Edition #909 (8 January 2015)

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

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www.adventist.org.uk

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CROYDON CHURCH TO HOST BBC RADIO 4 SUNDAY SERVICE

Croydon Seventh-day Adventist church will be leading worship for some 1.5 million listeners to the BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship service on 11 January.
at 8:00 am. With a media savvy leadership, and a congregation bursting with talent, the service will be led by Radio 4 continuity announcer, Neil Nunes. It will include a short health message on the benefits of Sabbath rest by Adventist lifestyle doctor, Chidi Ngwaba, while Pastor Richard Daly will preach on the promise of Christ's second coming. Music maestro, Ken Burton will lead both the Croydon Gospel Choir and the congregation in song.

Pastor Daly is excited at "this wonderful opportunity to use the medium of the radio to present the main tenets of our faith encapsulated in our name – the Second Advent and the Sabbath. By pooling together the best of our talent at Croydon, we plan to put on a professional programme that above all will be an inspiring service for the listeners and in glory to God."

Ken Burton sees the broadcast date as a blessing in itself. He notes, "Listeners will have just come out of the Christmas season and it is the New Year. We can therefore connect to the themes of Advent, and the notion of looking forward." Musically that 'looking forward' will be provided by the Croydon SDA Gospel Choir's now famous rendition of the early Adventist hymn, 'How Far from Home'. This was written by Annie Smith, sister of the Adventist pioneer Uriah Smith.

"What we want to put across is a people not only believing in, but burning with hope for the coming of the Lord", Ken states.

A BBC producer was excited to discover that one of the Croydon church elders, Neil Nunes, is a BBC Radio 4 continuity announcer. He immediately wanted Neil to be involved, so the "listeners can have a 'familiar voice'." Used to introducing a myriad of programmes on Radio 4, Neil hopes that in hosting this particular event that he can share that, "There's something special and unique not just about what we believe but how we worship as Adventists. We hope that many people will be encouraged by the service and will want to find out more about our Church."

The last time Adventists had opportunity to lead Sunday Worship on Radio 4 was in the 1980s when Pastor Roy Burgess preached on the hope of the Second Advent at a service in the Stanborough Park church, Watford.

Tune in Sunday morning at 8:00 am or use the BBC website to either listen live or, for late risers, 'listen again'.

[Victor Hulbert]
BREAKING THE NEW YEAR VOWS

Gyms laugh all the way to the bank each January. It is the main sign up time for those Christmas revellers who now realise they need to lose some weight, eat less, and do more exercise. All good intentions, but, according to Pastor Cyril Sweeney, Family and Children's Ministries director for the Adventist Church in the UK & Ireland, by February attendance rate at the gym will have halved, and for the rest of the year it will drop again. According to research done by the University of Scranton, only 8% of January resolutions will still be intact by December. We are not too good at keeping resolutions.

Sabbath morning worshippers at the Newbold church contemporary service where challenged when worship leader, Geoff Muckle took a roving microphone around the hall, asking members of their resolutions. Pastor Patrick Johnson then challenged members that the best way to keep a resolution was to:

1. Be specific
2. Don't beat yourself up
3. Turn a negative into a positive
4. Give yourself time – but not too much
5. Stay motivated

Patrick also noted that most resolutions seem to be linked to health – and then challenged the congregation by suggesting that if the world is so interested in health, and if Adventists have got such a fantastic health message, that, he said, "I've had a vision – a crazy idea: what if we were known for improving the nation's health?"

This isn't just idle theory! In a recent BBC radio programme aired on the World Service and on Radio 4's Woman's Hour, Peter Bowes looked at Adventist health and stated, "It is a compelling model for a world struggling with the scourge of obesity, diabetes and the chronic diseases of old age."
But how do we turn that compelling model into real life? BUC President Pastor Ian Sweeney may have the answer. He is only half the man he used to be having lost significant weight over the past two years! He states, "Among the many reasons why I decided to change my lifestyle was that I want to be a witness to my neighbours by way of example. A few years back Jennifer and I gave our neighbours a Christmas gift, the book *Celebrations, Living Life To The Fullest*. But the hypocrisy of the gesture grated on me, in that I was sharing a book on the health message but was visibly no practitioner of the book's health principles! Since changing my lifestyle I have had many conversations with my neighbours about the health message as I have come home or embarked on a bike ride or a walk. With them seeing my physical change they have initiated many conversations as to how I achieved it. Now I can point them back to the book we gave as a Christmas present a few years back."

