of-chronic-pain-affects-nearly-28-million-in-uk-study-suggests> ²<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-36574299>
³<http://www.nhs.uk/news/2016/06/June/Pages/Almost-half-of-all-UK-adults-may-be-living-with-chronic-pain.aspx>



A working men's club is 'converted'

by the Editor

The Barnsley church, a group of around 30 active members,¹ has taken on the daunting but exciting project of relocating their congregation to a new complex across town. The old chapel,² although neat and well appointed inside, suffers from a number of limitations. Foremost among these are its location, lack of accessible parking, narrow three-storey design with steep stairs and the fact that it no longer meets the requirements of their community outreach projects.

At the heart of this outreach is their clothing bank, something that has been running for almost two years with very positive results. Until now the clothing has been stored on the second floor of the church under very cramped conditions that severely restrict their ability to serve those in need. From the accompanying photograph³ readers will get a good idea of just how limiting these conditions really are.

In their search for an alternative church building the congregation purchased a run-down working men's club⁴ and are now in the process of renovating it to their specifications. On 25 June I was present for the first worship service at this new venue, and what a wonderful experience it was. The renovations are far from finished but impressive progress has been made, especially when one bears in mind that this is largely a DIY project driven by pensioners! Not only is their work neat and thorough, but their enthusiasm is also a joy to behold.⁵

God's hand is visible

While listening to the members who turned up that Sabbath at what was formerly the Ashfield Club, I heard some clear evidence that God is quietly lending them a hand. For example, when they began looking for suitable seating to fill the area that has been designated for worship – the club's former 'concert room' – they were directed to a website that sells second-hand chairs. There they found 150 matching conference chairs that had just been taken into stock,⁶ and it didn't take much to persuade the supplier to sell them off at £10 a piece! Both that amount and the transport costs were soon covered by generous donations.

Mike Rossitor, Barnsley's head elder, is active in the town's Hudson Taylor Society. This great missionary was born in Barnsley in 1832, became a missionary to China, and later founded the China Inland Missionary



If your congregation is currently engaged in an inspiring project like that in Barnsley, then let the MESSENGER editor know. Perhaps we'll feature your story too.



Society. Recently Mike had the opportunity to take Mary Liu, a Chinese Christian who was visiting the society, to look at their renovation project. After her visit she put a wad of notes in Mike's hand – £1,500 as a donation to the project!

Incidentally, Mary is not a Seventh-day Adventist, but lives in Taiwan where she has Adventist friends. She firmly believes that the Adventist hospital there is the best in the country, and God let Barnsley reap the benefit!

Many of the ceiling tiles at the project need replacing but due to cost (£3 to £4 plus VAT each) the members decided to keep the best of the old ones and intersperse them among the new tiles – which doesn't always look that great. Around that time, however, they were forced to appoint a different electrician, which was an unexpected setback. God is able, however, to turn setbacks into stepping-stones. The new electrician was able to source the tiles for £1.10 each including VAT! And, once again, faithful members stepped forward to provide the funding for an all-new ceiling. The new electrician also did a great job of keeping the costs down.

Great potential

Carlton Douglas, the lucky pastor of Barnsley, must be excited with the prospect of having such a facility to use as the venue for future outreach, both of an evangelistic and a community service nature. The venue is also located near some of the needy areas of town where there is great potential to run felt-need projects – ones that will directly improve both family and community life in the area.

One of those projects, to which we have already alluded, is the church's clothing bank. Since its inception almost two years ago it has helped to clothe at least 140 people who would otherwise have struggled to keep themselves warm and decent. Largely due to the persistence of Mike and Alison Allen, and their committed team, the new venue now has a special storage and changing room – set aside for this purpose – with more racking to follow.^{7/8}

The clothes bank, which was registered by the members as a charity under the name Clothe with Compassion, is run on a very discreet basis and by referral only, usually from sister charities such as Christians



Together and the Food Bank. It has also done commendable work among Barnsley's asylum seekers, much of which has been made possible by an Eritrean woman named Asmira. As an asylum seeker who speaks good English, she now assists them as a translator. Although she is a member of another Christian church, she now attends the Barnsley Adventist church too.⁹

The clothing bank also supplies special 'baby packs' to the midwives at the local hospital for use among the destitute mothers who have their babies delivered there. During its first year of operation the bank delivered over one thousand major items of clothing, most of which were brand-new.

'How is that possible?' you may be thinking. I was surprised too, but this is how it works. The clothing comes from among that which is confiscated by Trading Standards. Instead of using it for landfill, they now donate it to an organisation known of as HIS Church, with the proviso that they carefully account for

its sale to a select group of bona fide charities at ten percent of its assessed value. The money HIS Church receives is used to stitch identifying labels¹⁰ onto the clothing; to sort and warehouse the stock; and to manage the project.

