Edition #920 (3 April 2015)
Email Newsletter of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United Kingdom and Ireland

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For additional and updated news and a full listing of coming events visit our website: www.adventist.org.uk

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MODERN-DAY ANDREW INVITES JOÃO

Joy and excitement gripped the faces of mum, dad and younger siblings as they witnessed the Pathfinder scarf placed around the neck of their 12-year-old son and brother, João Rodrigues.
In a modern-day twist to Jesus' command to His disciples, 3 months ago, Andrew Zorzin invited his friend, João, to join Pathfinders. By Saturday (Sabbath), 28 March, Andrew found himself celebrating with João as he became an official member of the North West London Portuguese Pathfinder Club.

Overseen by the area co-ordinator, Cassandra Burton, it was a day of award giving, appreciation showing, and new commitment making as club members displayed what they had done and learnt. João was officially inducted into the club in a ceremony that awarded five Pathfinders and one leader who are now immediately aiming for even higher achievement levels along with 13 others who received badges for the skills they had developed including Laundering, Orchids, Christian Grooming and Manners and Swimming.

João's father expressed delight in his son's changed behaviour since being invited to the club in January. The entire family turned out to meet João's new friends and club leaders while João publically declared that he wanted "to have fun, learn new skills, meet new people and develop my character to make me a good citizen of my community and country." His parents vowed to support him and encourage him to reach his goals.

The investiture service in a packed church made a deep impression on João's parents. By the end of the day they expressed a desire to enrol their two younger children in the Adventurer Club while dad even enquired about being part of a Pathfinder Club for adults!

This particular Pathfinder Club is no stranger to the 'Andrew' phenomenon. Sometime ago, Diana introduced Melissa and then Ricardo brought Wilson and Ana to the club, and they are still members! The club meets three times per month and is focussing this year on involving more parents and other church members in providing all the support for a club that is clearly going to continue to grow.

João plans to receive his awards in 2016 to add to the 26 Pathfinders and leaders that were so successful this year. Welcome João!

To know more of the secrets of this exciting club, contact the leaders: Adelaide – 07503 115 067 or Emanuel – 07503 115 072.

[Vernon Noel]
forgiven for thinking you'd arrived at the scene of a mass choir practice. The majestic sound of over three hundred women raising their voices in praise filled every corner of the church building and floated on the airwaves as a witness on the street outside. Inside the pews were awash with various shades of purple as the attendees complyed with the instruction to 'wear something purple'.

This was the scene at the British Union Conference 'Women of Virtue' Conference and Exhibition Experience. Guest speaker, Adventist World Church Women's Ministries director, Heather-Dawn Small, shared 'Lessons from the Life of a Virtuous Woman'. She highlighted our tendency to describe ourselves in terms of our physical appearance. She spoke of the billion dollar industry focused on attempting to rid us of our imperfections, and drew our attention to the fact that, as women of virtue, we ought to be spending our time on eternal things as, "often under silken apparel there is a threadbare soul."

Based on Proverbs chapter 31, the whole day was geared towards encouraging, edifying and enriching the lives of women through the thirteen attributes identified in the Women of Virtue (WOV) programme. In the hall downstairs thirteen exhibition booths provided a colourful visual representation of the practical aspects of each of these attributes. Heather-Dawn was impressed by the Women as homemakers exhibition. "This is such a beautiful representation of the homemaker. There is no evidence of the drudgery sometimes associated with this role, rather an expression of Godly creativity."

She described all the exhibits as very 'creative and spot on' in their interpretation. These included, A Woman of Godly character, Women as singles, Women as wives, Women as homemakers, Women as providers, Women as mothers, Women maintaining their appearance, Women of strength, Women who are industrious, Women as investors, Women as community activists, Personal development, and Encouraging and affirming excellence.

