WHATEVER YOU DO, JUST DO IT!

In an invigorating start to the New Year, the South England Conference annual Evangelism Expo at Newbold campus on Sunday, 11 January attracted busloads of people. The crowds came to listen and to learn how to serve their church communities. This year saw an unprecedented variety of choice of 31 different workshops. These were led by skilled lay members and Conference departmental directors alike. That led to difficult choices as Kevin Simpson from Bristol expressed, "There are
Irish Mission President, Pastor David Neal, was the main speaker. In his inspiring morning presentation he drew on his experiences from Mission to the Cities: Dublin. Pastor Neal reminded the attendees that "evangelism is not an event, it's a process." To be successful, it is key that members have friends to invite along to various programmes. "We need to make friends before we have an outreach programme", Pastor Neal, challenged his audience. "Whatever you do, just do it. God has used us in Dublin this past year, but He is not done yet."

"It was an inspiring opening", said Pastor Sam Davis, SEC President. He was pleased with the quality of the expo: "I went to sit in on several workshops today, and I was impressed with what I heard and saw."

In addition to the speeches and workshops, this year saw a strong Newbold College staff presence, with many recruiters at hand. Dr John Baildam, College Principal, introduced the college as a centre for Christian leadership. The College offers short weekend and day courses which are open to all, and this announcement led to many interesting discussions at the Newbold booth.

Many of the attendees were recently elected to serve their church in various departments, and were there to see what the Conference was sharing for their specific department. Marie Coutet had just become involved in Family Ministries at Croydon. She shared how much she learnt from the Family Life workshop given by Pastor Leslie Ackie. Newbold elder, Victor Barendse, found that the Building Community Links workshop with church planter Winsome Brown-Baadjes was intensely interesting.

*Diversity: The Challenge for Contemporary Adventism*, a newly published book by Dr Richard de Lisser, generated a lively discussion between the contributors to the book and the expo attendees. This was facilitated by Mervin Weir, who reminded everyone that the book was merely the start of the discussion.
"This is the best expo I have ever attended", enthused Pastor Kwadwo Kwarteng-Ampofo. "I went to Pastor Osei's Prayer Ministries workshop and I was so inspired! I'm so glad I brought my leaders along. I wouldn't have liked them to miss this."

People left the expo retrained in various skills, and with a clear understanding that the mission is not finished. They still held the morning challenge from Pastor Neal fresh in their minds: "Whatever you do, just do it!"

Watch a video report from SEC Expo 2015.

[Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist]

CAMPUS MINISTRIES TRAINING FOR NORTH ENGLAND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Westwood Christian Centre, located on a windy hilltop overlooking the town of Huddersfield, is an old church converted into a retreat centre for Christian groups from around the country. From 16-18 January it was the gathering place for students and mentors from universities around the North England Conference, representing nine Adventist student societies. They came together for a weekend of training, visioning, fellowship and spiritual encouragement.

Students arrived on Friday to blue skies and sunshine but over Sabbath the snow fell creating a beautiful white winter wonderland, providing a place of quiet, calm retreat where the teams were able to focus together on Campus Ministries.

The NEC territory boasts roughly 45 universities or places of higher education. Adventists students are in attendance in at least 22 of these. Nine universities have official SDA Student Societies.

Students came from Bradford, Leicester, Manchester, Hull, Leeds, Coventry, Sheffield, Preston and Derby along with Youth leaders, mentors and pastors. British Union Conference Youth
director and Student Chaplain, Pastor Nathan Stickland, also spent the weekend with the students.

NEC Youth director, Pastor Adam Ramdin states, "It is our vision to see this number grow so that at every university where there are Adventist students, there is a missionary focused SDA society." He believes there is a double rationale for this approach. "Public Campus Ministries are a very important avenue of outreach in our Church as unfortunately we lose too many youth during these years." Campus Ministries not only retains Adventist youth, but reaches out to others who may be searching.

Globally 80% of university-aged Adventist youth attend a public or secular university. Between 50-70% of them leave the Church as they reach young adulthood. Thus equipping, training and supporting Adventist youth in their university years is something that is very important, relevant and needed.

Johnny and Tina Wong from Melbourne, Australia, came as speakers for the weekend. They were among the founders of the Gateway Adventist Centre (GAC) – an outreach started just over 10 years ago to students at the University of Melbourne. It has grown from an initial group of 35 young adults to three churches on three separate campuses with over 260 members. This has resulted in 160 baptisms over the past decade, with ninety of them making their first acquaintance with Adventism on the university campus.

