

Bristol's Christmas meal

by Ian Sabadin

Communications Officer at Bristol Central Church

On Sunday 23 December last year, the Bristol Central church hosted a free community Christmas meal at the Malcolm X Community Centre.

The church did this, rather than hold the traditional Carol Service, hoping thereby to attract a section of the community that had not previously attended its other events.

The venue was warm and welcoming, with the tables beautifully decorated in red and gold for the guests, who arrived from 3pm onwards.

A selection of live music included several items by the Hope Quartet from Swindon Portuguese Church, whose blended harmonies were really appreciated by the audience. Organiser Chrystal Ndhlovu also sang, as did her sister, Myrander Coleman, and 8-year-old Kristen from South Bristol, who gave a beautiful rendition of 'O Holy Night'.

The catering was arranged by Nadine Brown and comprised a three-course meal that was prepared and served by church members. There were many thanks and compliments for the food, while festive Christian music was played in the background. Many church members were there to mingle and chat with the visitors.

A short message was presented by Bristol Central elder, Hughlin Turner, about the spirit of giving and sharing at Christmas time. Local pastor, Royston Smith, also took a few minutes to assure the visitors that the church was 'there for them' and to highlight the events and services the church was able to provide, including counselling, Student Hub, health advice, food parcels, and a range of children's activities such as the Community Breakfast Club, Creative Church, Holiday Bible School, etc. The message from Pastor Smith was clear: that he was 'available to be their pastor, even if they didn't come to church'.

In all, around 35 non-members attended, including a number of community children who were given colouring and activity books, while the adults were given Adventist calendars and tracts.

Guests were invited to give written and verbal feedback, which was very positive, with several people commenting on how much they enjoyed the church company, food and live music.

According to Chrystal Ndhlovu: 'The aim was to build relationships with the local community, and to keep in touch

with them over the coming year.'

This event was part of the church's community strategy to serve and reach out to those in the local area, and, in doing so, to make more contacts who can be invited to future events and programmes.

Everyone agreed that there was a fantastic, friendly atmosphere, and it was a powerful witness to the community that the church was there to serve and help them where it could.



Organiser, Chrystal Ndhlovu



Kristen



Hope Quartet



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Annual Appeal 2019

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The therapeutic benefits of kindness – Part 2

Kindness research

Last issue's homework invited us to be intentional about being kind, noting the response in the recipient as well as ourselves – the giver. How did you get on with that exercise? I do hope it was a positive experience.

So, what difference does kindness make? Psychologist Dr Ritchie Davidson from the University of Wisconsin, USA, developed a 'Kindness Curriculum'¹ for children, in which the curriculum segments involved undertaking caring exercises, paying attention to other people, taking note of an individual's feelings, practising forgiveness and expressing gratitude. Participating teachers reported that:

'Students who went through the curriculum showed more empathy and kindness and a greater ability to calm themselves down when they felt upset.'

Reporting on the efficacy of this innovative research-based training, Kelly April Tyrrell, in an article titled 'Kindness Curriculum boosts school success in pre-schoolers',² states:

'Researchers found that kids who had participated in the curriculum earned higher marks in academic performance measures and showed greater improvements in areas that predict future success than kids who had not.'

An article titled 'Kindness – society's golden chain?'³ which was published online in *The Psychologist*, reported on the 2010 Acts of Kindness study by Kathryn Buchanan and Anat Bardi, in which participants were asked to carry out kind acts each day for ten days. An increase in life satisfaction was observed in the 'kindness givers' compared to those in the control group.

On 1 January this year my husband and I spent a satisfying day as volunteers at the Advent Shelter, catering for the homeless. I had the

opportunity to speak with several guests, who spoke highly of the service offered. One lady (an annual visitor to the shelter) emphasised the kindness of the staff and how their attitude made her feel uplifted, enabling her to forget her problems, if only for a while. More specifically, she mentioned experiencing less pain and felt 'less unwell' whenever she attended the shelter.

Kindness health impact

In their video, *The Science of Kindness*, The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation⁴ identifies a number of physiological and psychological health benefits experienced by both the givers and the recipients of kindness.

Kindness increases:

- Energy levels • Happiness • Pleasure • Lifespan
- The 'feel-good' hormone, serotonin • The 'love' hormone, oxytocin

Kindness decreases:

- Anxiety • Blood pressure • Depression • Pain • Stress

We will revisit these claims in the next issue.

Good health!

¹<https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/lessons-from-creating-a-kindness-curriculum>

²<https://news.wisc.edu/kindness-curriculum-boosts-school-success-in-preschoolers/>

³<https://the-psychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-2018/february-2018/kindness-societys-golden-chain>

⁴<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/the-science-of-kindness>

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

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Julian Hibbert, Editor

In memory of Molly

At the time of writing this editorial, Elize and I have been the proud grandparents of Sebastian Jacob Barker for a mere 8 weeks. He is our first grandchild and we simply adore him – an experience that many of you will have indulged in over the years or are eagerly looking forward to.

Sebbie – as the family have quickly come to call him – has begun to focus on our faces and voices, follow our movements, and visibly enjoy his bath times: all of which is a source of ongoing joy and wonder for us.

But there is more . . .

It is not just Sebbie and his rapid development that I have found wonderful to observe, though. I am also fascinated by the way his parents, Mick and Jeané, are applying themselves to the role of being new parents. I know they are not alone in what they do and the devotion with which it's done, but because they are our children we have the privilege of viewing the process up-close and personal through them.

What have we learnt?

Well, to be really honest with you: **we've learnt just how easy it is to forget about what parenting a new-born baby is really like!** Firstly, we have been reminded that the parents' lives revolve around their baby's needs. Their sleep, meal times and general attempts at housekeeping are determined by the baby's 'input', 'output', bathing and burping requirements! Life suddenly becomes a treadmill – with Baby's little hand firmly on the speed dial.

Secondly, we have been reminded that wholesome parenting involves much more than just the timely satisfaction of a child's physical needs. As I quietly observe little Sebbie's parents at work, I see once again how important it is for parents to bond emotionally with their babies . . . to cuddle, talk to, play with, and generally stimulate them in a kind and loving way.

Then I read *The Sunday Times* . . .

Yes, we were still on our way home from our visit to little Sebbie and his parents, when Elize read me the lead article of that weekend's *Sunday Times*, which appeared under the headline, 'Revealed: how Big Tech pushes teens to suicide.'¹ It involved the tragic story of Molly Russell (14), who committed suicide in November 2017 and whose death is currently the subject of an inquest presided over by coroner Andrew Walker.

At the heart of the article is the allegation by Molly's father, Ian Russell, that his daughter had been exposed to social media sites containing material that graphically depicted self-harm and suicide (contrary to their stated policies). This is how *The Sunday Times* put it:

'Ian believes that Molly, who had shown no obvious sign of mental ill health, may have killed herself after viewing, or being sent, material about anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicide on social media sites including Instagram. She used her smartphone to log on to the photo-sharing app that night [of her suicide] in her bedroom.'²

The report went on to state a further development with respect to Molly's death:

'Since Ian said last week in a BBC news report that he believed Instagram "helped kill his daughter" by using algorithms that encouraged her to view more and more distressing material, about 30 families have contacted the suicide prevention charity Papyrus to reveal that they believe social media was a factor in the deaths of their children too.'³

Algorithms?