A unique feature of a women's conference was that of getting 'A Man's Perspective' on the Proverbs 31 woman. Two brave Men's Ministries leaders, Pastor Andrew Rashford-Hewitt from the North and Dr Chidi Ngwaba from the South, fielded questions from WOV team members, Val Grosset and Pilira Zipita. During the lively discussion that ensued, Dr Ngwaba encouraged women to 'Talk to the king inside' when addressing their husbands and not to put them down but to pray for them and value the importance of respect in the home.
Another man on the programme was Gregg Wilson, Men's Ministries leader at Bedford Central church. He very ably threw some light on what it meant to be 'At the Gate'. He concluded that when women are loved they become the abundant producers of home life, the root of a happy and healthy community and that the man in Proverbs 31 was a righteous man who was known at the gate because of the excellent works of his wife.

It is hard to fully describe all the aspects of the excellent programme presented on Sunday. In the words of Heather-Dawn Small, "This is stuff that women can participate in, they can see, touch and hear – it is a holistic experience." She added, "I cannot see anyone coming here and not being impacted by this programme. This is preparing women for heaven."

That is an important point that impressed Heather-Dawn – "the fact that my sisters are so dedicated to focusing on their character because that's really all we have to take with us when we leave here."

The Women of Virtue programme was introduced at a BUC Women's Ministries Retreat in October 2013 and officially launched during the weekend of 26-27 April 2014 (see video report). Various other events have ensued including a four-day team training event with Dr Deborah Harris, which culminated in a Women's Business Conference on Sunday, 24 August 2014.

Founder and director of the programme, BUC Women's Ministries director, Sharon Platt-McDonald says that the idea of WOV is not a new one and that God had been speaking to her specifically about the life of the virtuous woman outlined in Proverbs 31:10-31 for many years. In 2007, she was further led to the idea of formatting 13 key principles which now form the basis for the Women of Virtue programme. She is supported by a team of volunteers who all work within their particular areas of giftedness and the topics covered by the programme.

Sunday's event was attended by a significant number of non-Adventist women who participated enthusiastically. One confessed, "This is such an amazing opportunity to see God in the everyday roles of women. I will certainly come again. It's made me think."

Sheila Samuels who was attending her first Women's Ministries conference felt it was well worth it too. She wrote, "The highlight was your guest speaker Heather-Dawn Small. What a woman!" She added, "We are planning to ask our Women's Ministries department at Kings Cross church for funds to buy the manual as we know we could benefit from its guidance."

Heather-Dawn is excited about the potential for this programme to be rolled out globally through the World Church Women's Ministries department. "When we present this next year at our advisory, I am hoping to let the Division leaders experience this programme. It is only as they experience it that they will be convinced to implement it. My associate director and I will be pushing this programme as we travel."
As the vision for the programme has grown, so has the need for dedicated volunteers. Anyone wishing to assist can contact the BUC Women's Ministries department for more information.

The next Women of Virtue event will be a Women's Business Conference to be held on Sunday, 27 September 2015, within the North England Conference. Enjoy a selection of photos from the day by visiting the Adventist Church's picture gallery.

[ Geraldene Farmer ]

NEWBOLD ACADEMIC PRESS LAUNCHED AT THEOLOGY TEACHERS' CONVENTION

A new initiative, Newbold Academic Press (NAP), was launched last weekend at a gathering of almost sixty theologians as part of the 2015 European Theology Teachers' Convention (ETTC).

The ETTC saw Adventist teachers and scholars from 15 countries, representing every Adventist educational institution in Europe, including Russia and the Middle East University, gather at Newbold College of Higher Education. NAP was launched during the Convention's final evening, following five days of papers and discussion around the theme, 'Ecclesia reformata semper reformata' (a reformed church, always reforming).

Under the direction of Manfred Lemke, Chair of the NAP Publications Panel and the College's Academic Registrar, NAP will specialise in the publication of scholarly essays, papers, books, and research. Its aim is to further the College's objective of providing quality learning and teaching through the provision of Christian higher education by publishing a variety of titles from Newbold lecturers as well as internationally-respected Adventist authors.