Johnny and Tina came with a wealth of real-life experience and so were able to share what they found worked and what did not work. It was practical education, not theoretical nor regurgitated from someone else's book or research. Helpfully, it came from a society and culture very similar to the UK, something that was appreciated by all who attended.

The couple shared lots of encouraging stories, including one from the current pastor of GAC. Vikram Panchal, who came to Melbourne from India to study Logistics, came in contact with their society on campus and he went from being a seeker, to receiving Bible studies, getting baptised, becoming a Bible worker, studying for pastoral ministry at Andrews University, then finally returning to the church to lead out as a pastor.

Throughout the weekend the topics included how to start a SDA Society on campus, how to implement an evangelism cycle in the context of an academic calendar, how to reach 2nd generation Adventists, and what are the ingredients of an effective Campus Ministry.

Olivia Harvey, the society President from the University of Leeds, declared that it was "an inspirational weekend with a practical guide for evangelising students on campus." Chisha Chitambala, a recent graduate of and now one of the mentors at DMU Leicester, as well as a member of the NEC Campus Ministry Advisory said, "It was enjoyable, yet eye-opening and an
extremely comprehensive weekend of training. I truly believe all society leaders present were
blessed and inspired to put the valuable lessons learnt into practice at their various university
campuses."

Students spoke of church members from where they came from who were supportive and
encouraging during their student years, whether it was cooking and inviting them to eat or
assisting them in giving Bible studies. It is all a part of student ministry and it all makes a lasting
impact.

We pray that God may be with each one of these students and the societies that they represent.
Adam concludes, "We would ask that you uplift them in prayer as they live, study and witness in
this difficult environment and that God may sustain each one of these students and prosper them
in their studies and their spiritual life."

[Adam Ramdin]

LOVE AND HOPE ON THE ROAD WITH PORTUGUENSE SPEAKING CHURCH

The 'Love and Hope Project' of the Portuguese-speaking church aims to share exactly that through a
series of voluntary projects. The programme started four years ago and is growing on a large scale as
members bring joy to those they meet.

Members from the Central London Portuguese-speaking church and their friends spent most
weekends in December running Christmas programmes in hospitals and nursing homes. This really made a difference in the lives of both children and adults.

The group started on Sabbath, 6 December by visiting the paediatric units at St Mary’s Hospital. The Portuguese children were joined by others from the English-speaking Central London church. Together they sang Christmas carols and delivered Christmas baskets to the patients. Each basket contained a teddy bear, a panettone, the books Fish Don’t Need Snorkels and Steps to Christ and the DVDs Final Events and
Health Kitchen.

Those who were unable to come to the playroom, where the concert took place, received special attention by having a couple of children going to their rooms and singing for them. They too received a Christmas basket.

The following weekend, the same group was joined by the teens of CAYA (Come As You Are) Project, which was developed by the Portuguese-speaking church, and a few children from Stanborough Park church. This time they visited the Bupa and Sonesta Nursing Homes, both in Golders Green.

The team shared Christmas carols followed by a little story of a dog who was born on Christmas Day. This dog was born with only two legs. As a result his owner decided to put him to sleep. But when a lady called Jude Stringfellow found out about him, she immediately went to speak to the owner and asked for the dog.

Due to her persistence and determination, the dog was able to walk within six months so she changed his name to 'Faith'. Now she travels around the world preaching that 'even without a perfect body, one can have a perfect soul'. This was the message we left the elderly and their families with.

As both nursing homes are close to each other, the manager of Bupa asked if we could start the programme in Sonesta without the children so they could remain there and sing a little more as everyone was really enjoying it.

Nevertheless, the residents of Sonesta also seem to have enjoyed their programme. The owner, Mrs Farzana, text messaged the next day, "Thank you all very much. It was a pleasure to have you all. The residents were so happy. I just came back to work and they were all talking about it. It really made their Christmas."

On 22 December, the group headed to Homerton Hospital to hand out Christmas baskets, then on Christmas Eve, Pastor Deyvid Valente and an elder of the church, both dressed as Santa Claus, went to Great Ormond Street and St Mary's Hospitals to wish Merry Christmas to the patients. More baskets were given to the children.

