

Messenger

News to the churches • 24 November 2017 • Volume 122 • 23

SEC ordination in Cheltenham

by Pastor Sam Davies (SEC Communication Director)

Area 2 held a special day of fellowship on Sabbath 23 September during which the ordination of a much-loved minister, James Shepley, took place at the All Saints Academy Auditorium in Cheltenham.

Speaking after the service, James said, 'For me, what made the ordination so special was the presence of many loved church members, family and friends.' This love was warmly expressed through the comments by the area co-ordinator, Pastor Namushi Namuchana, followed by those of the Swindon and Cheltenham churches, family and individual members who have been touched by his ministry.

Guest speaker, Pastor Simon Martin, outgoing South England Conference Church Growth Director, spoke to a full hall, telling them that ministry is a high calling with no rival. He quoted Charles Spurgeon's remark, 'When God calls you to be a minister, do not stoop to be a king.'

James Shepley was born and raised in Derbyshire. After graduating from New College in Oxford with a degree in Modern History in 1991, he took a postgraduate degree in European Studies at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium, where he met Hélia Mateus, whom he later married. James credits Hélia for his journey with God. They have both worked for ADRA, as volunteers and employees, and Hélia is presently the Chief Financial Officer of ADRA-UK. Their work with ADRA involved stints in both Madagascar and Burkina Faso. The Shepleys have three lovely daughters: Sarah (16), Joanna (14) and Naomi (9).

Pastor Emmanuel Osei, SEC President, read the charge to James before the ministers who were present surrounded him for the laying on of hands. In attendance were Ian Sweeney (BUC President), John Surridge (BUC Executive Secretary), Eglan Brooks (BUC Ministerial Secretary), Douglas McCormac (SEC Executive Secretary), veteran pastor, Cecil Perry, and the Area 2 ministers.

The ordination was part of a Day of Fellowship programme designed to equip the local members for disciple-making under the theme, 'Be the blessing'. In the morning service, Pastor Martin spoke about the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (NKJV).

According to him, the method of Jesus 'is to invest in a group of people: one person telling another person about the good news of Jesus. If Jesus had not invested in people, He would have lived and died and no one would have known what He did.'

The congregation returned after the fellowship lunch to discuss how to implement what they had heard in the sermon. Pastor Mick Smart led the discussion, which elicited a great response from the members.



Pastor James Shepley with his wife, Hélia, and their three daughters, Sarah, Joanna and Naomi



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editorial

This year, during the build-up to the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, we devoted a lot of *MESSENGER* space to various historical and theological aspects of this momentous period of church history. Having said that, this theme is far from exhausted. There is much more that can and should be said, and we would welcome well-written, spiritually uplifting and thought-provoking submissions.

An important perspective

It is quite easy, and very tempting for us, to discuss the Reformation in terms of how the Roman Catholic Church responded – or ought to have responded – to the challenges raised by Martin Luther and the other reformers. Pointing out the faults and weaknesses of our opponents is always the easiest part of any reformation process, isn't it?

Take any showdown, domestic or otherwise, that follows a script like this. 'You are the cause of this problem. If only you could make changes, things would be different. I blame you for the way things are!' Such comments don't encourage reformation; they evoke resentment and invite retaliation.

Among us there are a handful of people who relish finger-pointing, often with scathing language that holds nothing back in its criticism of Pope Francis and his denomination. Invariably, what they pen or preach is essentially ungracious in both its tone and choice of language. As you read what they write, or listen to them speak, you quickly conclude that they appear to be angry.

Endorsement is not good enough



Julian Hibbert
Editor

In response to this, we should firstly remind ourselves that the comments of Ellen White about how to work for and among Roman Catholics have been gathered into a chapter of the book *Evangelism*, entitled 'Reaching Catholics', that is worth reading. Here is a taster:

'In bearing the message, make no personal thrusts at other churches, *not even the Roman Catholic Church*. Angels of God see in the different denominations many who can be reached only by the greatest caution. Therefore let us be careful of our words. Let not our ministers follow their own impulses in denouncing and exposing the "mysteries of iniquity." Upon these themes *silence is eloquence. Many are deceived. Speak the truth in tones and words of love. Let Christ Jesus be exalted.*' Page 576 (emphasis supplied).

Don't we all need to see with the eyes of 'angels' then? At the same time, however, the writer is not suggesting that we have no message to bear. For she clearly says, 'Speak the truth,' but just do it 'in tones and words of love'. Then, in the same chapter, she adds this:

'The best way to expose the fallacy of error is to present the evidences of truth. This is the greatest rebuke that can be given to error. Dispel the cloud of darkness resting on minds by reflecting the bright light of the Sun of Righteousness. – Manuscript 6, 1902.' Page 577 (emphasis supplied).

Introspection

The second point to remind ourselves of is this: this anniversary year provides the Adventist Church with an opportunity for introspection. We boldly claim to be 'heirs of the Reformation', and have officially endorsed all its valid biblical claims, but have we really embraced them?

Like Paul, Luther repudiated 'good works' as a means of being made right with God: 'For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.' (Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV, emphasis supplied.) Are we all like-minded on this point? Are we experiencing the joy and peace that such a discovery brings, or are some of us still practising the 'faith + something' religion that Luther so fiercely opposed?

Ganoune Diop, writing in the October *Adventist Review*, lists 12 'core tenets of post-Reformation Christian beliefs' and the first of these is *sola scriptura*, which he defines as 'Scripture alone as the foundation for faith and practice, not Scripture along with tradition'. I believe that our members generally adhere to this, but there are times when some among us appear to have forgotten that Ellen White very specifically called her writings 'a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light [the Bible]'. *Evangelism*, page 257.

Oh, and while we are on the subject of *sola scriptura*, does our implicit trust in God's Word include the entire book of Genesis, or are there sections of it that we prefer not to take too literally?

Ganoune Diop's article lists equality as another of those core 'tenets' we have inherited from the Reformation and, once again, he refers to the apostle Paul as his source of authority:

'For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, **there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**' (Galatians 3:27-28, ESV, emphasis supplied.)

You couldn't wish for clearer scriptural authority for equality than this. Taken at face value, Paul appears to be saying that the Church has a) no space for a hierarchy among its national, ethnic or cultural groups; b) accepts no class, status or power distinctions among its members; and c) should tolerate no gender bias or 'glass ceiling' in any of its roles and ministries. Yes, believe it or not, it's all there in the text. Perhaps, then, it's time to ask whether we have really embraced all those 'core tenets' of post-Reformation Christian belief, or are we still clinging to our 'traditions'?

Give them a break . . .

This is my suggestion then. Why don't we declare a moratorium on finger-pointing for a few months? Let's give the Lutherans, the Anglicans, the Pope and everyone else a break. Let's pack away our 'conspiracy theories' and put our Vatican 'surveillance operations' on hold for long enough to ensure that we have each embraced those great Reformation truths and values for ourselves . . . because official endorsement isn't good enough for Jesus!



Enhancing Health

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

Antibiotics – the challenge

An *Independent* news article by Harriet Agerholm published on 20 September carried the cautionary headline: 'Not enough new antibiotics are being developed to combat lethal drug resistance, warns WHO'.

Her sobering comments highlight the scale of the problem: 'Health experts have previously warned that resistance to antimicrobials could pose a bigger threat to humankind than cancer.' So what are the key concerns?

- Around 700,000 people die annually due to drug-resistant infections including drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB), HIV and malaria.
- Some estimates suggest that drug-resistant infections will kill 10 million people a year by 2050, if no action is taken.
- The World Health Organisation reveals that only eight out of 51 new antibiotics currently in clinical development to treat the most dangerous antibiotic-resistant diseases are classed as innovative treatments and useful drugs.

Director-general of the WHO, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, concludes: 'Antimicrobial resistance is a global health emergency that will seriously jeopardise progress in modern medicine.'

Providing suggested solutions for urgent action, Dr Suzanne Hill, WHO Director of the Department of Essential Medicines, states:

'Pharmaceutical companies and researchers must urgently focus on new antibiotics against certain types of extremely serious infections that can kill patients in a matter of days because we have no line of defence. . . .'

The *Guardian's* attention-grabbing headline on 8 October read: 'Antibiotic apocalypse: doctors sound alarm over drug resistance'.² In the article journalist Robin McKie raised the dangerous possibility that

even routine operations could have life-threatening consequences due to drug-resistant genes.

Jonathan Pearce, Head of Infections and Immunity at the UK Medical Research Council, said: 'Routine surgery, joint replacements, caesarean sections, and chemotherapy also depend on antibiotics, and will also be at risk. . . . Common infections could kill again.'

So, what has caused this growing threat? McKie's article highlights the following:

- 'Scientists point to the widespread misuse and overuse of antibiotics and other drugs.'
- 'Western doctors are over-prescribing antibiotics to patients who expect to be given a drug for whatever complaint they have.'
- There has been a 'failure of pharmaceutical companies to investigate and develop new sources of general medicines for the future.'
- 'In many countries, both land and fish farmers use antibiotics as growth promoters and indiscriminately pour them on to their livestock.'
- 'Drug manufacturers also often do not dispose of their industrial waste appropriately,' resulting in 'antibiotics leaching into streams and rivers with alarming results, particularly in Asia.'
- 'Antibiotic-laden waters and banks of drug-soaked soils [are] ideal for the development of "superbugs".'

