‘Lifting the Mask’

Women’s Ministries Retreat, 14-17 November, Royal Court Hotel, Coventry

by Heather Haworth, Women’s Ministries director, BUC. Photos: Pastor John Surridge

‘Book by 31 July or the retreat will be full,’ was the message circulating in the BUC. When the numbers applying to be present exceeded 370, two more hotels had to be found. Finally the number present exceeded twice that of the previous BUC Women’s retreat, in 1999.

‘Lifting the Mask’ was a carefully chosen theme. Through women serving the whole church, an atmosphere of trust has begun to permeate congregations. Women are feeling more confident in revealing the real stresses of their lives; the ones they’ve kept hidden beneath their well-made spiritual masks.

John Surridge and Wes Kapon, who came to report the retreat for the BUC video news, commented on the high level of participation in the workshops. ‘These are hard-hitting topics,’ John commented as he noted the subjects covered: sex and the single woman, AIDS, HIV and the Church, abuse, Adventist women and God, keeping our children safe, miscarriage, the God of suffering, worship for busy women, power and prayer. Adventist promiscuous males, power in balance in the Church, who is in control of your life, surviving abuse, parenting teenagers. These were just a few of the two dozen topics covered in workshops.

Mrs Cynthia Francis, NEC president and his wife. Then, following a three-course meal, Claradell Morgan introduced us to some of the first women God created.

During the Sabbath worship hour Audrey Balderstone made an amazing flower display depicting the passion of Christ. ‘Fantastic’, and ‘a sermon I’ll never forget’, were two reactions.

Louise Clarke, the evening MC, had the ladies in stitches with her hilarious tale of how Mary McFarlane kidnapped her so that Ground Force could do her garden. . . . Her attention kept being caught by a gorilla, however. The women had dressed up for the three-course dinner, each wearing a mask. ‘But who are you?’ Louise demanded of the gorilla. It was not until after Pat’s fashion parade that all was revealed. The gorilla was a man, Philip Jackson, who, with his wife, led in the games and fellowship that lasted until the early hours on Sunday.

Each year a collection is taken up to support women in different parts of our division. Last time £700 was raised. This year’s total was £1,000.

The four-day retreat was run jointly by Claradell Morgan and her team at NEC, Julia Smith and her team at SEC. Each year a collection is taken up to support women in different parts of our division. Last time £700 was raised. This year’s total was £1,000.

The retreat came to an end with testimonies of how God had impacted the lives of individuals and of congregations through Women’s Ministries.
Excitement at orphanage
ADRA-UK Shoe-box Appeal 2002
Changing the world, one life at a time

by Chantal Aen

On 28 October the new ADRA-UK truck left Stansborough Park with 650 shoeboxes (250 more than last year!), which were destined for an orphanage in the city of Nis, in Yugoslavia. The success of last year’s shoe-box appeal among church members throughout the UK gave us just the incentive we needed to re-start this fun-filled project again this Christmas.

We asked Harry Wilby, our volunteer transport driver, to describe what happened when he arrived at the orphanage in Nis. “There was great excitement when two pick-up loads of boxes arrived from the ADRA-UK truck. Chaos reigned for a while, and only locks and the tops of heads could be seen as two huge boxes were opened and the children dived in to help themselves to cuddly toys, puzzles, footballs and all sorts of other goodies.”

A few children were chosen by Zlatuška Gjipa, the staff member on duty, to pose for photos with the shoe-boxes before they were stored away until Christmas Day.

There are currently ninety-six children in residence, aged 6-18. Some were orphaned by the death of their parents, some have tragically been abandoned, left to care of the state. Others have been taken into care because of adverse circumstances from their homes. Unfortunately, few people in Yugoslavia wish to take children into this age group, and none of them has been adopted in the past ten years.

Although the children are given all the love and care the devoted staff provide, both the children and staff showed their gratefulness as they understood that strangers in a far-away country also care about them and that they were happy to share their blessings!