What are algorithms? Well, I suppose they are what the programmers of social media use to keep feeding us information that is related to our recent or regular searches. We've all experienced it in some way: for example, when you search for an air ticket or a new motor vehicle you will find for some time afterwards that related information will keep popping up, near the periphery of your screen, in the hope that you will be enticed into a purchase.

This is what happened to poor Molly. In fact, it was so bad that a month after her death Pinterest was still sending her email invitations to view self-harming images!

The coroner is taking the potentially negative role of these social media giants seriously by asking six of them (including Apple and YouTube) to 'hand over the information they hold about Molly Russell's accounts'.

Back to little Sebbie . . .

For a moment, let's get back to little Sebbie and the many other babies who are being loved and cared for today by their faithful parents: parents who want them to grow up safely and live happy, confident and successful lives. **Will those parents be as caring and concerned about them in 10 or 12 years from now?** The reason I ask this is because of the findings in an important report that appeared just over a year ago:

'Ofcom's Children and Parents Media Use and Attitudes report found that 46% of 11-year-olds,

51% of 12-year-olds and 28% of 10-year-olds now have a social media profile.

'Parental awareness of the age limit was low – with about eight in 10 of those parents whose children use Instagram or Snapchat **unaware of the restrictions.**

'**More than four in 10 said they would allow their child to use social media ahead of them reaching the minimum age required.**'⁴ (Emphasis supplied.)

How about you?

Where will you stand on this issue? **Will you be among those parents who, having done their best to raise their children, then simply hand them over to the potentially damaging influence of unrestricted social media access?** Hopefully not!

'Here is a last piece of advice. If you believe in goodness and if you value the approval of God, fix your minds on the things which are holy and right and pure and beautiful and good.' Philippians 4:8 (PHILLIPS).

And firmly but kindly guide your children to think like that too!

¹*The Sunday Times*, 27 January 2019, pages 1, 4 and 5

²*Ibid.*, page 4

³*Ibid.*

⁴<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-42153694>



Which social media services are age-restricted?*

'WhatsApp have just announced a change to their terms and conditions for users based in Europe. Users will now need to be 16 to use WhatsApp.

'Nearly all other social media services require users to be at least 13 years of age to access and use their services. This includes Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and Skype.

'While there is no age restriction for watching videos on YouTube, users need to be 13 or older to have their own YouTube account (enabling them to subscribe to other channels, like videos, post comments, share their own content and flag inappropriate content).'

^{*}<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/age-restrictions-social-media-services>

^{*}This is part of a statement issued by the UK Safer Internet Centre on 25 April 2018.



Our Romanian congregations are growing

In mid-December last year the Romanian churches in the Greater London area were blessed by nine new members – eight by baptism and one by profession of faith. Six of the candidates were from the London Romanian church, one from the Watford Romanian church and two from the East London Romanian church.

The baptism took place at East London Romanian Church, and commenced with hymns of praise followed by a worship service conducted by Pastor Sorin Petrof.

These nine new members have brought much happiness into the church, but much more to the inhabitants of heaven. They have the will

and enthusiasm to work and serve God, helping others to be ready for the second coming of Jesus and eternity.

We thank God that the Romanian churches in the UK continue to grow, because people are hungry for the Word of God.

The Romanian churches are growing by more than 20 baptisms per annum. This was the second baptismal service held in our churches in 2018.

Praise God that every Sabbath more than 200 people worship at London Romanian, 100 at Watford Romanian and 120 at East London Romanian Church.

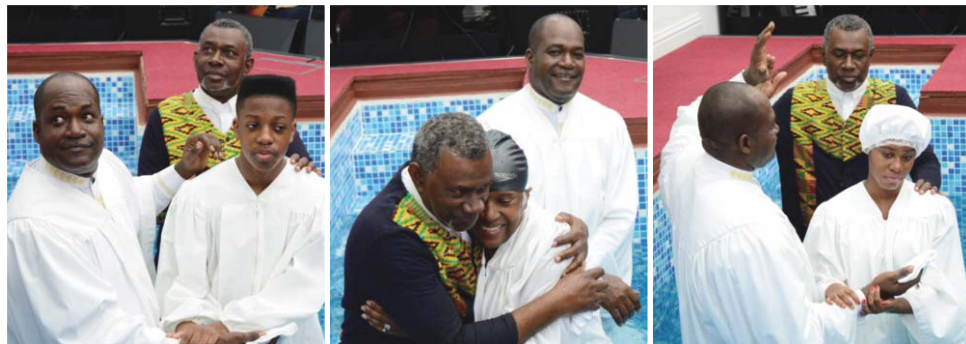
DIANA GAGA

Three baptisms at North Wembley

On the penultimate Sabbath of this past year, North Wembley Church had the joyous experience of witnessing the baptism of three new members. The service was conducted by the resident ministers, Pastors Moore and Mingo, who were assisted by an unexpected visitor, Pastor Michael Simpson, the NEC Personal Ministries and Church Planting Director.

Pastor Mingo addressed his sermonette to the candidates and read them the baptismal vows: in addition to which there were special songs and the reading of their favourite Bible texts during the service.

Among the service highlights was four-year-old Ahmya Rock, who sang, from memory, the worship anthem 'For Your Glory' for her elder



sister, Chykeyah Kelly, who was one of the baptismal candidates. Pastor Simpson took great delight in surprising Loris Allen (his aunt) by being there to baptise her. The youngest candidate was Myles Scott-Burrows, whose mother sang for him before his immersion.

NORTH WEMBLEY COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Stoke members rejoice!

Pastor Ian Philpott and the Stoke-on-Trent church closed last year with a special blessing – the baptism of Eddie Richards. Eddie grew up worshipping at Stoke Church together with his family, until recently, when the family moved to a sister church in Alsager. During Eddie's earlier years a lot took place in his life, but he walked with the Lord and developed a strong faith, trusting that the Lord would see him through all the challenges and discouragements that life would bring his way. Pastor Ian Philpott strengthened Eddie through studies with the support of Kath Thompson, while his father and mother (Mark and Keri Richards), along with his entire family, supported him in prayer. Now Eddie is finally baptised and actively involved in outreach programmes. Praise the Lord for this.

HASTINGS KANDAYA (CHURCH ELDER)



The Richards family, from left to right: Mark Richards (father); Eddie; other family members; and, on the far right, Keri Richards (Eddie's mother).

A year of blessings at Hope Community Church

Sabbath, 12 January 2019, marked the first anniversary of Hope Community Church's worship at Chapel Lane, High Wycombe. In the year before we occupied our new place of worship we had what you could call a 'wilderness experience' as we worshipped in various rented places while refurbishment of the building took place.

The highlight of our first anniversary celebrations was the afternoon baptismal service involving two precious souls who publicly proclaimed their redemption in Jesus Christ. The officiating ministers were Pastor Wilfred Blake, our local pastor; Pastor Llew Edwards (retired); and Pastor Chackochen of Chesham Church. In a message of encouragement, Pastor Blake reminded the candidates that their baptism means victory to walk the Christian's walk and to talk the Christian's talk.

God has richly blessed our ministry at Hope Community Church in the past year in many ways, not the least of which were the twelve new souls we have welcomed to the family of God through baptism.

Among the various outreach initiatives we have been busy with were an Easter play, in which our members were inspired to become actors to



present the Easter message to the community; a Holiday Bible School (HBS) for children of school age, which was a great success; a Christmas concert, which was well attended by the community; and a very successful Friendship Club once every week, where members of the community fellowship with our members at church and enjoy a devotional discussion and light refreshments.