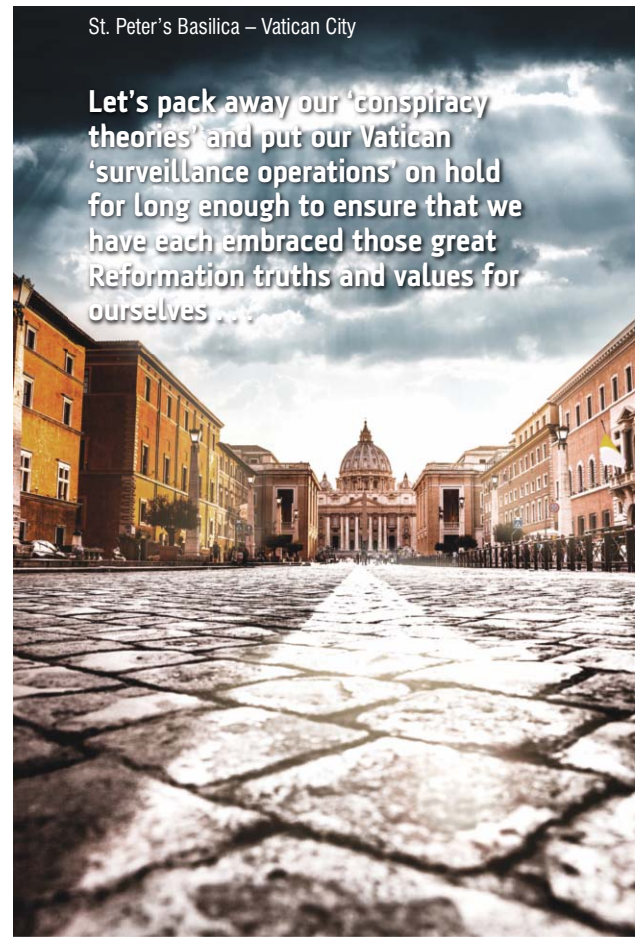
In the next issue we explore possible solutions.

Good health!

¹<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/antibiotics-development-drug-companies-drug-resistance-superbugs-mrsa-who-world-health-organisation-a7957156.html>
²<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/oct/08/world-faces-antibiotic-apocalypse-says-chief-medical-officer>

St. Peter's Basilica – Vatican City

Let's pack away our 'conspiracy theories' and put our Vatican 'surveillance operations' on hold for long enough to ensure that we have each embraced those great Reformation truths and values for ourselves . . .





Sexual harassment? Surely not in the church!

by Paul Thompson*

'Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.' Ephesians 5:4 (ESV). These are time-tested words from the Bible, which seem surreal against the backdrop of sexual harassment cases being reported in the US and UK.

Had this warning been heeded, many holding prominent positions across the globe would not have had to resign, thus avoiding broken marriages, tarnished reputations and worse. Many men and women today are forced to endure vulgar comments and foul behaviour, both within and outside their workplaces. If they resist, they are labelled 'puritan', 'killjoy', 'zealot', 'moralist', or 'Victorian'. Have you ever found yourself in this position?

Sexual harassment is labelled a disease because the end result is physical injury, which is real, and has a life-changing impact on its victims. In fact, many leading psychologists and academics report that victims systematically suffer deep depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, blood pressure issues, sleep problems, persistent thoughts of suicide and severe neck pain.

Sexual harassment is not a modern phenomenon; it has been around for thousands of years. There are even examples of it in the Bible, although our modern social media have proliferated it.

One of the earliest biblical examples of sexual harassment comes to life in the story of Ruth. We pick it up after Ruth and Naomi arrive in Bethlehem destitute. It is the time of harvest and Ruth decides the only way they can survive is by gleaning leftover crops from the farmers' fields, which only the poor were permitted to do (Leviticus 19:9-10). Immediately Ruth became a potential victim for sexual predators who deduced that because her husband was dead she had no man to protect her. She had nowhere else to go and had to face the risk of being harassed or sexually abused in order to put food on their table.

Sadly, this is the outcome for many people who find themselves in such positions. The powerful prey on the weak and often the weak have no option but to face humiliation to survive.

Then Boaz shows up and asks his foreman about the Moabite woman. Something about the way in which he nervously replies to his master leads Boaz to believe that there is something sinister afoot. Boaz is astute: he senses that Ruth is in grave danger and likely to come to harm. Without constant male protection Ruth would face wolf whistles, rude gestures, suggestive language, maybe even physical manhandling. Boaz knew the threat and the imminent danger she faced. The fact that these young men were so bold meant that they might have taken things a step further in the past. After all, which woman would dare to complain? They were beggars, and, with no male to defend their honour, they had little or no rights.

Being a man of integrity Boaz quickly moves to protect Ruth. He warns the men to stop the sexual harassment or they will answer to him. Boaz then went over and said to Ruth, 'Listen, my daughter. Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don't go to any other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. See which part of the field they are harvesting, and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to treat you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help



Ruth gleans leftover crops from the farmers' fields

yourself to the water they have drawn from the well.' Ruth 2:8, 9, New Living Translation (NLT), emphasis supplied.

Polling in the UK confirms that 52% of women have experienced unwanted behaviour at work, including groping, sexual advances and inappropriate jokes. Among women, the figure rose sharply between the ages of 16 and 24, a staggering 63%.¹ The fact is, many women report being harassed by their boss or someone else with authority over them, who was able to influence their pay, promotion or future prospects. Four out of five women don't report incidents out of fear they would be fired, ridiculed or classified as being prudish. The fact is, sexual harassment is not only confined to women: men are also being attacked. Millions of Britons recently heard how a young man working in Parliament described how he was handled and groped inappropriately – at times this took place publicly!

The inevitable question which we must ask is, 'Is there sexual harassment in the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Are there some skeletons lurking in our church cupboards or offices? The answer is, 'We just don't know!' There are no official surveys to hand and nothing has been cited in the media. However, it is inconceivable to believe, with 52% of women in the UK workplace reporting harassment, that the Church in the UK is in no way experiencing these issues. Fortunately, our church took steps in as far back as 1988 to set out our stance on sexual harassment. The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council Session in Nairobi, Kenya, 6 October, 1988, adopted the sexual harassment guidelines that appear with this article.²

¹<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/aug/10/half-of-women-uk-have-been-sexually-harassed-at-work-tuc-study-everyday-sexism> ²<https://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/guidelines/article/go/-/sexual-harassment/>

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An issue of growing concern . . .

Both the British political establishment and the US film industry are being shaken by an unprecedented series of sexual harassment allegations. Not all have yet been proven (and some may never be), but others have already led to high-level resignations and worse. This is a sad situation: one that should be cause for concern, particularly for those who uphold Christian values.

At a time like this it is important to remind ourselves that our denomination finds the practice abhorrent, particularly when it occurs among its employees, pastoral or otherwise. Here is the Church's official statement on the matter.

Sexual harassment

1. Personal conduct

Employees of denominational organisations are to exemplify the Christlike life and should avoid all appearance of wrongdoing. They should not for one moment indulge in sexual behaviour that is harmful to themselves or others and that casts a shadow on their dedication to the Christian way of life.

2. Mutual respect

Employees should respect and uplift one another. They must never place another employee in a position of embarrassment or disrespect due to sexual overtones. To do so would be a violation of God's law and the law of the land which protects human rights in the workplace.

3. Definition

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature affecting an individual's employment status. Such advances constitute sexual harassment when:
 - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual.



- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- Threats or suggestions are made that the individual's job, future promotions, wages, etc., depend on whether or not he/she submits to sexual demands or tolerates harassment.

- Unwelcome sex-oriented comments (kidding, teasing, jokes, etc.);
- Subtle pressure or requests for sexual activity;
- Unnecessary touching of an individual (e.g., patting, pinching,

- hugging, repeated brushing against another person's body, etc.);
- Demand for sexual favours.

4. Working environment

Denominational organisations shall inform their employees that sexual harassment in the workplace will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to avoid any unwelcome behaviour or conduct towards any other employee which could be interpreted as sexual harassment. Each organisation shall designate a male and a female person to whom complaints can be made.

5. Reporting incidents

If an employee encounters sexual harassment from supervisors, fellow employees, clients, or non-employees, the following steps shall be taken immediately:

- It shall be made clear that such behaviour is offensive.
- The incidents shall be reported to the appropriate person. If possible, the complaint shall be in written form.
- The discussion shall be conducted in an objective and thorough manner, and the complainant should be advised not to discuss the matter elsewhere due to the sensitivity of the complaint. The person to whom the complaint is made shall keep any information received strictly confidential, except as necessary to investigate or rectify the matter.

