Get connected

By now most churches have heard at least something about LIFEdevelopment.info. It is a new initiative which the Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland is adopting in order to take the Gospel more effectively to our secular friends and neighbours. Of course, how effective it is depends on you, and your local church.

The first part of the LIFEdevelopment.info approach (pronounced ‘life development dot info’, by the way) is called ‘Get Connected’ and the motto we’ve suggested is: ‘Make a Friend – Change a Life’. Not surprisingly the idea is to make friends with secular people, because making friends is the very best way of witnessing.

Dwight Nelson
When we look back at the NET ‘98 programmes we can see very clearly that they were most successful in introducing people to Jesus Christ when those people were brought along to the meetings by their friends. Next year Pastor Dwight Nelson will be broadcasting another series of programmes and we want to make sure that as many friends as possible can come to see them.

OK, so we probably all agree with this general idea, but how do we turn it into a reality? One thing we do know from the NET ‘98 experience is that if lots of people get behind a single project the results are much greater than if everyone does different things. There may be other good strategies for evangelism but, like the Church name and logo, if we all try to promote the same one as possible can come to see them.

Schedule of events
Below is a schedule of how we hope things will progress over the next year:

- NOW – Church Board discusses LIFEdevelopment.info
Each church looks at the possibilities of setting up small groups, which will be open and friendly to secular people. They may also like to consider whether or not they could start a church plant, where the mother church sends a core group of people out to establish a new church. Perhaps the church can set up a Life Development Centre. This could be the church hall or another building, but the idea would be to have a place where people, Adventists and others, could socialise around a meal and talk about the issues of life. Whatever route the local church decides to take they should appoint a LIFEdevelopment.info co-ordinator, and maybe even a committee, to take the strategy on.

- MAY 2002 – LIFEdevelopment.info co-ordinators talk together
It’s still early days in LIFEdevelopment.info and some of the best ideas and approaches have probably not surfaced yet. During May there will be district and regional meetings to which all the local LIFEdevelopment.info co-ordinators will be invited. Here they will be able to share their own ideas and also get a good understanding of what is being done in their area and further afield. Soon after these meetings the local LIFEdevelopment.info co-ordinators will use what they have learnt, along with the LIFEdevelopment.info materials, to present the ideas and strategy to their local church members.

- 25 MAY 2002 – A Union-wide ‘Day of LIFEdevelopment.info’
A special Sabbath dedicated to the principles of LIFEdevelopment.info. A suggested programme outline for the day will be sent to pastors and elders, along with a video. The purpose of the day is to have a special time of prayer and commitment for the project.

- JUNE 2002 – ‘Becoming a contagious Adventist’ seminars
Your pastor has already received a pack of materials entitled ‘Becoming a Contagious Christian’. No matter which materials are used, these seminars...
Dr Leslie Hardinge dies

On 14 March Dr Leslie Hardinge died at the Simi Valley Hospital in California, aged 81. Dr Hardinge was a distinguished author, teacher and pastor. He graduated in 1933 and, in the early years of his ministry, did pioneering work in Torquay, Exeter and Edinburgh. He was a prime mover in the acquisition of the Edinburgh church and was largely responsible for creating the foundation for the university district of the city. His woodwork skills were evident in the Torquay and Edinburgh churches and in Salisbury Hall, Newbold College.

Dr Hardinge served as a Bible teacher and college president in the Far East. He is remembered with great affection in the Far Eastern Division and by the older generation in Britain. A full obituary will appear in a future issue.

P lease do not tell me anything more about God. I know all that in the words of 5-year-old Princess Elizabeth – for the last fifty years, Queen Elizabeth II – to Archbishop of Canterbury Cosmo Lang.1

And some Adventists have a little in common with the precious princess.

Charles Swindoll once heard four scholars talking about their favourite Bible versions.

One said: ‘The King James is the best. No version can compete with its beautiful, poetic language.’

The second said: ‘Granted the KJV has beautiful language. But I like The New American Standard Bible. It is the most accurate version because it is the most literal translation.’

The third said: ‘I prefer The New Revised Standard Version. It is not only scholarly, it is gender inclusive: women are included in the language as well as men.’

The fourth said: ‘My favourite translation is my mother’s.’

‘His mother’s? I mean, what was he talking about?’ Everybody laughed at him! When the laughter died down, someone got a grip, and said, ‘What on earth do you mean, your mother?’

‘Just this,’ said the fourth scholar, ‘My mother used to translate the Bible into her life. That’s the best translation I ever saw it.’