NAP's inaugural publication was a Festschrift, or collection of essays, titled Journeys to Wisdom. It was produced in honour of Dr Michael Pearson, who officially retired at the end of 2013 after over 40 years' service with the College.

Twenty Adventist scholars and administrators, including a number of Newbold staff, alumni, and friends of the College, contributed to Journeys to Wisdom through essays on the matters of Christianity, spirituality and ethics. By demonstrating their impact on fellow travellers, the book attempts to mirror the breadth and depth of Dr Pearson's thinking, teaching and writing.
Dr John Baildam, Newbold's current Principal and long-time friend of Dr Pearson and his wife, Helen, had the honour of presenting Journeys to Wisdom to the unsuspecting Dr Pearson. "As a self-termed exponent of radical orthodoxy and as a critical friend of the Church, Mike is always at his best when students and staff can be themselves with him", said Dr Baildam. "Always a popular teacher at Newbold, Mike's methods were often unconventional. A class on Existentialism may have found him teaching while standing on a desk – and a young student endeared herself to him when she famously claimed that 'you are always at your most interesting when you get off the subject!''"

Dr Pearson continues to teach at Newbold part-time, and was recently awarded the honorific title of Principal Lecturer Emeritus by the College.

NAP has a series of publications planned over the coming months, including Dr Bjørn Ottesen's (Head of Newbold's Department of Theological Studies) doctoral thesis, A Strategy for the Adventist Church to Reach the Increasingly Secular and Postmodern Danish Population, and the proceedings of the 2015 ETTC.

Journeys to Wisdom can be purchased as a printed book or an e-book via Amazon UK.

[Kirsty Watkins]

DISABILITY MINISTRIES THANK SPECIAL MUMS ON MOTHER'S DAY

In a world which strives for perfection where image is key, it is easy to forget the heroes: special needs parents. Many battle daily to maintain an acceptable quality of life for their children whilst accessing facilities in the community to stimulate learning and development.

This was the rationale behind the Reading and High Wycombe Disability Ministries teams' special Mother's Day programme hosted in Reading on Sabbath, 14 March. The special mums were presented with daffodils in handcrafted pots made by the young adults. They also enjoyed a multisensory play and a special poem by Montel
Dublin:

M is for meek and mild
O is for obedient
T is for tired hands and feet
H means a heart of pure gold
E means everlasting love
R means rubies
Put all together spell mother

Reading Central and Parkside pastor, George Asiamah states that he is very proud of his Disability Ministries team. "They are leading the way in inclusivism in the church and the community. I can see that many from the community here today are involved and we are making a difference", he stated. "I say a special prayer every day for these mothers, they are very special to me and precious to God, thank you for your ministry."

[Paul Thompson]

SOS – RECLAIM AT CAMP HILL

Youth at the Camp Hill and Yardley churches in Birmingham joined together under the theme 'Reclaim: God Wants You Back' for a Youth Week of Prayer climaxing in a Youth Day on Sabbath, 28 March.

The Youth leaders, Leonie Stephen and Anolin Stevens, under the guidance of Dr Patrick Herbert put together a programme at the Camp Hill church which left everyone richly blessed. One particularly memorable night, Pastor Herbert shared a contemporary version of the narrative of the Prodigal Son under the theme, 'Let's Party'. He had everyone on their feet to experience the party mood as the prodigal came home.
With the week climaxing in a Youth Day, the church transformed into a courtroom. The congregation were shown a sign of things to come as seen through the eyes of the youth. This was followed by a challenging message from Dr Gina Miller who asked, 'Who Do You Think You Are?'.

An interesting twist on the theme 'Reclaim' came the following day. North England Conference President, Pastor Lorance Johnson chaired a constituency meeting for members in the Birmingham area. The meeting was to discuss Harper Bell School and members were joined by the Chair of the IEB, Rosemary Campbell-Stephens. In her discourse she turned and referred to the Youth Day slogan Reclaim stating we as Seventh-day Adventists need to reclaim our school.