Maybe our changing the world starts with our neighbours – and with our personal choices. BUC Health Ministries director, Sharon Platt-McDonald has had a similar experience: "When my neighbour asked my husband and I the question: 'How is it that you two are always so happy?' we laughed spontaneously but then both paused to consider our response. Simultaneously we responded – 'God!' We then went on to explain why God was the source of our joy. We often equate wellness with what we can see physically – a good physique or healthy body weight, great skin, good agility and so on. However our emotional and spiritual well-being are key aspects of wellness."

Ellen G White, a co-founder of the Adventist Church wrote extensively on health – physical and emotional, and it is her writings that founded part of the basis for the BBC documentary. Among her many statements Sharon loves the advice, "A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is in the pathway to health." [*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, pg 403.] For her neighbours, and for all those we come into contact with as Adventists, she believes that 'Presenting a holistic image of being 'fearfully and wonderfully made' also includes reflecting a positive mind-set to those around us. We were created to praise; therefore giving thanks in all circumstances is one way to develop a healthy mind, experience peace and trust in God and be a positive witness to others."

Science also points to the beneficial health outcomes of a balanced mind and the positive impact of attitudes such as forgiveness and gratitude. Sharon states, "the next time you want to send a positive health message to your neighbours, start with your face as you beam a smile from a thankful heart."
As you make or confirm your own new year resolutions, Pastor Johnson reminds his congregation that "As Adventists we are sitting on a gold mine." He states, "With all the preventative health knowledge we have, with programmes like NEWSTART or CREATION HEALTH, we can make a real impact on the health of this nation."

With the NHS struggling with increased health pressures, he argues that Adventists can make a significant difference. His challenge. "Start with your own life, dedicated to God, then reach out towards your neighbours, then your community. We can be part of a process of healing. As with Jesus' ministry, that physical healing can then lead naturally into spiritual healing."

This is in line with the view of Dr Bjorn Ottesen, Department Head for Theological Studies at Newbold College. He states that "in this postmodern, individualistic society, the significant question may no longer be 'What is true?' but rather questions like 'What is the outcome?' 'Does it work?' or 'Why is it important?'" These questions can be answered by a wellness approach to expanding God's kingdom.

It is now the second week of January – but certainly not too late to take the challenge, lay positive plans and make a significant difference. The opportunity is great. The challenge is ours.

[Victor Hulbert]
Pastor Emmanuel Osei, South England Conference (SEC) Ministerial director, has organised an annual SEC office day of prayer and fasting for the past seven years. On Wednesday, 7 January, directors and support staff gathered to pray and worship together at the nearby Watford Town church.

In the lull between prayer sessions, talks, testimonies and team building activities, I seized a rare opportunity to learn how praise teams make their worship leading look so effortless.

Having heard Pastor Kirk Thomas, SEC Personal Ministries director, speak earlier, charging us to "never feel like a dry stick", I decided this was as good a time as any to try a challenge, something new and outside of my comfort zone. A small group of staff had gathered around the piano, singing hymns and choruses. After venturing over to express my desire to learn about harmonising, Nikisha Brown, Rebeto Samuel-Ouadjo and Mavis Bramble, all singers in their respective churches, patiently guided me through some basic harmonies.

Little did I know, Pastor Osei had overheard us and during the following session put us on the spot to perform a special item! With an abnormally fast heartbeat, I stood with the ladies and sang my very first chorus in front of everyone.

Safe in the knowledge that I will never win *The Voice*, I thought about other challenges that had been discussed throughout the day. Some easily overcome, some deeply perplexing, some that pose as obstacles for us as a group, and others that can only be personal, between us and God.

Pastor Thomas had spoken about financial challenges and how many of those working for the Church find themselves living on the 'financial edge'.

"Don't you sometimes wish you could go to the bank and see a big credit?" he asked. "As workers for the Lord we live on the edge sometimes, but I have recognised that, despite the struggles, not one day has God not been faithful. Sometimes in our lives we feel dry of faith, we battle against so many things but when God chooses us He does it so that we can be successful. Never feel like a dry stick; God didn't go through all of this for us not to flourish!"

Each of the talks carried a thread that segued into the closing presentation from Pastor Aris Vontzalidis, SEC Church Growth director. He focused on the text in John 12:23 that reads, "the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." He dwelt on how unfathomable it is for us that the King of the universe stepped down to earth with the
purpose of dying on the cross.

With this thought in mind, Pastor Sam Davis, SEC President, then led the office staff in a special Communion service.

"We've been doing this for seven years, first at St Albans church, then Stanborough and now here", he said. "This is the last time we are starting a new year in this current term in office and there is no better way to start 2015 as an office family than with this prayer and fasting."

