

# M

## Messenger

Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church  
in the United Kingdom and Ireland

30 July 2021 • Volume 126 • 7



Above, left to right: Pastor Douglas McCormac (Executive Secretary), Dr Emmanuel Osei (President), and Candy Layson (Treasurer)

Below: Hay's Wood Retreat main building – photo taken whilst under construction

Photos: Steve McKenzie



# Welcome!

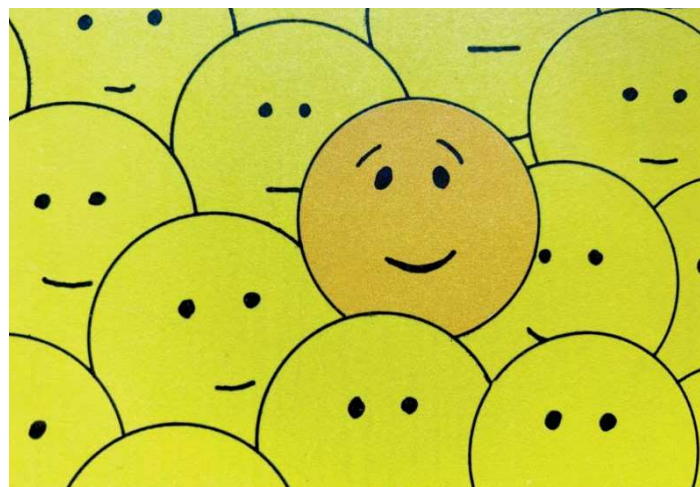
*to the new*

## South England Conference

## Hay's Wood Retreat

Read more on pages 4-5

# Let's talk about leadership



'Good leadership always makes a difference,' says America's foremost leadership expert, John Maxwell. He's seen what good leadership can do in turning around organisations to positively impact the lives of thousands of individuals. He continues, 'True leadership is not easy to learn . . . becoming a better leader pays dividends, but it takes great effort. Leadership requires a lot from a person. It is demanding and complex.' Here's what he means . . .

- Leadership is the willingness to put oneself at risk.
- Leadership is the passion to make a difference with others.
- Leadership is being dissatisfied with the current reality.
- Leadership is taking responsibility while others are making excuses.
- Leadership is seeing possibilities in a situation while others are seeing limitations.
- Leadership is the readiness to stand out in a crowd.
- Leadership is an open mind and an open heart.
- Leadership is the ability to submerge ego for the sake of what is best.
- Leadership is evoking in others the capacity to dream.
- Leadership is inspiring others with a vision of what they can contribute.
- Leadership is the power of one harnessing the power of many.
- Leadership is your heart speaking to the hearts of others.
- Leadership is the integration of heart, head, and soul.
- Leadership is the capacity to care; and, in caring, to liberate the ideas, energy and capacity of others.
- Leadership is the dream made reality.
- Leadership is, above all, courageous.<sup>1</sup>

Is leadership a spiritual gift? Yes, says Paul: '*We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. . . . If it is to lead, do it diligently*' (Romans 12:6-8, NIV).

Does church leadership matter to you? If so, do any of the above leadership characteristics Maxwell describes 'quicken your pulse and stir your heart'? If they do, why not share what you think with

*MESSENGER* readers in less than 450 words? Could you take one of the 'Leadership is . . .' descriptions above, and share how the chosen 'leadership difference' changes the leadership culture of the church for the better at all levels, for the sake of its mission? In the first instance, please contact David Neal with your choice of 'Leadership is . . .' by emailing the editor at: [editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk).

EDITOR

<sup>1</sup>John C. Maxwell, *The Leadership Handbook: 26 Critical Lessons Every Leader Needs*

## Union, Conference & Mission Session dates

### New date for BUC Session – 21, 22 October 2021

On Wednesday 30 June the BUC Executive Committee voted to approve a new date for the BUC Session. It will now be held on Thursday 21 and Friday 22 October 2021, assuming there are no further government regulations which would prevent it from taking place. We have just confirmed that the venue will be Jury's Inn, Hinkley Island, which is about halfway between Coventry and Leicester, at the junction of the A5 and the M69. Please accept this as formal notification of the BUC Session, in accordance with Article 5 (a) of the current constitution. Further information can be found on our website at: [www.bucsession.org.uk](http://www.bucsession.org.uk).

PASTOR JOHN SURRIDGE, BUC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

### North England Conference – 2021

Notice is hereby given that the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held from Wednesday 8 until Friday 10 September 2021 at St John's Hotel, 651 Warwick Road, Solihull, B91 1AT.

Registration on Wednesday begins at 8am, and the opening of Session at 11am.

PASTOR ALAN HUSH (NEC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY)

### Scottish Mission Session – 2021

Notice is hereby given that, COVID-19 restrictions permitting, the Triennial Session of the Scottish Mission of Seventh-day Adventists will take place at the Macdonald Inchyra Hotel & Spa, Grange Road, Polmont, Falkirk, FK2 0YB, on Sunday 10 October 2021. Delegates will receive documentation in advance of the session.

PASTOR JACQUES VENTER (EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, SCOTTISH MISSION)

### Irish Mission Session – 2021

Notice is hereby given that, COVID-19 restrictions permitting, the triennial session of the Irish Mission of Seventh-day Adventists will take place at Belfast Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sunday 31 October 2021. Delegates will receive documentation in advance of the session.

PASTOR JACQUES VENTER (EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, IRISH MISSION)

## Prayer matters

### Let us pray for leaders:

- Provide them, Lord, with the gift of insight where ours is limited.
- Give them both clear vision and clear plans for the church going forwards, genuinely led by the Holy Spirit, according to His will.
- May they have Christlike patience, self-control, and a love for those they serve, for members and employees alike.
- Where there is a leadership 'trust deficit', we pray for all – leaders and members alike – to prioritise re-building confidence, tempering justice and mercy as a church 'in Christ'; we pray for the unity of the church.
- Stir within us continually the cause of Your mission.



David Neal, Editor

# Where's the Gospel in all this . . . ?



An editorial does not appear on a whim. Often, I muse over the matter for weeks; and, in the case of this one, for many months. The pastor experiences the same thinking about the message to share from the pulpit. What must I say? What can I say to help the members I serve to grow in Christ? I am conflicted here about what to say and what not to say. In my humanity I want to 'say it as it is'. The Spirit impresses me at the same time, on this occasion, to 'be circumspect'.

Where were you on European Cup Final Day? In the afternoon prior to the match, our extended family and friends gathered together to celebrate an important birthday for our youngest grandchild. While work was parked in a distant corner of my mind, present at this event was a good friend and colleague with his family. We'd not seen each other for quite a while; and, as our children/grandchildren happily played together at the party, we took time to catch up and chat. At his prompting the conversation turned to 'church matters' with this question:

***'When we worked together, David, you often shared with me that when we try to solve problems facing the church, we need to put the Gospel at the heart of the matter – we need to find a Gospel solution. As I hear about what's going on in the church at the moment, I'm asking the question, "Where's the Gospel in all this?"'***

It was his question, 'Where's the Gospel in all this?' that provided me with the lightbulb moment, because, like my friend, I too am struggling to see the Gospel shining through the trouble – and in this I'm not alone. The heart of the problem? **'Underlying trust issues'** is how I've recently heard it described – between members, pastors, and administrative leaders – not all, but some. **United we are not.**

During the 1980s the 'trust issues' were doctrinal, as the heresy of 'absolute perfectionism' drained the spiritual lifeblood of many local churches in the British Union. The then MESSENGER editor, David Marshall, incisively saw the core problem by asking the very same question, 'Where's the Gospel in all this?' It wasn't there. So his remedy and response was to champion the Gospel consistently throughout the pages of this magazine. While our current problems are different – not doctrinal, but about trust in leadership – we are compelled to ask the

same question if we are to move beyond our current trouble.

***'So get rid of your feelings of hatred. Don't just pretend to be good! Be done with dishonesty and jealousy and talking about others behind their backs. Now that you realize how kind the Lord has been to you, put away all evil, deception, envy, and fraud. Long to grow up into the fullness of your salvation; cry for this as a baby cries for his milk' (1 Peter 2:1-3, TLB).***

In recent months I have had the privilege of editing a manuscript for the publication of a new book by the Stanborough Press called *End-time People*, based on the epistles of 1 and 2 Peter. The author reminds us that Peter did not write a treatise about end-time events, but a letter from a pastor to the church family reminding them that 'chosen' and 'called' end-time people are redeemed representatives of the Risen Christ. In the light of the Gospel he asks that pertinent question: 'What kind of people ought you to be?' (2 Peter 3:11, NIV.) In other words, the Gospel is about 'how kind the Lord has been to you', as we read above. Now you realise that, 'Do you see how essential it is to live a holy life?' (2 Peter 3:11, Message.)

As a people we often exude confidence about knowing the detail of 'end-time events' – but living as 'end-time people', the kind of people we should be in response to the Gospel, is something we struggle with. The only adequate response I believe we can make is to confess and to start again, embracing the reality of spiritual renewal.

It seems to me that when a financial crisis hits the organisation, as it has done in the past year, our leaders will burn the midnight oil to sort out the problem. Extraordinary executive committee meetings are called, and we are assured that decisive action must be and is being taken to ensure that the church remains

solvent. But when it comes to a spiritual crisis facing the church – and, make no mistake about it, an **'underlying trust issue'** will only be solved by recognising it to be a spiritual problem, in my judgement – we are slow to respond . . . or, perhaps better put, to see the problem for what it is.

Back to European Cup Final Day. A short while later, after our conversation, disaster struck the party. Our eldest granddaughter tripped and banged her face on a table, requiring urgent medical treatment. The party was over. For the family and friends present, nothing else mattered but the well-being of this young child. Adrenaline rushed due to concern over whether she would be OK. All evening, while she was in hospital, the football match was played. While the country was gripped – for me, in those hours, it was of zero consequence. All that mattered was whether our granddaughter was going to be OK. I found myself talking ten to the dozen with the Lord about the matter! With the prayer answered, she is now recovering well.

Our Sunday experience illustrates for me that nothing else matters until we find out where the Gospel is in all this and do something about it, at all levels of church life. The matter is urgent, with some of our pastors, leaders, and members continuing to suffer great personal injury – not physical, but emotional, spiritual, with many disturbed and confused. For some there is financial injury. **Personally and collectively we need to say, 'As end-time people, we are not living up to the call of the Gospel – we are sorry, and we repent.'**

Am I saying it 'as it is', or is the Spirit speaking? Surprise – trouble in the church is not new. Back in 1984 the MESSENGER editor recognised the church to be struggling over a few matters, and published these few but direct words.

## IF

*If all the sleeping will wake up,  
All the lukewarm folk will fire up,  
All the crooked will straighten up,  
All the estranged folk will make up,  
All the gossip folk will shut up,  
All the dry bones will shake up,  
All the true believers stand up,  
To honour Him who is lifted up,  
Then the Seventh-day Adventist Church in  
Britain and Ireland  
Will have a revival, the like of which  
Eye has not seen, nor ear heard;  
And, before we know it,  
The nail-pierced Lord and Redeemer  
Will be descending the vaulted heavens  
Full-brilliant with angels  
Drawing His faithful into a blaze of glory  
Stretched from sky to sky.<sup>1</sup>*

Did he 'say it as it is', or did the Spirit speak then as it does today?

# The vision for Hay's Wood Retreat

On Sabbath afternoon 26 June, the South England Conference held a thanksgiving service to recognise the Lord's leading in the development of a new multi-purpose retreat centre located near the village of North Runcton, near King's Lynn, Norfolk. It was time to look back – and to look forward, because the Hay's Wood Retreat is soon to open for mission!