The bank also processes used clothing, but only the best is washed, ironed and repacked for distribution. Where they find children who need school shoes, they purchase these from local outlets at the best possible prices.

There is more . . .

There are more aspects to the 'conversion' of this working men's club than I could tell here, but let me close with this. Some of the locals, curious as to what is happening to the old club, have popped in to find out for themselves. This has led to a number of interesting conversations and the chance to make friends. Among them was a young woman who pricked up her ears when she heard talk of a regular Parent/Toddler group

Investors and developers: If you are interested in acquiring the old church building please contact Mike Rossitor at: mbrossitor@hotmail.com or telephone him at either 01226 291212 or 07709512653.

that was being planned once the renovation was finished. She let it be known that she was enthusiastic to help with something like that and already had social media contact with a large group of mums who would be interested too!

Please pray for this project in Barnsley: for its DIY pensioners and their younger assistants; for those that might be impressed to join them for a brief 'working holiday'; for anyone who might not be able to join them but has the means to help in other ways. If you want to know more then please contact Mike Rossitor at: mbrossitor@hotmail.com or telephone him at either 01226 291212 or 07709512653.



'Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse' . . . by Pastor Jeff Couzins

Some time ago, the elders at the church where I ministered asked me to preach on the subject of tithes and offerings, so I preached on 'Loving Obedience'. Following on from that sermon I met with a few members of foreign extraction, who challenged me about the content of my message.

The challenges focused on eight areas: (1) What should be the main reason for returning tithe? (2) Sending tithe to the 'home union'; (3) The tithing of Abraham to Melchizedek; (4) The curse in Malachi 3:9; (5) Possible redemption of tithe; (6) The NT letters not addressing the issue of tithing (Hebrews discussion of Melchizedek excluded); (7) An apparently incomplete usage of tithes by the administration if compared with the biblical mandate; (8) A sample of reasons why some people do not return tithe locally.

Firstly, with reference to the main reason for returning tithe: I believe it is not a test of faith, but an expression of love. Why do I say that? Well, Jesus, and the apostles after Him, persistently linked law and love. For example, as wickedness increases love grows cold (Matthew 24:12). So when I preached on the subject of 'Loving Obedience', I spoke of returning tithe as a response

of love. My reasoning is this: because love cannot really exist without obedience (see for example, Matthew 22:37-40), the returning of our tithe in accordance with the command (see Malachi 3:10) is an expression of our love for God. When I extend this thought, I see our freewill offerings as an expression of our faithfulness.

Ellen White wrote: 'Tithes and offerings for God are an acknowledgement of His claim on us by creation, and they are also an acknowledgement of His claim by redemption. Because all our power is derived from Christ, these offerings are to flow from us to God. They are to keep ever before us the claim of redemption, the greatest of all claims, and the one that involves every other. The realisation of the sacrifice made in our behalf is ever to be fresh in our minds and is ever to exert an influence on our thoughts and plans. Christ is to be indeed as one crucified among us.' – *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 479.

In terms of sending tithe to a 'home union', I was asked why I thought so many members living locally were not returning tithe locally. When I responded that many people were still sending their tithe back home, their reply surprised me. One of those

present said that people are sending back their money thinking they are returning tithe to their home countries; but they are not. We didn't understand what he meant, so we opened our Bibles to re-evaluate what we thought we knew about returning tithe.

And my friend appeared to be right. People may think they are returning tithe to their home nations, but such action does not conform to what the Bible describes as a tithe. That is to say, every recorded biblical instance of returning tithe is accompanied by the word, or idea, of personally *bringing* the tithe, not *sending* it (see for instance Deuteronomy 14:24-26). Tithe is brought; it is never sent. For example, Abraham brought a tithe of the recaptured goods to Melchizedek. Even with all his large retinue of attendants and soldiers, Abraham chose to bring the tithe personally.

Other examples of bringing tithe include Deuteronomy 12:11; 14:28; 2 Chronicles 31:5, 6, 12; Nehemiah 10:37, 38; 12:44; 13:12; Amos 4:4; Luke 18:12; Hebrews 7:5-9. God said, 'Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.' (Malachi 3:10, NIV.) The prophet of the Lord said, 'The tithe is sacred,

reserved by God for Himself. It is to be *brought* into His treasury to be used to sustain the gospel labourers in their work.' – *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 249 [emphasis mine]. Although God did not say send your tithe, there are exceptions in the case of housebound people who want to return tithe – they normally rely on able-bodied members who bring it for them.