We give God the honour, praise and glory for the work He has done through our ministry at Hope Community Church.

JEROME LANGENHOVEN



West Midlands baptism

The Breath of Life, Smethwick and Winson Green district of churches in the West Midlands experienced a high point on 3 November last year, when three precious souls were baptised and accepted into membership: Matthew Gage, Doville Gurskyte and Deneshae Thomas.

Among the congregation were the friends and family of the three newly baptised members, along with the members of the district's three churches. Each of these new members had a special song sung and a Bible passage read before they were baptised. Matthew chose Psalm 23, Doville chose 2 Corinthians 4:7-10 and Deneshae chose Psalm 32:8. Pastor Nicholson preached the sermon, and the baptism was conducted by Pastor Lawrence, the district pastor.

W. MASIH

'And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.'
Acts 2:47 (NIV)

Your invitation . . .

If you are interested in receiving a complete copy of Dr Brighton G. Kavaloh's paper entitled,

'Church on Gender Self-Identification and the Law',

which was commissioned by Pastor Sam O. Davies, SEC Communication and Media Department director, then please email your request to editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk.

We will forward you a PDF of the document, footnotes, diagrams and all, which is unfortunately too long for us to publish in *MESSENGER*.

It is also unwise to edit or summarise a carefully written document of this nature. According to Pastor Davies, the document has also appeared in the January issue of the *SEC Communicator*.

His masterpiece

'We know that domestic abuse is a cruel and complex crime that can affect anyone, leaving physical and emotional scars that can last a lifetime. It also places a considerable demand on public services,' with recent Home Office estimates placing 'the economic and social costs of domestic abuse to society to be £66 billion for victims in 2016 to 2017'.* With this in mind, and against the background of the draft Domestic Abuse Bill published on 21 January this year, this article by Alison Awuku is most topical.

Have you ever made, owned or obtained something so magnificent that you cherished it dearly? Something that you are so proud of? Or is there someone in your life that you think is just amazing? Someone whom you love and cherish so much? Someone whom you cannot bear the thought of losing?

Well, when it came to Karla (not her real name) and her husband, unfortunately he didn't feel this way about her. They were very active in their local church. He was a deacon and she held leadership positions too. While they looked like a happy family at church, Karla was being severely abused at home. This is how she put it: 'I lived with being raped one to two times a day. I've been strangled. I've had socks put in my mouth where I couldn't breathe. I was never safe in my own home.'

As a worldwide church community, on 25 August last year we observed 'End-It-Now', also known as Domestic Abuse Prevention Day. Our need to be united in love – to stand together in battle against the forces of evil – is more urgent with each passing day, as we look forward to the return of Christ, and as the forces of evil multiply their efforts against God's children. One of the most savage weapons the devil uses against us is domestic abuse.

Let's start by looking at what domestic abuse actually is and some of the ways it manifests itself. Most, if not all of us, have either witnessed or experienced domestic abuse in our homes or families, despite the fact that we may not recognise it as such, nor even want to accept that our loved one is abusive or being abused.

Domestic abuse is a systematic pattern of behaviour by one person (the perpetrator) on another person (the victim) with the intention of controlling and/or oppressing the other person. It can happen to anyone in the domestic or home setting and can take various forms, such as:

- **Verbal** – hurtful, destructive words, lying or deceit
- **Emotional** – manipulative or controlling behaviour that immediately or ultimately

causes emotional pain or feelings of distress, incites anger, lowers the other person's self-esteem or heightens their sense of neglect/abandonment

- **Psychological** – deceit, manipulation, abuse of power, and persistent attacks on a person's self-esteem
- **Physical/sexual** – hitting, pushing, rape, inappropriate touching against the other person's will

According to the Office of National Statistics in England and Wales:

- An estimated 1.9 million adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse during the year ending March 2017, according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (1.2 million women, 713,000 men).
- The police recorded 1.1 million domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes in the year ending March 2017, and, of these, 46% were recorded as domestic abuse-related crimes, while domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police accounted for 32% of all violent crimes.

Sadly, these are just the figures for abuse that were reported to the police. No one really knows the true scale of the problem, as most cases are not reported. Equally sad is the fact that some of the reported and many of the unreported cases of domestic abuse are taking place among members of the body of Christ: those whom God describes as His masterpiece or workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared beforehand (Ephesians 2:10).

So how have we arrived here? Some people who are the perpetrators of abuse are replaying what they have experienced. Others, who are victims, may be drawn to what they have also previously experienced or become accustomed to. Many of us have heard the saying: 'Hurting people hurt people.'

Some of the factors that lead to abuse in our homes include:

- Lack of understanding of self-worth and

'Domestic abuse is a systematic pattern of behaviour by one person.'

the worth of others;

- Insecurities that result from not receiving love and emotional attention as a child or some trauma caused through feelings of abandonment, being misunderstood, fear, insecurity and anger;
- Sexual or physical abuse in childhood that may not have been addressed, and which may result in a lack of trust;
- Unresolved guilt;
- Pride and the lack of consideration for the feelings of others: putting one's needs and feelings above those of others without paying any attention to the emotional and psychological damage that it causes;
- People pleasing, which may prevent the victim from 'having a voice' and/or recognising the significance and importance of their own thoughts and feelings;
- Not establishing healthy relational boundaries.

Healthy, happy homes produce vibrant and productive churches. To that end, the following key steps can be taken to prevent or stop abusive behaviour:

- **Foster self-worth** – Start with the Word of God and understand your worth. We need to see ourselves the way God sees us and love others and ourselves the way He loves.
- **Be assertive without being aggressive** – This involves setting healthy boundaries and being consistent with each other.
- **Pray for wisdom and guidance on whom to talk to and get help from!** – This can be pastoral or professional assistance, or even talking to a trusted friend, family or church member. Call the emergency services immediately if there is imminent danger to life. Help is very important, not

Alison Awuku



- **Promote self-awareness** – Spend time with yourself; get to know who you are and be honest with yourself about how you feel, what you are good at, what you need to get better at and so on. Part of this involves spending time in solitude with God and getting to understand His will and purpose for your life.
- **As a church community, we can take care of each other and look out for each other** – Make a little more effort to get to know each other better than just the usual 'Happy Sabbath' formalities once a week. Sometimes, this may involve taking time to really listen to others and notice the unspoken changes in their mood.

As God's masterpiece or workmanship, He expects us to fulfil the two greatest commandments: love for God, and love for others as ourselves (Matt. 22:36-40). The place where this is first modelled is in our homes. We have a duty not only to model this in our homes, but to help those who are suffering from abuse in their homes.

'When the nations are gathered before Him, there will be but two classes, and their eternal destiny will be determined by what they have done or have neglected to do for Him in the person of the poor and the suffering.' (Ellen G. White – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 637.)

If Jesus came to your home today, would He recognise you and those around you as His masterpiece or workmanship?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-consultation-response-and-draft-bill>

Cor Sanders



Sanctuary or sanctuary?

Cor Sanders is known for thinking 'outside the box', and here he poses the question of whether our places of worship should primarily be places for God to be worshipped or for men and women to be 'given' sanctuary?