## A brief history

There was a time when the South England Conference owned Broomhill House, near Exeter. We outgrew it, sold it and ringfenced the proceeds from its sale for the future, but with a low expectation that any place of suitable size would be available for purchase. But the youth directors shared a vision.

Nathan Stickland reminded the one-time SEC youth team – Kevin Johns, Steve Thomas, and Dejan Stojkovic – of the funds. Energised, Kevin Johns and Steve Thomas discovered the North Runcton land for sale. They took the idea to the SEC president, Pastor Sam Davis – who was cautious. 'Think big,' said the directors, and Pastor Davis let them do the research. 'I think you are on to something,' said Steve Thomas to Kevin Johns when he reviewed the brochure. Many site visits followed. 'We all saw this amazing potential,' says Dejan Stojkovic; 'we saw this place as a life-changing, transformational place for young and for old.' Kevin Johns continues: 'We saw this place as presenting a unique opportunity to share

the Gospel in ways we have never been able to before.'

There were challenges galore. Steve Thomas burned the midnight oil, forensically examining the details of council planning regulations – and objections. Funding was always an issue. Could the SEC afford it? The Executive Committee needed convincing. But – supported by Pastors Sam Davis and Terry Messenger and treasurer Earl Ramharacksingh – Pastor Steve McKenzie's development team got the green light to continue. Along came a new administration of Pastors Osei and McCormac and Fred Shone. As Pastor Osei recalled: 'The Lord placed it on the heart of our previous administration to purchase this land six years ago. Today, we rejoice to see what God has done in giving a place for our young people and members to come and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of Hay's Wood Retreat.'

## Keynote address

Pastor Sam Davis, in the keynote address, recognised the vision of the youth team, and rejoiced that the Lord has made a way for their vision to become reality. 'For sure, there have been immense challenges along the way – but learn a lesson from the experience of the exiles returning from Babylon, as recorded in Ezra 3:10-13. The older men wept when they saw the new, meagre building – called the temple. What temple? They remembered Solomon's temple, of which there was no comparison. But, while they wept over the loss, the new generation looked back and saw chains and disenfranchisement. Those who listened heard both weeping and celebration. Unlike the exiles, we do not want to give out a confused sound. This is not a time to look back, but a time to look forward, but



Pastors Sam Davis and Emmanuel Osei with Fred Shone



Pastor Dejan Stojkovic



Just one of the fields on site for camping



Anne Brown's Memorial Bench, donated by the extended family of Dr. Jeff Brown

to keep learning from the lessons of the past.'

And then Pastor Davis went on to share the vision for the future . . .

'I see people coming here as a place of refuge, a sanctuary, in these troubled and stress-filled times. I see people coming here as a place of refuge for church members and the community alike. This is going to be the evangelistic centre, where the Adventist lifestyle is on display, and where our friends come to know Christ. It is where our young people will encounter Christ, grow their faith here, and one day become leaders in our churches.

Pastor Davis continued by further recalling how Solomon's temple had a missiological/ evangelistic role. Citing 1 Kings 8:38-43 (NKJV), he called for Hay's Wood Retreat to keep its focus on mission!

*'Whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, or by all Your people Israel, when each one knows the plague of his own heart, and spreads out his hands toward this temple: then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men), that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You gave to our fathers.*

*'Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name's sake (for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this temple, hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name.'*

In the coming weeks the SEC will be sharing details about availability and the booking process. It is the dearest wish of the current SEC leadership team that Hay's Wood will be a tremendous centre for building up God's kingdom – and that it will do so in so many and diverse ways that we cannot even begin to imagine what good may result!

To see a video introduction to Hay's Wood Retreat, go to:  
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/kkdu9u50iiosv83/Hay%27s%20Wood%20202.mp4?dl=0>

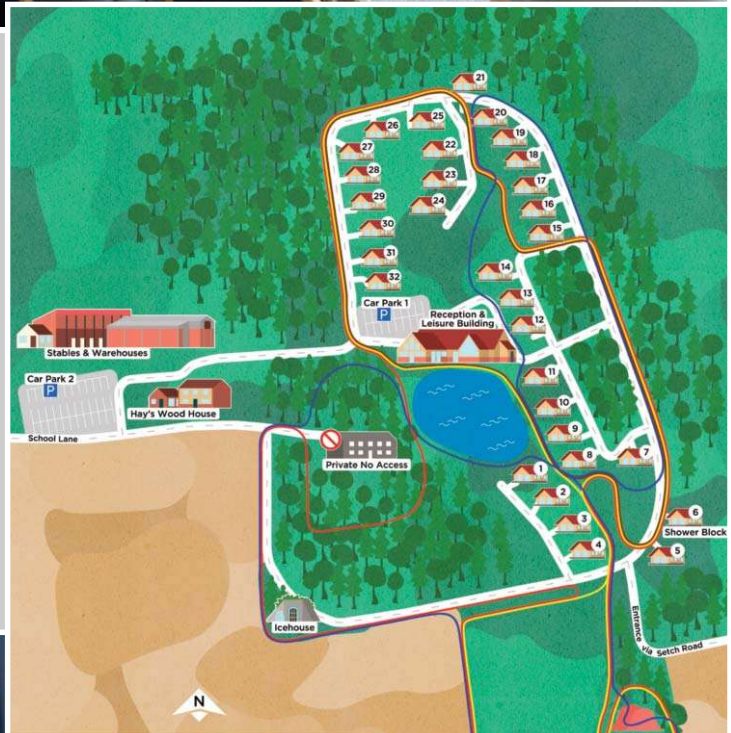
To watch a recording of the 25 June Thanksgiving Service, including Pastor Sam Davis's full keynote address, go to:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMB7LW1Ezm4>  
 EDITOR



Pastor Douglas McCormac shows visitors around one of the chalets



The Thanksgiving Service



**Hay's Wood Retreat**

Site Map

<b>Key:</b>	Cabin	<b>Walking Routes:</b>
Grassland	Car Park	1.5 km
Farmland	Mound	2.4 km
Woodland	No Entry	2.9 km
Road		3.6 km
Lake		



'Think Big,' said Pastors Kevin Johns and Steve Thomas



*The love of God compels us:*  
**A statement of the Biblical Research Institute Ethics Committee (BRIEC) on the humanitarian crisis of refugees, migrants, and displaced people**

**Part 2**

**In this, the second part of their statement on refugees, migrants and displaced people, the Biblical Research Institute Ethics Committee look at Jesus' example of love and compassion, the fact that we are all pilgrims on earth, and practical things that we can do to help migrants and refugees.**

***Jesus' example of love and compassion***

The New Testament encourages Christian believers to show a spirit of compassion and active love to those in need. Jesus, in the parable of the good Samaritan, gives His followers a helpful illustration of what it means to help others (Luke 10:25-37; see also Matthew 25:31-46). In Matthew 25 the term 'stranger' (*xenos*) occurs four times (Matthew 25:35, 38, 43, 44). Jesus identifies Himself as a stranger to be welcomed (Matthew 25:35), and Christ will remember every act of kindness shown to those in need, counting every kind treatment of any human person in need as if it had been done to Him. Jesus says, 'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me' (Matthew 25:35, ESV). This reflects the Golden Rule that Jesus summarised from the Law and the Prophets: 'Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them' (Matthew 7:12, ESV). God cares for the sparrows; how much more does He care for human beings, who are created in His image? (Matthew 10:29, 31.) Because God loves

every human being, we are called to love others as well – even our enemies. The Sermon on the Mount teaches us simple acts of human kindness (Matthew 5:43-48). While caring for others might at times look like a disadvantage, humanly speaking, the Bible tells us that ultimately it can be a huge blessing – not just for the person we help, but also for our own well-being.

***In this world, believers are strangers and pilgrims***

Paul gives a theological meaning to the concept of strangers when he reminds Christian believers that we were all 'strangers to the covenants of promise' but now 'are no longer strangers and aliens' (Ephesians 2:12, 19, ESV). The strangers and Gentiles now have become a part of the church of Christ. Christian brothers may be strangers and need hospitality (3 John 1, 5). No matter where we live as God's children, we are strangers in this world. The writer of Hebrews points out that on this earth we have 'no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come' (Hebrews 13:14, ESV). Thus in Hebrews 11:13 the heroes of

faith are called strangers (*xenos*) and exiles (*parepidēmos*) on earth. This pilgrimage towards our heavenly home is a strong antidote against any sin of nationalism, racism, casteism, tribalism, ethnocentrism, or other -isms that are antithetical to biblical theology and our beliefs and alien to deeply held values of Seventh-day Adventists.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian attitude towards foreigners and strangers is driven by Christ's love, which 'compels us' (2 Cor. 5:14, NKJV) to show mercy to all, and especially to the most vulnerable among us, who are often children. God is a God who treats all justly and with equity (Psalm 9:8). God repeatedly reminds us in the Bible to be gracious and merciful to strangers in our midst, and to reach out to them.

***What can we do?***

God's love does not stop at national or tribal borders. God is merciful and kind to every person in the same manner. He is compassionate especially to those in need, regardless of the colour of their skin, ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, financial position, or social status. As His children, we should treat others in the same way and emulate His loving and kind example. As Seventh-day Adventists, we seek to relate to others in such a winsome way that we would be known for our kindness and love.

This compassionate and loving attitude starts with our thoughts and the language we use to express them. Unfortunately, much of the language about refugees and displaced people has become rather heartless, giving licence to discrimination and racism and fostering an atmosphere of fear. Violent and aggressive language often leads to the dehumanisation of specific groups of people, and frequently it is coupled with a denial of the dignity and value each human being has in God's sight. As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, we are against all tribalism and nationalism, and we reject derogatory and discriminatory rhetoric that depersonalises, demoralises, and demeans people. Such



agents of hope and healing – for the love of Christ compels us (2 Corinthians 5:14). Interestingly, many refugees and displaced people come from countries where the free proclamation of the Gospel is difficult or even prohibited. In God’s providence, these people are now brought near and into our sphere of influence,<sup>2</sup> presenting unique opportunities to reach out to those in need, to offer help and show Christlike reflections.<sup>3</sup> Our love can trigger in them a desire to learn more about the caring faith they see in us. Our practical help will give our testimony credibility when we share the love of God that compels us to do good and to share the good news with them. As Seventh-day Adventists we have a sacred responsibility to be actively engaged in work for the health and well-being of others and to share God’s grace and salvation to a perishing world.

Caring for others who are in desperate need is not only the church’s business and responsibility. While we are grateful for the excellent work ADRA<sup>4</sup> is doing, everyone is called to engage in creative actions that show the love of God and bring healing to those in need. This could be as simple as offering language classes to foreigners, being advocates for refugees and displaced people, providing housing and food, going with them to governmental offices, finding ways to ease their pain, helping the sick, comforting those who mourn, and giving hope to those who are receptive to it, to mention but some

possibilities. In this we follow the example of Jesus, who, during His earthly ministry, found manifold practical ways to heal and to restore, to feed the hungry and to preach the coming of the kingdom of God. Seventh-day Adventists seek to find ways to be a blessing to those in need by living out their faith in harmony with the biblical message and following the example of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup>See General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, ‘One Humanity: A Human Relations Statement Addressing Racism, Casteism, Tribalism, and Ethnocentrism’ (Silver Spring, MD, 15 September 2020), <https://www.adventist.org/official-statements/one-humanity-a-human-relations-statement-addressing-racism-casteism-tribalism-and-ethnocentrism/> (accessed 18 April 2021). See also Bettina Krause, ‘Jesus 2020: Nation-Building for God? Where Does the Adventist Church Stand Regarding Christian Nationalism?’ *Adventist Review*, 15 January 2021, <https://www.adventistreview.org/jesus-2020-nation-building-for-god> (accessed 18 April 2021).