6. Third-party reports

All employees who are aware of incidents of apparent sexual harassment in the workplace are responsible for reporting such incidents to the appropriate person for investigation. Complaints of sexual harassment shall be investigated promptly. The determination of whether or not a particular action constitutes sexual harassment shall be made from the facts on a case-by-case basis. On determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the supervisor or appropriate official shall look at the record as a whole and the totality of the circumstances, such as the nature of the sexual overtures and the context in which the alleged incident occurred.

7. Action

If sexual harassment is found to exist, appropriate officers shall take prompt corrective action. Depending on the severity of the act, the discipline may range from a written warning, a copy of which is placed in the offending person's personnel file, to immediate dismissal.

These guidelines were adopted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council Session in Nairobi, Kenya, 6 October, 1988.



Rubber stamping

by Pastor John Surridge, British Union Conference Executive Secretary

Typical isn't it! You wait all your life for the chance to make a difference. The church you know and love has a number of weaknesses. You can see that clearly now – funnily enough, much more clearly than when you were first baptised. And what's more, you now know what needs to be done to put things right. Finally, they put you on a committee. This is it! Your opportunity to use your intellect, considerable experience and limitless energy in God's service to create a better, brighter future for His church.

But what do you find? What do you actually experience when you find yourself on that prestigious and all-powerful committee? Rubber stamping! When it comes down to it, no one cares what you think. All the decisions have been made before you even get to the meeting. Boring reports are read out, pre-written motions are proposed, and all you are expected to do is approve them.

'All in favour?' says the chair. 'Aye,' say the committee members. Like puppets on strings, pre-programmed automatons, mindless sheep in a flock, everyone responds in unison. 'All in favour?' 'Aye.' 'All in favour?' 'Baa.' 'Baa.' What a waste of time!

But hang on a minute, what kind of committee are you sitting on? Are you sure it's the right one for your special skills and interests?

If you think about it for a while, you'll realise that there are different kinds of committees. Basically four.

1. Decision-making committees

Generally seen as the top of the tree, decision-making or governance committees are usually the most boring – and they're supposed to be. People on these committees 'carry the can' for the big decisions that are made. At Union and Conference level the members of these committees are 'jointly and

severally liable' for the decisions they make. In other words, if things go badly wrong they can literally lose their houses! Their job is to look at the processes that are already in place and the proposals that have been made, and make a judgement as to whether they are reasonable and in the best interests of the church. It's not their job to get too involved in the plans and projects that are being proposed, just to decide whether or not they are sensible.

2. Think tanks

Think tanks are committees for 'blue sky' people, often seen as 'dreamers' by the less enlightened. The church may face a particularly thorny challenge, but no one really knows how to address it. What's required is a group of people who can 'think outside of the box' and come up with ideas that no one else has thought of. Think tanks need people who are imaginative, not shy of coming forward with their ideas, and, most importantly, non-judgemental of other people's ideas. In the closed environment of a think tank, a hundred silly proposals may be put forward before the brilliant one emerges, but who cares? That's how think tanks work.

3. Task-orientated committees

Of course, great thinkers are often not the best people to make things happen: too busy thinking to get any real work done.

But if you are a grafter, a proper worker, you'll find that a task-orientated committee is much more fun. On one of these committees you know what you've got to do, and you go off and do it. An example might be a Pathfinder Camp or Camporee committee. The church or

conference has allocated a certain amount of money and they've assigned a number of people to be on the team, or committee, that's going to make it happen. You are one of the chosen ones! You can't afford to sit around talking for too long, you've got to get out there and do the work: checking out sites, getting quotes for the marquee and minibus hire, printing the flyers, and making announcements in church, while at the same time communicating with the other committee members so that everything gets done and nothing is duplicated.

4. Investigatory committees

At one time or another, any of the committees listed above may find that they need more information on a specific subject. They can go and do the research themselves if they want, but often they realise that a detailed investigation would take too long and could distract them from the main job that they are supposed to be doing. So, they delegate this work to another group of people – an investigation committee. To sit on one of these committees you need to have a nose for truth and an eye for detail. If you ever fancied working as a private detective, this is the committee for you. You don't make big decisions, you don't think too deeply, you don't directly make anything happen, you just produce a report. Others can decide what to do with it.

Now, in real life the four functions listed above can be combined in different ways. You may find that the committee you're on does them ALL – to a greater or lesser degree. In these cases it might be helpful to courteously remind the chair – if he or she seems to have forgotten – exactly what your committee is supposed to do. Are you making a decision, thinking aloud, making something happen, or carrying out an investigation? If you're supposed to be making a decision, and you're happy with the preparatory work that has been done, don't waste time sharing your random thoughts, trying to do something different, or starting an investigation. Just feel free to bleat!

Blah-
Blah- Blah
Blah



The gift of giving – a seasonal reflection from ADRA-UK

by Catherine Anthony Boldeau

'I want each of you to take plenty of time to think it over, and make up your own mind what you will give. That will protect you against sob stories and arm-twisting. God loves it when the giver delights in the giving.' 2 Corinthians 9:7 (MSG).

Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his book, *Dethroning Mammon*, states that 'abundance exists to be given, freely and openly.'¹ The word 'freely' here implies that you are not coerced into giving, but do so with prayerful thought and Christian devotion. Think for a moment – how much of your giving is actually 'planned' and not simply a knee-jerk reaction to a crisis somewhere in the world. And while funds are needed at those times to assist those in desperate need, it appears that when the cameras leave the scene, and the distressing images are no longer at the forefront of our minds, our giving ceases. Sadly, we often respond out of guilt – not planned compassion.

Statistics reveal that, of the 7.6 billion people in the world, nearly half live on less than \$2.50 (£1.91) a day and more than 1.3 billion live on less than \$1.25 (95p). It is also estimated that 80% of humanity exists on less than \$10 (£7.63) a day.² This data reveals that there is an ongoing need to give to those who experience poverty as a way of life, lacking food and proper sanitation, and often dying from preventable diseases.

During this coming Christmas season it is imperative that we take time away from the glitz, glamour and tinsel to think about the real 'reason for the season'. It's all about the abundant love of the Father

who was willing to give the gift of His only Son, to save a world of people living in the abject poverty of a severed relationship with God.

But God didn't give this gift on the spur of the moment: He planned it 'way in advance'. He thought about it 'long and hard' and today we call it 'the plan of salvation'. We know that Jesus wasn't born during this time of the year, and it really doesn't matter *when* He was born. What does matter is that a generous God was willing *to plan* His giving to save humanity. Why not take the example of the Father and start to plan your giving too?

Planned giving to ADRA-UK will assist the charity to respond immediately when a crisis arises, whether at home or abroad. During this past year, ADRA-UK gave funds to the SEC Adventist Community Services to assist with the Grenfell disaster the morning following the fire. They were also able to provide thousands of pounds to the regions affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria a few months ago.

Why not decide to plan your giving to ADRA-UK by making a regular monthly donation to assist those in need? Further details are available at www.adra.org.uk or by calling the ADRA-UK office on 030 30 40 10 17 or emailing info@adra.org.uk.

During this special season, which many all around you see purely as a commercial holiday, plan to act with compassion as God does, by giving generously to help those who can't give anything back.

Godinterest.com

Godinterest.com is a Christian social networking service created in 2014. Its core purpose is to promote Christian values and facilitate spiritual inspiration through the sharing of photographs and other media in the style of Pinterest and Twitter. Its content includes media about Christian history, personal and family-oriented stories and so on from a Christian viewpoint.

The site was developed by Dean, a 39-year-old construction project director who is presently a member of Bedford Church. Since its launch **Godinterest.com** has been featured in the *London Evening Standard*, *Huffington Post*, *Washington Times* and other prime news outlets around the world.

Technology and evangelism

The internet is changing society. At every point God has made a way for His Church to embrace new opportunities to tell more people of His love, and I believe that the internet is no different. At **Godinterest** we are convinced that God has a purpose for this technology, and we are dedicated to using it to share the life-changing message of Jesus.

Churches can register and share their sermons, videos, photos and updates online. Church members can converse with other Christians in the knowledge that the information shared and stored will not be used for marketing or promotion. Non-Christians are also welcome.

If you're ready to see what's happening on **Godinterest**, sign up today at Godinterest.com, or contact Dean at admin@godinterest.co.uk for more details if necessary.

Stanborough Secondary School scholarships and bursaries registration is now open!

Once again, Stanborough Secondary School has worked hard to secure additional funding for its Scholarship and Bursary Fund, to enable more pupils across the British Union to benefit from the good educational programme it offers.

The scholarships and bursaries examinations in Maths, Science and English will be held on 11 January 2018 from 9.30am to 1pm for prospective students entering Years 7, 8 and 9 in September 2018. **The maximum award is worth a 50% reduction on tuition fees** (boarding fees are excluded). **Seventh-day Adventist parents of successful candidates will obtain this tuition fee reduction in addition to their 30% denominational discount.** Awards are multi-annual.

Candidates must register (deadline: 15 December 2017) and pay an administrative fee of £10. You can download the application forms from the school website. If you have any questions please contact Mrs Sonia Poddar: spoddar@spsch.org, or call 01923673268.