While observing the Adventist churches I have visited around the world, I have noticed that we all follow a more or less similar routine during our worship services. In itself that should not be a problem, as Jesus didn't seem to give particular instructions as to how we should worship Him. However, it does strike me as strange, for instance, to see people in Thailand following what seems to be the same 'old-fashioned' European pattern of worship with some modern add-ons.

To look at just one aspect of our present service and compare it with what happened in the 'good old days', or with other world religions, I was wondering why we sit during most of our worship service? Where is the biblical instruction for this? There doesn't seem to be any clear instruction from Jesus or the apostles in this regard.

On the other hand, the Israelites would stand in the temple forecourt because they were instructed as to how to build it and what to do during their worship in it. In fact, God gave some strict instructions regarding this.

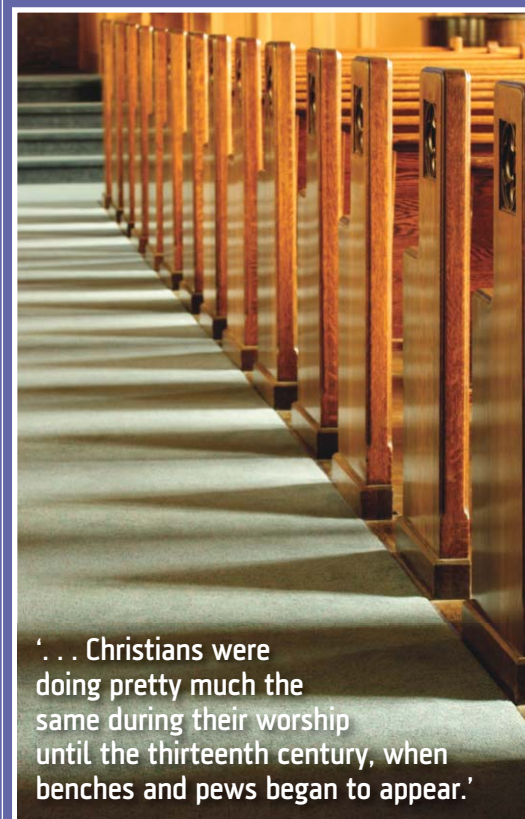
Today European Jews generally stand or sit in their synagogues, having been influenced by more recent Christian worship practices.¹ Muslims either kneel or stand during their prayer sessions, while Christians were doing pretty much the same during their worship until the thirteenth century, when benches and pews began to appear.² This begs the question: with our current pews and pulpit arrangements, which are generally not very versatile, are we actually just following a Western Christian tradition?

I'm merely asking this question in order to get us thinking about whether or not we are using our church buildings as effectively as possible in reaching out to the church and unchurched around us with the love of Jesus and our distinctive message of salvation.

Are our churches really meant to be 'sanctuaries' into which we withdraw each Sabbath to worship God – while for most of the rest of the week they are useful for little else because of their design and furnishings? Or is

there a possibility that Jesus actually wants us to design and furnish them as multifunctional buildings that can be used for a variety of daily uses that directly benefit the surrounding community? After all, the primary meaning of the term 'sanctuary' in most dictionaries is 'refuge or safety from pursuit, persecution, or other danger' or 'protection or a safe place, especially for someone or something being chased or hunted'. Wouldn't it be wonderful for our churches to be places where needy men, women and children could be 'given' sanctuary?

Here's a radical thought: say we had chairs that could be stacked away after the worship service each week, to make space for the homeless to sleep warmly at night and be fed a nutritious meal each morning? How about running suitable training sessions in the church each weekday? How about thinking and praying about this revolutionary way of being God's presence in your neighbourhood – of creating a real sanctuary for the less fortunate around us?



'... Christians were doing pretty much the same during their worship until the thirteenth century, when benches and pews began to appear.'

¹<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pew>²ibid.



Swaziland trip 2018



Laying foundations at the project site



Group of volunteers



Pre-school halfway through its build



Volunteer and local labourer



Two volunteers laying bricks



Taking shape



Volunteers and local labourers standing outside completed building

November signalled the last ADRA Connections trip of 2018. ADRA Connections is the cornerstone volunteering programme of ADRA-UK, through which volunteers travel to developing countries to help complete small-scale manual labour projects. Each Connections trip has taken a variety of individuals from around the UK, but with each passing year the reach of these trips extends! One of the Swaziland locals commented that the group from ADRA-UK should be called 'ADRA European Union', with volunteers hailing from the UK, Spain, Romania and Germany. What awaited the volunteers in Swaziland was one of the most challenging projects in ADRA-UK's history! On the second day of the trip the volunteers drove along scenic roads until they

arrived at the top of a hill, excited and expectant to see what their building tasks would be over the next few weeks. However, the team were welcomed by mounds of earth and sets of wooden railings showing where the building *should* have been! Due to it being the rainy season, the builders had been rained off the site for the past weeks and the foundations of the building had not been completed. There are many things that can be achieved by hard work, but a change in weather is not one of them! The volunteers had to appeal to a Power greater than themselves to help solve this situation. With a multitude of prayers, the team asked God to calm the weather as the completion of the project was now in jeopardy. And God is faithful – after day two, it did not

rain again for the entire trip! When they were finally able to begin, the team worked with new energy: mixing cement by hand, laying bricks, levelling floors, sanding, painting and doing anything else needed for the creation of the pre-school. Yet they did not work alone. The volunteers were assisted by local builders from Swaziland, some of whom daily journeyed over an hour each way to help complete the project. On trips, we always encourage volunteers to speak with the locals and to share their stories and their lives. While Swaziland is a beautiful country, there are also many issues that the country faces. It has one of the highest rates of HIV in the world, which has resulted in a disproportionate number of orphans due to AIDS-related deaths. Workers who had

contracted HIV shared with us their worries for their children, that they would not be able to provide for them in the future or give them access to good education. The circumstances encountered by those in developing countries can often feel far removed from our everyday life in the Western world. In the UK, people often live with the same medical conditions as those in poorer countries, but under a health system that can afford to provide for those in ill health and with an education system available to every child. The volunteers found themselves being very grateful for things we can so often take for granted. Such moments when we are confronted with the reality of the lives others live should serve as a reminder of how good God is to

us. As the Bible says, 'Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights' (James 1:17, NIV), and no day should pass when we do not acknowledge the blessings He is constantly pouring out on us. This doesn't mean that those living under poorer conditions are not beneficiaries of God's goodness! Taking time out of the fast-paced concrete jungle of the West to appreciate the warmth and picturesque beauty of Swaziland, as well as the locals' pleasant and determined nature, also showed forth the hand of our God, who is working in the lives of *all* His children; and the pre-school building was no less a testimony of God's love in Swaziland. The land which the school was built on had been donated by local leaders of the Lombardi Lomdzala district, after many years of negotiations. The local council had agreed for ADRA Swaziland and the Seventh-day Adventist Church to use the land so that children from the community could have access to education. A double blessing also came in the form of the school

being used as a church on Sabbaths, so that Christians in the local area could worship closer to home. As the volunteers and local labourers worked tirelessly to finish the building, we were told how the Church's local conference administration planned to host a dedication service for the pre-school on our final Sabbath. The church and local council wanted to ask for God's blessing over all those who would use the facilities. Considering the late start to the project, this seemed an impossible task to achieve. Although the rain had stopped, there was still much work to be completed, and, while the team's spirits were willing, they were not sure if time was on their side! Yet, as with any task, you have only to keep working each day, with all your might, and you will be astonished by the result! As we finished our second week on the project, we were amazed to see that the building was 95% finished and ready for the Sabbath celebrations! Nothing could prepare the group for the festivities on Saturday. As the team drove to