<sup>2</sup>Speaking about the many foreigners in America, Ellen G. White sees the following opportunities: ‘God in His providence has brought men to our very doors and thrust them, as it were, into our arms, that they might learn the truth, and be qualified to do a work we could not do in getting the light before men of other tongues. There is a great work before us. . . . This work calls for the exercise of all the talents that God has entrusted to our keeping – the pen, the press, the voice, the purse, and the sanctified affections of the soul’ (Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* [Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946], p. 570).

<sup>3</sup>This accords well with the ‘I Will Go’ strategic plan of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which has as one of its key performance indicators KPI 2.7: ‘Each division identifies all significant immigrant/refugee populations in their territories, has initiatives in place to reach them, and reports annually to the Global Mission Issues Committee on progress in reaching them.’

<sup>4</sup>ADRA, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International, is the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

rhetoric easily leads to a mentality that separates by erecting walls rather than building bridges that connect us so that hope can be shared.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we see our responsibility to engage in constructive ways with the people who are affected by this humanitarian crisis. With God’s help, we want to see opportunities to become God’s healing and helping hands in reaching out to those affected by war, persecution, violence, famine, and other catastrophic events. We want to be



Is this the first ever *FOCUS* magazine published to communicate with friends and neighbours the meaning of Revelation 14:6-12? A *Sunday Times* newspaper columnist peddles the idea that Seventh-day Adventists believe God to be engineering a ‘you-will-burn-in-hell’ plan for humankind, but we know that’s fake news. Around AD 90 John received a vision ‘from Jesus . . . to show his servants what must soon take place’ (Revelation 1:1, NIV). Could the messages at the heart of the vision given by the three angels begin to put the matter right? How do we share with our friends and neighbours the relevance of Revelation 14:6-12 for our times?

***FOCUS* – working with you to turn an everyday conversation into a spiritual one.**

*Focus* magazine – published and printed for Seventh-day Adventists in the UK and Ireland to share with friends.

Tel: 01476 591700



# Newbold College of Higher Education celebrates graduates of 2020 and 2021

The academic year 2020-2021 was like no other, full of uncertainty and turbulence. Despite the various challenges, Newbold's students remained committed to their studies, persevering with patience while the college pursued alternative avenues to deliver digital classes and virtual learning content to see the students through their programmes.

Sunday 11 July 2021 will always be remembered as staff and students came together in a hybrid format to celebrate their accomplishments. It was the first virtual awards ceremony in the college's history, paying tribute to every individual's remarkable academic and personal efforts in the face of adversity during the COVID-19 pandemic, and marking the last awards ceremony to feature programmes under the Department of Business and Humanities.

With special music conducted by Dr Sandra Rigby-Barrett, Dr John Baildam opened the ceremony with introductory remarks and thanks; Dr Emmanuel Osei, President of the South England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, addressed the graduating students; Newbold's academic registrar, Serena Santona, presented the graduating students; while Dr Daniel Duda delivered a charge to the graduating students and offered a prayer of dedication. Representing the student body, Pilira Zapita provided the students' response, and Chief Financial Officer Abigail Wright made an appeal to raise money for the Student Aid Fund before the benediction.

College Principal Dr John Baildam recalls how the ceremony made for a poignant end to a challenging year: 'Not only have we been dealing with the pandemic since March last year, but over the past nine months we have been going through a challenging period of reorientation and restructuring. I am grateful to my academic colleagues for their contributions to ensuring that so many of our students this year are graduating with first-class honours, merits and distinctions. I thank our graduates for their commitment and contribution to the college, and I look forward to a number of them returning to Newbold in September for the next stage of their academic journey.'

Most of the graduating students and academic staff managed to attend the awards ceremony on Zoom. They made great use of the chat box and video functions to cheer their peers on and wish each other every blessing for the road that lies ahead.

Once again, Newbold

would like to congratulate all graduating students (those names marked with an asterisk reside within the territory of the British Union Conference):

## University of Wales Trinity Saint David

### Bachelor of Arts with Honours, Biblical & Pastoral Studies:

Caroline Lacoma, Fitzroy Morris\*, Nicholas Okyere\*, Samuel Semakula\*.

### Graduate Diploma, Biblical & Pastoral Studies:

Gustav Nyajeri\*, Jairaj Kanakaraj\*, Marcial Hernandez Ramos, Marianne Thieme, Martynas Baltiejus, Michael Jayarathna\*, Philip De Rivaz\*, Simon-Levi Lie-Bakken, Sureen Rayavarapu\*, Thirza van den Broek.

### Master of Arts, Theology:

Adam Cserpan, Alma Hernandez\*, Andrew Cudjoe\*, Anne-May Muller, Anton Torstensson, Arne-Kristian Andersen, Arnoud van den Broek, Austin Blackburn\*, Choni Miguel, Christle-Caroline Jasinta, Clebson Braga\*, Desiree James, Divinia Reynolds\*, Emmanuel Acheampong\*, Emmanuel Asamoah\*, Filip Stojanovic, Freddy Boutin, Godfred Asamoah, Hina Ahmed\*, Ida Hakkarainen, Kornel Fleisz, Krisztian Omboli, Leo Espana Reyes, Luca Zagara, Lydia Hamblin\*, Mantas Kucinskas, Matija Kovacevic, Miroslav Ostrovljanovic, Mohan Abbadasari\*, Naftal Zinyemba\*, Nicole Gooden\*, Paul Dhanaraj\*, Pilira Zapita\*, Qudon Stewart\*, Sergio de Sousa\*, Sofenna Lowe\*, Tajesh Puri\*, Thando Mlalazi\*, Troy Smith\*, Ville Suutarinen, Wezley Bishop\*, Wilfred Masih\*.

## Washington Adventist University

Washington Adventist University degrees are subject to verification of the satisfactory completion of all requirements by the Academic Records Office of that institution.

## Bachelor of Science, Business Studies:

Ana Anton, David Keszeg\*, Lazar Acimic, Loveness Magai, Miriam Szoke, Paola Abramovic\*, Patrycja Niewolik\*, Predrag Salonski, Robert Keszeg\*, Strahinja Tasic, Teodora Ostojic.

## Andrews University

Andrews University degrees are subject to verification of the satisfactory completion of all requirements by the Academic Records Office of that institution.

## Bachelor of Arts, Humanities:

Naomi Grit.

To watch the live-streamed awards ceremony event in full, please visit our dedicated webpage: [newbold.ac.uk/awards-ceremony](http://newbold.ac.uk/awards-ceremony), or visit the college Facebook page: [facebook.com/newboldcollege](https://facebook.com/newboldcollege).

FELICITY BRODRICK



The academic registrar, Serena Santona, congratulates the graduates



Photos: Roland Dan



The college leadership team, faculty and guests lead the ceremony



Chief Financial Officer Abigail Wright makes an appeal





## Trans-European Division strengthens mission & discipleship with two new appointments

by Pastor Victor Hulbert\*

**On Thursday 1 July, Dr Anthony WagenerSmith and Dr Kayle B. de Waal were voted to serve as Evangelism and Mission Coordinator and Disciple-making Coordinator respectively.**

The appointment of these two new roles within the Trans-European Division will help the Division further the key objectives of the Strategic Framework voted by the TED Executive Committee in May 2021. The framework includes a strong emphasis on Adventist identity, evangelism, mission and disciple-making.

'Now, more so than for many years, is the right time to share the Adventist message of wholeness and hope in Jesus,' states TED President Raafat Kamal. 'In light of the viral pandemic, economic upheaval, resurgent nationalism, and a post-Christian worldview that offers no hope for the future, we have an opportunity to present our unique, biblical, end-time message of hope.'

WagenerSmith holds a doctorate degree from Fuller Theological Seminary specialising in missional church planting. He currently serves as Associate Director at the North American Division Evangelism Institute (NADEI) as well as Assistant Professor in Practical and Applied Theology at Andrews SDA Theological Seminary. He is a church planter at heart, with vast experience in the Tampa Bay area of Florida, including a parachute church plant, Compass Community, in a low-socio-economic area that then experienced growth by multiplying mission-focused home groups and empowering volunteer lay-pastors.

Mission coordination in equipping and training will be a major part of WagenerSmith's new role. This includes mentoring, coordinating and evaluating the development of church planting, house churches, evangelism, centres of influence, mission to the cities, total member



Dr Anthony and Lianro WagenerSmith



Dr Kayle and Charmaine de Waal

involvement, entering new territories, and reaching people groups while developing and supporting new, innovative approaches and programmes. He will also be responsible for establishing five training outreach centres strategically positioned across the 22 countries of the Division, and for directing the newly established TED branch of the GC Centre for Secular and Post-Christian Mission.

As outlined in the TED Strategic Framework, he will also take a lead in developing mission initiatives for what are, in

effect, the TED's mission fields, where there is minimal Adventist presence despite a keen sense of mission: Albania, Bosnia, Cyprus, Greece, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, North Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro.

De Waal holds a doctorate degree in New Testament with a focus on church growth from the University of Auckland. He currently serves as Master of Arts Course Convenor and Senior Lecturer in New Testament at Avondale University College, Australia. He has vast experience in pastoral, evangelistic mentoring, as well as academic and research leadership.

Among a list of responsibilities, including coordinating the work of the new TED Adventist Disciple-Makers Institute (ADM) and developing a disciple-making practicum, he will work in synergy with the TED unions and attached fields, as well as Newbold College and the four union seminaries in Croatia, Hungary, Poland and Serbia. In doing this he will support practical training components for the seminaries relating to placement, internship and continued education for pastors, and training for elders, 'front-line strikers' and church members working in tandem with the Evangelism and Mission Coordinator.

'As we prayerfully worked through a shortlist of names, it suddenly struck us that these two individuals, working together with our other staff and our field leaderships, could seriously enhance our training, mission growth and discipleship skills at every level,' Kamal states.

Field presidents across the Division agreed, and current TED directors and officers unanimously supported the proposal in the 1 July TED Administrative Committee vote.

Their appointment is part of the continuing process of selecting the best team to work with the needs outlined

in the Strategic Framework. The plan is for the team to be complete by TED year-end meetings in November 2021.

As the Administrative Committee concluded, Kamal re-emphasised the challenge to all leaders and members across the TED: 'Christ's mission is to seek and to save the lost. He is asking us to join Him as He leads us, empowered by the Holy Spirit.'

*\*Pastor Victor Hulbert serves as the Communication Director for the Trans-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists.*



## Well-being coping strategies during the pandemic

The Mental Health Foundation recently published an article titled: 'Coping with the pandemic: new mental health research reveals how UK adults are managing stress'.<sup>1</sup> Their study data found the following interventions for coping:

- 59 per cent of UK adults who had experienced stress because of the pandemic said walking helped them cope.
- 50 per cent of the UK adults experiencing pandemic-related stress stated that visiting green spaces, such as parks, aided their coping.
- 47 per cent of UK adults experiencing pandemic-related stress said that contacting family members (for example, by phone, video chat and so on) helped them cope.
- 46 per cent of UK adults experiencing stress as a result of the pandemic stated that contacting friends (for example, by phone, video chat and so on) assisted their coping.

Commenting on the research outcomes, the foundation's director for England and Wales, Dr Antonis Kousoulis, said: 'The good news here is that, at a very difficult time for many of us, millions of people across the UK are using effective ways to improve their well-being.'

He further states: 'At a time of local restrictions, it's more important than ever that local authorities invest in improving our neighbourhoods and leisure areas, to create safe, green spaces for outdoor activities.'<sup>2</sup>

The American Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in an article published on 22 January 2021, titled 'Coping with Stress', offer the following comment:

'The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major effect on our lives.