This notion of *bringing* tithe, though, is challenging in some areas of the world, because some treasury departments encourage electronic payment of tithe to enhance efficiency. So, the question of where tithe should be returned to – to their so-called 'home unions', or to where they are 'benefiting from ministry' – needs to be considered in the light of two significant factors. One is that sending tithe abroad deprives the local church of tithe, which may directly result in reduced budgets and the retrenchment of pastors. Secondly, our church has a well-functioning system whereby we already distribute resources to the less prosperous regions of the world, the so-called 'home unions'. These are the mission offerings, which are collected and fairly distributed by the General Conference. These include the weekly Sabbath School offerings; the thirteenth Sabbath offering; the investment offering; the birthday and thank offering; Week of Sacrifice offering; and those for specific entities, such as Adventist World Radio. There is also a percentage of tithe that filters upwards to the General Conference, part of which is redirected to less prosperous areas of the Church.

Moving on to Abraham's tithe (Genesis 14:20) being an isolated incident in Scripture: how can we know what Abraham knew about tithing? Was tithing only limited to the spoils of war? Genesis is quiet on the question of tithing, so any basis for tithing leading up to Abraham's example is an argument from silence. Ellen White (in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 136) acknowledges this tithing but does not expand upon it. Neither does the inspired pen comment on why there is silence on the subject of tithe in Genesis and Exodus. As this audience is distant in time and culture, if we draw any conclusion from silence we are prone to interpretational errors.

The issue of the curse in Malachi 3:9 is an interesting one. I was unaware of its implications until it was brought to my attention. Since Malachi 3:10 directs us to 'bring "the whole tithe" into the storehouse', what happens when there is insufficient money left – after paying the bills – to return a whole tithe? If the curse applies to submitting a partial tithe, then people are no worse off than they are if they don't return any tithe. This has been put forward as a reason why some people are not returning tithe. They feel that if they are going to be cursed for a partial tithe, then they may as well be cursed for withholding the whole tithe. The same person also pointed out that this curse appears to be mediated, in Scripture, by the process of 'redeeming' tithe.

Leviticus 27:31 (NIV) states, 'Whoever would redeem any of their tithe must add a fifth of the value to it.' I think the idea of withholding tithe, with the intention of redeeming it at some later date, requires thinking through very carefully. For example, according to the *SDA Bible Commentary* discussion of Leviticus 27:31:

'The question has been raised whether it is legitimate now to withhold the tithe if later a fifth is added to it. This question reveals a misunderstanding of the words of Scripture. It was not a matter of withholding tithe that demanded a fifth to be added. It was a question of paying the tithe in kind, in wheat, barley, or whatever produce was tithed. There might be cases in which a man needed wheat for sowing, and would rather pay in money than in wheat. Under these conditions he might redeem the tithe by having the wheat appraised and paying this sum plus one fifth. The withholding of tithe was never contemplated. As noted above, it was only grain and garden produce that could thus be redeemed. Cattle could not be redeemed or exchanged.' There may still be parts of the world where this would apply, but certainly not in the UK.

Regarding the New Testament letters' silence on tithing based on the New Testament is one of equivalence and therefore weak. In terms of the usage of tithes, the Old Testament suggests that tithes should be shared among the Levites, and also distributed to the fatherless and the homeless (Deuteronomy 26:12-15). *The Church Manual* (19th

edition), p. 137, says that tithe 'is held sacred for the work of the ministry, for Bible teaching, and for the support of conference administration in the care of the churches and of field outreach (missionary) endeavours. Tithe shall not be spent on other work, on paying church or institutional debts, or on building programmes.' Conferences and unions are therefore directed that tithe should be used solely in the furtherance of the Gospel. Lastly, as a sample regarding why some people do not return tithe locally, I was surprised by what was shared with me. For instance, one person – whom I had understood to have been sending tithe to her home union – had stopped tithing altogether out of neglect. Another person present had not returned any tithe for years, and still another admitted to sending money back home to meet the needs of her family, believing that she was thereby tithing. Yet this is in contrast to the Lord's direction: 'Let none feel at liberty to retain their tithe, to use according to their own judgement. They are not to use it for themselves in an emergency, nor to apply it as they see fit, even in what they may regard as the Lord's work.' – *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 247. Fortunately, there are a number of our members who return a loving tithe in recognition that they need to honour God and support the ministry from which they directly benefit.