Here and now let me say, I’m with the fourth scholar! Many of us are like the 9-year-old princess. We think we know all about God, but do we experience him? We may have a lot to say in the Sabbath School class, or a working knowledge of the proof-text schema for every doctrine, know all the answers in the Bible quiz, make free with the reasons why our favourite version is best – but what about how his mother’s translation? That is the acid test. How does the Bible translate into your life? I don’t want to wear out this expression, but here it comes again: We know how to talk the talk, but do we know how to walk the walk?

A friend of mine used to say, ‘If you want to know who behaves the worst, look for who sings the loudest!’ Now since she said that I noticed some notable exceptions! I think that what she meant to say was, ‘The two who are making the most noise may be the very ones who are not living up to their translation?’

‘Ain’t Christian’ about the church community: ‘Are you aware of the sinful failings in their own lives, there are people who, instead of tackling them with God’s help, focus instead on the more conspicuous failings of others. It’s called gossip. “Tain’t Christian, but it happens.” Are you aware of the failure of their pet outreach ideas, there are people who, instead of stopping for a rethink, spit venom at the up-and-running ideas of others. “Tain’t Christian! When we have a failsafe method of outreaching there will be such an influx into the Church that there will be no time for carping. “Unaware that the personal insecurities and neuroses that prevent them from running their own lives successfully arise from unresolved issues from childhood, there are many people who form cosy cosa nostras to enable them to ruin congregations (maybe even conference sessions!).”’


Healthwise

Richard J. B. Willis, BUC Health Ministries director

T he over 22 million antidepressant prescriptions issued annually in the UK are now costing NHS £210 million. With the similar high rate of cost of drugs being offered in most Western countries, clinical scientists are questioning the efficacy of such treatments.

Six or seven in every ten depressed people will get better on antidepressants within six to eight weeks, if they take them regularly,” says the Royal College of Psychiatry (RCP). Other authorities disagree. University of Nevada’s professor of psychiatry and behaviour, Dr. David Alpert says: ‘I don’t think the data support antidepressants as a first choice treatment.’ Against the backdrop of these views the Consumer Association has launched its own investigation into the effectiveness or otherwise of antidepressant drugs. Concerns have been raised about the validity of the clinical trials for a variety of drugs since there is good evidence that drug companies are very selective with the material they publish, so there is good evidence that drug companies are very selective with the material they publish, so the drugs may not be all that they are hyped up to be.

Other concerns are focused on the likelihood of dependence and an increased suicide risk. The RCP state that if the drugs are used as recommended people do not become addicted. What is not always clear is whether the symptoms experienced are withdrawal symptoms or a recurrence of the original problem. One drug company believes that withdrawal reactions are rare, occurring in only two cases per 1,000 patients.

As far as a tendency to suicide is concerned, again controversy is under. It is not known whether or not patients kill themselves as a result of taking the tablets or because of the underlying depression which led to the drug being prescribed. The Health Watch reviewer, David Healy, writes that data from a number of trials leads one to believe that the suicide risk is not a common occurrence. Prozac, hailed as the new antidepressant wonder-drug, has not turned out to be as effective as at first thought. What beneficial effect it has can be gained naturally by using foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids. These include nuts, seeds, and legumes, as well as the publicised fish oils.

There is no stigma in getting professional help when we are depressed. It helps to talk things through. As Dr W. Blair Liddell, who died in 1901, said: ‘Ten minutes quiet conversation will do much to relieve the worry, excitement, morbid fear and ideas of mental depression’ and we should not stop taking prescribed medications without talking it over with the prescriber. We all have our ups and downs but as with other aspects of health, all that we can do to prevent illness should be done, and we can talk problems over with the Great Physician.
Women’s World Day of Prayer took place on 2 March and, in Watford, it was the turn of Stanborough Park church to play host, affording an excellent opportunity for our members to reach out and make friends with Christians visiting from other denominations. Over a dozen churches were represented on the local committee for this international event. The service was written by the women of Romania on the theme of ‘Reconciliation’. Two ‘readers’, one of whom was Mrs Anne Plimoo – the headmistress of Stanborough Primary School – directed the programme. Readers, called ‘voices’ consisted of seventeen other women and a few children. The children were part of a choir from the primary school. With Mrs Frida Peake conducting, they sang ‘Sometimes I wonder’. The chorus: ‘Sadness will turn to laughter; mourning will turn to dancing and our tears will be wiped away’ made the long song very appropriate to the occasion.