Many of us are facing challenges that can be stressful, overwhelming, and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but they can make us feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety.' The article

concludes: 'Learning to cope with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and those around you become more resilient.'<sup>3</sup>

*Psychology Today's* article, titled: 'Tips for Post-Pandemic Life', posted on 20 April 2021,<sup>4</sup> yields further coping strategies. The author, Konstantin Lukin, PhD, outlines the following:

- Make changes slowly to reduce feeling overwhelmed.
- Allow yourself time to grieve and create rituals to acknowledge all of the loss we have experienced this past year.
- Make plans to 're-do' missed milestones such as birthday celebrations and graduations.
- Many of us are anxious about returning to work after a year of working from home. Ease back into the office slowly.
- Take short breaks during the day for deep breathing and exercise.
- Take socialising slowly. Begin with those closest to you.
- Express your feelings with trusted individuals.
- Be patient with yourself.

### Good health!

<sup>1</sup><https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/news/coping-with-the-pandemic>

<sup>2</sup>ibid.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-man-cave/202104/tips-post-pandemic-life>



## Earth and Soul 4

by David Wright

'If we love the Artist, we must not destroy His painting.' – Dr Paul Cox, ethnobotanist

In November, the UK hosts an event that many believe is the world's last chance to get runaway climate change under control. With three months

to go, this month's column is looking at the background to COP26 in Glasgow – the UN Climate Change Conference.

The conference website explains how, for almost thirty years, the UN has brought together nearly every country on earth for global climate summits, called COPs ('Conferences of the Parties'). Between Berlin in 1995 and Glasgow this year, climate change has gone from a fringe issue to a global priority as storms, floods, and wildfires intensify, air pollution affects millions, and unpredictable weather causes untold damage to homes and livelihoods. The UK Government subtitled the event 'Together for Our Planet', hoping to complete and implement the actions approved in the 2015 Paris Agreement, and to demonstrate that the world can work together in tackling what most inhabitants consider its most critical challenge.

COP26 goals include securing net-zero carbon emissions by mid-century to keep further global temperature rises under 1.5 degrees; and, because climate change is expected to continue even if this is successful, taking all necessary action to protect global communities and natural habitats from predicted future impact. To deliver these targets, all countries are expected to phase out coal use, reduce other fossil fuels, curtail deforestation, switch to electric vehicles, and invest in renewables. Collaboration is also required to mobilise the considerable financial resources needed to restore ecosystems, build flood defences and warning systems, and create resilient infrastructure and agriculture that ensures a more



secure future for human beings on the planet.

Despite COVID-19, more than 190 world leaders are expected to arrive in Scotland, together with thousands of negotiators and governmental and business representatives, for the twelve days of talks.

In 1972, just two years after the first Earth Day that marked the birth of the modern environmental movement, the influential *Ecologist* magazine published a special 'Blueprint for Survival' edition that drew attention to the urgency and magnitude of environmental problems facing the world. More than thirty leading scientists of the day argued for radical global restructuring to prevent what they referred to as 'the breakdown of society and the irreversible disruption of life-support systems on this planet'. It was later published in book form and titled *How to Save the World*, the second chapter of which was, 'Why the world needs saving now and how it can be done'. Half a century later, the theme of this year's Earth Day was 'Restore the Earth'.

None of the publications or events described above have ever referred to the hope found in Acts 4:12. I wonder how many delegates at COP26, or those watching and waiting for positive outcomes, realise that Seventh-day Adventists observe their own weekly version of Earth Day – one that not only focuses on the creation of their earth and its inhabitants, but also gives respect to the God who created it, and anticipates its full restoration.



# #walkforadra Walk for ADRA

by Pastor Bert Smit

Dear colleagues,

It's been a long time since I have seen you in 'the flesh'. For the past 15 months we have only met in virtual spaces. And, while these spaces were invaluable (and will be for some time), there is nothing that can beat personal interaction.

On behalf of ADRA-UK, I would like to thank you for supporting our work, especially during the pandemic. Our 'special relationship' with Adventist Community Services was particularly vital during the past 15

months. I would publicly like to thank Sharon Platt-McDonald (BUC), Max McKenzie-Cook (SEC), Patricia Douglas (NEC), Jovan Adamovic (WM), Helena Kunata (IM) and Paul Tompkins (SM), the ACS directors and sponsors, for working with Cathy Boldeau as our ADRA lead so ably.

ADRA has a special relationship with the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide, not just ACS. Many of our projects appeal to youth and Pathfinders, and we are grateful for the opportunities that we have had to work with Dejan Stojkovic over the past few years, creating and delivering honours and being part of BUC Pathfinder and Adventurer camporees.

The work that we do in ADRA is very specific. Our remit is to help the world's most vulnerable people through justice, love and compassion. We do this by responding to emergencies such as the second COVID-19 wave in India and the volcanic eruption in St Vincent. But we also lead long-term humanitarian projects in places such as Yemen, South Sudan and Ghana. Partnering with other appropriate agencies, each year

we support hundreds of thousands of people all over the world.

Emergency response and development projects, both overseas and in the UK, are only possible with the generous support of our donors. As ADRA is a para-church organisation, we must raise all our funding, including staffing costs, ourselves.

I know that each of you is very busy. Church work is extremely time-consuming. However, I would like to ask one small favour. Please would you send the enclosed poster to your counterparts in the local church. Our #walkforadra is this summer's fundraising activity. However, it is not just about fundraising, but also to encourage our members and their friends to enjoy nature and lead a healthier lifestyle.

As I close this letter, I would also like to invite you to set up a direct debit for ADRA-UK if you have not done so yet. You can find the information here: <https://adra.org.uk/donate/>. You can donate from as little as £10.00 a month.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter.

With warm regards,

BERT SMIT, CEO

Walk a mile, maybe 2,  
walk any distance you can do  
join the challenge today!

# WALK for ADRA

Walk the globe twice with us.  
Collectively we can walk **50 000 miles**  
to raise **£50 000** for ADRA.

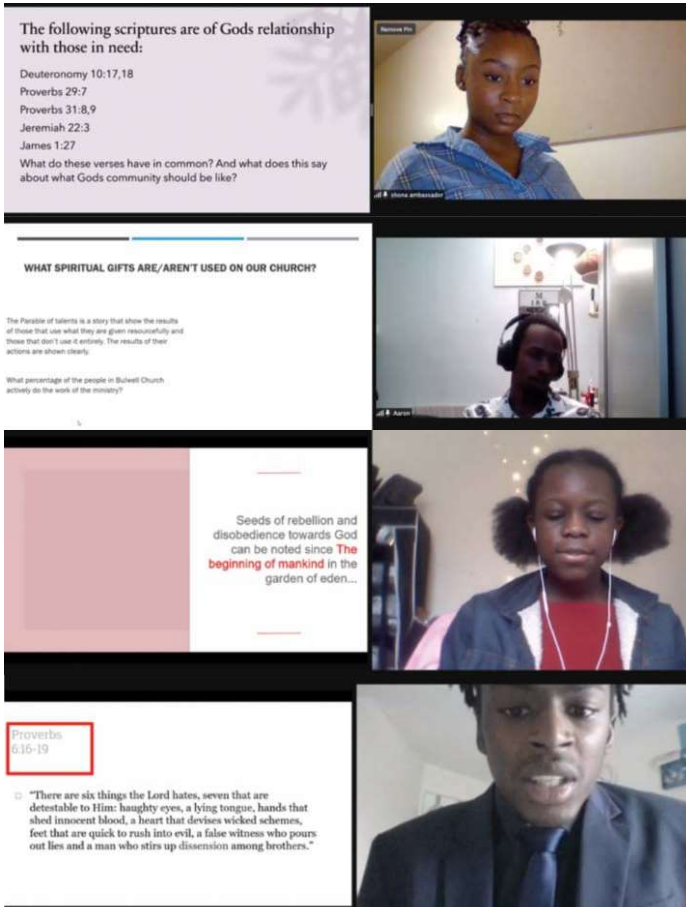
**1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE –  
31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2021**

[www.adra.org.uk/walkforadra](http://www.adra.org.uk/walkforadra)

**f** or please join our dedicated FB group  
[www.facebook.com/groups/walkforadra](http://www.facebook.com/groups/walkforadra)

Nottingham Bulwell Ambassador Club

# Pathfinder life beyond the Guide class



Ambassador class presenting to their peers – Shona Gonese (top), Aaron Matshiya, Caitlin Munawa and McKenzie Davis (bottom)

Pathfinders at Nottingham Bulwell Seventh-day Adventist Church were in for a delight when they found out that their Pathfinder journey was not ending at Guide class. For many clubs, the Guide class is indeed the final class requiring investiture before the extracurricular Master Guide. The General Conference, however, wisely decided that the Pathfinder journey should continue beyond the Guide class to a class where the Pathfinders are to be further challenged and enriched. This phase of Pathfinding is known as the Ambassador Club.

The curriculum is rich and diverse, covering topics from relationships to Christian community. Instead of being textbook-heavy, the work involved in the Ambassador Club involves discussions with peers, which are designed to refine them and elevate their thinking to a higher plane.

What does this look like for Bulwell Seventh-day Adventist Church? In keeping with the theme of independence and development, the teachers of the Ambassador class play a less hands-on role. Each member gives a 6-7-minute presentation on the topic they covered that week. Each presentation ends with an interactive Q&A, which tests the understanding of the presenter, and also gives a chance for the club to discuss how to apply the lessons to the local church or to their personal lives.

Additionally, the club has engaged in exciting activities such as day trips in nature, weekend residentials and barbecues. There is also usually a chance to stop and do a little shopping at retail outlets before getting back to church and going home. Such activities have excited widespread interest outside of the Adventist community. The club is truly thriving as an evangelistic tool!

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Ambassador class and other youth on a day out in the Peak District

# Anchored in Christ and stronger together

**P**lymouth's 'Anchored in Christ' investiture started with a bang as the Pathfinders got things underway with their newly acquired drums and cymbals. The Pathfinders had been busy practising over the last month to surprise the parents with a well-rehearsed routine. They were thrilled to show off their skills as the Adventurers marched in the flags and took their seats.

Church members watched on Zoom while parents gathered to view the proceedings in the church. For some it was their first investiture, and one little 3-year-old was especially thrilled to receive her Adventurer scarf and sash, claiming the

spotlight with her infectious smile.

The Pathfinders organised the whole programme as part of their Companion class requirements. Leading out was nothing new for these youngsters, as they had led the club's devotional many times over the course of the year and worked well as a team. Though our area coordinator got stuck in traffic and couldn't make it, that didn't stop the Pathfinders from springing into action with a 'the show must go on' attitude. Felipe Valente took to the mic and led out in a touching devotional, while Faith Nyathi and Suely Vera Cruz supported him with Bible verses and readings. Everything went smoothly, and Adventurers Diana De la Cruz and Alinka Aluculesei recited their law and pledge.

Though the Adventurers had only been meeting for two months, they had completed several awards and proudly received them at the front from Adventurer Director Gracie Valente. Two young ladies graduated from the Adventurers: Ianna Gutley and Annette Raskova were welcomed into the Pathfinder Club.

The Pathfinders had been working tirelessly on Zoom, and then in person in recent months, to complete their Companion

class. They even did some community outreach during Pathfinder Day in March. As we weren't allowed to go out into the community, we decided to take some activities to those who were isolating. They packed around 150 craft packs and arranged little vases of flowers to take to a local retirement village. The residents were thrilled and touched by their generosity, and soon all the packs were snapped up.

Twenty of the crafting kits included knitting needles, wool and instructions for newborn baby caps. Some of the ladies took up the challenge and have now donated around 30 baby caps to the local maternity department, passing on the blessing to others.

After all was said and done, everyone helped themselves to individually packed cupcakes to celebrate the birthdays past and to come before they can properly celebrate together again.

Everyone had a great time! We thank God that we were able to celebrate, and look forward to the day when we can all meet together again properly and celebrate future investitures with our whole church family again.