ADRA-UK would like to express their sincere gratitude to everybody who gave so generously of their time and effort in making up the Christmas shoe-boxes. As Leonard Nimoy once said, “The miracle is this – the more we share, the more we have.”

Healthwise

Noaël, Noaël!

A n early Christmas Carol now that cards and crackers are in the shops? No, just an abbreviation to let us know that the powers that be are looking after our health.

NOAEL stands for No Observable Adverse Effect Level, which places limits on the amount of pesticide residues in foods. For good measure, there is also the ADI (Acceptable Daily Intake) of pesticide residues in foods. For good measure, they point out that making these paring food tables across the years will show that the nutritive than in former times and that the consumers may therefore be victims of our own cravings for products with an excess residue of foods not in season here.

So far as pesticide residues are concerned, around two-thirds of the fruit and vegetable products listed in former years are much improved.

As far as pesticide residues are concerned, around two-thirds of the fruit and vegetable products listed in former years are much improved.

The remaining 30% fall well within the NOAEL levels issued as guidelines for these products. Even allowing that cereals and cereal products are worse for the residues, it is fair to say that these do not exceed their NOAELs.

If these products show residues, approximately 7% were found to have levels above the maximum permitted, and while these would still have no adverse effect at those levels, because of the wide safety margins in the NOAEL system these products do not come to supermarket shelves.

Wherever this level is set, there will be people who want and demand absolute purity.

David Marshall

Two to a Manger

The child was not a particularly good child, nor was she particularly bad. She was a normal child. And she was unfortunate enough to be the focus of my attention while she was unwrapping her Christmas presents.

She tore into them with a speed and tenacity that was a little unnerving. There was a visible mountain of parcels for her to get through, and the speed with which she unwrapped the presents was not much better. They ended up over her right shoulder. I saw my wife wince as she did so. It was not an elegant move, but it was considerably improved.

The children were known to make do with ‘a stocking with a few oranges and nuts’, and that we should think ourselves lucky. And we did. We had a pineapple full of parcels. The largest of these – from our parents – would be something we would recognise as the anaesthetic of television. But don’t get me started!

In the course of this year a reader has drawn this story to my attention. You may think that it has something to teach us all.

Noaël, Noaël!

Richard J. B. Willis, BUC Health Ministries director

BUC News

Noaël, Noaël!

The story happened in the gangster-ridden Russia in the year following the collapse of Communism. Two American pastors were invited by the Russian Department of Education to teach Christian values in state orphanages and schools. In an orphanage that contained children who had been abused and abandoned the American pastor told the Christmas story. From the drop-jawed silence of the children who gathered around him, it is known that this was a story they had never heard before. After twenty years of state-enforced atheism, how could they have heard it?

The story had its usual features: Mary and Joseph, no room at the inn, stars, angels, and the baby in the manger. The children pressed forward, eager to hear every detail.

So good was the story’s reception that the pastor decided to harness the imaginations of the orphans by setting them some practical work based on it. They were given squares of coloured card and told to use scissors and paste to recreate the nativity scene.

The orphan went at it with a will and the pastor went around inspecting the assemblage of cut-out stars, shepherds, angels, Marys and Josephs, and babies in their mangers. ‘Boy!’, he exclaimed. "These are really good… jeez, but what’s this?’ He concluded, bewildered. He had just come across 6- year-old Mishas’ finished project. It was great save in one respect. There were two cut-out babies in the manger! The pastor called for a translator and quizzed Mishla. In the answer to ‘Why two babies?’ question the 6-year-old listed his arms, branded at his project and began to retell the Christmas story. For a little boy who had only heard the story once he had told it very well indeed. Until, that is, he reached the place where Mary put the baby in the manger. It was then that Mishla began to improve. And when Mary laid the baby in the manger, Jesus looked at me and said, ‘Do you have any place to stay?’ and when I told him I had no mana and no papa and no place to stay he said, ‘Come and stay with me.’

Misha had told Jesus, ‘No, I can’t have no gift for you.’ But then it had occurred to him that, in a manger out in the cold, the baby could use some human warmth, and had asked if the warmth of his company would be an appropriate gift.