But what about the rest of our members? How many of us are literally 'misappropriating' our tithe? From what I understand, there is more than enough tithe in the pockets of the members to almost double the number of 'gospel labourers' (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 249). Sadly, due to people benefiting from ministry locally, but not returning tithe locally, we face the reality that pastoral budgets may be cut and men and women retrenched from ministry. The corollary of this will be that fewer and fewer will benefit from ministry! Having said all this, we need to end on a really positive note, and there is no better than this: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." (Malachi 3:10, NIV-UK.)

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'Yes, dear, I'm listening.'

by Pastor Andrew Rashford-Hewitt

Imagine the following.

Joe and his wife are travelling home after a lovely walk in the countryside and there is a comfortable silence in the car. Then Jenny says, 'Are you hungry, dear?'

'No,' Joe responds. A few moments of silence pass, after which Jenny says calmly, 'You are so selfish!'

Joe replies, 'What? What on earth are you talking about?'

'I'm hungry and you don't even care!' says Jenny.

'Of course I care!' answers Joe. 'If you wanted to stop for dinner, why didn't you say so?'

'I did say so! Why don't you listen better?' Jenny is now visibly upset.

Shaking his head, but speaking calmly, Joe says, 'There's a good quality restaurant up the road; it's not far – we can stop there and have something to eat.'

'Don't bother! I'm not hungry anymore, just take me home,' says Jenny. The journey continues in silence.¹

Does this sound remotely familiar?

It wasn't long into our courtship that my darling Andrea and I had a similar exchange. That was 22 years ago, and it would be great to say that such things no longer happen to us, but the reality is that we had a similar exchange not so long ago. . . .

Why is it that communication in the home, in relationships and in the church can sometimes be challenging? In an article that appeared in *Psychology Today*,² it was noted that the top two reasons that couples cited for marital difficulties were communication problems and the lack of emotional warmth. Now, we all communicate. That's

what we do as persons created in God's image (Genesis 1:27). God is the supreme Communicator (Genesis 1:3; John 1:1) and, being fashioned in His image – though now marred by sin – it is in our divinely-designed DNA to communicate. Thus, we communicate all the time, even when we are not speaking. According to the communication theorist, Paul Watzlawick, 'One cannot not communicate.'³ So, if communication is something we all do all the time, why do we mis-communicate so often?

Perhaps the problem is that we take communication for granted, too often expecting others to easily understand our written, spoken and unspoken efforts to communicate.

How can we learn to do it better?

There are many ways to answer this question but these are the ones I would like to propose:

There are numerous studies that indicate that men and women communicate differently, even to the point of suggesting that men and women have a different daily word usage. (In 2013 *The Daily Mail* claimed that men use about 7,000 words per day while women use 20,000.⁴)

Perhaps this is one reason why some wives feel that their husbands don't communicate enough, while some husbands feel their wives talk too much!

So, here are a few pointers to help us all improve our communication.

- Remember: good communication improves the quality of relationships and improves our sense of happiness and wellbeing.
- Remember that 35% of communication is verbal while



65% is non-verbal.⁵ This means that we speak more with our bodies than we do with our words. So, while speaking, try to have generous eye contact and position your body to indicate your interest in the person.

- Be mindful of the setting or context of the communication. Is it a special day; where is communication taking place; who are present; what else is happening; and how might those factors positively or negatively influence the communication or expectations?
- Timing. Ask yourself if this is the right time to raise the point you wish to discuss. If the other person is about to go out, perhaps the matter should be raised at another time.
- Agree to make time to talk about stuff. Things that are not communicated will only cause things to deteriorate.
- What are the cultural influences at work? What cultural factors may be impacting on the process of communication or the person's expectations? Recognise that all communication takes place within a cultural context. Recognise that sometimes those cultural influences need to be limited as they may not be appropriate or helpful.
- What is the emotion out of which the person is speaking? This may simply be an emotion of anger, fear, grief,

happiness, joy, and so on. The emotional setting will greatly influence how the messages are received by the hearer.

- The mood of the communication. Are persons fed up, depressed, in a silly mood, tired, excitable, or frustrated?
- The emotional warmth of the communication. This can be affected by the above points, but primarily stems from a person's emotional availability, their emotional capacity to recognise and value their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. This stems from what is called emotional attachment, which shapes the degree of emotional connectedness and willingness that a person brings to the conversation. Here we can ask ourselves, 'What emotional warmth am I bringing to this conversation?'
- Remember to listen more rather than talk more – by listening we communicate to the other person that we value their contribution and their thoughts. (Isaiah 50:4, 5.)

Now, I am sure there are a number of other suggestions that you can come up with yourself to help improve communication in your home, your marriage or your church.