the school, they were greeted by over 50 children, alongside many more men and women. There was a rousing song service and a sermon given by one of the ADRA-UK volunteers, Pastor Jonathan Holder, who spoke about how God's will is inclusive of all of us. Later that morning, the volunteers took a multitude of pictures, gave out dozens of gifts and talked lovingly with all the people they had met during their stay. The team now stood in the shadow of the shining new pre-school, reflecting on how it stood

as a beacon of hope and learning to the community. Though the team would not see the dozens of children who will benefit from the building throughout the coming years, they could leave proud of their achievement, knowing that they had stepped out of their comfort zones and contributed their time, finances and effort to help make a small difference in the world. *If you would like to be part of one of ADRA-UK's life-changing volunteer experiences in 2019, get in touch now! We still have a handful of spaces left for the Philippines (May 2019) and Sri Lanka (August 2019). See how you can make a difference! Contact volunteering@adra.org.uk or 030 30 40 1017 for more information.*

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READING, RG30 1EA




With Guest Speaker:
PR ROGER BERNARD

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Lord, Heal our Land
Sunday 19th May - Friday 24th May 2019



Guest Presenter
Dr Clarence Ing, President of Lifestyle Productions USA

Cost: Single Room - £530
Twin Room - £375 per person
Double Room - £375 per person
Payment via phone or BACS

Topics include:
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BUC Bereavement Care Ministry Launch
Fitness Bootcamp
Food Demonstrations
Motivational Lifestyle Coaching

Venue
De Vere Staverton Estate
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Staverton
Daventry
Northamptonshire
United Kingdom
NN11 6JT

CLOSING DATE FOR REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT: *April 24th 2019*
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1 DAY Marriage SEMINAR



10AM to 3PM
SUNDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2019
SUNDAY 17 MARCH 2019

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“BEFORE I SAY I DO” Seminar



10am-3pm 21st April 2019
STANBOROUGH CENTRE
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Have you lost your spouse? Do you have a friend in your community whose spouse has passed? Then register for this very Special Banquet.

2-6PM SUNDAY 12 MAY 2019

Venue: Hyland House School Hall,
Holcombe Road, London, N17 9AB

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SEC FAMILY MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

Marriage on “THE ROCK”

24-26 MAY 2019

DE VERE HORSELY ESTATE
Ockham Rd S, East Horsley, Leatherhead. KT24 6DT



Speakers
Pastor Fredrick Russell & Brenda Russell

£250 PER COUPLE

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Message sent – but not delivered

Pastor David Neal, with a contribution from Pastor Sam O. Davies, SEC Communication Director



It is the first Sunday in January and the seasonal festivities are a recent memory, over and done with for another year. I am driving west along the M4 between Slough and Maidenhead around 9.20am. I notice a minibus, and another, and another similarly travelling west, full to capacity. *Is this a coincidence?* I wonder. Not at all – as I know that each minibus with its occupants is heading for the Newbold College of Higher Education campus, where the South England Conference leadership will set out the nurture, outreach and evangelism agenda for the year, including training. It's called the Evangelism Expo.



If you've not visited the Newbold campus for a while, be ready for a pleasant surprise. It's looking good, very good, including the recently refurbished gymnasium where we gathered together, 1,000 of us, full to capacity.

The heart of the expo is the morning plenary session. This year Pastor Louis Torres (pastor, evangelist, administrator, trainer) shared a fascinating incident from fifteenth-century English history to illustrate our spiritual condition when it comes to sharing our faith:

'Queen Elizabeth I became very fond of Robert Devereux, the 2nd Earl of Essex. With a thirty-three-year age difference, it was enough of a signal to suggest the relationship would be short-lived. As things deteriorated

Robert Devereux decided to make a bid for power, instigating a coup d'état which failed. His punishment was imprisonment at the Tower of London. Found guilty of his crime, he was beheaded. News of the Earl's death was delivered to the Queen, who promptly enquired of her aide, "Did he read my letter?" She was told that the letter had been sent – but not delivered.'

Torres used the undelivered message illustration as the focal point of the sermon. It was a sober reminder that members of the body of Christ sometimes fail as message bearers. He left his listeners with a challenge: 'As individuals we only know the message because of someone who brought it to us and our families. If undelivered, someone's salvation is at stake.'

His challenge reminded me of Paul's: 'But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"' Romans 10:14, 15, NLT.

With the plenary session over, we separated for lectures and seminars led, in the main, by the South England Conference leadership team. As I drove home east along the M4 back towards the M25, I couldn't help but feel a tremendous admiration for the SEC members eager to develop their spiritual giftedness, all for the sake of helping a friend, a neighbour or a loved one to come to know Christ. I also wondered about those times when I could have opened my mouth, but instead it remained shut. Message sent – but not delivered. That's sobering.

Mission matters?

by Pastor Sam Davies (South England Conference Communication Director)

'Christianity Is Dying in the United Kingdom' was the headline of the 27 May 2017 edition of *Psychology Today*: words met with relish by the secular and astonishment from the Christian. The poll shared a picture of a steady decline of those professing the Christian faith, as well as church attendees. An earlier edition of *The Spectator* magazine took these statistics further with a projection that 2067 will mark the end of British Christianity. As the article says in its subtitle, 'Projections aren't predictions. But there's no denying that churches are in deep trouble,' and the UK has yet to see any significant trend upwards in the wider Christian Church.

Is this an indicator that the Great Commission of Matthew 28:16-20 hasn't been implemented, or that British people exemplify the parable of the sower? 'When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart.' Matthew 13:19, NIV.

What do you think? How do you react and feel when you hear about the possible 'death of Christianity in the UK'? What can we do, locally and nationally, to sharpen our mission focus in 2019? We'd very much like to hear from you on this matter – because *Mission Matters*. Tell us what you think by sending an email with the header, 'Mission Matters' to: editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk.

'2067: The End of British Christianity'
<https://www.spectator.co.uk/2015/06/2067-the-end-of-british-christianity/>

'Christianity Is Dying in the United Kingdom'
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-secular-life/201705/christianity-is-dying-in-the-united-kingdom>



Stanborough Park's Christmas traditions

Mention the number 57 and most people would probably reply 'Heinz'. However, for Stanborough Park Church it signifies the number of annual Christmas toy services that have been held at the church since their inauguration by the late Alf Kelly, MBE – the latest one being held on 8 December. Neither he nor his daughter, who now organises the event, would have envisaged it still running after all these years.

The service is usually attended by the Elected Mayor of Watford or the Chairman of Watford Borough Council: sometimes both. This time it was Mayor Peter Taylor who accepted the toys on behalf of the local needy families. He commented that he, like his predecessor, was a Christian and was aware of the work that the church was doing in the community.

Safeguarding requirements now mean that the church is no longer able to distribute the toys, a task left to local social workers, children's centre managers and charitable groups and organisations. Some of them had representatives attending the service, who selected toys from those on display immediately after the service. The rest were bagged up and delivered to the remaining charities and organisations over the following days.

A more recently established annual Christmas event was held at the church on the following Thursday. The Watford Inter-Schools Christmas Art Competition was established in 2013 and is jointly sponsored by the Community Chaplaincy Service at Stanborough Park Church and the Co-op, a company which involves itself in community projects.