We hope and pray that our small club will continue to grow, and we'd like to encourage any small club out there with Matthew 18:20 ESV: 'For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.'

JENNIE HALL



Felipe leading the devotional



Suely sharing her knowledge of the tree honour



Faith enjoying the investiture, having received her honours and class pin



Alinka reciting the Adventurer law with Diana reciting the pledge



Isabella, our youngest Adventurer, excited to receive her scarf and sash



The Anchored in Christ Pathfinders, Adventurers, parents and counsellors



# BUC Session constitutional reflections

by **Pastor John Surridge**, British Union Conference Executive Secretary

The Queen famously described 1992 as an ‘annus horribilis’, which translates as ‘horrible year’. What with COVID-19, Brexit, financial challenges, and the recent North England Conference employment tribunal findings, many church members may well be feeling that this has been our ‘annus horribilis’. In fact, many in the NEC may feel justified in saying they have had a ‘quadrennium horribilis’.

There are members who feel hurt, let down, angry and disillusioned by what they have seen, heard and experienced. For some there is a deep desire to understand what has happened, to make sense of what seems like chaos, and to pin the blame on someone or something.

This is completely natural. However, on behalf of those who have worked very hard on the project, I would like to make a plea in favour of the proposed new BUC and NEC constitutions, and the proposed new Missions’ operating policies.

When session time comes around, the constitution takes a battering. For many, the constitution discussion time is the only opportunity they have to express their frustrations, grievances and concerns, saying: ‘We must revise the constitution.’

Well, revision of the constitution is an ongoing process. It is part of the normal work of the church, which is why we appoint standing constitution committees. You can see all of our BUC constitutions, going back to 1924, at: [www.bucsession.org.uk/constitution](http://www.bucsession.org.uk/constitution). Over the years there have been constant revisions and changes as we seek to comply with the laws of our land, as well as the model constitutions provided by the General Conference. At every session these revisions are brought to the delegates to be approved.

Constitutions are the foundational documents of our church, a solid platform to build on. However, they cannot answer every question we might face. Whatever the proposed amendments, they will not solve our current problems, which are mostly human and relational. Addressing them will take a wide range of measures, including improvement in our governance, but the constitution is only a small part of this.

The proposed new constitutions are part of the solution to our current problems, not part of the problem. The benefits include: a closer harmony between us and the General Conference; the opportunity to hold a virtual session in any future emergency situation; and a strengthening of the position of the Executive Committee.

Anyone reading the constitution, current or proposed, will see things that they would like to change, but it is very difficult to achieve a complete consensus. It is therefore important that we focus on the higher purpose of the constitution, which is to provide stability, promote unity, and enable our Union, Conferences and Missions to operate effectively.

Whatever our current grievances, my plea is, ‘Don’t blame the constitution!’ We need a two-thirds majority at our Union and Conference sessions to get the new documents approved, and we would really appreciate your help in making this happen.

## When does the BUC session actually start?

This question was raised several times at a Town Hall meeting on Thursday 17 June. To answer it properly there are a number of things we need to clarify and other questions to answer, some of which were also raised at the Town Hall meeting.

## Unity in diversity

The levels of Seventh-day Adventist Church organisation include:

- The General Conference, which includes different divisions
- Unions, including our own British Union Conference

- Conferences
- Missions
- Attached fields

Every organisation has its own constitution (the Missions have ‘operating policies’); and, despite there being a model from the General Conference, each will be slightly different, depending on the country they operate in, the type of organisation they are (we have chosen to be charities), and the governance systems they have chosen.

Even within one union conference there can be significant differences in the systems of governance being used. In the UK & Ireland there are differences between the BUC constitution and the constitutions of the two conferences.

## Delegate cap

The BUC has a cap of around 350 total delegates. The vote to cap the number of delegates was taken at the BUC session in July 2006. Previously, the number of regular delegates was calculated using a formula of each local conference/mission being entitled to one delegate without regard to membership, and one additional delegate for every fifty church members or major fraction thereof.

In 2001 we had a total membership of 20,637, but today we have over 40,000. If we were still following this formula we would have 800 regular delegates at the session!

The 2006 delegates realised that the success of the church was becoming a challenge to its governance processes. They could have simply changed the formula to reduce the number of delegates, but every time membership increased significantly the formula would have to be changed again. A cap solved the challenge once and for all.

In May 2009, at a special BUC session, the Standing Constitution Committee presented a proposal to reduce the regular delegate cap to 200 – partly to limit the vast expense of a session, but more importantly to ‘find and recommend a process that would be most effective in conducting the business of the church’. As the Constitution Committee explained, ‘This had as much to do with the preparation for the session, in terms of setting up committees before the session, as the session itself.’





Delegates to the 2011 BUC Session held at Stanborough Park Church

Therefore, committees now meet in advance of the session itself – partly to save time and therefore money, but primarily to make the business of the church more effective.

In the event, the 2009 delegates felt that 200 regular delegates were too few to give adequate representation to the Conferences and Missions, and the number was revised to 300, which is where it still stands. They did, however, approve the proposals to carry out the preliminary committee work prior to the session, voting that:

‘The members of the Recommendations Committee shall be appointed by their respective conference/mission delegates at least eighteen (18) weeks before the session.’

Similarly, the Nominating Committee would meet at least 12 weeks prior to the session and would circulate a report to the delegates. Any objections would be considered by the Nominating Committee at least six weeks prior to the session.

With so much work done prior to the session, there was scope for the session to be reduced in length, and in 2011 a one-day session was held at the Stanborough Park church. On reflection it was felt that one day was probably not quite long enough, and the 2016 session was therefore held over two days.

We should point out here that, while these major changes to the constitution were implemented by the BUC and the Missions, the Conferences do things differently. The NEC continues to use a formula to calculate the number of regular delegates for its sessions, and the SEC caps its total delegates at 600. In both the NEC and the SEC, the Recommendations and Nominating Committees meet during the session itself.

#### So when does the session start?

A session can only start when a quorum (51%) of authorised delegates is present. However, session-related processes must take place before the session. In the BUC constitution these include:

- The Constitution Committee meeting and considering revisions to the constitution;
- The Conferences and Missions writing to their churches, requesting suggestions for Conference or Mission delegates to the BUC session;

- The Conference and Mission executive committees making their final selection of which members should represent them at the BUC session;
- The Conference and Mission delegates deciding who should sit on the Recommendations Committee;
- The Recommendations Committee selecting who to appoint to the Nominating Committee;
- The Nominating Committee nominating officers, directors and members of the Executive Committee;
- This information being conveyed to the delegates;
- The delegates having the opportunity to object to any name proposed and to refer it back to the Nominating Committee;
- The Nominating Committee meeting again to consider these referrals;
- The Nominating Committee sending out a final list of nominees to be taken to the session.

All of these things have to happen before the session, not at the session. Presently, the BUC intends to hold its session on 21 and 22 October 2021.

#### What does ‘present’ mean?

Just one final point: in Article 5 (b), what exactly does ‘present’ mean? Until just over a year ago it would have meant a physical meeting in a nice big hall. However, since COVID-19, definitions have become blurred. How many of us have been ‘attending’ virtual church services since last spring? How many companies and charities have held their annual general meetings by Zoom? The word ‘present’ is now being used to describe virtual as well as physical presence.

So far, we have been planning for a physical BUC session. For many reasons, a physical meeting is far preferable to a virtual one. However, legally, if we were to hold the session virtually – because of COVID-19 and the way words such as ‘present’ are now understood – we would be within the terms of our current constitution, and the Charity Commission would be very unlikely to challenge us. This would be very much a last resort, but it’s something to consider for the future.

### Coventry North organisation

June 5 2021 marked the day when Coventry North Seventh-day Adventist Church officially changed from company status to full church status. In 2014, when a regular prayer meeting in a member's home outgrew capacity, members were compelled to think of a way forward that would accommodate this zealous group of members. This seven-year journey has seen the move from a home to Holbrook Community Centre, and to acquire what was previously a youth club, which is now the home of Coventry North Church.

After weeks of meticulous planning, the organisation was held at our church building and broadcast online as we celebrated the occasion. The atmosphere of the vibrantly decorated church hall complemented the joy expressed by church members and invited guests from far and wide. We were blessed with guests such as Pastors Jackson, Hush, Kumi, Simpson and Lambert, and Elder Earl Ramharacksingh, representing the NEC. Also, we were happy to have with us Pastors Lewis Quaye and George Dadey, along with Elders Maxwell Ampaw and Mark Addo, who have given support to Coventry North's development over the years. The music was of the highest quality, with renditions from our own choir and the La Melodia choir. We give thanks to God for the great things He has done for Coventry North so far.

After the virtual Sabbath School service and announcement in the morning, the divine worship commenced with a welcome in which our pastor, Dr Patrick Herbert, greeted us in a few well-pronounced words in 'Twi'. While thoughts of the church organisation proceedings went through our minds, moments of singing and prayer refocused our attention to the present moment. Then, what we had all been waiting for happened – Coventry North Church was organised. However, the feeling of delight would not have been the same without the immense

support from the North England Conference and our mother, sister and neighbouring churches. The sentiments of the organisation of our church were summed up in the lyrics of Sister Ann-Marie's song, 'To God Be the Glory; Great Things He Hath Done'. We pray for the future that lies ahead for Coventry North Church, and continue to thank God for His mercy.

JOHNETTA AND DANIELLA OKYERE



Pastor Michael Simpson greets the members



Music was provided from both the Coventry North and La Melodia choirs



## Bottomless barrels to St Vincent

Grace Community Seventh-day Adventist Church quickly responded to the call to provide emergency assistance to the people of St Vincent and the Grenadines following the sudden volcanic eruptions which caused havoc.

The newly formed Grace Community Church members were moved by the sight of more than 15,000 people being evacuated from their homes, and vowed to provide support.

Grace Community Church members rallied together to pool finances and buy food items, toiletries, bedding, games for the children, and medical equipment such as blood pressure monitors. There were so many items, but the barrels seemed to have no bottom and everything was packed tightly into each of the three large barrels.



Pastor Baptiste, President of the Adventist Mission in St Vincent and the Grenadines, personally wrote to the members, sending 'sincere thanks and deepest appreciation to all those that have supported this noteworthy humanitarian undertaking'.

Grace Community Church members will continue to keep the people of St Vincent and the Grenadines in our prayers.

*The newly formed Grace Community Seventh-day Adventist church is made up of members from the former Palmers Green and Tottenham Holcombe Road churches.*

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

## Death of Peter Bo Bohsen

We are extremely sad to announce the death of Peter Bo Bohsen, age 50. After many months of struggling with a serious heart condition, Peter Bo's heart gave up the struggle on Thursday, 8 July 2021. He slipped quietly and painlessly away and is now at peace.



'Peter Bo was selected as Pathfinder director for his expertise, track record, creativity, and energy,' TED president Raafat Kamal said. 'He certainly did not disappoint and led a strong drive in training leaders, organising camps, and training Master Guide leaders.'

Bohsen made a unique contribution to the Trans-European Division (TED) as its Pathfinder director between 2015 and July 2020, when he left to take up a full-time position at the Danish Junior College, Vejlebjergskolen.

He was an innovator, providing strong inspiration and motivation for many Pathfinders and leaders across the Division. His many visits locally across the countries of the Division were always much appreciated.