As reported two weeks ago, members were all delighted to learn Harper Bell is no longer in special measures. However, we recognized that we now all need to work together for the best interest of our children and for the future of the school. The school currently has vacancies in the nursery and reception classes and would keenly welcome enquiries from interested parents.

[Natalie Sutherland]

Fletewood School pupils and parents joined the Plymouth church congregation on Sabbath, 28 March to celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ. This included a small choir of seven pupils who shared their musical talents with songs such as 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' and 'The Lord God Bless You and Keep You'.

As part of the special Easter service the children both sang 'Praise the Lord Together' and taught the church to sing it as a four-part round. The congregation's response: "Fantastic!"
In-between items Pastor Clifford Herman talked about God's love for us and how Jesus died to save us from sin. He shared stories of how everyday people have expressed their love and compassion for others in the simplest ways. One outstanding example included an individual bringing someone back to life with a personal defibrillator. The children helped him by sharing various Bible verses such as John 14:6. "Jesus answered, 'I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

While not all the children could make it to the church service, they still participated as during the week they had all worked on illustrating the children's story. They drew pictures depicting the resurrection of Jesus and presented them with narration as a film.

The congregation was thrilled to have the children taking part in the service and enthusiastically joined in with the children as they closed with the school song, 'Side by Side'. Afterwards friendships and connections deepened as pupils and parents joined the church family for fellowship lunch.

[Jennie Hall]

PASSING THE BATON IN RHYL

On Sabbath, 28 March 2015 Pastor David Foster preached his last sermon as minister of the North Wales district of churches. David joined the Welsh Mission pastoral team in September 2008, having served for a number of years previously in the South England Conference, and brought with him a maturity and wealth of experience which proved to be of great benefit to the Mission.

Ministry was not David's first career. In his former life he worked for British Telecom, firstly as an engineer but later as a senior manager. Taking an opportunity for early retirement from BT, David, who was already an active lay preacher in his home church in Ipswich, studied at
Newbold College and had his first placement in 1998 at Lowestoft and Oulton Broad (including the Dell Retirement Home). Here he also became a chaplain to the local prison, and chairman of Churches Together in Lowestoft.

In 2000, moving to pastor south coast churches, he served as a chaplain to the three prisons on the Isle of Wight as well as being SEC Area 3 Coordinator and Chairman of the SEC Provincial Ministers' Forum.

On joining the Welsh Mission David served congregations in Rhyl, Llandudno Junction, Bangor and Wrexham. He was later joined by Malcolm Turner who served his internship with David before being given sole responsibility for the Llandudno Company.

In the latter part of 2014 David and Malcolm took on the pastoral care of the entire northern half of the Welsh Mission, adding Shrewsbury and Telford to their portfolio.

David and his wife Sandra have been well accepted and much loved by the various congregations they have served, and David's technical skills have been particularly appreciated. In the Rhyl and Telford churches he installed hi-tech video projection systems, and in Rhyl he ran regular computer training classes for community senior citizens.

David always emphasised that he was a Christian first and an Adventist second. Having grown up in the Church of England he was familiar with many different forms of worship and mixed easily with fellow Christians in the Rhyl area, regularly participating in Cytûn (Churches Together) meetings and inter-church services.

In his final sermon, at a well-attended service in the Rhyl church, David preached on Joshua chapter one, a point of transition in the Israelites' history when Moses stepped down and Joshua stepped up. Immediately distancing himself from any direct comparison with Moses, David emphasised the importance of change and transitions in the life of every church group. "The church has to move forward", he said. "When Moses was gone Joshua was told to get up and get on with it. Just as God had been with Moses, so He would be with Joshua." The message for the Rhyl church was clear: change happens, but God, His purposes, His mission, His promises and His assurance, remain constant. We simply need to follow His instructions and, like Joshua, step forward in faith.

Following the morning service local church member and organist, Leslie Riskowitz, thanked David and Sandra for their years of service on behalf of the
church members, and presented them with flowers and a painting of Conwy harbour. Other members gave personal gifts and then shared their own words of appreciation over a fellowship lunch.