Stanborough School would like to thank the alumni and friends of the school for making this support possible. If you have benefited from Seventh-day Adventist education or feel that God is impressing you to help make Adventist education more accessible, please contact the BUC Treasury Department and ask how you can support the Stanborough Secondary School Scholarships and Bursaries Fund.

CRE exhibition



Gospel in Action – Christian Resources Exhibition 2017

by Pastor Maureen Rock

Several ministries of our church recently displayed their work at the annual Christian Resources Exhibition (CRE) held at Sandown Park, Esher. Over three days (17 to 19 October), more than 40 members, pastors, BUC administrators, directors and support staff showcased the Seventh-day Adventist Church's activities outside of Sabbath worship.

Pastor Maureen Rock, Principal of the Adventist Discovery Centre (ADC), co-ordinated things under the theme, 'Gospel in Action'. 'The Adventist Discovery Centre has been exhibiting at the Christian Resources Exhibition for many years,' she explained. 'However, this year a number of BUC directors and support staff joined the ADC in true inter-departmental co-operation to demonstrate their ministries at CRE. We could not have achieved this without the added help of a number of church members from across the SEC.'

The week began with Millie Williams and her team carrying out health checks for visitors and exhibitors. The second day highlighted Adventist education and was led by Kathleen Hanson, BUC Education Director, supported by representatives from Newbold College of Higher Education, Hyland House and home schooling. They were joined by the Religious Liberty Department led by Dr Brighton Kavaloh. On the final day Bert Smit, CEO of ADRA-UK, and his team promoted the work done by our relief agency. Almost 5,000 pieces of literature relating to these areas of ministry were distributed and direct contact was made with over 300 visitors and exhibitors.

Here is what one visitor said:

'I wish to say "thank you" to the Adventists for saving my life. Three years ago I visited your stand at CRE to have my blood

pressure checked – the machine didn't work properly, or so they thought. New batteries were placed in the machine, I was asked to rest for a while and my blood pressure was tested again. It was "sky high"! So I was advised to see my doctor, who confirmed my condition. My blood pressure is now controlled, following treatment and successful weight reduction. I was so close to having a stroke that day. Thank God for the Adventist Church exhibiting at CRE!'

Among the comments of our staff were the following:

'It was amazing to discover how many Christians were quite alarmed when they considered, some for the first time, the prospective impact on our religious liberty as Christians in the UK.'

'One non-Adventist gentleman asked me about the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and when it first started in England. He then said that his great-grandfather was among our early founders in the UK.'

'There were a few people who asked us about the Sabbath. One lady asked us where her nearest Adventist church was as she would like to visit.'

'Meeting the public at the CRE was a positive experience. I got "blessed" by a Pentecostal Christian who felt moved to affirm our ministry. We shook hands and prayed together and it made me realise just how many other people God is using in this world.'

'The only negative thing is that while a lot of people knew about the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church and the Evangelicals, most have never heard of the Adventist Church. As a church organisation we need to do more to get out into the community and promote ourselves.'

According to Pastor Rock, 'We all took every opportunity to promote the extensive work of our church at the stand, on walkabouts and in conversation at the restaurant tables. The numerous visitors and fellow exhibitors were amazed to see the breadth of ministries we undertake as a denomination. They were also impressed to know that Pastor Ian Sweeney, our church's president for the UK, was working alongside us at CRE 2017.'



Thank you for your generosity

On behalf of the team and students of the Adventist Discovery Centre, we extend heartfelt thanks to all who have supported our work over the years. Many of you have donated funds via your tithe envelopes, sent in cheques and money orders directly to us or set up standing orders for regular donations. Some of your family members may even have left us legacies for the continuation of this much-needed work.

The provision of Bible and health courses by post and online is welcomed by many across all ages and cultures. Some of our students share how they look forward to receiving these studies as it gives them comfort, hope and time to relax. The ADC's lessons are offered free to all, both inside and outside the church: to prisoners, to those who are seeking to know God, as well as those who are already experienced in the Word. Our students may be looking for a local church to worship in or seeking to study in the comfort and privacy of their own homes. So far this year, our students have identified themselves as Pentecostal, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Jewish, Apostolic, Church of England, Church of Ireland, Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist and having no faith at present.

We never tire of hearing the many stories of individuals and, indeed, whole families joining the Church through our courses. Some have been introduced to our lessons by service providers, friends, work colleagues, neighbours or family members, while others have found us online.

Your involvement with this work as donors is most welcome. Thank you for choosing to be part of the ADC team.

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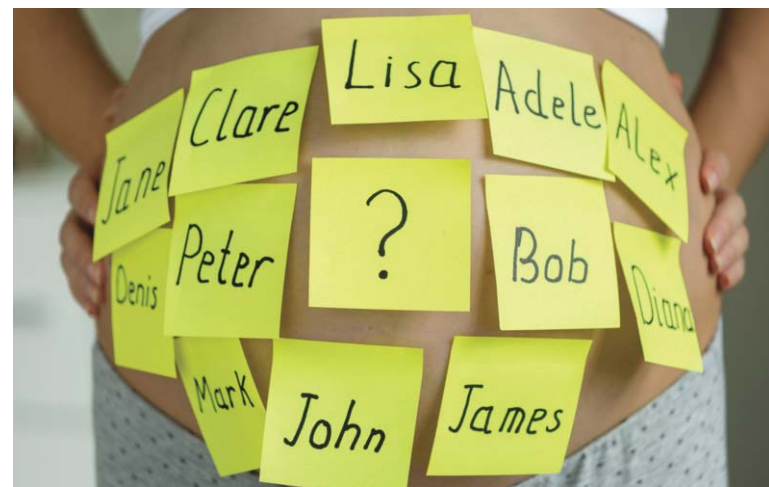
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What's in a name?

by Dr Richard de Lisser



What's in a name? There is an old African proverb that says, 'It's not what you call me, it's what I answer to!' Names are important. The choosing of a name can often set the direction and destiny of a person's life. On 10 November 1483 a baby boy was born in Eisleben, Saxony, to Hans and Margarethe Luder (or Luderh, later Luther). The child was named Martin Luther, with Luther meaning 'people's army' in German, little knowing that this child would go on to lead an army of people in protest and revolt against the teachings of the Catholic Church.

This year, as most know, marks 500 years since Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses to the doors of the All Saints church in Wittenberg on 31 October 1517, protesting against papal abuses and the sale of indulgences. He refused to recant, and was branded a heretic and excommunicated by Pope Leo X. He was also deemed an outlaw by Emperor Charles V in 1521. Central to Martin Luther's theology was the concept of righteousness by faith, and one of his greatest achievements was the complete translation of the Bible into German by 1534.

What's in a name? The name 'Martin Luther' evokes the idea of protest, revolution, reformation, change, and the willingness to oppose the current order of things. There was another Martin who wanted to change the current order of things in his day in the United States as it related to racial equality and social justice. Born Michael King on 19 December, 1899, he served as a Baptist minister at Atlanta's famous Ebenezer Baptist Church. While on a missionary trip to the Holy Land, and then on to Germany in 1934, Michael King, an early figure in the Civil Rights Movement, visited the place where Martin Luther, the Father of the Reformation, had lived and worked. The visit had a profound impact on him, leaving him so inspired by this great Protestant Reformation leader that he changed his name from Michael King to Martin Luther King. Little did he know that this change of name would be one of a series of events that would change the course of US history.

In 1929 he had named his second child Michael King Junior, after himself. Now that his visit to Martin Luther's country had inspired him to change his own name, he also changed the name of his son to that of Martin Luther King Junior. What's in a name? The name Dr Martin Luther King Junior evokes the idea of civil rights, non-violent protest, reform and justice: or was that just a dream?

On 28 August 1963 Dr Martin Luther King Junior outlined his dream for an end to racism, and for equality, justice and freedom for all. Delivered in front of an estimated crowd of 250,000 people gathered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC and broadcast around the world, the speech immortalised King as one of the greatest orators and civil rights leaders in the world.

On 23 October, 1957, a son was born to this civil rights advocate and his wife, Coretta Scott King, and they named him Martin Luther King III. His mother had reservations about naming him after his famous father, 'realising the burdens it can create for the child', but King Junior had always wanted to name his son Martin Luther III in honour of his paternal grandfather and the Protestant reformer Martin Luther. Martin Luther King III has kept up the family tradition, becoming an American human rights advocate and community activist in his own right.

What's in a name? He was born on 3 June 1934 in the parish of Hanover on the island of Jamaica. The eldest of seven children, he was

named Martin Luther Rodney by his grandmother, who was anxious for him to be like the great Protestant reformer Martin Luther. Martin Luther Rodney left Jamaica for England in 1955; however, he almost did not make it as the ship he was sailing on caught fire in the mid-Atlantic, but the crew fought relentlessly and successfully to put the fire out. God had a plan for the life of Martin Luther Rodney.