To read an extended tribute to Peter Bo Bohsen, go to: <https://ted.adventist.org/news/1877-death-of-peter-bo-bohsen>

THOMAS MÜLLER/TEDNEWS

## At a glance . . .

- **Faced with increasing gun violence**, members of the Harbor of Hope Seventh-day Adventist church in the US town of Benton Harbor have been engaging in several measures to support their community in the last few weeks, including a family event, a 'basketball and faith' event, and community outreach – all with a high degree of professionalism that was noticed and commented on by the locals, according to the *Adventist Review* (first reported in the *Lake Union Herald*). As a result, one young man, named Napoleon, made a decision to follow Christ.
- **A snowy miracle has occurred in Sweden**, says Claus Nybo of the Trans-European Division, reporting for *tedNEWS*. He shares the testimony of a self-employed carpenter who was injured, unable to work, and experiencing financial and emotional difficulty when a fierce storm landed wet snow on his satellite dish, causing all 580 of his channels to disappear, except one: LifeStyleTV, a privately owned Adventist television station. As a result, the carpenter opened his Bible and became a Seventh-day Adventist!
- **Katerina Goufioti survived an agonising COVID-19 experience with the help of the Pathfinder Bible Experience**, writes Marica Mirilov for *tedNEWS*. In March this year her grandmother, uncle and father all contracted the virus and were rushed to hospital, where the cases of her two male relatives became critical. Katerina says, 'Every day before our PBE Bible study one of my friends would fervently pray for my father and I could focus on the Word of God. That gave me the courage to face each new day.' Sadly, her uncle died of the virus; but, after an intense five-week battle in intensive care, her father miraculously survived.
- **Pastor Herman Smit, former TED communication director, has passed away at 87**, following twenty-three years of retirement. He was the father of the ADRA-UK CEO, Pastor Bert Smit. Before his role at the Trans-European Division from 1980 to 1985, he held the roles of youth, Sabbath school and communications director at the Netherlands Union. He also preceded his son in working for ADRA by being the ADRA Zambia director, and served as the Greek Mission president before his retirement.
- **The Baptist Church is warning its members against spiritualism**, according to *The Baptist Times*. 'In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic,' writes Jayne Irlam, 'the Baptist Deliverance Study Group is expressing its concern that some people are turning to spiritualism in the belief they can make contact with their departed and so find the closure they so desperately need' – sometimes with 'horrific consequences' from which they beg to be delivered. Baptists note that 'communication with the dead . . . is specifically forbidden in the Bible by a loving God who wishes to keep people safe from bondage to preternatural or demonic powers'. It seems that our denomination is not alone in recognising the dangers of dabbling in the occult.

*'At a glance . . .'* provides a roundup of news in a regular column for MESSENGER, keeping our readers informed of events in other Christian denominations in the UK and Ireland, as well as the wider Adventist Church across the globe.

ANDREW DUCKERING

# Thoughts on lifestyle and doctrine

part 1

by Dr George Knight

*'Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths' (Psalm 25:4, NKJV).*



reaffirmed the consensus and helped those who still had questions to accept the correctness of the biblically derived conclusions of the group. Thus we can best think of Mrs White's involvement in the formation of doctrine as one of confirmation rather than initiation.

The same does not hold true for her part in the area of Adventist lifestyle: but, before moving on with that topic, we should recognise some differences between the realm of lifestyle and that of doctrine.

Even though twenty-first-century Adventists tend to see doctrinal and lifestyle issues as being of equal magnitude, that was not the position of the denomination's founders. Whereas they hammered out the basic doctrines through intense Bible study and held conferences to bring about consensus, lifestyle development followed a

somewhat different pattern.

Perhaps the difference revolved around the fact that doctrines define a denomination. Doctrine among early Sabbatarian Adventists, therefore, was a crucial issue and received a great deal of attention. Lifestyle items, on the other hand, tend to be second-order concerns. Many lifestyle issues are not so much basic determiners of a denomination's identity as they are ways of life that facilitate its mission in spreading its doctrinal message.

From this perspective, health reform enables people to become better witnesses and missionaries and enables healed people to reach the place where they can better understand the Gospel. Similarly, Christian education facilitates the development of both individual church members and Gospel preachers. Again, tithing and sacrificial giving not only enable people to reflect the character of the One who so loved us that He gave His only Son, but also forward God's mission on earth.

*Lord, we appreciate both the doctrinal package and the lifestyle issues that have made Seventh-day Adventists a unique people. Help us to understand better their roles in our individual and collective lives.*

You may have noted in our readings during the past few months that Ellen White took a larger role in the area of Adventist lifestyle practices than she did in the formation of doctrine. In doctrinal formation the procedure consisted of Bible study until a general consensus developed. At that point she sometimes received a vision that

This article is an excerpt from *Lest We Forget* by George R. Knight (published by Review and Herald), reprinted here with permission from the author and the publisher. You can purchase the devotional from the LifeSource website: <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk>.

## NATHAN'S PONDERINGS



# Listening is pointless

by Pastor Nathan Stickland

Listening is pointless if it is just a time when we are silent to let the other person speak, only to ignore what the other person has said, and thrust our point home again. But how easy it is to behave like this . . . we have our perspective, and we are determined to emphasise it! But what if

we were to stop to listen – listen to understand – and to seek understanding to appreciate where the other person is at?

Many moons ago, I was leaving my house to go to church. It was a time of my life when it was hard enough to get up and go to church, let alone have a conversation with someone about faith – but such an opportunity was about to be played out. Unlocking my car, I noticed a group of people stood in the middle of the road – and, judging by the literature in their hand, I deduced which faith group it was.

Maybe realising that a conversation was about to be missed, one of the group walked over to me and asked if I had time for him to share a magazine with me. So far it was standard script, but when I said I was on my way to church the guy stiffened up, stepped forward, and challenged me to ask him any question about the Bible. My nominal faith was being exercised; and, while we had a brief exchange of sentences, I was genuinely running late, so I invited him to come back another time: an opportunity he did not take up. What I did ask him was whether he was willing to talk on the basis that either of us might

conclude to change our minds about what we believe. He would have none of that suggestion. He believed that he was right and I was wrong.

After secondary school I went to building college. At the end of the year our course tutor suggested that we did

not know everything, and that we'd learn more in the next three months in the workplace than we did in the first year of college. (Maybe a side lesson here is that we grow stronger in our faith when we put it into practice than through all the time we've spent in reading about religion.) Then our tutor said, 'When you get asked a difficult question, say, "What I know, I know, and what I don't know, I'll find out."'

What we know, we may think we know: but, if we engage in a conversation like the 'witness', we portray a sense of: 'I'm right and you're wrong, and I am going to tell you how wrong you are.' I heard that the best way to teach someone, instead of telling them the 'answer', is to lead them to the point of discovery for themselves.

Instead of condemning people for believing something differently to us, what would it look like if we were to ask people to help us understand a Bible story, a faith principle, or an aspect of the character of God? I wonder if it would not be easier to open a conversation about faith with someone by asking for their help in our understanding, and then to ask questions, rather than telling them that we are right and they are wrong.

When we listen to others, we can ask about their experience. Listening, in this case, has a purpose. So, when you are heading for winning a faith argument, stop! Listen some more. It may be better to give the person time to think. Rather than win the argument, try to continue the conversation. Who needs you to keep quiet and listen to understand them? Nobody likes a know-it-all.



# GOLF = God Obtains Lifelong Friend

by Divinia Reynolds

I am at a hotel in the Dominican Republic. Experiencing other cultures is personally enriching, and I am enjoying spending time with my family. Travelling is also a wonderful way to meet people. Before I got here, I repeated my habit of praying for God to make the holiday not only a physical journey, but a spiritual one too.

Today I feel mentally fatigued. However, the sound of booming music from the pool in the main area of the hotel is far from spiritually restful. I begin to feel unsettled as the noise reaches a level to make me crazy! I wish I could experience a Sabbath service out here . . . but my hazy holiday moments have ticked far into Sabbath morning, and the geography outside the hotel is a mystery. There is no way I can get to a church service at this point. I will be content with some precious quietness of mind to reflect and connect with God; so I amble towards what I hope might be the outskirts of the hotel complex and welcome a serene-looking patch of green I spot in the distance.

This greenery seems like the best place to escape the hubbub. I am thirstily longing for a true Sabbath experience here in this place. With gladness, I plonk myself down on a bench, determined to 'switch off' and rest. There is a stooping man a few feet ahead with his back towards me, and I cannot see what he is doing. I hope I am not disturbing him.

My mind is turning to spiritual matters when the hunched-over man, who is positioning himself carefully, turns around just enough to greet me. I respond, succinctly,

'Want a go?' he asks.

I finally look down at what the man is doing long enough to notice his club, and it dawns on me that I have found my way onto the hotel's mini golf area. Finally, I perceive that my fellow guest is playing golf – by himself.

'It's Sabbath,' I say, asking myself why I am saying this. Many people are unaware of the Sabbath. Will the stranger understand me?

The golfer turns around to face me. He asks me to repeat my words. Is this a threat?

I say once again, more clearly: 'It's the Sabbath.'

Now he is no longer playing golf, but instead seems to be very interested in me, and overwhelmed. Is he offended? One thing I do know is that I am just not going to be having a quiet time today.

'Are you a Seventh-day Adventist?' the golfer asks confidently.

I am surprised, and not sure I have heard correctly, but I respond with a brief but curious 'Yes.'

The man no longer looks like a golfer, as he has forgotten about playing altogether. 'So am I,' he replies. I will call this man 'Donald'.

Donald and I talk, and I learn that he is a church member who has started to become distracted somehow, in terms of attending church and practising his faith. However, he is unyielding about the truth of Seventh-day Adventism. God uses our encounter to convict Donald, and he decides, here and now, that he will return to the Church.

Donald is from Wales, and I am from South London. I am amazed at how the Holy Spirit



has orchestrated events: we have journeyed thousands of miles to meet on a small golf field on this extraordinary Sabbath morning in the Dominican Republic.

Praise God for using my restlessness to lead me in the kind of 'Sabbath day service' I could never have anticipated. It has brought believers together, as is customary. Yet, on top of that, God is using me to demonstrate His message for Donald by keeping the Sabbath there and to 'serve' by encouraging someone in need of restoration to come back to Him. This has turned out to be a special 'Sabbath service' indeed!

Reader, please join me in praying for 'Donald'. God knows him, and I will be delighted to know that each time someone reads this testimony, they will ask God to visit him, wherever he is. Please also pray that it will become true that, in Donald, God obtains a lifelong friend – one who will rest in His presence on the Sabbath day, and who will delight in Him throughout eternity.

*First published in Here and Now: Stories of Faith and Mission, vol. 1 by Kirk Thomas and Divinia Reynolds. Used with permission.*

## MESSENGER by post

If you would like to receive *MESSENGER* by post:

- Simply notify your local church clerk and ask to be included. At the same time, why not use the opportunity to update your most recent details, such as address, phone and email?
- Alternatively, you can still request to receive *MESSENGER* by post and/or email at [msubs@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:msubs@stanboroughpress.org.uk).

If you choose to receive *MESSENGER* by post, you will also be sent the official international magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Adventist World*. Why not choose to receive the double blessing of not only staying connected to the UK and Ireland church family, but also receiving news, comment, inspiration and reflection from the global church family?





*'I have never felt so much love before . . .'*

## Baptism joy at Central London Church

*'I'll try not to cry, but I feel so emotional, so hopefully you will understand me. So I just want to say thank you to all of you for opening the doors of the house of God, because God is love and God is forgiveness. And I have learnt to love even more and to forgive people, but most important – to forgive myself.'*

These were Laia Pla Aguilar's words right before her baptism on 26 June 2021. Laia heard about Adventists for the first time from her

friend Saray, a young person from Central London Church (CLC). Invited to a worship service, she immediately fell in love with the warmth of CLC members, even though not understanding all the teachings of the Bible.

At the first lockdown in March 2020 the church closed, but during this time Laia retained her interest in spiritual matters and wanted to learn more about God. Online Bible studies commenced with Melissa, a friend Laia had met at church.

When the church reopened in October 2020, CLC started a project called RESET, an afternoon series of programmes, with the intent of specifically supporting young adults to restart their lives with God in a more beautiful and healthy way.