The address was by Mrs Audrey Baidestroene. Starting from scratch, Audrey built a large flower arrangement. As she placed leaves and flowers in position, she spoke on the chosen theme. Ulices represented the purity of Christ; blood-red roses his sacrificial flowers of blue, pink and white showed how we can picture the creation byounteracting to reconciliation and restoration. Watford MP Claire Ward, and Watford’s Mayor Sybil Tucker were both present, and with all the readers took flowers forward for Audrey to use. for their support and guidance.

Adventists given medals
Each year the Grantham Journal has its own New Year Honours ceremony held in a local hotel. Readers are invited to nominate those who have gone beyond what is expected of them, and as one might imagine the nominees come from a variety of interests. Those who care for others feature high on the list.

Two Adventists were nominated this year and were presented a week later with a CD and affection of the children, parents and friends. The Lollipop lady who has won the respect of national flags whose emblems were explained by the pupils. Stanborough is a multicultural school with boards from forty-three countries. They believe strongly in the enriching quality of their mini-United Nations.

Unity in diversity
Commonwealth Day was celebrated in colourful fashion at Stanborough School on Monday 11 March. Pupils representing Member States within the Commonwealth took part in a special assembly, celebrating the occasion by wearing traditional dress and talking about life in their home country.

A few of the pupils from abroad are shown in the picture against a background of national flags whose emblems were explained by the pupils. Stanborough is a multicultural school with boards from forty-three countries. They believe strongly in the enriching quality of their mini-United Nations. We wish both the Grantham Norman members the best for the future. Mary as she begins her retirement and Rita as she continues to care for those in need of help, healing and the comforting word. MIKE COXON

Salt of the Earth: Yeovil church planting update by Dana King
Church planting since 1997 has been a roller-coaster ride of hair-raising heights of exhilaration and plunging into the depths of the great unknown. Four years in, and we were at the stage of developing ‘community’, involving the parents of our parenting group in a community project that would impact Yeovil and bring us together as a core group. This was a huge challenge as we were all coming from very different backgrounds. During the course of 2001 we saw the birth of Time Out Together, a charitable company that aims to meet the ‘felt needs’ of families. A teen club was launched and a parenting newsletter was hot off the press for National Parenting week, to name just two of the endeavours.

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Ballacnock baptism
Ballacnock is a small church about thirty miles south-west of Dublin, set in the idyllic countryside west of Wicklow. On 16 February the members gathered together with a few from Dublin for a very special Sabbath celebration. Kevin Rothwell had returned home to share his baptism with his friends and family. Kevin and his wife Caroline had travelled home from Liverpool, where Kevin has almost completed his nurses’ training. They have looked forward to this day for some time. Kevin placed his life in the hands of God many years ago and is very much a student of the Bible. The members prepared the church for the service with fresh spring flowers and foliage, and Kevin’s father, Ben Rothwell, sang an old favourite gospel melody in the sermon Douglas McCormac reflected on the life of David and the new life that is experienced through the new covenant. The assistant pastor, John Dwyer, who was baptised three years ago, was present, and with all the readers took flowers forward for Audrey to use. for their support and guidance.

The editor of the paper made short mention of the event. The address was by Mrs Audrey Baidestroene. Starting from scratch, Audrey built a large flower arrangement. As she placed leaves and flowers in position, she spoke on the chosen theme. Ulices represented the purity of Christ; blood-red roses his sacrificial flowers of blue, pink and white showed how we can picture the creation byinreacción to reconciliation and restoration. Watford MP Claire Ward, and Watford’s Mayor Sybil Tucker were both present, and with all the readers took flowers forward for Audrey to use.
The trouble with Sabbath school

DAVID SHENFIELD, a member of the Leytonstone church and Woodford Green branch Sabbath school, reports on the different approaches to the Sabbath school and the Sabbath school lessons he observed while visiting a source of churches across North America and Europe. He believes there are lessons to be learned.

Dr George Gallagher moved from the Secretariat of the British Union to the General Conference. *Dr Gallagher moved from the Secretariat of the British Union to the General Conference.*

The Scandals of the Bible Revealed by John Gallager

From the grey details of the Leevile and his butched conclusion to the suffering of [job with child] and demonic persecution on the way, Sipe- Torst’s book The Scandals of the Bible might seem to be a hostile criticism of the “Book of books.”