Inspired and encouraged by this reverent day of worship, prayer and fellowship, we put before God the challenges that 2015 will undoubtedly bring, knowing that as we begin the year praising God, we can trust that equally we will end the year praising Him who has brought us this far.

[Katie Allen]

STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY RETURNS POSITIVE RESULTS FOR NEWBOLD

Students feel overwhelmingly positive about their experience at Newbold, the College's annual Student Satisfaction Survey has found.

Administered during the autumn semester, the survey covered everything from the on-campus environment and spiritual atmosphere to admissions, finance services and food, with students representing all curriculum areas responding to the survey.

Over 90% of respondents agreed that Newbold is a Christian environment which upholds the mission and values of the Adventist Church, indicating that regardless of where students fall on the theological spectrum, or what their spiritual background is, that the difficult task of meeting their spiritual needs is mostly being achieved.

Pastor Alastair Agbaje, Chaplain and Dean of Men, said "It can be a challenge to meet the spiritual needs of such a diverse group, so I'm really pleased to hear that so many of our students are growing in their faith in Christ." He added, "I want to affirm our campus ministry team who have been phenomenal this semester with their creativity and drive to get people involved, and which I believe has had a direct impact on the spiritual temperature on campus."

Outstandingly positive responses were recorded for the library service and for the service
provided by academic and administrative staff. Respondents found them to be friendly and helpful.

"I love Newbold and find everything that happens here a true blessing from the Lord", said one respondent. "I am grateful to be able to learn in this amazing environment of spirituality lived in the real world."

For more information on the 2014 Student Satisfaction Survey, visit www.newbold.ac.uk.

[Kirsty Watkins]

**A POSITIVE DECEMBER FOR GREAT BRICKKILN CHURCH**

Two events at Wolverhampton Great Brickkiln church brought a year of activities to a positive end.

On Monday, 8 December, Dr Rigley, a clinical psychologist, accepted an invitation from the Health Ministries department to conduct a seminar on identifying dementia and possible ways to prevent it. The session was very well attended. Some people in the group were already caring for close relatives diagnosed with the condition. They were especially relieved to have questions answered on how to cope with challenging problems whilst giving care.

The following Sabbath, 13 December, went to the opposite end of the age spectrum as Pathfinders, led by the beating of drums and dressed in their bright colours made entry into the sanctuary for their special investiture day. Pathfinder awards were distributed under the supervision of the directors, assisted by the Master Guides. Certificates were awarded to the various achievers from their respective clubs. The programme brought to an end not just a successful Sabbath, but a positive year for ministries right across the whole church.

[Delva Campbell]
APPRECIATION THE THEME FOR YEAR-END SABBATH

It was the last Sabbath of 2014 and the members and visitors of Camp Hill church, Birmingham, gave thanks for all that the Lord had blessed them with during the year. The day was filled with praise, music, and thanksgiving, climaxing with an evening of praise where the first half focused on the nativity themes whilst the second half embraced a thanksgiving.

An unexpected surprise came in the midst of the programme when the compère announced that the head elder, Richard Russell, would bring his item. The congregation was puzzled to say the least, as no-one could recall the elder singing or playing any musical instrument. The suspense was broken when Richard stated he would not be singing but would like to invite Dr Patrick Herbert and his wife Ann-Marie, along with Pastor Pardon Chenjerai and his wife Anastasia to the platform.

They were as confused as the audience until Richard stated that on behalf of the Camp Hill church they would like to show appreciation to its ministers for their work and commitment to serving Camp Hill. Plaques were presented to the pastors and bouquets to their wives. Both pastors and their wives concurred it was indeed a very pleasant surprise. They were grateful for the very humbling gesture.

The membership pray that God will continue to prosper and bless our pastors as they serve God and Camp Hill church.

[Natalie Sutherland]

PRAYER OR FIREWORKS?
BOURNEMOUTH CELEBRATES NEW YEAR

New Year’s Eve is traditionally a time for fireworks and fun. Bournemouth church certainly had the fun but a lot more as by 10:30 pm some 16 adults and
five small children came together to enjoy a nice spread of food with all the trimmings. They sang some traditional praise songs, and at midnight turned their focus on the reason for the meeting – prayer. Members sat in pairs and prayed for each other. This was followed by a general prayer meeting, when various people spoke of matters closest to their hearts. This included special prayer for "our dear Pastor Daniel Thompson and his wife Hilary." Daniel is laid up with a broken leg at his parents' home in St Albans after slipping on ice at a Christmas Eve service. Members also prayed for elderly and sick church members, and for various issues and needs in the world in general.

Members agreed that although we all know the New Year commenced at sunset, we should pray at the time the rest of the world celebrated with fireworks, parties etc.