While Laia continued her studies, RESET became the perfect place where she would feel even more loved and integrated into the church family. Feeling happy and secure with her new-found friends, it wasn't long before she made her decision for baptism, and naturally began telling everyone about it. At her baptism were her housemates, and watching online from Spain were her family.

Laia's baptism was beautiful, and the members were thrilled! Everyone was there to make her day remarkable, a wonderful witness to the truth that God is love. The praise team sang Laia's favourite songs, and Saray shared the story of Laia's journey to



faith. After the service, the celebration continued with the RESET team and friends.

Laia's new life in Christ continues. Currently she continues with Bible studies on a weekly basis – wanting to grow and mature as a disciple, and keen to share the new life she has found.

The day after her baptism, Laia wrote this message to members of the RESET team:

*'You have no idea how happy and blessed I feel. I really appreciate everything you did for me. Yesterday was a really important day in my life, and you made it even more special. I have no words to describe how I feel, but I just want to say thank you. I have never ever felt so much love before. I am proud to call you my family and to say I am a daughter of God.'*

CLC COMMUNICATIONS



## Mary chooses the good part

*'And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her" ' (Luke 10:41, 42, NKJV).*

As we come to the end of one quarter and begin another, a main highlight during this past period has been the baptism of Mary Murraine on Sabbath 24 April at the Hackney church. The 82-year-old, who hails from the Caribbean island of Montserrat, decided to give her life to Christ after having studied for two years with her great-niece – Eileen Philip, Prayer Ministries leader at Hackney Church. In addition to the Bible studies, Mary also regularly attends the daily online church studies facilitated by

Hackney's pastor, Joojo Bonnie, and felt it was time to give her life to the Lord.

'I have found a church family where I have been made welcome and have also enjoyed and learned so much from participating in the Bible studies that I had a desire to be baptised,' she said.

Mary's favourite scripture (Psalm 27) was read by a Hackney deaconess and fellow Montserratian, Emelda Greer, while Mary's great-niece, Eileen, read a poem she had personally written for her.

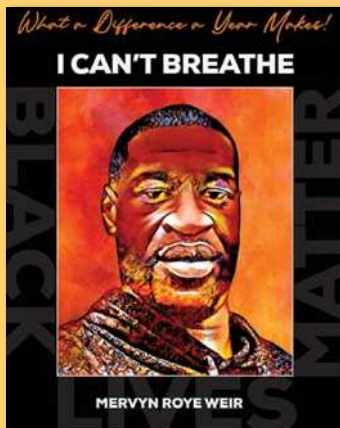
In the presence of her family, including her great-niece Joyce Murraine (herself baptised at the end of last year), who watched via



livestream from Florida, Mary was baptised by Pastor Joojo Bonnie, who remarked that in sitting at the feet of Jesus, like her biblical namesake, she too had chosen the good part. He said: 'Having regularly studied not only with your great-niece, but also with the church as a whole for the past two years – including during this past pandemic year – like Mary of the Bible, you have sat at the feet of Jesus and chosen the good part, as demonstrated through your baptism here today. Heaven is rejoicing, and so are we.'

The service was then brought to a fitting conclusion with a joyful rendering of Mary's favourite chorus – 'In the name of Jesus, we have the victory'. With all that has taken place with regard to the global pandemic, including its impact within the UK, this celebration of one returning to the Lord came about at just the right time, and for that we give God thanks.

EMELDA GREER, DEACONESS AND COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT AT HACKNEY CHURCH



## I Can't Breathe: *Can 8 Minutes, 46 Seconds\* Change the World?*

**Mervyn Roye Weir**

ISBN 9781908415073  
Paperback

<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/i-cant-breathe-can-8-minutes-46-seconds-change-the-world>

who has been sentenced to 22 years in prison, and of the man he kept pinned beneath his knee – but not the hands.’ In his book, *I Can't Breathe: Can 8 Minutes, 46 Seconds\* Change the World?* Mervyn Roye Weir offers his response at seeing the murder of George Floyd, and wonders whether this tragedy can bring about change.

It is a multifaceted book containing prose, poetry and art, all characterised by lament, provocation, and, above all, passion. Indeed, one of its stated aims is ‘to stir emotions and touch the hearts of readers everywhere’. As one of the roles of a prophet is to act as God’s mouthpiece and confront injustice, it might even be seen as prophetic in nature. At 83 pages the book is not a long read, but its visceral approach encourages the reader to linger a while on each of Weir’s images, ponder the meaning of his poetry, and reflect on the overwhelming roll-call of victims of racism.

And the hands? Weir highlights how Chauvin kept his hands in his pockets as a man’s life faded away beneath him. Was this nonchalance, indifference, an attempt at coolness? Weir suggests that it displayed ‘contempt for another member of the human family turned up to the max’! If anything, there could have been more of these perspectives and insights to help bring a touch of personal narrative – to have the opportunity to see through different eyes in a more immediate sense.

Throughout the book, Weir references and alludes to events and

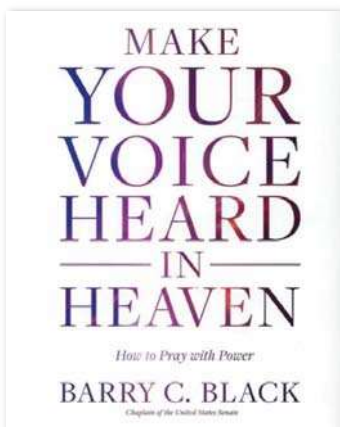
people that encourage the reader to consider the actions of settlers and colonialists as they disrupted the lives of people of colour around the globe. The explanatory notes that come at the end of each of the four sections help flesh out these allusions, but readers may have to dig deeper into the history books to gain a fuller perspective.

Bubbling beneath the surface are issues and concepts that have caused division and controversy: colonialism; the Black Lives Matter movement; the idea of whiteness as a system of oppression that goes beyond individuals and leads to black and brown people being disadvantaged and even murdered. ‘It’s hard not to see a pattern here’ is the constant refrain that is heard throughout. That pattern is a system that allowed and is allowing some white people to oppress, enslave and kill black and brown people.

That I had been asked to provide a review of the book was greeted with surprise by some, who thought it should be a person with different coloured skin. However, if the change that Weir is looking for is to happen, there is a need for white people to engage with history from and with a black and brown perspective, even if it leads, to use a popular phrase, to being uncomfortable. For the most important step to take in building relationships is to first listen so someone can be heard, and this book may act as a starting point for that.

Available for £15.00 from the LifeSource Christian Bookshop – telephone 01475 591700 or buy it online at:  
<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/i-cant-breathe-can-8-minutes-46-seconds-change-the-world/>

PASTOR ADRIAN PECK



## Make your voice heard in heaven – *how to pray with power*

**Barry C. Black**

ISBN 9781496429490  
Hardback, 155 pages

<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/make-your-voice-heard-in-heaven/>

for our faith in the public space. In the Senate he is better known for the meaningfulness of his prayers.

I can’t say that I am impressed with the title, which I suspect is more about getting the book read in Waterstones: nevertheless, the content is substantial and necessary.

Prayer Ministries has followed various fashions, variously encouraging spontaneity, contemplation, one-phrase group prayers, and intervention through the power of numbers, among

others. There was a time when I was critical of the formalism in *The Common Book of Prayer*, but of late I have come to appreciate the value of well-thought-out and structured prayers.

Barry turns prayer into an art form with structured poetic expression. As a professional, these prayers take hours in composition, and include a dozen or more principles, values and attitudes upon which prayer may be structured. As ever, Chaplain Black outlines the biblical basis for values that take supplication

beyond a casual conversation with the Almighty.

All prayers are heard in heaven, but the listening Jesus will, no doubt, listen out for those crafted with purpose and reverence by reflective supplicants.

(Chapters include: Pray with assistance, Pray the model prayer, Pray with purity, Pray fearlessly, Pray with effectiveness, Pray to escape the squeeze of temptation, Pray when God is silent, Pray when you don’t feel like being good, Pray with celebration, intimacy, fervency, perseverance and submission, and finally Pray with a partner.)

Available for £10.75 from the LifeSource Christian Bookshop – telephone 01475 591700 or buy it online at:  
<https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/make-your-voice-heard-in-heaven/>

VICTOR BILMOR

Any book written by a chaplain to the Senate of the United States deserves attention: more so following his invocation for distressed legislators on 6 January 2021.

Chaplain Black is a well-known and outstanding preacher among Seventh-day Adventists, and always captures our imagination as an ambassador

# Pastor Patrick Boyle, remembered

by David Neal

(part 1)

Week after week he would slip, as discreetly as he could, into the Dublin Sunday-night evangelistic meeting and place himself on the back row. With the meeting already in progress, Patrick did not want to be noticed – because, as lifelong friends George and Betty Sisson explain, ‘The only real reason for being there was his enquiring mind.’ It was the evangelist preacher he wanted to hear, Pastor R. H. Bainbridge, who expounded the Bible like he’d never heard before. Stirred, he would exit in haste before anyone noticed: ‘until, one particular Sunday evening,’ recalls George, ‘there was a thunderstorm and the rains poured just as the meeting ended. Patrick, not wanting to get drenched, was stuck.’ Bainbridge was thrilled. From his pulpit, he’d noticed this young man, but could never get to the back of the church quick enough, once the meeting had ended, to shake Patrick’s hand. But this time he was caught!

It would be easy to see something symbolic about that Dublin thunderstorm. But what is for sure is that Patrick was impressionable, searching, and stirred – and, as Betty points out, ‘during a time in Irish society when it was the priest and the church who did your thinking for you’. Born in Dublin in 1935, Patrick knew about Adventism due to his father joining the church in Australia. With his mother, they served as caretakers for a Jewish school in the city, and were of limited means, which he would certainly not forget in later life.

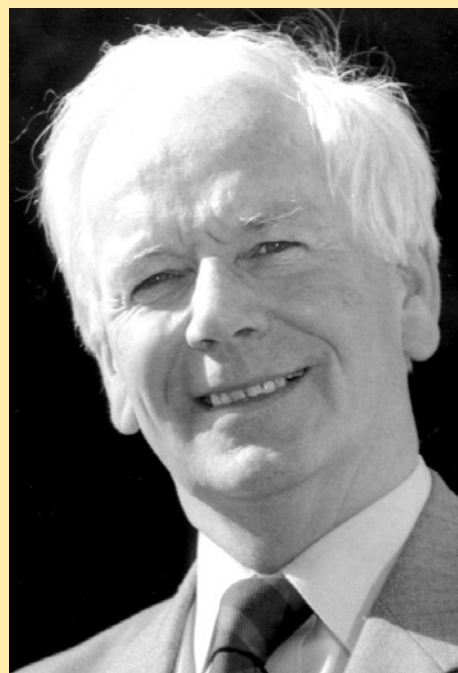
He and Rosemary, his wife, were baptised in the newly constructed Dublin church in 1957. With fewer than forty members in Ireland at the time, to be a Seventh-day Adventist was to meet with ‘hostility and abuse from other Christian denominations’.<sup>1</sup> Patrick’s commitment to keep Sabbath resulted in the loss of his job.

His conversion to Adventism with Rosemary was the defining moment of his life’s journey. For Patrick, the biblical emphasis on Christ’s Second Coming, the Sabbath and man’s condition in death were truths that just could not be ignored. The Jesus he knew as his Saviour and Friend was the same Jesus who revealed to John the apostle the urgent call for end-time people to ‘worship Him’ and share the ‘everlasting Gospel’. It was with this conviction that Patrick and Rosemary, with their young daughters, Amy and Audrey, left Dublin for Newbold College, where Patrick trained for pastoral ministry.