Not so. Dr. Torst (a specialist in biblical method in Norway) has written a quite calmly and in-depth look at the stories in the Bible, and explain why they are there. More than that, he takes a clear delight in portraying the God who still works for good—perhaps not the way we expect it. He discards scenes that are not in keeping, and explains why they are there. The ten-minute spots should be within the Sabbath school before the Sabbath school breaks into classes. The ten-minute spot between Sabbath school and service usually starts with the teaching plans. They are there to be used to guide the class, and give a workshop on the Sabbath day.

The class is cut short because all are present, or on time. The class is “cut” because all are present, or on time.

The role of the teacher is to cover the lesson from a different angle from the daily readings. “Within the Teacher’s Quarterly there are various teaching plans. There are the lessons that the questioner is embarrassed about. Manson can be seen as a teacher who is teaching about the Sabbath school. The lesson plan is not broken and should be restarted. Divinity school about a short while on Sabbath school is about teaching the Sabbath school and the dedication that which was used during the Sabbath day’s lessons.

I have little sympathy for the luxurious of the adults being able to go to a different room and vacate the sanctity of the church. The church is a place where Sabbath school breaks into classes and each class is told to play with prayer.

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The proposals called for immediate suspension of all non-humanitarian assistance to the government of Turkmenistan, and the cancellation of all state visits between the two countries. Additionally, the commission called for Turkmenistan’s human rights record to be raised at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Adventists have been target of state-sponsored religious persecution in Turkmenistan, with the destruction in November of the only Adventist church building in the country. The arrest and detention of the pastor and members, fires and bombings, and the expulsion of an Adventist woman from her apartment for allegedly holding religious services there.

We must send a clear message to the president of Turkmenistan that his actions in violating fundamental human rights are intolerable, said Gallagher. We are asking all those who wish to support our protest at the treatment of religious minorities in Turkmenistan to write to both the Turkmen government and to elected leaders here in the US. Details about the letter-writing campaign are available at: http://ue.ucanbulletin.org

Troubled East Indonesia. Government efforts to end more than three years of religious and ethnic violence in Indonesia’s Moluccas province have met with only limited success, reports an Adventist church leader in the region. Two days of peace talks between Christians and Muslims were held earlier this month in Malino, South Sulawesi, aimed at ending the sectarian fighting that has left some 10,000 people dead, thousands of homes and churches destroyed, and tens of thousands of people displaced.

Reinhold Kesaulya, president of the Adventist Church in East Indonesia, called the reconciliation efforts in Malino ‘excellent, but says there is no guarantee that peace agreements will hold in local regions and remote villages. If the Malino team could visit all the villages and talk to all the people together, then I am sure that peace would come, he says. But in the meantime, he adds, the continued danger means that Adventists are being advised to delay their return to their former villages.

Kesaulya, along with a group of local Adventist leaders and a police officer, visited the Poso district in January. When we entered the district of Poso we saw and visited many villages left deserted, with no more houses, he says. Our church buildings in Sala and Tanggul villages were burnt to ashes. The roads we travelled was so deserted and desolate that for several kilometers we met only one or two vehicles. In Poso city the Islamic presence is dominant, says Kesaulya, with women and girls wearing veils in compliance with a regulation recently passed by local authorities.

We thank the government for the peace talks in Malino between Muslims and Christians at Poso, says Kesaulya. We really appreciate their positive effort in unifying the people there. He says the government is also encouraging those who fled the violence to return to their villages, and is offering to rebuild houses and churches destroyed in the conflict.

New day in Cuba. The Advent Church in Cuba is a vibrant community whose members have a readiness, a willingness, to share their faith, said Pastor Jan Paulsen, president of the world church, during a visit to the country last month. I have been encouraged visiting Adventist churches here by seeing that they are Christian communities that are alive, said Paulsen, adding that a new day has dawned in Cuba.

During the five-day itinerary, Paulsen met with Adventist church leaders and members, and spoke at church events across the country. He also met with government officials in Havana, including Cardinal Dias, minister of religious affairs. During their meeting, Paulsen mentioned his earlier visit to the Adventist seminary in Cuba, built by Marianna Volunteers International. He commented on the small selection of books in the library, many of which are outdated, due to the restrictions on bringing books into the country.

I told Diegos that I find it incomprehensible that ministers can be trained in a modern society without the proper literature, said Paulsen later. The library has the square footage and space, but not enough books. This is one of the challenges facing the seminary.

Diegos responded, positively granting the Adventist Church an opportunity to impart additional books for the seminary in Cuba.

The church in Cuba currently has some 35,000 members and continues to experience strong growth. Marianna, along with other Adventist organisations, has played a key role in supporting this growth through its evangelisation programmes and an extensive church building and rehabilitation project.