The positive feelings were not just among the recipients. It blessed those doing the giving. "It really touched our hearts when we saw those little children, some ill whilst others injured, with a smile on their face as they received the baskets", one participant said. "One child was so happy that she immediately tore off the wrapped paper, hugged the teddy bear and started running along the hospital corridor."
Although most of the baskets were for children, the group also prepared 100 baskets with toiletries to give to the homeless who were sheltered between Christmas and New Year's Day at the Advent Centre. Overall, 560 children and adults received a basket.

The church family is delighted that through this project they were able to share a very special time with all these families and to share something of real meaning with them.

[Emerson Ferraz]

AFRICAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR ENDS WORLD TOUR AT CROYDON CHURCH

The world-renowned African Children's Choir brought a year-long world tour to an end last Sunday evening, 18 January, with an electrifying concert in Croydon. The event inspired and moved a packed Croydon Adventist church, but saw attendees coming from as far as Yorkshire and Wales.

The eighteen children bounded on stage with some of their favourite songs, moving energetically throughout. They showed no hint of tiredness after a complete year of touring scores of venues throughout the United States, Canada and the UK.

The choir is comprised of some of Africa's most vulnerable and under-privileged children yet the energy of their performance and praise showed no hint of their tough backgrounds. They
were well received and lifted the congregation to new heights of praise with their now famous version of 'O Happy Day'.

The choir not only entertains and worships, but also raises funds to help some of Africa's most vulnerable children. To that end £2,000 was raised at the Croydon event.

The Uganda-based choir is run by the Music for Life charity which has educated more than 52,000 orphans and deprived children since it started in 1984. They've helped sponsor less-fortunate children in other countries such as South Sudan, Kenya, South Africa, Rwanda, Ghana and Nigeria. Many of them have gone on to lead successful careers in fields such as media, the arts, law, education, and engineering.

[Neil Nunes. Photos: Bengt Ararah ]

HELP FOR AURORA

Never give up on a child. That is the message that one mother, Kallahan Campbell shares as she appeals in a moving video testimony for help for her baby girl. Aurora, or Rory as she is lovingly known, has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy yet despite that setback mum and grandma talk very positively about this beautiful little girl. However, they want to do more – beyond the excellent treatment and support that the NHS has given.

Kallahan, a member of Croydon Adventist church, has discovered a positive treatment that makes a difference in a clinic in Hungary. The NHS does not provide this treatment so they travel there several times a year, spending at least three weeks there each time. Though slow, the treatment is making a difference.

Others are catching the vision to help them. Aerobics
expert, Joni Blackwood got the idea of an aerobathon after seeing something similar organised in America. She suggested it to the family and they caught the vision. As a result, on Sunday, 15 February, the youth hall at Croydon Adventist church will transform into a gym for the fun event, along with stalls selling food, crafts and natural beauty and well-being products. All proceeds from the day will support the 'Root for Rory' campaign.

Faith is also a part of the story. Grandma, Doriel Benjamin describes Rory as a 'delightful little girl who loves to laugh', stating that everyone who meet her comments that she is so jolly. "I don't blame God", she states. "The Bible tells us that we won't always have sunshine, we will have some sorrow and some pain, and it also says He won't give us more than we can bear." She concludes, "As far as I'm concerned I thank God for her and I love her just the way she is."

For the family and little Aurora, the aerobathon – and the opportunity it will provide for more treatment in Hungary will make more than a difference, it is life-changing.

[Kofi Osei-Owusu]

**DOES EVIDENCE UNDERMINE RELIGION?**

A Sunday morning Religion and Ethics programme, The Big Questions has provoked debate this last week. The BBC1 programme normally discusses up to three topical religious or ethical issues that are in the public mind. On Sunday, 18 January the programme, hosted by Nicky Campbell, focused purely on one topic, 'Does evidence undermine religion?'

London-based journalist, Keith Lockhart, watched the programme and states, "As usual more heat than light is generated by this kind of show, but if you're interested in the subject… it's worth a watch." If you do watch, and it is still available on the BBC iPlayer, you will find an audience on one side of the studio consisting of a variety of Christians along with Jews, Muslims and other religions, with a strong cohort of atheists positioned on the other side. The spectrum was intentionally broad to provoke animated debate and stretched from Adventist theologian, Dr Radisa Antic, Principal Lecturer in Systematic Theology at Newbold College on the far right of the studio, balanced by a former Seventh-day Adventist turned atheist seated on the far left.