Celeste is one of the many Christmas charities of the affluence of the past thirty years. Other charities include homemade entertainment, not to mention Christmas puddins, rice pies – all sacrified to the supremacy of the supermarket and the anaesthetic of television. But don’t get me started!

Back to gifts. In the course of this year a reader has drawn this story to my attention. You may think that it has something to teach us all about gifts and giving. In the interests of brevity, I’ll use my own words.

The true light, which lighteth every person that is in darkness, was coming into the world . . . He came to his own, and his own received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God‘. (John 1:9, 11-12). Holy Bible. English Standard Version. (2001).

Mishla had found someone who would never abandon or abuse him. More. He had illuminated the Reason for Christmas Season; and the only acceptable gift we can give in response.

The ADRA-UK Shoe-box Appeal 2002

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**Pencebank church plant - first baptism**

The story behind David Robert’s baptism is not only remarkable but a vivid testimony to the wonderful leading of the Holy Spirit.

Many years ago when David was clocking in early one morning at work, someone had placed a note in his slot pointing out that the seventh day, and not the first, was the Sabbath. When he showed it to his pastor at the Pentecostal Church it was informed that the Sabbath was changed under the new covenant. Being the trusting person he was, David believed what his pastor told him and brought nothing of it again until some twenty years or more later when he was listening to a series of audio studies on the Book of Hebrews by Dr. Prince. When the speaker presented chapter 4 - particularly where it says, “There remains a keeping of the Sabbath for the people of God”, and expounded clearly that the Sabbath is the seventh day.

Saturday and, we recommend to enter we believe to the blessings of a truly happy experience. Dr. Prince’s words convinced me to study the word of God and learn to enjoy it. I realised that he had been wrong all these years for our people to keep the first day of the week as the Sabbath. So the next Sunday when he took his church to the pastor, but he told him the same untruth as the previous one and urged him not to forget that nonsense! Some time later, while browsing through a second-hand bookshop in Penzance, he found an old volume in which were a series of Bible studies. Intrigued by his finding, he laboriously went his way through the studies, page by page. Then he carried out a series of studies of the Book of Hebrews by Dr. Prince. When the speaker presented chapter 4 - particularly where it says, “There remains a keeping of the Sabbath for the people of God”, and expounded clearly that the Sabbath is the seventh day.

On Sunday, 28th September the members of the Bishop church were gathered in a local Adventist church. Mr. James, who is the current leader of the church, welcomed our members and made them feel very welcome. He then introduced us to the main speaker of the day, Pastor Michael Walker. Pastor Walker gave us an inspiring message of the power of faith, the joy of living for Jesus Christ, and the importance of keeping the Sabbath as the Lord’s day. He challenged us to be the change we wish to see in the world and to be the light that guides others to the path of righteousness.

The day was filled with uplifting music, moving testimonies, and inspiring sermons. Everyone seemed to share a sense of being uplifted by a truly inspirational experience.

**Why is MESSENGER sad?**

MESSENGER has never been more so. Why? You have been asking. The Department of Health is proposing to close all of our Apprentice. Our computers were stolen. We back up all our work, but the recovery has taken longer than expected. Apologies and - Christmas (I don’t know what’s New Year?)

**Newbold Hosts Day of Fellowship**

Newbold’s new church building provided the ideal venue for the Area 3 Day of Fellowship on Sabbath 26 October. Visitors from the various Adventist churches came to plant in the church. The church has been working towards the goal of baptism for several months and was looking forward to welcoming their new members.

The day was filled with exciting activities, including music, games, and fellowship. The presence of the new members was a reminder of the joy of welcoming new believers into the church family. The day ended with a closing prayer, thanking God for the wonderful day and looking forward to the continued journey of faith and growth for everyone involved.

**Footprints campaign**

On Sabbath 28 September the members of the Bishop church were privileged and delighted to begin their walk in the Footprints of Jesus. The Footprints campaign was initiated by evangelist Glen Samuel, who currently serves as the Ministerial secretary of the West Indies Union in Jamaica.