Upon arrival in England Martin Luther Rodney first settled in the West Midlands before moving to London, where he attended the Edmonton Seventh-day Adventist church for eight years. Upon leaving Edmonton he ventured to plant two Adventist churches in Tottenham and one in Chingford. During the 1960s and '70s the new Adventist immigrants from the Caribbean felt that their spiritual needs were not being fully met by the British Adventist Church, and Elder Martin Luther Rodney, living up to his famous name, was in the forefront, pressing the church for change as part of the London Laymen's Forum.

The demands were simple: the right for their own young men to be allowed to train as pastors as well as inviting 'top drawer' pastors from the West Indies to pastor in the United Kingdom to help cater for their needs, and allow them to be a part of the church administration at both Union and Conference level, as well as proportional representation on major committees. The London Laymen's Forum persuaded a number of churches, including Elder Martin Luther Rodney's church in Tottenham, to withhold tithes until all demands were met.* It took an intervention by the General Conference to resolve the issue and sanction change.

Martin Luther Rodney went on to be instrumental in the establishment of the John Loughborough School, the first Adventist secondary school in London, becoming its first site manager. In the late 1990s Martin Luther Rodney made history by becoming the first layperson to be elected as Chairman of the London Area Advisory Council (LAAC). Martin Luther Rodney is the epitome of his grandmother's wish: now 83, he is still passionate about the work of the Lord and still pressing for change.

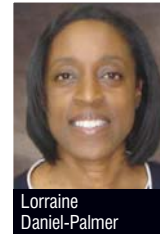
Martin Luther. Martin Luther King Senior. Martin Luther King Junior. Martin Luther King III. Martin Luther Rodney. What's in a name? What name do you answer to?

*Editor's note: The withholding of tithes by an individual, a congregation or a group of congregations has never been an acceptable course of action, either during Bible times or since. The 'returning' of tithes is an act of worship, and it should never be used as a 'pawn' in a power struggle.

Opinions expressed in the 'Perspective' pages are those of the authors, and may not necessarily be those of either MESSENGER staff or the BUC.



Joan Saunders



Lorraine Daniel-Palmer



Joanna Daniel

Move your mountain!

The NEC Women's Ministries Department – led by Beulah Plunkett – delivered a one-week event that focused on 'restoration in action for women who are hurting'. 'Move Your Mountain' was the theme and the purpose was to address abuse awareness and the healing and reclaiming of one's life after abuse. This was an opportunity for Seventh-day Adventist professional women who work in this field to help our women find ways to 'move their mountains'.

Two hundred-plus women attended the event, which started on Sabbath 26 August and ended on Friday 1 September. The week started with preaching and teaching on the Sabbath, then carried on with teaching sessions led by Lorraine Daniel-Palmer, Joan Saunders and Joanna Daniel. The week ended with a healing and anointing service led by Pastor Patricia Douglas and Winsome Brown-Baadjes. Prayer devotionals were held each evening, led by the writer. One woman, a non-member, smilingly said, 'I have moved one of my mountains this week and I'm going to work on the rest because of what I have learnt here.' Many other women thanked the Lord for the blessings of the week, and praised God for bringing this programme of healing to them.

The first speaker was Joanna Daniel, a counsellor, author, wife and mother who runs a private practice offering face-to-face, video and telephone counselling. She is CEO of Wounds To Scars, an organisation that positively influences the lives of many women. One of her sessions dealt with learning how to listen to God's voice through His Word, rather than listening only to the voice that comes from your pain. She explained how to keep this understanding as 'a constant reminder that, despite my pain, in spite of whatever I may encounter in life – notwithstanding the impact of the obstacles I may face – the "Potter" can and will put me back together again.'

The second speaker was Joan Saunders, an adviser for children and young people who have experienced sexual assault or abuse. She is also Director of the WHEL (Whole, Healed and Empowered Living) and WHEN (Women's Healing and Empowerment Network) UK. She spoke about the abuse of young people and children, helping the attendees see the experience from their point of view rather than just that of an adult. She also stressed the need for parents to listen to young people and observe what's happening in their world, above and beyond trying to manage their behaviours, as very often the behaviours are indicators of the emotions they are unable to verbalise.

In a later session Joan focused on the process of healing as outlined in the Bible in Isaiah 61:1-3 and John 4:16-21. This was a more interactive session where the concerns of parents for their children were prayed for.

The third speaker, Lorraine Daniel-Palmer, Director of Minds for Eternity, is a Christian neurological, life and leadership coach, and a minister's wife. Originally from the UK, she now resides in the USA. On the Sabbath Lorraine's title was 'Still I Rise', and she challenged the audience to remember that above the clouds the sun still shines – to 'live life at 37,000 feet where the sun shines, to rise up each day and think on higher things: the things of God'.

Lorraine later introduced the women to their greatest asset – the mind and its amazing capabilities – under the title, 'Minds for Eternity'. According to her, 'God planted eternity in our minds when He created us for eternal life. Sin has caused much damage, but there is hope – The Blueprint – living in the will of God as Christ our Saviour lived.'

Her presentation certainly provided help to break the cycle of being abused by others, a key area of change in the process of getting 'mountains to move'. In the final session the women wrote their manifestos and came up to the front and shared them with zeal and confidence.

On the Friday evening there was a solemn and very moving prayer, praise, healing and anointing service for the women. Pastor Patricia Douglas, who had supported the programme in many ways, led out with Winsome Baadjes in praying for the women and anointing those who wanted special prayer and healing. This service was a wonderful end to such a blessed week.

We go forward in faith, 'moving our mountains' by having minds for eternity, understanding pain through the eyes of a child and beginning to heal by addressing one layer at a time.

BEULAH PLUNKETT (NEC SABBATH SCHOOL AND WOMEN'S MINISTRIES DIRECTOR)



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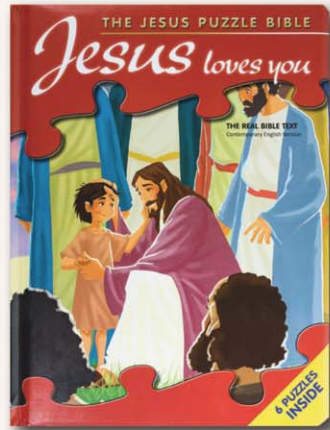


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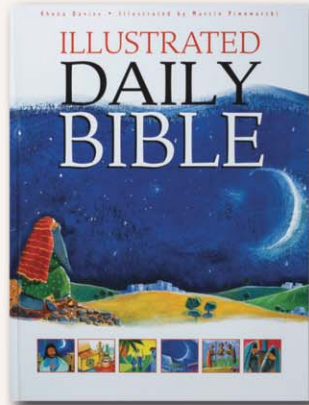
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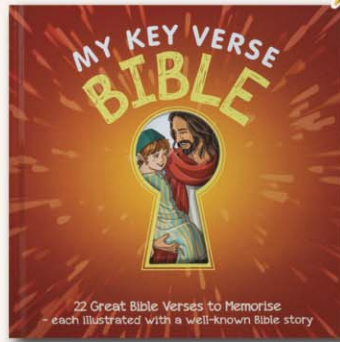
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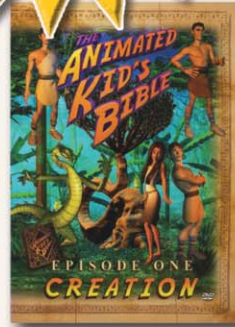
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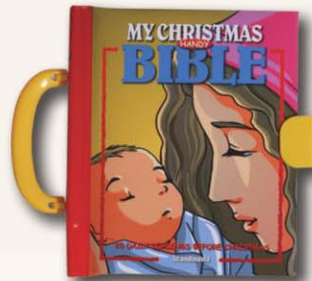
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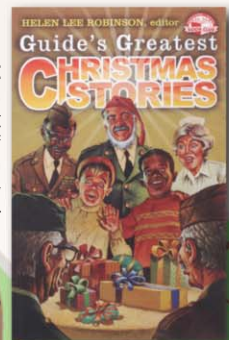
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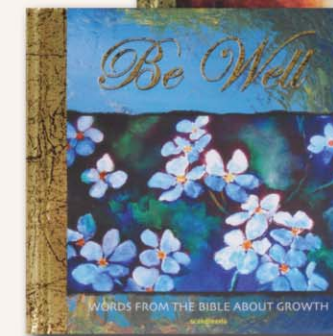
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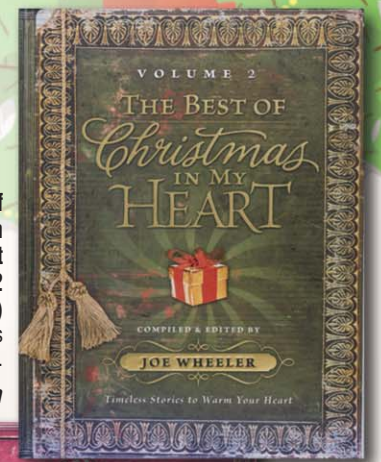
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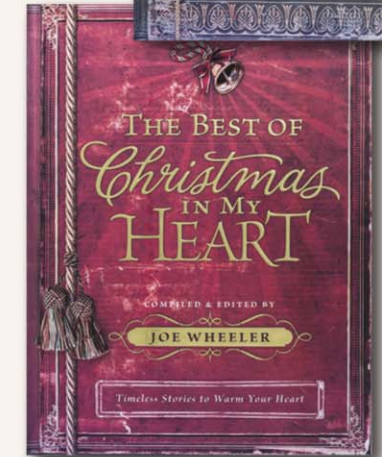
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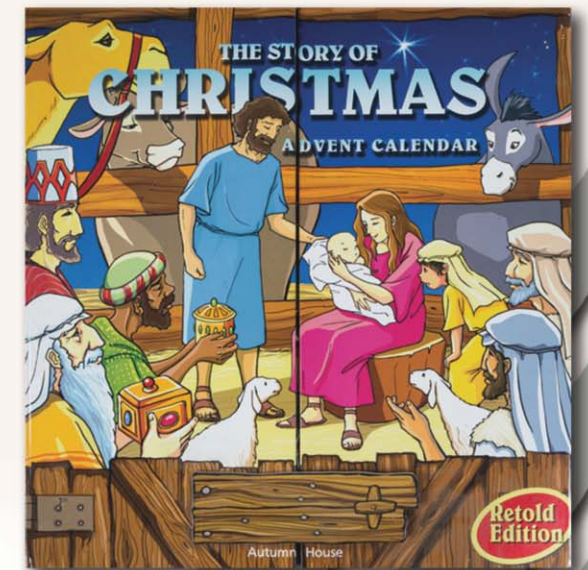
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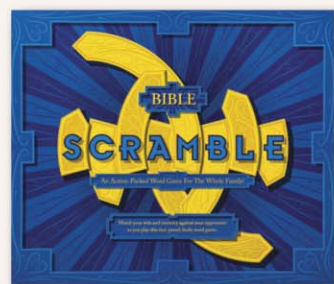
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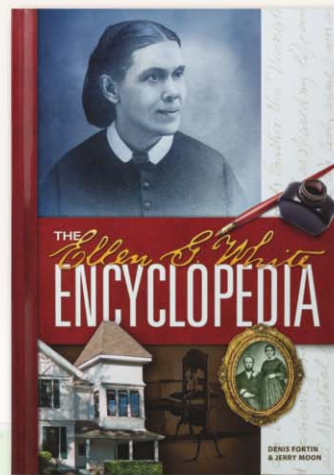