Each year children from local schools submit Christmas-themed pictures in any medium of their choice – collage, paint, felt-tip, pencil, and so on – with the aim of winning a prize. This year, children aged 5-11 years from seven schools in Watford and Hemel Hempstead submitted their pictures. A large number of them and their parents turned up to support the competition's award ceremony on 13 December. The walls of the hall were decorated with more than 100 of their pictures, and the prizes were presented by the Chair of Watford Borough Council, Councillor Rabi Martins.

The leader of the church's Community Chaplaincy Group is a Co-op employee and was able to obtain the organisation's sponsorship for the



event. Senior members of the Co-op staff attended and spoke to the audience about its aims and its involvement in local communities. Stanborough Park Church was represented by Pastor Geert Tap, who presented a prize from the church to the winning school.

JUNE COOMBS

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9 Chatham After Sabbath
23 South-East Ghana After Sabbath

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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

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NECYouth

2019

Senior Youth Leader Prereq Training	Jan 11-13
Relationship Weekend	Feb 15-17
Aberdaron Work Retreat	Feb 17-24
NEC Spring Ski Trip	Apr 19-28
Prayer Warriors	May 3-6
Big Six	Jun 16
NEC Youth Roadshow	Jun 24-29
Camp Meeting	Jul 1-7
Athletics Day	Jul 14
Aberdaron Junior Camp	Aug 4-11
Aberdaron Earliteen Camp	Aug 11-18
Aberdaron Youth Camp	Aug 18-25
ASC Student Training Retreat	Sep 2-8
NEC Students Day	Sep 28
iWorship	Nov 22-24

As supplied, errors and omissions excepted

Grantham's full veggie breakfast . . .

For the past seven years a group of Grantham Church members have served as kitchen staff and servers each Sunday morning while playing host to the hungry and needy of the town. Those who choose to come are treated to an individually cooked vegetarian breakfast and a range of cereals, fresh fruit, hot drinks, and fruit juices to give them a nourishing start to their week. Annually they serve over 1,000 meals.

Some who attend are 'rough sleepers', while for others it is a warm place to chat, away from some very basic lodgings. It started as the brainchild of a local clergyman some years ago, who saw the need for a place for the less fortunate to get a good meal on a daily basis. Some churches opened their doors to the idea, and the 'Grantham Passage' came into being.

The Adventists took up the challenge under the leadership of Esme Sutton, one of the elders, who has been the coordinator ever since. Those who attend are able to access professional advice from national and local agencies, and we provide clothing, bedding, toiletries, and so on, together with our unique 'starter packs', which contain essentials for cooking, as well as vouchers for the local food bank.

The obvious choice of day for the Grantham church to become



involved was a Sunday, since other churches have their worship on that day! Our involvement, as well as that of the other churches, has the backing of the local social services department.

Sometimes there can be trouble, since some of the attendees are drug-dependent, but a kindly word and a warning to 'behave', often from other diners, usually restores some order. The Grantham church members provided the means to set up the project, and continue to fund it. However, the local business community has given tremendous support to all the churches who provide the vulnerable with help and hope. There is no doubt that our full veggie English breakfast is appreciated, and at least one of our diners now attends regularly on Sabbaths.

MIKE COWEN

While self-employment should not be considered an easy route, it was hard to find someone who regretted going it alone!

AUBREY DAVIS
(COMMUNICATIONS TEAM)

*If you are interested in inviting Darren Ross to your church, please contact Aubrey Davis at aubreydavis777@gmail.com.



Left to right: Pastor Paul Dhanaraj (Northampton District pastor), Jabalani Maphosa (self-employed electrician), Dayo Falade (Men's Ministry leader), Joseph Woodburn (self-employed mobile phone sales and repair professional), Darren Ross, Robert Henry (self-employed non-alcoholic drink supplier), a welcome visitor, and Shannon Alexander (self-employed teacher)

Going it alone!

For many, this statement alone could fill you with fear, but on Sunday 2 December last year the Northampton Central Men's Ministry team lifted some of the mystery associated with becoming self-employed and instilled confidence in those who were considering this route for career development.

Darren Ross, who has over 15 years of experience of self-employment, did a wonderful job in sharing how he has trodden this path and seen the benefits of it in so many ways. For Darren the grim and exhausting London commute was the trigger that helped him to change direction!

Over the years of building up his customer base, delivering purified water to private and business customers, Darren has had the opportunity to share his authentic, cheerful and ethical qualities with many hundreds of people!

Darren provided examples in Scripture of people who used various trades to provide income for themselves and their families, such as carpentry, tent making, agriculture, and so on. For many Adventists the challenge of getting Sabbaths off is becoming increasingly difficult, and self-employment may be one of the routes to overcoming this issue.

The event was well supported by both men and women and visitors from the community, who were reminded of the wisdom found in Ecclesiastes 9:10: 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might' (KJV).

Adventist World Radio visits Camp Hill

Adventist World Radio Vice President, Pastor Kent Sharpe from the General Conference (GC), preached at Camp Hill Church on 27 October last year. The preaching appointment had been facilitated by Vasily Makarchuk, AWR's European Financial Controller and Africa Continent Programme Coordinator.

AWR broadcasts under a motto of 'No walls. No Borders. No Limits', and Pastor Sharpe illustrated this with reference to its role in support of evangelism in Lusaka, Zambia. During winter the temperatures drop to 18-20°C, which discourages people from attending public meetings at church in the cool evenings.

Radio promotion, however, promoted awareness of the campaign across the city, and there was a tremendous response: 18,000 people were baptised after the meetings, of whom 80% came to the meetings as a result of the radio broadcasts! There were even death row prisoners among the 800 who became Adventists through the evangelism undertaken in the local prison.

According to Pastor Sharpe, radio ministry finds people that the Holy Spirit is talking to, opening the way for our influence on their lives through visitation and Bible study.

DR JACQUIE HALLIDAY-BELL



Lincoln baptism

On Sabbath 24 March last year, Lincoln Church rejoiced at the baptism of Tanya and Vasilica by Pastor John Ferguson. They were prepared for baptism by Pastor Solon Kyriacou and Valentin and Tatiana Stoica respectively. My apologies for this very late report due to difficulties obtaining photos of the occasion.

VICTOR LAMMY (ELDER)



From left to right: Lilette Lewis (Treasurer), Tanya, Pastor Ferguson, Vasilica, Elder Victor Lammy

Newbold College Diversity Lectures Spring Semester 2019

Tuesday 5 March

Lecturer: Dave Bookless,

Director of Theology for the global Christian environmental organisation, *A Rocha International*

Title: 'Environmental threats – do Christians care? Should they?'

Venue: Smith Centre, Salisbury Hall, Newbold College, RG42 4AN

Time: 7.30pm

Tuesday 2 April

Lecturer: Jo Berry (founder),

Building Bridges for Peace

Title (working): 'Forgiveness and community building'

Venue: Smith Centre, Salisbury Hall, Newbold College, RG42 4AN

Time: 7.30pm

Everyone is welcome.
Refreshments will be available!



At last – in God's good time!