The whole event was so positive that members see it as something of a precedent and hope a midnight prayer meeting will become an annual New Year event.

[Joy Elliott]

GRANTHAM'S GIFTS

The months up to Christmas are always a time of giving at Grantham church and this year was no exception. These gifts included nine boxes of hand-knitted and crocheted baby clothes and blankets to add to the big winter aid drop by 'Hand in Hand for Syria'; the gift of talents at a fundraising concert for local charity, Newark MIND, which raised £200; the gift of toys for every child under the care of the local Home Start group, as well as hats for premature babies to a local hospital; and finally, monetary gifts on the Christmas tree of over £400 for Open Doors, a charity helping Syrian refugee children.

That is the special effort made for the giving season, but Grantham Adventist church is also known as a giving church all year around. The church family provided just short of 2 tonnes of food and toiletries to the Grantham Foodbank during 2014, often responding quickly when specific items were identified as low in stock.
The giving does not stop there. The church operates Sunday Breakfast, as part of the 'Passage' programme to feed the homeless and needy (the other days of the week being covered by other churches in the town). Esme Sutton, co-ordinator of the Sunday Breakfast teams states, "Our volunteers have served 1,514 meals over the past year to those in need. We have served all kinds of people: the homeless, rough speakers, sofa surfers, the cheerful and the discouraged; the mentally, emotionally and physically sick, those with hangovers, those coming down from a 'high' and those with injuries – some self-inflicted but some acquired after being attacked. We have given items of clothing, bathed wounds, given transport to A&E and given Christmas gifts...but most importantly we have been able to pray with some of our visitors as well as pray for them."

In the words of Grantham church treasurer, Jan Pearce, "Praise God and blessings on all the donors."

[Elisabeth Carnell]
British Seventh-day Adventists feature prominently on an innovative calendar listing Seventh-day Adventists who have stood for peace and social justice over the years since the Church was formed in 1863. The November entry focuses on the 14 British Adventist conscientious objectors who stood up for their faith in France during WWI, court-martialled and imprisoned in a manner that severely tested their faith.

Other months feature Adventist pioneers such as Alonzo T Jones and Joseph Bates – champions for religious and social liberty; Arna Bontemps and Sojourner Truth who championed the equality of all in racially divided America; Desmond Doss – the only conscientious objector to receive the Medal of Honour, America's highest military award; and Vladimir Shelkov, a Russian Adventist and pacifist who knew the reality of life in Stalin's Gulags.

Sharon Platt-McDonald, BUC Health and Women's Ministries director, managed to blag a calendar from the BUC News team. She states, "It is really impressive to look at these photos and names. It makes me proud of our Adventist history and pioneers."

The month of October highlights the social justice side of church co-founder, Ellen White noting that during the American Civil War, White declared that defenders of slavery should be expelled from the Advent movement. She also urged defiance of the Fugitive Slave Law.

Ronald Osborn, APF Executive Director, produced the calendar as a way of celebrating the "prophetic, dissenting, and radical spirit of these Adventist pioneers who made important contributions to their world as champions of nonviolent peace-making, social justice, environmentalism, freedom of conscience and human rights."

The APF calendar is available from their website for a donation of US$25 or more to support the work of the Peace Fellowship. BUC News has 10 calendars which it will send to the first ten people to email BUCnews@adventist.org.uk with the subject line, 'Send me an APF calendar'. (Offer restricted to residents of the UK and Ireland only. Name and postal address required for delivery but will not be used for any other purpose.)

[Victor Hulbert]
The **ADRA Street Team** is a brand new initiative for 2015 in which volunteers can visit churches around the UK to let them know what, where and how the Adventist Development and Relief Agency is working.

ADRA CEO, Bert Smit, has visited many projects and knows the difference church members’ support can really make on the ground. He states, "This is a fun and active way for you to get involved with us and be a part of our work around the world."

All training is provided, and perhaps even a few goodies! If you are interested in 'a lot of ADRA with a bit of travel', email Sophie Gordon at volunteering@adra.org.uk.

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**BREAKING THE MOULD – MAKING THE NEWS**

June Coombs found herself somewhat surprised to get an 'honourable mention' in the **New Year edition** of **BUC News**. She was honoured as 2014’s most prolific Adventist contributor to her local newspapers – raising the profile and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Watford and Garston – with a few additional contributions as far away as Bournemouth.

Slightly embarrassed at her new-found fame, she states, "People don't realise how easy it is to get something into local papers." She adds, "It is a symbiotic relationship. They need copy to fill their papers we need the exposure. They are always grateful."

Not one to miss an opportunity for positive service, she has submitted some tips so that maybe you can overtake her on the news generating stakes for 2015!