Malcolm Turner now takes over as minister of the Rhyl church. Having worked together with David for the last two and a half years he is on course for commissioning in the not too distant future. We wish David and Sandra all God's blessings as they explore their retirement options, and Malcolm and Geraldine Turner God's continued guidance as they take up the baton in North Wales.

For more pictures from the day see our gallery page. For more on the mission focused life of Pastor Foster enjoy watching an archive edition of 'In Conversation'.

[John Surridge]

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS RESPOND TO STREET PREACHER COURT RULING

Pastor Ian Sweeney, President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland has spoken of his concerns following the conviction of Taunton street preacher, Michael Overd.

On Monday, 23 March, District Judge Shamim Ahmed Qureshi convicted Overd of a public order offence for making homophobic comments via a loudspeaker on Taunton High Street last summer. The judge also criticised him for his particular choice of Bible verses. Overd was fined £200 and ordered to pay compensation and costs totalling £1,200 at Bristol Crown Court.

In response to the ruling Pastor Sweeney states that, "Seventh-day Adventists strongly support freedom of speech, and freedom of religious speech in particular," but then goes on to note that "we have to be mindful that this freedom should be guided by not causing offense to hearers and ensuring that our speech is most suited to receiving a response from those listening that might
lead them to further investigation and acceptance of the Christian message."

Let your conversation be always full of grace

Quoting the Apostle Paul's words in Colossians 4:6 he states, "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

Sweeney believes that the best principle is to follow the example of Jesus who "spoke to win people's hearts, not merely state the truth or give His position." Referring to an official statement of the Adventist World Church made in 2010 he noted that "Seventh-day Adventists affirm sensitivity and respect in all communication."

As such, Adventists fully support the right to freedom of expression on the streets of Britain but counsel that such expression should always be within the context of Christian love. At the same time the church is concerned that prosecuting authorities may have been over aggressive in dealing with complaints. "There needs to be a level of tolerance on every side", Sweeney stated.

Support for Overd, who appears to volunteer his time independent from any specific church, has come from an unexpected source - The National Secular Society. Terry Sanderson, NSS President, said the ruling appeared to make the quoting of certain passages of the Bible illegal.

He states, "Whilst we all want to encourage public civility, there is a higher principle at stake. As long as there is no incitement to violence, then people should be allowed to speak freely without fearing legal repercussions."

Overd intends to appeal his conviction and said, "I follow my Lord and leader, so I won't tone down."

[BUC news]
against the odds.

Rejoicing was a theme in Yardley church as Cynthia Smith and Dubrey Golding made a choice for Jesus. Our news report tells the full story.

In more somber news, Pedro Torres, Communication director for the Adventist Church in Spain penned a thoughtful piece regarding the Germanwings plane crash in France. We have posted the English translation, The Flight of Life, on our website.

[BUC news]

PERFECT CHRISTIANS: DO THEY EXIST?

Perhaps one of the most controversial subjects within Christianity is whether a Christian can be perfect. In this week's edition of FaithTalks, aired on Revelation TV, Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist and guests looks to see if there is a sensible and reasonable answer. A programme both worth watching and sharing with your friends.

Twice weekly, viewing audiences across the UK and Ireland get the opportunity to learn something about Adventists and their beliefs when they tune into Revelation TV: Thursdays 8:30 pm repeated Sunday at 1:00 pm:

Thursday 2 April (repeated Sunday 5 April): Perfect Christians. Does such a thing exist?
Thursday 9 April (repeated Sunday 12 April): Global Responsibility.
Thursday 16 April (repeated Sunday 19 April): Domestic Violence.

To find out how to watch Revelation TV, click here. The new series will also shortly be released on the www.hopetv.org.uk website and on ROKU, the best IPTV platform for watching Hope Channel and other Adventist programmes.

[Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist]
COMING EVENTS For a full listing of Coming Events please visit http://adventist.org.uk/events

Friday 3 April:
Reflections from the Cross. An evening of songs and reflections on the cross. A memorable opportunity to share the story with your friends and neighbours. Time: 19:30 - 21:00. Venue: Watford Town Seventh-day Adventist Church, Broadsword House, 1-5 Brixton Road, Watford WD24 4AB.

Sabbath 4 April:

Sunday 6 April:
Gospel Roller Jam presents the Easter Skate special. Roller skating event in aid of the New Life urban youth project. Time: 17:00 - 22:00. Venue: York Hall, 5 Old Ford Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 9PJ.

Wednesday 8 - Sunday 12 April:
NEC Youth Alive Training Conference. Check link for full details including costs. Venue: Whitemoor Lakes, Barley Green Lane, Lichfield, Staffs WS13 8QT.

Friday 10 - Sabbath 11 April:
Centennial Commemoration of Ellen White's Life and Ministry. Check link for further details. Venue: Newbold Seventh-day Adventist Church, St Marks Road, Binfield RG42 4AN.

Friday 10 - Sunday 12 April:
ASNA Family Respite & Training Weekend. Check link for full details including costs. Venue: Sunningdale Park Hotel, Larch Avenue, West Berkshire SL5 0QE.

Sabbath 11 April:
National Asian Day of Fellowship. Check link for full details. Time: 10:00 - 17:00. Venue: 2 Handsworth New Road, Birmingham B18 4PG.

Sunday 12 April:
ADRA Fun Run – Manchester. Download your sponsor form here. Time: 10:30 - 14:30. Venue: Alexandra Park, 180 Russell Street, Moss Side, Manchester M16 7JL.
The London Adventist Chorale: Fundraising Concert in York City. Check link for full details including costs. Time: 14:00 - 16:00. Venue: Joseph Rowntree Theatre, Haxby Road, York YO31 8TA.

Tuesday 14 April:
God, Language, Mind and Men. You are invited to the April Diversity Lecture at Newbold College. Lecturer: Mervi Kalmus, Seventh-day Adventist pastor in Tallinn, Estonia and Lecturer in Homiletics at the Tartu Theological Seminary of the Estonian Baptist Church. Time: 7:30 pm. Venue: Salisbury Hall (Smith Centre) Newbold College of Higher Education, St Marks Road, Binfield RG42 4AN.
**Sabbath 18 April:**

**Free Bible Conference at Newbold.** Hear from four internationally-respected Adventist speakers on 'How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth', at Newbold College of Higher Education. Check link for full details. Register for free at [www.newbold.ac.uk/bible-conference](http://www.newbold.ac.uk/bible-conference). Time: 10:00 - 18:00. Venue: Newbold College, St Marks Rd, Binfield RG42 4AN.

Future events that you need to book for now:

- 7-10 May. The [TED Master Guide Camp](http://www.ted.com) in Slovenia.
- 24-27 May. Book now to join a [coast to coast cycle ride](http://www.coasttocoastcycle.com) raising funds for ADRA.

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**SMALL ADS**

**JOB VACANCIES.** [ADRA-UK](http://www.adra-uk.org) is offering a trainee position based in its Watford office. Deadline for applications: 30 June 2015. Newbold School has two vacancies: a [Year 5 & 6 teacher](http://www.newbold.ac.uk/jobs) and maternity cover for a [Year 1 & 2 teacher](http://www.newbold.ac.uk/jobs). For details of these and other vacancies please [visit our jobs page](http://www.newbold.ac.uk/jobs).

**FREE VEGETARIAN SHOW TICKETS:** Hackbridge church are offering a free ticket link from [2EDEN VEGETARIAN](http://www.2edenvegetarian.com) to a national Vegetarian Show at Olympia, London. Free tickets are being offered for Friday, 3rd and Sunday, 5th July 2015 or £10 on the door. [Click here for the link to free tickets](http://www.2edenvegetarian.com/free-tickets). For more information on the show which includes The Allergy & Free From Show, [click here](http://www.2edenvegetarian.com/free-tickets).

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