Stoke-on-Trent Church recently joined the Bursuc family in their celebration of the birth of their baby girl Sophia during a dedication ceremony conducted by our pastor, Ian Philpott. Claudio and Ionica Bursuc are members of the Stoke-on-Trent church who have been married for 13 years, and for 12 of them they had been waiting for a baby. They became discouraged that their prayers were not being answered, but finally Sophia was born on 13 June 2018. Pastor Philpott took the opportunity to remind the church that God knows our needs and hears our prayers, and that as Christians we must learn to trust Him under all circumstances.

HASTINGS KANDAYA (CHURCH ELDER)

Young Adventist honoured

Alexandria Chantiluke, an Adventist from Birmingham, was selected by Birmingham Live* as one of the city's 'stand-out' young people in their '30 Under 30' campaign to celebrate the achievements of 'inspiring entrepreneurs, professionals, social activists and artists aged 16-30'. The honour was bestowed on her for her outstanding work as a menswear fashion designer. Well done, Alexandria!

*www.birminghammail.co.uk/all-about/30-under-30



NEC Youth

RELATIONSHIP

WEEK END

LOVE, SEX & MARRIAGE

FEBRUARY 15-17

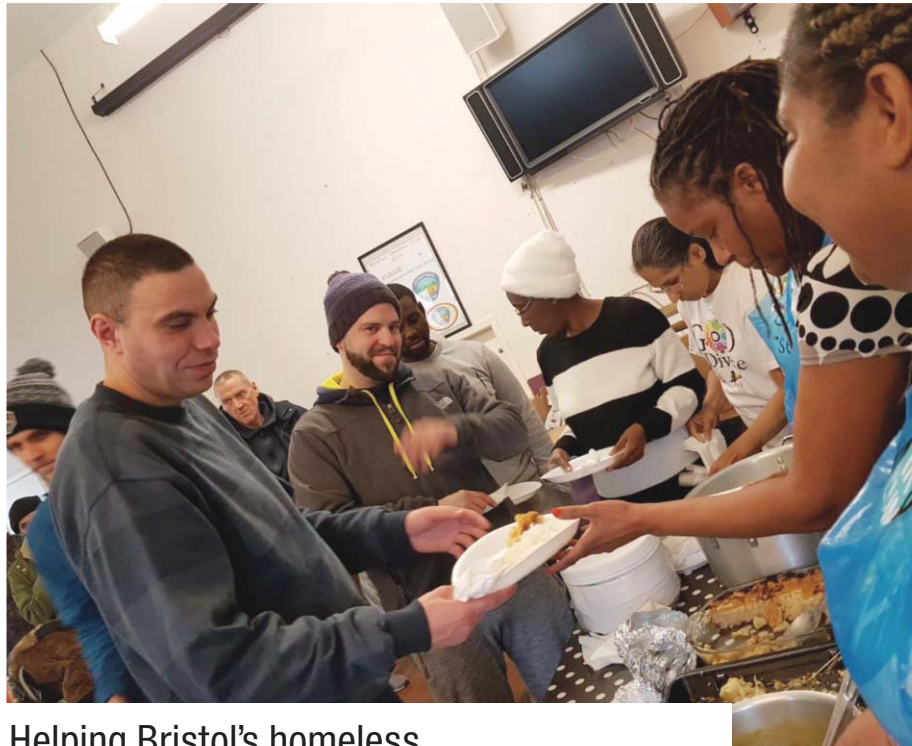
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Helping Bristol's homeless

On Sunday 30 December last year, a team of ten from the Bristol Central church brought smiles to the faces of dozens of homeless people when they served them with a hot, tasty home-cooked meal. Pastor Royston Smith, the local church pastor, first discussed the idea with the church board earlier in the year and was keen to see it through. The writer planned the event, and rallied support at the Rosa Burden Centre at Southmead Hospital, inviting the staff to support the event. The call was received with enthusiasm, and individuals brought in canned food items, biscuits, boxed fruit juices, crisps, and so on, which were put together in takeaway goody bags and handed to the guests following the meal.

Inviting the homeless was an easy task for volunteer Dale Grandison, as he knew exactly where to find them, having worked in the area. Also, an invitation went out through 'Caring In Bristol', who said that they would happily circulate the information. Volunteers Bernet and Sharon Cochrane were only too glad to ensure that the food was purchased, prepared and served on time.

On the day, the guests came back for second helpings, really pleased to be treated with a home-cooked meal as well as cakes, juice and ice cream afterwards. There was a real sense of calmness and togetherness in the church hall, as multiple cups of tea and hot chocolate were served by the happy helpers. Dale also played soft background music to cheer everyone on.



In all, a total of 60 people were fed and given a goody bag to take away, and many of them complimented the menu, with one individual stating, 'The food was amazing! Brilliant!'

The main goal of the event was to invest in and serve the local community by creating an opportunity for those who often feel unwelcome or unappreciated to feel at home. It was wonderful to know that – for one day at least – they felt part of a caring family and properly appreciated.

MARY PHILIP (COMMUNITY MINISTRIES LEADER)



Moving into the neighbourhood

For the second year in succession the North Wembley Community members took to the street right outside their church door to sing. With it being mid-December, what else to sing but traditional Christmas carols? Our plan was to give a blessing to our immediate neighbours and those passing by.

But something unexpected happened. As we sang to bring a blessing to others, we found ourselves receiving a blessing. Little did we expect neighbours and those passing by to stop and wish us a merry Christmas. Many of our church neighbours came out of their homes to give us Christmas cards and presents. One young person gave us a box of wrapped chocolates, explaining that, as she heard the singing in her home, she'd been reminded of how much her family was blessed. She thanked us for making her evening.

'The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.' (John 1:14, MSG.)

NORTH WEMBLEY COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

'I am a friend of God'

Over 700 Pathfinders and Adventurers with their friends and families came together on 2 December for the first Area 5 Pathfinder and Adventurer Day of Fellowship, held in the newly refurbished Newbold College Gymnasium. The theme, 'I am a friend of God', inspired and shaped the day.

What is a more vital theme? We unpacked it into three study sections:

1. Understanding earthly friendship;
2. God's Bible friends;
3. How to become a friend of God.

Pastor Kevin Johns led this last section with his sermon about faith and belief: 'And if you do believe, you are a friend of God' – the Gospel in a nutshell!

Sophia Nicholls, the SEC Area 5 Coordinator, commenting on the event, said: 'I'm humbled by the support of the Area 5 Pathfinder club directors – thank you!'

SOPHIA NICHOLLS



Making the Gospel accessible

The annual regional joint training day for Disability Champions and their teams took place at the Friends' Meeting House, Euston, London on 24 November. Fifty British Sign Language students from different levels came together for a Christian sign training day organised by the South England Conference Disability Department. Signs of God, a Christian charity for deaf people, was commissioned to provide the training for students to learn how to make the Gospel accessible for people with hearing loss. The day culminated in an inspiring worship service presented in BSL. Students expressed how excited they were to see the impact of the learning they had achieved within the year. Delegates were said to find the training 'inspiring', 'excellent', 'engaging', 'empowering! The SEC Disability Department will be starting a new BSL Level 1 course at the Ilford Central church on Sundays from 3 February for 32 weeks. Please text 07768 298297 to register your interest and to find out more details.