Having served as a pastor for a number of years and been involved as a counsellor, the issue of fractured communication comes up time and time again

within families, churches and the community. At times, in my experience, the common male stereotypical approach to communication has not helped. Often it has been the problem of men failing to communicate effectively that has led wives and children into difficult experiences.

Thus, in summary, may I encourage our men to take the time to consider how we can improve our communication. Perhaps we need to learn to change our tone of voice; avoid our preconceptions; adopt a different style of doing things; and become aware that our communication can cause others to flourish, because they at last feel they are being heard and valued.

May it be, by the grace of God, that we men will make our communication warmer and more positive. 'Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.' (Colossians 4:6, NIV.)

¹Adapted from W. Barnett Pearce: *Interpersonal Communication: Making Social Worlds*, HarperCollins, 1994
²<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/adventures-in-dating/201307/reasons-couples-go-therapy>
³https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Watzlawick
⁴<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2281891/Women-really-talk-men-13-000-words-day-precise.html>
⁵<https://tylerbeardshow.wordpress.com/2015/09/01/verbal-and-non-verbal-communication/>



Worth fighting for – your marriage and family

More than 240 people came to the Daventry Mecure Hotel and Spa for this year's 'Rekindle the Spark' marriage enrichment focus, 'Worth Fighting For', over the May Bank Holiday weekend. This is the fourth year it has run and it continues to grow each year. Keeping in line with 'Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere', Adventist and non-Adventist delegates were counselled by well-seasoned speakers, Errol and Paulette Nembhard from sunny South Africa, back by popular demand.

The weekend of prayer and reflection commenced on Friday night with 'Know Me – Know You', while Sabbath morning focused on relationship 'Priorities', 'Communication' and 'Conflict Resolution'. Couples then prepared for 'Date Night' on Saturday evening; husbands and wives looked ravishing in their formal evening gowns and tuxedos.

Sunday morning concluded with 'Sex Is So Good' and 'The Power of Forgiveness'. The hosting couple, Linda Mukwada and husband, together with their planning team, did not leave any stone unturned. 'As the Spirit of God hovered you could not remain the same after this refreshing, rejuvenating and renewing weekend,' remarked one attendee.



Our sincere thanks go the SEC, and our sponsors, who have worked tirelessly to make this event a great success. Plans are already in place for the 2017 couples' retreat.

VARAIDO MABVUDZI AND NOZI CONNOR

Request for help

On the final Sunday of the SEC camp meeting, Eileen Philip shared her testimony about overcoming her battle with mental illness. If anyone made a recording of the testimony, kindly contact her through email, at eileen.philip@yahoo.co.uk.

Other churches are also welcome to contact her, if they would like her to share her testimony with those in their churches, as an encouragement to those who may be going through depression or mental illness.

DARELL PHILIP

Welsh Mission Camp Meeting 2016

Friday 30 September to Sunday 2 October

Cefn Lea Conference Centre, near Newtown, SY16 4AJ

Main speaker: Dr Allan Handysides, Associate Director for Health Ministries at the General Conference and a familiar Hope Channel presenter. Supported by Mrs Sharon Platt-McDonald, Health and Women's Ministries director at the BUC. In addition there will be a full programme of workshops, seminars and activities for all ages, including a youth programme led by our own Youth Ministries team.

Prices range from just £10 for a basic adult day ticket on the Sabbath with no meals, to £128 for accommodation in an en-suite chalet including 6 meals. Children's discounts available. Info at: <http://wm.adventist.org.uk/events> Phone: 029 2084 4106.

Book Now!





The Stanborough Press Open Day

Sunday 4 September



Guest speakers

Dr and Mrs Jan Paulsen. Dr Paulsen, who is the keynote speaker for the event, is a former president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (March 1999 to June 2010). His messages are always deeply stimulating and not to be missed.

Dr Chidi Ngwaba. Dr Chidi is one of the world's premier 'Lifestyle Doctors', and holds degrees in both science and medicine from Cambridge and University College London (UK), and Johns Hopkins (USA). Many have already benefited from his life-changing medical ministry. He will conduct a set of interactive seminars on how to prevent and reverse chronic illnesses like diabetes.



Live music

Vadè will be at Open Day to provide top-class Gospel music that you won't want to miss.

Fun for the kids

Fun activities will be available for your children.

Exhibition marquee

There will be space in an exhibition/vendors marquee for those who respond early and meet our terms and conditions. Official permits may be obtained from Elisabeth Parkinson (01476 591700 or eparkinson@stanboroughpress.org.uk) by not later than 30 August, and are subject to availability. They will be issued on a first-come-first-served basis. No displays or vending will be permitted on The Stanborough Press property without an official permit obtained in the above manner.