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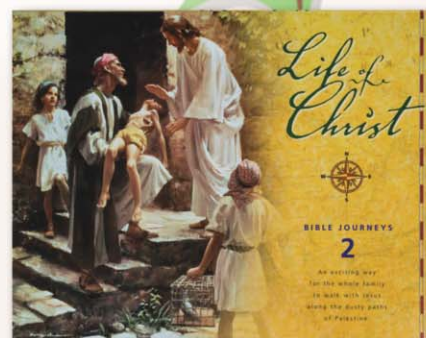
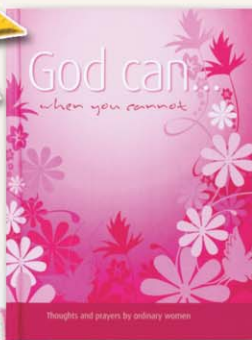
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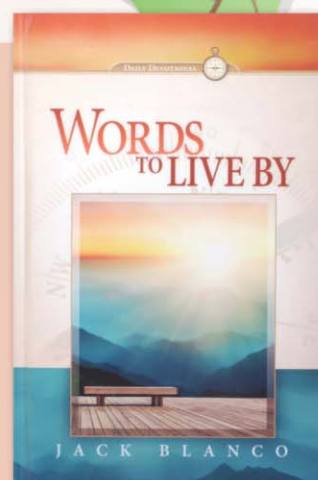
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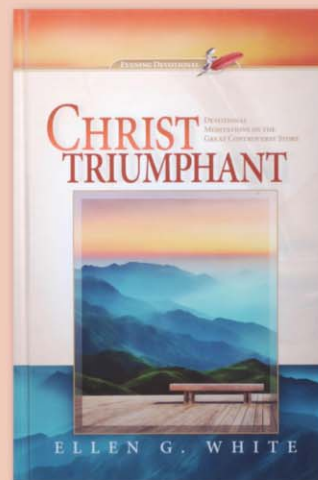
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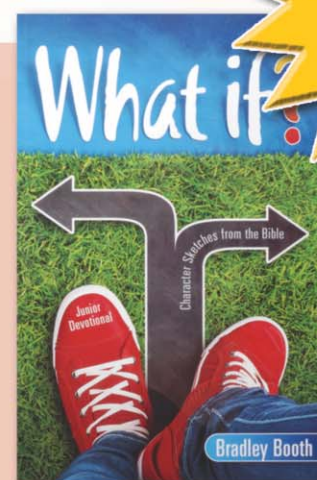
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Redditch celebrates 30 years

It was a memorable day for the Redditch church on Sabbath 29 October, as they celebrated 30 years of church organisation. For this occasion the local town hall was used for the service, with local church members as well as many from other Adventist churches present.

With over 200 in attendance, including the Mayor of Redditch, the service had a jubilant atmosphere. The mayor gave a speech chronicling her own faith in God and how persevering in times of difficulty and challenges is what God calls us to do.

Local minister, Pastor Micah Campbell, who was ordained the week before, led out in welcoming each one and introducing the various guests.

Pastor Alan Hush, North England Conference Executive Secretary, was the main speaker for the occasion. As a former Redditch pastor it was a homecoming day for him and his family. He encouraged the church members to remain faithful, using Joseph as an example of loyalty to God, even during the most testing of times.

The celebration continued into the afternoon when the founding members shared their experiences, and there were further tributes from Pastors Richard Jackson, NEC President, and Richard Daly, BUC Communication Director. The day ended with an evening concert by



Pastor Alan Hush, the Mayor of Redditch, and Pastor Micah Campbell



groups and artists such as Trio, Handsworth Group and the saxophonist, Mark Bunney.

We congratulate Pastor Campbell and Redditch Church, and pray that they will continue to make an impact in their local community.

PASTOR RICHARD DALY (BUC COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR)



Dr Rosena Allin-Khan and Joseph Dominique Clem

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Freedom of religion concerns raised

Following a letter about concerns raised by members of the Balham church, MP Dr Rosena Allin-Khan met on 25 July with the congregation's Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department (PARL) leader, Mr Joseph Dominique Clem, to discuss the proposed Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill and the recent Casey Review as well as the Out-of-School Education Settings: Call for Evidence.

Joseph highlighted that it is still not clear how new legislation would define 'extremism', 'non-violent extremism' or 'British values' in a way that would not threaten freedom of speech or freedom to exercise one's belief. His concern was whether a person holding conservative religious views such as the belief that there is only salvation through Jesus Christ, or a religious belief opposed to same-sex marriage, falls into the definition of 'non-violent extremism'.

Also, referring to both the recent Casey Review and the Out-of-School Education Settings: Call for Evidence, Joseph expressed a concern that there seems to be no guarantee that any charity organisation upholding such teachings would be able to register as an out-of-school setting with the approval of Ofsted and/or the Charity Commission.

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan has since registered these concerns with the responsible minister and assured the congregation that she will bring them to Parliament, adding that she also had some concerns about the Casey Review, which, although intended to bring unity between communities, may have the opposite effect.

JOSEPH DOMINIQUE CLEM (PARL LEADER AND ELDER)



Blessings, not 'trick or treat'

Moyra Rodd, who is the Children's Ministry Co-ordinator for the Crieff church, has become increasingly concerned about the commercialisation of Halloween and the dangers this could pose to our children who may want to be involved in it.

With this in mind, she suggested to the parents at the church that they could have a 'blessing' party for the children and do something positive for some elderly residents at the Richmond House Retirement Home. The parents gladly agreed to this, so on 21 October the children had a party and then made gifts for the residents of the home.

They made cards with the message, 'Blessings to you' and taped a small bar of chocolate to each one. They also planted about 40 small viola plants in little pots to give to the residents. The children then dressed up in fancy dress and about 15 of the under-13s went to the home to give out the cards and flowers. They also sang two gospel choruses. It was a real pleasure to see the joy on the faces of the old people and the staff members. An article was sent to the local paper, which has been acknowledged, and it is hoped it may cause other churches to do the same with their children.

PASTOR BOB RODD (COMMUNICATION SECRETARY)

Dundee centenary celebrations

Early in the 1900s, a Dundonian by the name of Mrs Helen Barrie and some friends started checking out the Adventist beliefs that her brother in the USA had written to her about. Soon a group of ladies were meeting regularly on Sabbath mornings for Bible study, and in September 1917 they were officially organised as a company of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

On 30 September this year, in the bright new church auditorium, Pastor Marcel Ghioalda hosted a special service of thanksgiving to God for 100 years of His watch-care. The morning and afternoon meetings were enhanced by music from the 'PALS' Filipino choir and many Dundee musical artists. Guest speaker Pastor Llewellyn Edwards encouraged us to move outside our cultural barriers with friendship and compassion while striving to reproduce Christ's character in our lives. A pictorial survey by Dr John Walton provided a taste of the changes that have shaped Dundee Church down the years. The finishing touch in the morning was the ceremonial unveiling of a commemorative plaque by Pastor Paul Tompkins (Scottish Mission President).