That carefully construed audience make-up can present a problem in itself. The 'Best of Belief' website posted a blog back in January 2012 – another occasion when an Adventist pastor had appeared on the programme. The author, retired pastor, Islwyn Rees, wrote that the programme has an anti-Christian bias and stated, "Whatever the sincerity of the pastor in wanting to represent the biblical world view, I question the merit of discussing Christian belief in that kind
of arena where Christians can be held up to ridicule if they are not as politically as well as media savvy as their atheist opponents." That is a sentiment endorsed by Willard Foxton in the New Statesmen who argues that the programme is designed to make "religious people look unfairly crazy".

Nevertheless, recognising the challenges, and preparing for them, Dr Antic spoke well on behalf of faith and reason. Following the programme, Ijaz, a Muslim, was one of many people who wrote to him reflecting on the debate. Ijaz says, "I saw your discussion on TV on The Big Questions show and found that your argument was quite strong and that you put your point of view very well." That point of view included a rational and scientifically based response to the atheist claim that "faith believers have no physical evidence in the Word of God and that it is based on faith alone." As Newbold Principal, Dr John Baildam noted, "You had good support and applause from the audience on that point."

Brixton member, Jonathan Prendergast, watched the whole programme. He felt that Nicky Campbell believed that "the atheist view is established and clear" and thus that his questioning lacked objectivity. As a passionate Christian that would be an easy view to support, but in the heat of confrontation the Christian community, and indeed a Muslim gentleman sitting on the second row, responded very well. Jonathan was disappointed that Dr Antic did not get an opportunity to give a Christian/Adventist response to the important questions on the existence of God and the resurrection, rather focusing him onto the subject of Jesus' miracles and asking a trick question on demon possession – something hard to answer in twenty seconds.

That was perhaps balanced by the lack of credibility in the ex-Adventist witness. Kept until almost the end of the programme Jonathan notes, "She declared herself as an atheist bringing in a new subject of the morality of God in the Bible. This in itself needs another whole programme to be able to discuss her views." There appeared to be some pain in her journey from faith, but while she was able to raise the question, nobody on the Christian side had any opportunity to respond. As such, Jonathan states, "I question the motives behind the programme and found that it seemed to be geared towards being more 'heat than light'."

Should Adventists appear on a programme like this? Dr Antic reflects, "I did what I could but it is clear that he had an atheist agenda." Nevertheless, he says, "I think that it is good that we were there, at least." Mr Lockhart agrees with him. "Believers can't always choose the ideal circumstances in which to communicate and sometimes they need to communicate in a forum such as this. It's just that when they do, they need to be as savvy as their atheist counterparts."

Adventists have appeared on The Big Questions numerous times over the years. Yet there are probably more occasions when the invitation has been turned down. "We have to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves", states BUC Communication director, Pastor Victor Hulbert. "That means caution, the ability to say 'no' if the topic is too controversial, the need to consult
with colleagues and media professionals before we say 'yes', and, beyond all, the need for prayer and preparation."

[BUC News with Jonathan Prendergast]

AWARD WINNING INSPIREURBIZ A BIG HIT FOR CROYDON

Networking on a Sunday in Croydon is hardly everyone's cup of tea, but last Sunday 18 January, Croydon Business Insight2Marketing proved that it works for some. Over 100 people chose to attend the InspireUrBiz event at the Croydon Conference Centre.

This was the second in a series of InspireUrBiz events that are planned to run as an ongoing programme throughout 2015. The first event back in November won a High Impact Host Award from Global Entrepreneurship Week UK.

Beyond Croydon, guests came from a number of boroughs, including Lambeth, Bromley, Lewisham and even outer London areas. Feedback forms and online reviews via the event hashtag indicates that this business networking event is worth the Sunday sacrifice.

Already 23 individuals have registered to attend the next event in the series which takes place on Sunday 8 March at Jurys Inn Croydon Hotel. Themed, 'Make It Happen', this will adopt a slightly different format running from 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm and celebrating women for International Women's Day.

However, it is not a female only event. All are welcome and will learn. For more details visit the Coming Events page of the Adventist Church website.

[Roshan Roberts]
A tradition harking back to the 1950s is highlighted in the 23 January edition of Messenger, official journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland. The lead story reflects back on the history of the annual toy service at Stanborough Park church, originating from an idea starting in Ealing.

Pastor Hibbert's timely editorial reflects on the massacre at the offices of *Charlie Hebdo*, tackling differences in perspective on what it means to be a martyr. Karen Shelbourn challenges us on priorities, while Victor Hulbert gives us practical guidance on sharing 'Present truth in an age of social media'. Add to that two pages packed with baptisms, another two with local church news, this edition makes compulsive reading. Pick up a copy from your local church or read it online now.