Catering

Provision has been made for an authorised caterer to supply a variety of tasty meal options at reasonable prices. No other food or refreshment vending will be permitted.

See you there . . . with your family and friends!



news



Left: Previous and current BUC presidents, Pastor and Mrs Cecil Perry and Pastor and Mrs Ian Sweeney.
Below: Speech.
Below left: Pastor Cecil Perry and his family in prayer.
Below right: London Adventist Chorale performance.

Thank you, Pastor Perry!

by Natasha Mirilov

Pastor Cecil Perry and his wife, Alma, were honoured on 29 May at the Balham church, during a programme organised to pay tribute to them for their years of dedicated service to the Adventist Church.

During his ministry Pastor Perry served in a number of positions, including those of South England Conference President and British Union Conference President.

The event, organised by Mike Johnson on behalf of the SEC, was a collage of heartfelt tributes to the couple for their years of loyal service.

Pastor Perry moved to England with his family in 1978, which SEC Youth Director Pastor Anthony Fuller described as 'society's troubling times' in his Youth tribute to the Perry family. After the riots of 1980, Pastor Perry played an influential role during the restoration process.

'He was a man who was able to bring together warring parties,' said Pastor Ian Sweeney, current President of the BUC. 'He was always able to speak for and with both sides of the party.'

Many other church leaders, such as the General Conference President, Pastor Ted Wilson, sent their appreciation electronically. The London Adventist Chorale, Golden Chords and London Adventist Male Voice Choir blessed the audience and the guests of honour with a display of their singing talents.

Pastor and Mrs Perry's children, Paul and Sheryl, also had a chance to share how life was as pastor's kids (PKs), reminiscing over the many late board meetings and the long car journeys that often included

a breakdown. They were also, however, able to mention the many valuable lessons they learned from their father.

'I'm very proud. It's quite amazing that he's affected so many people and what he's contributed to the church here. He's my big example,' said Paul Perry.

In his response, Pastor Perry said that he was humbled by the day's experience and jokingly mentioned that he wouldn't need a funeral service after such a programme. But Pastor Ian Sweeney said he believed that it is important to share kind words with people while they are alive, and that elders deserve to hear praises and have their contributions celebrated.

'We all say great things about people, when they cannot hear them. We'll talk about the contributions they've made to our personal lives when they're not able to hear them. It is far better to recognise their contributions while they can appreciate that.'

In a later interview, when asked if 50 years ago he ever imagined that his life would have such an impact, Pastor Perry answered: 'No, because I didn't think of myself. I just think of serving, I didn't think about praise. I just wanted to win souls for Christ.'

Pastor Perry also mentioned that he hoped that his 'Thank You' programme would serve as an example to others that the accolades should be given to the person before he or she passes away. The last advice was that our service should be wholehearted: a gift of soul, mind and body, in which we look to serve God!



Bearwood now an organised church

On 21 May, Bearwood Church Plant became an organised church. The organising service was held at the Parklands Banqueting Suite in Hockley, Birmingham. This venue, with a seating capacity of 700, was full to capacity, and last-minute arrangements had to be made to accommodate the many extra people who attended this beautiful event.

These included members, visitors, delegates and leaders from the North England Conference; the central co-ordinating committee of Ghanaian churches in the UK (CCC); the Euro-Ghanaian community of Seventh-day Adventist churches; Yardley Church (a sister church to Bearwood); and many more.

The Sabbath School, in which the discussion took place in small groups, was enjoyed by all. The worship service was preceded by a procession of the various participating choirs. Those up front were Pastors Lorance Johnson (NEC President), Pardon Chenjerai (Bearwood and Yardley churches), Isaac Amofa (Manchester Picadilly),

Charles Asare Bediako (EGACCOM, Ghana Europe SDA Chairman), Kwadwo Kwarteng-Ampofo (Elephant and Castle and South East churches), Mike Simpson (NEC Personal Ministries Director and Church Plant Director) and Miss Eliette Lozeil (NEC interim treasurer).

The church organisation service was led by Pastor Mike Simpson, and a very timely and powerful sermon was delivered by NEC President, Pastor Lorance Johnson.

Lunch was served after the service and enjoyed by all who stayed. The pastor of Bearwood Church, Pardon Chenjerai, acknowledged everyone who had worked so hard to mark the day, for the contributions they had brought.

In the afternoon there was a musical celebration, with renditions from various choirs and groups. Bearwood is now a fully-fledged church – to God be the glory!