A tasty and plentiful lunch was topped off by the cutting of a special centenary cake baked and artistically decorated by Mrs Abigail Tettey-Addo. In the



Bumper thirteenth Sabbath

On 30 September the Nottingham Central church children brought a bumper thirteenth Sabbath offering to Jesus – the proceeds of their own hard work and initiative. Their efforts at making and selling various items raised over £200! The speaker for the day was Pastor Sangmin Heo, a Korean youth pastor who is presently studying at Nottingham University.

DENNIS TAYLOR (COMMUNICATION ASSISTANT)



Joel, Jonas and Tobias Davies-Browne



Left to right: Pastor Marcel and Claudette Ghioalda, Pastor Bob and Moyra Rodd, Pastor Paul Tompkins, Mrs Karin and Pastor Llewellyn Edwards and Mrs Sheila and Pastor Doug Sinclair

afternoon, Pastors Doug Sinclair and Bob Rodd shared past memories and some good advice for the future. Warmest congratulations, blessings and good wishes from former pastors and members now scattered round the world were communicated in a PowerPoint presentation.

Then, in an informal open session, members of the congregation told of moving and faith-building experiences (as well as some hilarious moments) from the lives of some of the true 'characters' who have enlivened church affairs. Finally, Pastor Ian Sweeney, BUC President's congratulations were shared with

the congregation: 'I pray that your example of faithfulness and service for over 100 years might inspire every congregation in the British Union Conference so that soon we might celebrate the return of our Saviour Jesus Christ.' 'Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!'

PROFESSOR JOHN C. WALTON

Vacancies at Harper Bell Seventh-day Adventist Primary School, Birmingham

Harper Bell Seventh-day Adventist Primary School is a unique and popular one-form entry school, located at 29 Ravenhurst Street, near to Birmingham City Centre, with approximately 210 children on roll.

The IEB seeks to make the following appointments:

1. Key Stage 1 Teacher/TLR2 (Responsibility for EYFS) required: September 2018

Requirements:

Be able to work in a creative and inspirational way that inspires children to love school; challenge and motivate all children to achieve; be committed to working as part of a team; improve standards of teaching and learning; be a positive role model in school; buy into the school vision.

2. Teaching Assistant – Level 3 required: immediate start or 1 January

Requirements:

Have experience of working in KS1 and KS2; be committed to raising pupil attainment; have an understanding of intervention strategies; communicate effectively with children, staff and parents; work as part of a team; be supportive of the Christian ethos of the school.

Both positions can expect: articulate and enthusiastic children; a friendly and motivated staff team; a positive working environment; professional development opportunities; and a supportive leadership team.

Visits to the school are welcome.

Closing date (both posts): 1 December 2017.

Interviews: week beginning 11 December 2017.

Please contact the School Office on 01216937742 for any further information.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful candidates will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks, including: an enhanced DBS; Prohibition check; Childcare Disqualification (where applicable); qualifications (where applicable); medical fitness; identity; and right to work. All applicants will be required to provide two suitable references.

Leeds grows by 19 souls

The Leeds District was blessed to have Pastor Carlos Muñoz from the Amazing Facts organisation present a series of nightly sermons on 'Unveiling Revelation' between 4 and 19 August. The district's members successfully invited over 100 visitors to the campaign, many of whom came for more than one evening. Pastor Carlos has a clear and engaging preaching style that was enjoyed by members and non-members alike.

Two baptismal sessions were held during the campaign. On the evening of 13 August three young people were baptised, followed on the evening of 19 August by a further 15 souls who made or renewed their commitment to Christ through baptism, and one through profession of faith. The Leeds District rejoiced at this wonderful event and warmly welcomed them into the church. Pastor Kumi, the Ministerial Association Secretary, advised the newly baptised members to stay focused on Christ's example rather than on fellow members.

The Leeds District pastor, Samuel Gardner, commented: 'The campaign served as a catalyst to unite the district in one mission – to



spread the everlasting Gospel. Each church played its role effectively from planning to execution. Many of the guests who came are also potential candidates for future studies. With this current harvest we have seen 34 people give their lives to Jesus this year in the Leeds District of Churches.'

JOANNA KHUPHE



Hannah Donaldson, Dawn Simpson and Jade David

Fartown baptism

In June this year, Pastor Steve McKenzie, from the SEC, held a week-long revival campaign at the Fartown church entitled, 'It's time to make that change', where decisions were made for Christ.



Sharmaine Lawrence and Pastor Steve McKenzie

Following this, Sabbath 26 August was a highly memorable day when four new members were added to the church. In the morning, Sharmaine Lawrence was received into church fellowship on profession of her faith by our minister, Pastor Pardon Chenjerai, and welcomed by the elders and members. In the afternoon, Dawn Simpson, Jade David (aged 16) and Hannah Donaldson (aged 14) were baptised at the Crosland Moor church.

Each candidate was able to have her favourite scripture read and special items rendered; and the proud mothers of Hannah and Jade expressed their joy and thanked those who gave Bible studies and other spiritual help to their daughters. Although faced with difficulties in the week leading up to her baptism, Dawn was able to testify of the goodness of God, thanking those who had helped in providing Bible studies and support on her journey.

Prior to their baptism a timely message was presented by Pastor McKenzie, based on Matthew 27 and 28 – Jesus' death and resurrection. The candidates were warmly welcomed into the family of God by the Fartown and Crosland Moor members as well as family and visiting friends.

VERONICA WHITTLE



Andrea Simpson, Councillor Natalie Bryan and Pastor Kevin Johns

Photo quality as supplied

Hackney's investiture

The Hackney Pathfinders were honoured on Sabbath 23 September during their annual investiture service. It proved to be a special occasion for the leader, Andrea Simpson, who has dedicated 51 years to this ministry and had this to say: 'I am so proud of the efforts of both the young and the old – of both the Adventurers and Pathfinders Club.'

The club was encouraged by Pastor Kevin Johns, SEC Pathfinder Director, who told them that 'when we make God a part of our experience, we cannot fail.'

Assistant Pathfinders Director, Margaret Brooks, paid tribute to the group, letting them know that all their efforts during the year, from marching through the streets of Hackney to the completion of their various pins and honours, had not gone unnoticed or unrewarded.

Along with Pastor Kevin Johns, those assisting in the awards ceremony were Councillor Natalie Brian, Assistant SEC Pathfinders Director, and David Burnett, pastor of the Clapton church, whose Pathfinders were also present. Pastor Johns gave a generous donation to the club on behalf of the Conference to ensure that their ministry can continue to flourish and touch the lives of those within the community.

DARELL J. PHILIP (COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT)

NEC Family Camp 2017

This year's NEC Family Camp at Aberdaron, North Wales, from 22-31 July, was full of uplifting worships, inspiring singing, delicious food and great fellowship. The weather was changeable, but the campers were thankful for the sunshine, which enabled them to enjoy the beautiful surroundings that the Glan-yr-Afon campsite offers. Lots of special memories and lasting friendships were made, along with the opportunity to spend time with God in His stunning creation.

In recent years, the NEC family camps have raised large sums of money for ADRA-UK and ADRA Burkina Faso. It was felt this year that it would be good to continue fund-raising, but choose a cause that would benefit the Aberdaron community. Aberdaron has fewer than 1,000 residents, but every year the local sailing club uses its Monday-night summer music events to raise money for a local cause. This year, the charity was the Canolfan Felin Fach Centre in Pwllheli, the main market town of the Llŷn Peninsula. The centre provides support for people experiencing mental health problems, including drug or alcohol abuse, or who feel socially isolated within their communities. Access to help for mental health issues is extremely limited in North Wales, and Canolfan Felin Fach has been able to provide ongoing help and support.

It was a highlight of the Family Camp week to welcome Gwenda Williams, the charity's local co-ordinator, to Glan-yr-Afon and hand her £1,500 in donations from the campers. She was overwhelmed by the generosity of everyone at Family Camp, and was brought to tears when handed the money by Camp Master, Malcolm Logan!



Malcolm Logan and Gwenda Williams



The padre for the week was newly-retired minister, Pastor Llewellyn Edwards, and the camp was blessed by his worships on spiritual development.

Family Camp 2017 will be remembered for many different reasons: strengthened faith; friendships made and renewed; a real sense of God's presence in this special place. It will also be remembered, again, for the very positive response to help those who are in need.

Family Camp 2018 dates have yet to be confirmed, but it is anticipated that booking details will be available in the new year.

ANGELA LOGAN

Community and Memorial Service

In recognition of the recent tide of violent gun and knife crime within the South London communities, on 30 September the Lewisham church held a Community and Memorial Service in honour of families affected by such violence.

The Lewisham Pathfinder and Adventurer club also punctuated the day with a takeover of Sabbath School and performed their annual drum corps drill and march.