[Julian Hibbert]

**COMING EVENTS** For a full listing of Coming Events please visit [http://adventist.org.uk/events](http://adventist.org.uk/events)

**Sunday 25 January:**
**MOHAP Day Retreat – January**. For more details, and to register, visit the Ministry of Healing and Prayer website, [www.mohap.org](http://www.mohap.org). Time: 09:30 - 17:00. Venue: The Advent Centre, 12 Crawford Place, London W1H 5HD.

**Thursday 29 January:**
**Wheat Free Cooking – Health Lecture**. Cooking Wheat-Free Foods – a demonstration by Cecilia Davison. Soup and Rolls at 7 pm. Lecture: 20:00 - 21:00. Venue: Stanborough Centre, 609 St Albans Road, Watford WD25 9JL.

**Sabbath 31 January:**
**40th Anniversary Service: Loughborough**. Have you been a part of Loughborough Adventist church at any point in its history? If so, we'd love for you to join us as we celebrate 40 years. Please let us know if you are planning to come so we know how many to cater for via loughboroughtsdachurch@gmail.com or 07748 590 594. If you are unable to come, but have memories, photos or a message you would like to share, please get in touch. Time: 10:00 - 16:00.

**Saturday 31 January:**
**House Of Praise 8**. The Thames Valley Youth Federations presents the 8th Annual 'House of
Praise', an evening of praise, worship, thanksgiving and fellowship. Refreshments provided. Contact the Thames Valley Youth President, Cheryl Singo, 07428 151 087 for further info. Time: 19:00 - 21:00. Venue: Newbold Church, St Marks Road, Binfield, Bracknell RG42 4AN.

Indian Evening. Indian Evening with meal and auction to raise funds for STOP International in its on-going work to help orphanages in India. Items and promises will be auctioned and there will be Indian-themed entertainment during the evening. Cost £10 for an individual or £70 for a table of 8. Time: 19:30 - 21:30. Venue: Stanborough Centre, Stanborough Park Church, 609 St. Albans Road, Garston, Watford WD25 9JZ.

Saturday 7 February:
Ilford Central SDA Presents: The London Adventist Chorale Fundraising Concert. Entry Fee: £5 on the door (FREE for under 5 year olds). Kindly register your interest NOW on Eventbrite so we can keep track of the numbers attending. Go to www.eventbrite.co.uk then search 'Chorale', make sure the area is 'Ilford' in the search engine. Time: 7 pm (Doors open: 6:30 pm). For enquiries, please call: 0778 002 0706. Address: Ilford Central SDA Church, 14-16 Coventry Road, Ilford IG1 4QR.

Friday 13 - Sunday 15 February:

Sunday 15 February:
4th London Adventist Credit Union Careers Fair. Meet and speak to professionals in the medical, engineering, financial, science, IT, craft/design and legal sectors, amongst others. Time: 11:00 - 15:00. Check link for further details. Venue: Brixton SDA Church, Santley Street, London SW4 7QG.

Four future events that you need to book for now:

2-6 April. Reborn – an Easter Conference for Senior Youth (18+).
18 April. A free Bible Conference at Newbold College.
7-10 May. The TED Master Guide Camp in Slovenia.

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SMALL ADS

JOB VACANCIES: The South England Conference, based in Watford, is looking for a full-time Secretary and also a full-time HR Assistant/Secretary. For full details of this and other job opportunities with the Church, visit the job vacancies page on the Adventist Church website.

ABERDARON ADVENTIST CAMPSITE 2015 SUMMER STAFF. Volunteers are needed for the summer of 2015: Nine maintenance staff required for 10 weeks. Food and board provided along with a monetary allowance. Please post your CV to Aberdaron Advent Campsite, Glan-yr-Afon, Anelog, Aberdaron, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL53 8BT or email it to: enquiries@aberdaroncamp.com. Closing date: 27 February 2015.
BUC News is a weekly news bulletin produced by the Communication Department of the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Items for inclusion should be sent to bucnews@adventist.org.uk and need to be received by 6.00 pm on Wednesday. Coming Events should be submitted via the on-line form at: http://adventist.org.uk/events. The editor reserves the right to modify articles received to make them suitable for inclusion. The views expressed in this bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, though we try to ensure that they do. You are free to re-print any portion of this bulletin without the need for special permission. However, we kindly request that you identify BUC News or other sources..

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