GRACE DEMANYA, CHURCH CLERK



Invitation to Swansea dedication

On Sabbath 30 July the brand-new Swansea church will be dedicated in a service beginning at 11am. We would very much like to invite any former members of the church, or anyone with a particular interest in the church, to attend this service. If you are able to come, please contact Pastor Jovan Adamovic on tel. 01792 208155 or 07519 512151, so that we can reserve a place for you. Note that seating may be limited, so please do not come without booking your place in advance.

PASTOR JOHN SURRIDGE, OUTGOING WELSH MISSION PRESIDENT

inbox

Re: Winson Green Church (a response to MESSENGER's cover story of 3 June)

Dear Editor

Before we flatter ourselves on having been able to move into a building with an illustrious name, and no doubt a once-better past, I hope we have taken the long view. Whether or not we are able to use the name – and 'Bishop Latimer' is an expression of continuity with the generation that enjoyed that preacher's ministry, and who witnessed his martyrdom – is one factor. More down to earth is whether or not it suffers the fate of our Glasgow congregation; they had to leave their fine edifice when it found itself 'listed'. Result? They could not afford to maintain it.

Yes, its seating capacity of 1,000 is a plus, as, no doubt, are the other features that characterise it. It can serve as an evangelistic centre . . . no doubt the 'little flock' of 70 will be looking for ways and means to reach out to the heart of the West Midlands. But let us not forget that temple-like buildings do not make up the church.

BARRY GOWLAND

Aston-Newtown: the journey continues

In 1973, a few devout members from the Handsworth church formed a small company in the Newtown area of Birmingham, hoping that it would grow into a church someday. That 'someday' came sooner than some expected when, just three years later, on 13 May 1976, the church was officially organised into a community church based at the William Cowper Primary School.

On the weekend of 13 to 15 May this year, Aston-Newtown celebrated its fortieth year since that official organisation. The celebration weekend started with a Friday evening service at which the British Union President, Pastor Ian Sweeney, preached a message of encouragement entitled, 'Looking Back to Look Forward'. During the Sabbath morning worship service, Pastor Michael Simpson preached a sermon based on being the salt as well as the light in the community, charging everyone to be faithful in mingling with those in need.

In the afternoon a short documentary, produced by Daniel Blyden, was screened for the church to view. It detailed the development of the church, which included some history of Aston-Newtown and a series of interviews with members and others who are affiliated with the church. (The documentary is entitled, 'The Journey Continues', and can be viewed online at www.astonnewtownsda.org.uk/who-we-are/history). During the services there were special tributes and items, including this poem, entitled, 'Don't Forget To Remember', by Lawna Tapper:

A commemorative celebration is like an old gospel song
About inspiring journeys, pleasure-filled, yet hard and long,
Its verses tell of faith, laughter, doubt, sweat and tears,
All the joys and the struggles that have coloured past years.
But why do we bother, what's the relevance for today?
The events, the names, what is it that they say?
Yes, we all know well, we feel it deep-down inside,
Those happenings of yesteryear, they inform and they guide.
Many with whom we started are no longer here now,
But forgetting their efforts we must never allow,
For they too prayed and encouraged, and paid prices so dear
To build and sustain what we celebrate here.
Some hands are too weak now, some legs no longer can walk,
Some heads now simply nod and smile, their voices too frail to talk,
But don't forget to remember all that they have brought,
And to show them we're thankful for the fight that they fought.
Then let's be glad and sing together, both young and old,
Ancestors, elders, let's leave none from the fold,
As we praise and show gratitude for all the blessings we receive,
Let's look to the future, sing the same old gospel song,
hold fast and believe.

To end the weekend of celebration, a fellowship lunch was held on Sunday 15 May, with members writing to reminisce and enjoy each other's company.

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BOOKSALES

<p>July 10 Newbold Awards Ceremony 10 Sheffield (Concord Park) 21-24 NEC Session</p> <p>August 7 Coventry Central 14 Aberdeen</p> <p>ABC Shops Watford, BUC, Monday-Thursday - 12.30-5pm, Friday - 10am-2pm. 01923 893461 Birmingham, Aston-Newtown, Wednesday - 11am-4pm, Thursday - 4pm-8pm, Sunday - 11am-3pm. 0121 3286380 Advent Centre, Mondays & Wednesdays - 6.30pm-8.30pm, Sundays - 11am-3pm, Saturdays - November, December, January: After sunset. 0207 7236849</p>	<p>From 10am 10am-2pm</p> <p>10am-2pm 10am-2pm</p>	<p>Adventist Book Center.com</p>
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ADRA UK

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Plymouth's health outreach

'Life Colours – a revolutionary way to reverse, improve and prevent the most common "lifestyle diseases" and achieve permanent, healthy weight loss.' So says Dr Chidi Ngwaba, the UK's high-profile lifestyle doctor and SEC Health Director. Between 21 and 27 May 2016, Dr Chidi provided the opportunity for Plymouth Church to host his programme, while providing a positive service to the community.