From the pulpit, in the Bible study of one or many, the message of Revelation 14:6-12 was his refrain: a life-and-death matter, a holy burden required by his Lord to both preach and teach. In frustration he once wondered why some parents in his congregation placed

educational attainment for their children above matters spiritual.

Patrick served in many congregations within the British Union Conference (including a return to the Irish Mission, serving in both Belfast and Dublin), and for a time as Stewardship and Sabbath School Director for the South England Conference. For a while the family emigrated to serve in Canada. But nowhere did the effect of Patrick’s ministry have a more lasting effect than as the minister of the then 500-member-strong Stanborough Park church, Watford.



From left to right: Patrick Boyle with Heather Royal, Sherard Wilson, Tony Crouch, Rosemary Woodfield, Olive Crouch and John Butters at Newbold College, circa 1960

He brought to Stanborough Park what one member describes as ‘a radiant confidence in the truth of the Gospel message, and with it a new, less formal, warm style of leadership, much more up-close and personal’.

As important as his preaching and teaching ministry was, care and visitation were the absolute pinnacle of what he considered a pastor should focus on, both for himself and others. He drove himself to call and visit, proactively, in addition to the times when he was called upon by a member.

Systematic visitation of members was strategic to the spiritual health of his congregation. Visitation was to be with purpose – to console, to encourage, and even, when required, to discipline – always with love and care, while at the same time being very direct. Those he could not see during the week he would pursue on a Sabbath morning. As the head deaconess during Patrick’s time as pastor noted, ‘Patrick always came into the deaconesses’ vestry after the service when we were arranging the church flowers into bouquets to be taken to members in need, to the sick, or to those who had suffered a bereavement. He was a very caring pastor, and took care to thank all those who worked behind the scenes.’

He was relentless, setting a high

benchmark for himself and others who call themselves pastors. He was not ashamed to call others out if he felt they were not taking visitation seriously enough, and held himself accountable too. Many an intern and associate pastor experienced an adrenaline rush if they were not able to positively answer his question in the Tuesday-morning vestry meeting: ‘Did you manage to visit Mrs Smith last week as I requested?’

There is one further element to his visitation strategy that must not be missed. In his early years in Dublin he had seen poverty, and knew what it was like to be poor. It was an experience he never forgot, which led him to be very generous with dispersal of the Good Samaritan funds, and where he saw a need he would also share from his own resources. He regularly said he was rich beyond his dreams, so he willingly shared what he had with those in need. This did not diminish when he retired. He continued just as he had when he was a working pastor, right up to the very end.

As far as church administration was concerned, he often gave the impression that chairing boards and committees wearied him. Their purpose was to get things done. If he could guillotine lengthy and considered discussion – he would! On the one hand this

was construed as 'running a tight ship', and yet it was perceived by another as an attempt to 'steamroll the agenda'.

There were times when he was frustrating and opinionated: but whenever he overstepped the mark, he was ready to apologise. When others overstepped the mark with him, he was ready to forgive. Nevertheless, by nature he was a lover of people, whom he sought out on every occasion with good humour.

In the few years immediately prior to his retirement as the Stanborough Park minister, the church went through quite a rapid process of change. In the late 1990s the building was enhanced with a major extension. It was consuming, both in time and in funds for the church. Leading from the front, it was a project Patrick drove with purpose. At its inauguration he declared that the Stanborough Centre would be 'open every day'. To Patrick's mind, it was to be open every day for mission! It was the only way he felt the cost of the project could ever be justified. To the members, the matter was not as clear-cut.

Another matter perhaps as challenging to his ministry in the late 1990s were 'unsettled youth' seeking to bring change to the church, not least over the core matter of worship. Patrick found it hard to understand their problem. Why could they not enjoy the hymns he and their parents loved? Not just that, but he considered modern praise and worship songs to be riddled with a major distortion of what true worship should be, in that they were more 'I'-centred, rather than God-centred. It was a matter he felt should not be compromised. Nor would it be wise, he felt at the time, to permit youth to hold their own worship service during the divine worship hour. The compromise at the time was the formation of a worship committee.

The passing of Patrick on 29 December 2020 left a huge hole in the lives of those closest to him. He also left a huge hole in the life of the church, both local and national.

*Stanborough Park elder, Audrey Balderstone, contributed to this report. In part 2, we will consider Patrick's contribution to the wider work of the church in the UK and Ireland.*

**Richard Arras  
Trenear  
(1919-2021)  
d. 14 May 2021.**

Richard was born one of four siblings, and leaves a surviving nephew and niece, David and Rosemary. As a child he struggled with ill health; diagnosed with meningitis, he was not expected to live. However, he not only survived this and other health issues, but lived a full 101 years of life!

Although most of his life he worked as a gardener, at the age of 21 he was called to serve in the Royal Navy during World War Two, nearly being killed after a large steel ladder fell on him. He fought in the Battle of the Atlantic, and it was during this battle that he turned to God for protection. He received five medals for his service, and after leaving the Royal Navy in 1947 his brother introduced him to the late Pastor Bod Rodd. After two years of Bible studies Arras joined the church, spent a year at Newbold and then was ordained as an elder in Redruth Church, where he served for 60 years as an organist and lay preacher.

He faithfully took care of his invalid mother for 25 years. He will be remembered for his faithful service and his strong faith.

*PASTOR JEREMY TREMEER (WITH THANKS TO PASTOR MICHAEL WALKER, WHO PROVIDED THE INFORMATION)*

**Audrey Bunnay  
(1923-2021)  
d. 20 May.**

Audrey was the second child of Lena and William Laming, with Olive having been born some two and a half years earlier. At the age of 4 Audrey was hospitalised with diphtheria, and it was as a result of the atrocities she witnessed during her hospital stay that she chose nursing as a career. When she was 18 years old, Audrey commenced nursing training at Manchester Royal Infirmary. After qualifying, Audrey worked as a nurse in several hospitals in Yorkshire.

In 1949 Audrey decided to change career when she began a two-year Bible Instructor course at Newbold College. Graduating from Newbold in 1951 as a Bible worker, over the next 13 years she supported various ministers in Scotland, London, York, Northampton, Middlesbrough



Newcastle, Liverpool, and Wolverhampton, where initially she worked with her brother-in-law, the late Pastor John West.

It was while in Wolverhampton that she met Raymond – a widower – had been attending meetings led by Pastor Brian Ball, as, following the death of his wife, Raymond wanted to strengthen his faith.

Raymond and Audrey's friendship blossomed, and they were married on 28 December 1964 at the Wolverhampton church.

Audrey and Raymond, together with Judith (Raymond's daughter from his first marriage), then set up home in Castle Bromwich, on the outskirts of Birmingham, where Audrey lived until her passing.

In 1966 Audrey gave birth to Elaine, thus completing the Bunnay family.

Sadly, in 2000 Raymond died suddenly from a heart attack, which left Audrey on her own for the next 21 years.

As the result of failing health, Audrey passed away during the early hours of 20 May 2021 at the age of 98.

Audrey was faithful to the very end. She had her Bible and a magnifying glass next to her until she became bedridden and unable to move unaided.

The funeral service was conducted in Erdington Church on 14 June 2021 by Pastor Paul Haworth (a past minister of Erdington Church).

Audrey is survived by two daughters: Elaine and Judith; two sons-in-law: Philip and John; four grandchildren: Natalie, Charlotte, Jacob and Jessica; and three great-grandchildren: Oisín, Niamh and Joel – as well as two nephews and their respective families.

'Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.'

*JUDITH REDMAN*

**Valerie Freeman (1933-2021)  
d. 29 May.**

We were saddened to learn of the death of Valerie Freeman, who passed away on Saturday 29 May 2021. Valerie was born on 23 September 1933 in Lincoln, in the East Midlands of England.

She entered employment within the British Union Conference (BUC) in 1952 as a Bible instructor in the North England Conference. In 1978 she started working at Granose Foods Ltd. as a receptionist. Soon after, she

shifted to quality control. After a short hiatus from 1983, she returned to denominational employment at Stanborough School, where she taught Home Economics until 1999.

Valerie will be remembered for her kind spirit. She was generous, conscientious and hard-working, and modelled love to her family and friends.

With her family, we now look forward to Christ's soon return and that glorious resurrection day. Please pray for Valerie's children and their families during this difficult period.

*PASTOR JACQUES VENTER*

Messenger

Volume 126 • 07 – 30 July 2021

Editor: David Neal  
Editorial secretary: Sarah Jarvis  
Design: David Bell  
Proof reading: Andrew Puckering  
Production and distribution:  
Peter Oppang-Mensah

COPY FOR No. 08 – 2 August 2021

Note to potential advertisers

It is important that those who submit adverts for display in *MESSANGER* ensure that they have permission (and a paid licence where required) to use any downloaded photographs or artwork that they incorporate into their adverts. It is also important that credit be given to the individual, organisation or company from which these have been obtained. For example, something like the following should appear within the advert: ©Joe Bloggs/iStockPhoto.com. Please be aware that images downloaded from Google may also be subject to permission and licensing.

The Stanborough Press Ltd takes no responsibility for any downloaded images submitted to *MESSANGER* by contributors and reserves the right to decline adverts about which we have copyright concerns.

Permission relating to photography

Those who submit photographs of minors (persons under the age of 18) for publication must ensure that they have permission to do so from their parents, guardians or carers. We would like these submissions to be accompanied by the following statement: 'I have the permission of the parents, guardian or carer of the minors who appear in this/these photograph/s to submit them for publication in the *MESSANGER*.'

Copy should be sent to the Editor, *MESSANGER*, The Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL, Tel: (01476) 591700. Fax No: (01476) 577144. Email: [Editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:Editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

Send high-resolution pictures to: [dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

ABC Sales line: (01476) 591700  
Mon-Thurs only, 8am-5.30pm.

[www.stanboroughpress.org.uk](http://www.stanboroughpress.org.uk)

The Editor may alter, clarify, précis or expand articles sent to him if he thinks it necessary.

Published fortnightly on Fridays by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

For general enquiries, email: [info@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:info@stanboroughpress.org.uk)

Printed in the UK.

Visit the BUC website at: [www.adventist.org.uk](http://www.adventist.org.uk)  
ISSN 0309-3654

Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by HM Nautical Almanac Office.

	London	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
Jul 30	8.52	9.04	9.02	9.24	9.28
Aug 6	8.40	8.52	8.49	9.09	9.14
13	8.27	8.39	8.35	8.54	9.00
20	8.13	8.25	8.20	8.37	8.44

# Stanborough Press

## Virtual Open Day

Sunday 5 September 2021

'It's here again!'

Up to  
**80% off**  
selected  
lines

*Stanborough Press Ltd,  
in association with LifeSource  
Bookshop online, presents*

## Stanborough Press Virtual Open Day

**Theme: *Life Stories***  
along with inspirational music and featured titles

**Sunday 5 September 2021**  
**10am – 4pm**

We will have special discounts of up to 80% across selected lines, with new titles as well as food, sparkling grape juice, children's books and gifts. Our shop outlets in Watford, Advent Centre and London will also be open. Further details will follow via our various platforms, . . . subscribe to our YouTube channel, follow us on Facebook and Instagram and keep an eye out in the *MESSENGER* and Conference bulletins, or contact Trevor Johnson directly by email: [tjohnson@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:tjohnson@stanboroughpress.org.uk).

### **Keynote Speakers:**

**Pastor John Bradshaw**  
Director of *It is Written*

**Dr Katia Reinert** PhD CRNP  
Health Ministries Associate  
Director (GC)

**Brenda Walsh**  
Brenda Walsh Ministries

**Dr Kirk Thomas**  
Publishing and Personal  
Ministries Director, BUC



# 01476 591700

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



*LifeSource*

[www.lifesourcebookshop.co.uk](http://www.lifesourcebookshop.co.uk)