Six families who have lost children and loved ones to these crimes were represented in the congregation, along with friends, relatives and supporters who were there in support. Members of the Lewisham police force who specialise in tackling gun and knife crime were also present to show support.

SEC President, Doctor Emmanuel Osei, and SEC Youth Director, Pastor Anthony Fuller, were present in support of the cause, with Dr Osei highlighting the need for the church to play a relevant role in supporting the practical needs of communities experiencing violent gun and knife crime. He also emphasised the church's responsibility to reach out to those suffering loss and embrace them with arms of love.

This was followed by a moving prayer for all families who had lost loved ones, after which there was a slideshow paying tribute to all victims who had recently lost their lives as a result of this scourge.

Pastor Fuller also preached on the importance for the church to exercise 'passion' rather than more 'duty' in responding to the needs of those around us.

Paul Frempong, who leads the Boys2Men ministry, which is currently running a Knife Crime tour across UK churches, discussed the effects of violent crimes during his presentation in the afternoon, showing how popular youth culture is helping to perpetuate these crimes.

Pastor Colin Stewart, who initiated this Community and Memorial Service, emphasised that he did not want the day to be a one-off event. His desire is to make such services a national yearly event whereby churches join with local communities in recognising victims of gun and knife violence.

ATHEA BONNER-MCKENZIE



Doctor Emmanuel Osei



Pastor Colin Stewart

'In All Things Be Faithful, Tweet All About It'

This was the theme for the Leeds Central Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs in 2017, chosen by club members. The investiture service was held on 16 September, Global Pathfinder Day, and it came at the end of a busy year for both clubs, full of local camps, camporees and social activities.

The club members have also been heavily involved in the life of the church, distributing literature and taking part in the church's evangelistic outreach, visiting nursing homes, and being involved in 'flash mobs' with the AYS team.

Close on 50 people were invested, with many of them achieving additional honours such as Cake Decorating, Small Engines, Currency, etc.

The guest speaker was Mark Sinclair, whose sermon was based on Daniel 3:15-17 – the story of the three young Hebrew men who refused to bow down to the image at Dura. They showed their faithfulness to God, who saved them from the fiery furnace.



The investiture was supported by local Area 3 clubs: Bradford, Hull, Leeds New Generation and Middlesbrough attended the service.

V. MAYNARD
(PHOTO: EDEN MATHESON)



Metamorphosis Women's Conference

The first annual Metamorphosis Women's Conference was hosted recently by the League of Extraordinary Women in the Barbican, central London. The convention was led by a group of female speakers who urged their listeners to remove their masks and confront the real-life issues that affect us all.

The event, sponsored by the SEC Youth Department, was attended by around 200 women of differing ages, cultures and backgrounds. At the beginning of the day, individuals filed into the main hall, with silent questions filling the air: 'Will we hear something new? Have we heard it all before? Will we leave feeling empowered or embittered?'

These questions were soon answered, as Pastor Tabitha Purple set the tone for the day with a passionate devotion outlining the various women God had used throughout the Bible to show the worth and resilience of the fairer sex. She encouraged women to see themselves in these biblical characters, often misinterpreted but exceedingly loved by God: women Christ called by name, who are capable of feats beyond their wildest dreams. According to Delia Bogues: 'The platform [of Metamorphosis] created a safe environment for self-evaluation without judgement, and cemented sisterhood, while encouraging each other to nurture our unique gifts as women.'

Attendees had the option to attend two of four seminars that discussed the often-taboo subjects of our church and culture. Wanitta Powell discussed the process of change and how we must learn 'to dance open-handed with this inevitable force', so that we become all God has called us to be. Cherlene Wilson addressed the path to celibacy after an early life of sexual abuse and promiscuity. Dr Val Bernard-Allan gave a sociological insight into female 'singleness' and how it has functioned in society over the centuries. Yolanda Greaves led a

straight-talking discussion on depression, mental health and the importance of recognising the signs and symptoms in those around us. Lastly, one of the event organisers, Naomi Osei, shared a narrative from her own life concerning the power and mercy of God in using our brokenness for our eventual success.

The candid manner in which the speakers presented their topics conveyed not only their expertise but their own personal experiences. These were not issues they were simply drilling their audiences on; these were areas in which they were sharing their failures and triumphs, their life's work and their new-found purposes. Attendee Del Baxter said, 'The small-group atmosphere of the classrooms allowed a greater sense of togetherness, which meant people felt safe enough to be vulnerable with each other.'

In truth, the conference succeeded in communicating practical ways in which women can be authentic in their Christianity and womanhood. Participants were left to ask themselves: 'What might happen if we dared not to see our gender through the eyes of society, not to be in competition with other women, but instead to stand side-by-side with and strengthen the women God has placed within our sphere of influence?'

To fully answer this question, Metamorphosis made it clear that we must work on who we are, making sense of our lives – our struggles and victories – under Christ's guidance.

Only by and through His will can we navigate our destiny and discover our true purpose as women of God.

To be kept up to date with future League of Extraordinary Women events, contact: info@leagueofextraordinarywomen.co.uk.

BY AN ANONYMOUS ATTENDEE

ASC Student Training Retreat

It has been the goal of the NEC Youth Department to have an Adventist Students on Campus (ASC) society on every university campus where we have Adventist students. So far there are 18 societies out of the 44 universities that lie within our territory.

As the student population is constantly changing, as does the leadership of each society annually, it is important that training takes place every year. This year that training took place at Aberdaron from 6 to 10 September, with student leaders from over 15 societies present.

The training was conducted by Thando Amankwah, a graduate of Harvard University and the CAMPUS programme in Michigan. She has a wealth of experience in campus ministries and her messages were solid, biblical and relevant to the experience of the students. The topics covered during the weekend included 'How to give a Bible study', 'How to set up a society', 'How the different committee personnel function' and 'How to succeed as a student'. Also during the week's training there was a mock 'Freshers' Fair' to help the students know how to promote ASC, how to initiate conversation and how to answer some of the difficult questions that are regularly asked.

The students were given newly designed banners to promote their societies at Freshers' Fair, as well as various other resources to give away. We were blessed to have a visit by the BUC Youth and Pathfinder Director, Pastor Dejan Stojkovic, on the Thursday. Commenting on his



visit, Pastor Dejan said, 'It's great to see the students getting training; 70% or thereabouts of Christian young people leave church when they go to university and we need to do something about this. I am praying for all the students on campus and want to provide as much support from the BUC as possible.'

Please keep our students in prayer as they study at university and minister on their campuses. Their work is not an easy one but it's one that is highly important. To find out more about the various societies in the NEC please visit <http://www.necyouth.org.uk/Societies.php>.

PASTOR ADAM RAMDIN

School of the Prophets report

Martin Luther was by no means alone in his efforts to reform Christianity. One of those who were active long before him was John Wycliffe, the 'morning star of the Reformation'. He was involved in the translation of the Bible in the language of the common people in 1382 (Middle English). This monumental work was undertaken while he was the rector of a small parish church in Lutterworth, England. This church still stands today and was the location for this year's School of the Prophets, which focused on lessons to be learnt from the past.

The morning's presentation was by Pastor Adam Ramdin, NEC Youth Director, who showed how the work that John Wycliffe did was key to those who came after him and how he was well ahead of his time in his thoughts and beliefs. In the afternoon Anthony Banton spoke on the topic of 'The Historical Reliability of the New Testament', showing how the New Testament can be trusted today.

After spending the morning and afternoon in St Mary's Church, Lutterworth, the group participated in a walking tour of the Reformation sites in Oxford. About 30 youth made the journey from Lutterworth to Oxford, where Pastor Adam Ramdin led a tour of the various colleges where reformers studied as well as the Martyrs' Memorial commemorating the lives of the Oxford martyrs. Nicolas Ridley, Thomas Cranmer and Hugh Latimer all gave their lives in Oxford, which is marked today by a cross on the ground. Troy Smith, a ministerial student at Newbold College of Higher Education who was on the tour of Oxford, said, 'It was inspiring to visit the humble scenes where monumental figures in the Reformation began their ministry and ultimately gave their lives. It also reminded me how important it is, living in the UK, to understand Britain's role in the Reformation.'

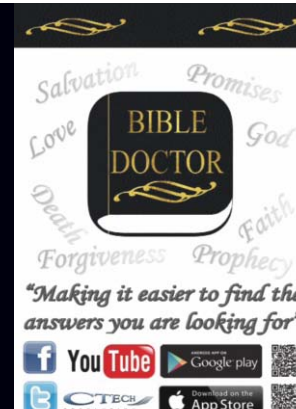
More can be seen online at <http://tinyurl.com/sotp2017>.

PASTOR ADAM RAMDIN



Bible Doctor app

Troy Flood, a member of the North England Conference, has developed an aid to Bible study and witnessing called Bible Doctor. This app is available free of charge for both Apple and Android devices. The app will provide you with a list of texts in support of various subjects that you may wish to study or share with others, especially in those spontaneous situations where you may have to support your assertions with biblical support.



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