- You need a good story that will interest their readers – it helps to familiarise yourself with the publication first.

- Building up a good relationship with the papers helps as then they will take note of your emails
and not ignore them – and if you are lucky will reply to thank you. It often helps to phone them after you have emailed a story just to make sure they have got it – and to draw it to their attention.

• Grade A*** in nagging is an advantage. You must possess enough time and energy to sit down and apply yourself, and have persistence as people are often slow to reply to emails or meet deadlines. Research can take a long time as does getting quotes!

• To possess the primitive hunting instinct is useful as you have to set the bait and wait for it to be taken.

• An appreciation of deadlines, best before and sell by dates on stories. Make sure your story is news and not history! [You would be astonished how many articles come into BUC News or Messenger that are 3 months old. They will not get published!]

• All these are obvious but the main point is that many don't recognise what makes a good story that people would be interested in reading about.

• There appears to be a line of thinking that we only report events. To be honest, these can be rather deadly dull! What papers are really interested in is human interest stories! Your local paper is probably far more interested to know about a golden wedding, a young person who did extraordinary things for charity, or someone who has struggled against the odds, then it is a report of your Harvest Festival service.

One of the most popular stories that June generated this year was of a young school girl, Anjali Moser, who shaved her head for charity. Because she saw the opportunity not only did local media turn up, but there was substantial coverage in the Watford Observer, Garston News, Messenger, BUC News and on both Adventist and non-Adventist social media. That also substantially increased the amount of donations – more than five times her original goal.

So the main thing is how do you recognise a good story? June admits that this is the hard bit. "It helps if you have a good nose for a story but a lot is divine inspiration where something nags away at your subconscious until you do something about it."

Ultimately June concludes, "It comes down to a matter of need to extend our Church profile." She asks, "Why are we so shy of promoting ourselves as normal people?"

For more suggestions and short training videos on how to write, take photos and get your story published, visit the Communication Training page of the Adventist Church website.
DEATH OF MRS OLIVE ARCHER

It is with sadness that we learnt of the death of Mrs Olive Archer on Tuesday, 30 December 2014.

Olive Selby was born on 8 January 1919 in Skewen, South Wales. After completing a stenographer's course at a Commercial College in Swansea, Olive studied at Newbold College (Stretton under Fosse) for two years and then worked in the general office there for ten months. She then commenced work at the ESDA office (Edgware) in the transport department, followed by a few months at the NEC office.

In December 1941 Olive moved to Watford and started work in the Accounts department of Granose Foods where she continued until after her marriage in February 1950. Following a short break, she returned to secretarial work at Granose until July 1971 when she moved back to the then Northern European, West Africa Division office in St Albans as a secretary. Olive, who had been previously widowed, had to take early retirement on the grounds of ill health on 1 November 1972 after 32.6 years of employment.

With no surviving family, our sympathy is with her friends at this time of loss and our hope is for the resurrection morning.

Her funeral will be at 11:00 am on Friday 23 January, in the Cedar/Sycamore room at the Stanborough Centre, 609 St Albans Road, Watford, WD25 9JL.

[Paul Lockham]

FAITHTALKS RETURNS TO REVELATION TV

As a cooperative venture between the British Union Conference and South England Conference Media departments, Adventist output on Revelation TV
switches back to the SEC for the first quarter of 2015. Tune in on Thursday evenings at 8:30 and again on Sundays at 1:00 pm as Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist and guests ponder questions of faith and practical life. Revelation TV (Sky 581, Freesat 692, internet and Roku).

For more Adventist programming visit the www.hopetv.org.uk website or slip down to your local electrical retailer and pick up a ROKU box or USB stick for your TV. In addition to giving you a wide range of Adventist programming this will also be the best way for you to follow the General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas, this summer.

[BUC news]
SMALL ADS

LOOKING FOR AN ADVENTIST DENTIST IN LONDON? Adrian Mateas and his wife have opened a Dental Practice in London near Canary Wharf. You would be welcomed and, as an Adventist, receive a 10% discount at the aptly named SDA Dental Studio. If you would prefer to go to an Adventist dentist in a Christian environment visit Unit 1, 9 Salter Street, Docklands, E14 8BH, [www.sdadentalstudio.co.uk](http://www.sdadentalstudio.co.uk) or phone 0207 987 2480.

AU PAIR AVAILABLE. Sara Baluta from Austria is looking for a family in the UK who may need some support with their children. Sara is an Adventist and a social worker with a lot of experience with children. She is looking for new challenges and experiences and would be available from the summer onwards. Please email s_baluta@ehleso.at for more details.