The programme offered three elements: a two-day health expo, evening lectures, and a vegetarian cooking class. On two days of the week, Plymouth City Council provided the church with prime space in the middle of the city to host a health expo. We believe that this was providential, because they provided this space in the busiest part of the high street, at a vastly reduced cost! Armed with volunteers, beautiful sunshine for both days and Dr Chidi himself (some recognising him from television and YouTube), we ran a very successful series. It allowed us to meet, share and engage with a large number of people, while at the same time promoting the name of Jesus and the Church.

Every night Dr Chidi offered hourly lecture sessions profiling the most common lifestyle diseases and advising on how to stabilise or reverse them by changing one's lifestyle. Members from both the church and the community attended from as far as St Austell, and by Tuesday everyone was buzzing about the changes they intended to make in their lives.

On Thursday Dr Chidi took a break and one of the teachers at our local Adventist school, Fletewood, hosted a vegan cooking class to demonstrate food that could help lower cholesterol and provide healthy weight loss. Gaynor Rowe became a vegan because of an illness her mother had years ago. She eventually convinced her family, and together they adopted a plant-based diet. Gaynor is not a fanatic, but she is passionate about health and sharing it. Her passion was evident from the way she made twenty-four people delight in the four simple recipes she demonstrated and served. Those who came loved her favourite smoothie, the green salad, the tofu stir-fry, and the homemade mango-and-banana ice cream.

Plymouth church and its community were truly blessed by this series of events and concluded that Ellen White was correct when she wrote: 'When properly conducted, the health work is an entering wedge, making a way for other truths to reach the heart' (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 327), while at the same time becoming the right arm of the Gospel.

CLIFFORD HERMAN (PASTOR, PLYMOUTH CHURCH)

Area 6C Day of Fellowship

Pastor Calvin Preston, pastor of West End Church in Atlanta, USA, urged the congregation that 'it's time to take a stand', at the Area 6C day of fellowship on Sabbath, 21 May, held at the Dominion Centre in North London.

The guest speaker stated his conviction that today's generation is living in the closing hours of the earth's history and that Jesus is coming soon. 'Because of that, I also believe that there are certain things that are going on in the Church – things that will go on until Jesus comes,' said Preston. 'He has not called us as a Church to straighten it out; He has called us to let our lights shine so that people can see Jesus in the midst of all that is going on.'

The congregational singing at this festival of evangelism was led by Chike Chike-Michael and enriched by the Area 6C Mass Choir, the London Ghanaian Choir and the HACS Millennium Chamber Orchestra. To Hampstead Church member, Aurora McKay, the musical element complemented the pastor's message.

'The pastor's message took us back to the basics – to help us know our purpose as Adventists. . . . The singing, the music, which I enjoyed,



gets you on your toes and I really want to be part of this. I'm here.' To conclude, the visiting pastor emphasised that evangelism is not a crusade, but a way of life in which we let the light that God has given us shine brightly. 'Wherever you are and whoever you are, you let your light shine. That's what evangelism is all about,' said Preston. 'God using everyone, everywhere to present Jesus Christ.'

NATASHA MIRILOV (SEC COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA ASSISTANT)

Great Yarmouth is busy again!

A good quantity of literature was taken from the 'Please Help Yourself' table in the Great Yarmouth town centre on Sunday 15 May – in fact, more than on any previous occasion, as far as we can remember. We were conducting another health screening programme in the Market Gates shopping mall. While the literature was mainly focused on health, there were also religious titles, such as *Steps to Christ* and *He Is Coming*, and the public took a fair amount of these books too. We found this to be very encouraging, as folk generally tend to bypass these and just take the health magazines. It is our prayer that they will read these books and be led by the Holy Spirit to enquire into what the Scriptures teach.

On this occasion we were able to take 113 blood pressure readings, 111 blood sugar tests, check 82 people for their Body Mass Index (BMI), as well as 23 smokers (or recent smokers) for carbon monoxide levels. Of the 18 individuals who sought medical advice, 11 were referred



to their GPs. Responses to our survey were once again complimentary and appreciative of the service our church provided.

PASTOR MICHAEL I. WALKER (COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARY)

Messenger

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	London	Card	Nottingham	Edin	Belf
Jul 15	9.11	9.23	9.23	9.48	9.51
22	9.03	9.15	9.14	9.38	9.41
29	8.53	9.05	9.03	9.25	9.29
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