SOPHIA NICHOLLS



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23 FEB 2019

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23
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Religion made relevant

What do finance, education, mental health and employment have in common with our faith? This was what the New Life church explored through a series of workshops and a panel discussion on Sabbath 3 November last year. These sessions were grouped under those four themes, and each group had three presenters, who addressed a series of questions and shared practical ways on how to overcome challenges associated with their topic: for example, 'What is true mental well-being?' and 'How can poor mental health be addressed from a biblical perspective?' Parents, young people and those seasoned in age, wisdom and experience shared their testimonies in each session. This made for a wonderful learning and worship experience.

The visitors and members rotated between the groups to make sure that they didn't miss out on any session. People left the programme feeling encouraged by the personal stories shared with them, while others left with notes they had taken that they could apply in their lives or share with someone else. Asha Sampson, Kumar Birch, Daniel Opoku-Mensah, Kimberley Saddler, Eve Anderson, Anelle Smith and Corinne Kerr-Allen were some of the presenters and panellists who helped make

Sixtieth wedding anniversary

For Gilbert and Inez Blackburn, 25 August 2018 was a celebration of their sixtieth wedding anniversary. With Sheffield Carter Knowle members and family, they gave thanks to the Lord for their long life together, which began as childhood sweethearts at school. As loyal and supportive members of the Carter Knowle church, they have both served the church in a variety of roles over the years, including Inez's role as a Bible worker for the North England Conference. Our prayer for them both is that they enjoy many more years of life together with the Lord.

ELVINA LEE, CARTER KNOWLE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Photo quality as supplied



Dr Mark's ministry at Wood Green

On Sabbath 17 November last year, Dr Mark Prince preached in his own unique and dynamic way to a packed Wood Green church. Never before had they seen so many visiting friends joining the regular members for worship on a Sabbath morning. God has surely used the personal tragedy in Mark's life as a launching pad for his ministry, enabling him to reach out to the youth and other vulnerable members of the Haringey community and beyond through his anti-knife crime counselling ministry.

After his moving and eloquently delivered sermon, Wood Green then witnessed the dedication of Akai Prince Slade, Mark's grandson, by the local pastor, Joojo Bonnie. It was a very enriching day to all in attendance, especially to the young people and the many friends and relatives who also came for Akai's dedication. Who knows how many spiritual seeds were planted as a direct result of this service?

BARBARA SOMMERS (COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT)



this day of teaching, thought-provoking questions and discussion possible.*

Personally, as a youth member, it was nice to see a healthy balance in the ages of the presenters: no group was left out. We often hear in our church that our faith and values are not always made practical or relevant to what we experience in our day-to-day lives. Well, this is one programme that proves this notion wrong.

GABRIELLE GUY

*Miss Gabrielle Guy and all present on that day say a big thank-you to Kamara Pringle and her team for an inspirational day.



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Janet Blott (1916-2018) d. 8 December.

Janet Blott was a faithful member of Bournemouth Church for many years. She was born in Birmingham on 30 June 1916, and was the second of four daughters. Her parents, Bert and Irene Lomax, moved the family to Bournemouth, where Janet attended Bournemouth School at the Lansdowne. Following her school days, she returned to Birmingham for nurse's training at the general hospital, working there as a night sister during the Second World War.

On 20 July 1943 she married Oliver (Jim) Blott. Janet and Jim lived in both Bournemouth and the Isle of Wight, and were blessed with a daughter, Judith, in 1945. In Bournemouth Janet became a Seventh-day Adventist, following her mother, Irene Lomax, a long-term member of Bournemouth Church.

As a faithful member Janet would often visit the sick, along with her mother and sister. Janet was widowed in 1979, and moved into a care home in July this year, but at the end of her long and faithful life she was ready to go to sleep and await the return of the Saviour she loved. She was very much loved in Bournemouth Church, and she will be missed.

JOY ELLIOTT (CHURCH CLERK)



Bobby Johnston (1947-2018) d. 19 August.

'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast' (Ephesians 2:8, 9, KJV). The impact of this text changed the course of Bobby Johnston's life. When Pastor Patrick Boyle led the 1968 Belfast evangelistic campaign, Bobby made a commitment to follow the Lord, saved by and only through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptised by Pastor Edgar Hulbert, it was the beginning of a 40-year spiritual journey into Scripture, church leadership and community service.

Following God over and above tradition was immensely important to Bobby, not least his conviction about the biblical Sabbath. Often at the expense of ridicule and prejudice, Bobby's 'Here I stand' was least welcomed in his home community of Larne, Northern Ireland.

As Bobby dug deep into the Bible, particularly the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, he became ever more determined to break down walls of prejudice. Being the warm, gracious, caring family man he was, more than helped this cause. When the local church recognised his spiritual gifts of teaching,



leadership, and evangelism, he assumed responsibility for running the youth club during the 1980s, regarded by many as the high point in the history of the church.

When he felt his church to be in mere 'ticking over' mode, Bobby became unsettled, pleading, 'It's time for us to have a campaign.' Within a few months of his request, the doors were open to the community and the Gospel was preached. Combined with street witnessing in Larne town centre, and a commitment to the annual ADRA Appeal, confidence with the community strengthened.

But it was his work with the St John Ambulance that kept Bobby well connected with both the church and the community. For Irish Mission youth, it was first aid training. For the local community development organisation, he helped run the youth forum. Saving lives mattered to Bobby, both physical and spiritual. As a builder, his stewardship of the Larne church building is clear for all to see.

The last few years of Bobby's life required regular visits to the hospital. With books and tracts in hand he would make new friends, share, encourage, study, and pray with them in their distressing situations about the grace of the Christ he knew.

Bobby's funeral was held at the Larne church on Thursday 23 August, conducted by Pastor

Dan Serb, assisted by Pastors Mart de Groot and Weiers Coetser. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with his wife Margaret, daughter Heather, and son Robert, who feel a deep empty gap in their lives at his passing. It is a loss also felt by Larne members and the wider Irish Mission family. When Bobby believed he was saved, it was for a purpose – to experience the gift of eternal life. One day there will be a glorious resurrection when we will be reunited with Bobby again. We very much hope and trust it will be soon.

PASTOR DAVID NEAL

Messenger

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Fletewood School to celebrate centenary, 13-15 September 2019



In 1971 Joyce Hill, one of Fletewood School's famous patrons, wrote:

'In March 1919 Pastor Campbell (Conference President) and Elder Wakeham (Principal of Stanborough College) visited with the church in Plymouth to discuss the practical issues in opening a church school for the twenty or so children in the church family. A few men led the influences in pressing for a church school, but the church was in full agreement with their ideals, for at this meeting £125 was pledged by the membership in support of the venture. There must have been much praying and planning, because Monday, September 15, 1919, became the historic opening for eighteen Adventist pupils in the second church school to be started in the British Isles.'


100 years later the Plymouth School, which became Fletewood School, is as strong as ever.

On the weekend of **13-15 September 2019, Fletewood School**, supported by Plymouth Adventist Church, will be celebrating 100 years; to all alumni past and present – teachers, administrators and students who've been part of the school over the last century – please come and celebrate with us. If you know of anyone who has been connected with the school over the last century, let us know and we'd be delighted to send them an invitation. They may be a relative, former student, teacher or other staff member.


To make the event more memorable and auspicious we are requesting as much information as possible, such as names of headmasters and teachers, including any stories, pictures or memorabilia you may have. If you have anything Fletewood-related please contact the school via our website: www.fletewoodschool.co.uk – or call the school on +44 (0)1752 663782.

For details of the weekend centenary celebrations watch this space or continuously check our website.


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