He delivered his sermons with power and conviction each (except Thursdays) and was very enthusiastic about the campaign. It was a great motivator for members to attend church and to spread the gospel to others. The Footprints campaign was a wonderful opportunity for the Bishop church to reconnect with the community and to share the message of Jesus Christ.

**New Adventure Playground**

Following our annual harvest festival on 9 October the parents and friends of Dudley House School, Grantham, together with a band of very happy school children, adjourned to the playground for an exciting event! All our long-awaited Adventure Playground was ready for action and now it will have its baptism.

Funding for the playground was launched four years ago by previous headteacher Eric Vinch, and the Friends of Dudley House School Association worked hard to raise money for the play equipment. Costings of commercial equipment somewhat thwarted the dream until local builder, parent and church member Austin James very kindly offered to erect the facility for us at cost. At least one year of hard work for the playground is now complete.

**Middleborough welcomes new members**

On 7 September three of our church members from Zimbabwe- Lazarus and Teradi and Khumalo and Vee Chauke- moved to Middleborough congregational. Pastor Jameson Bernard led the lesson study and several musical items had an opportunity to test the acoustics of the room. The accomplished sound of ‘3D’ was particularly well received.

When 11:15 came around the local church pastor, Ian Sleeman, welcomed everyone to Newbold and its unique church centre. Then the preacher told us about the exhilarating ‘crowd experience’ when Jesus brought the widow’s dead son back to life. After the morning service visitors enjoyed their packed lunches and took advantage of the superb weather to experience the ambience of the Moor Close garden.

The afternoon programme was organized and hosted by Pastor Malcolm, Area 5 youth leader. The Pathfinder from the Reading Central church started their retreat by writing a short vespers talk by Pastor George Dadey from the newly-founded Slough Ghana church concluded the day’s programme. As the church emptied and people set off for home, everyone seemed to share a sense of having been uplifted by a truly inspirational experience.

**Wigtown’s new church centre**

Wigtown’s new church centre was the ideal venue for the Area 3 Day of Fellowship. Visitors from the various Adventist churches came to plant in the church. The church has been working towards the goal of baptism for several months and was looking forward to welcoming their new members.

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**Retrofit to the Island of Wight**

Barry Allen and David Foster. We truly felt God’s Spirit among us. We were brought closer together in a community drawn from the four corners of the world (and Area 3!). The programme was designed to appeal to young and old alike, with all age groups looking at spiritual gifts in the church; and even included a hike over the downs for the young at heart. The setting at the Christian Retreat centre at St. Khadjah’s was a taste of heaven, with fine autumn weather and glorious views of Ventnor bay. Andrew and Geraldine, who are the resident managers, looked after us very well and have made firm friends with us.
Harvest blessings
Harvest festival is becoming surprisingly difficult to organize. In our small group, we find that we have no time and we therefore do not measure our blessings in terms of the size of our harvest. At Wallingham, a few years ago, we decided to celebrate nature, creation and God's goodness and we invited all in its variation and splendour. Then we were faced with a difficult problem – the programme would be too long if we included everything! Instead of bringing a portion of our harvest, we bring our offerings and donate it to a charity.

Our elder, Jan Dant, has produced an extraordinary harvest programme this year and this year was different. The theme was clearly about the need to care for our environment and about the need for the programme that was enjoyed by the Visitors, poems, music, social, inspirational song with natural footage, thought-provoking readings and a short sermon all as part of the programme. One visitor was inspired to discuss the case of creation versus evolution over dinner. No contributions were received but Jesus specialised in healing all of us and others could do with the highlights of the programme.

The programme was entitled ‘Harvest Samba’, a song played on the keyboard by Peter Jenner, the choir and then the audience. The song and the song played was beautiful to see. Young children delighting in the worship of their God. How much more a beautiful musical gift of our praise to God for it.

(Patrick Boyle, The Express)

Visions, musicales, inspirational song with natural footage, thought-provoking readings and a short sermon all as part of the programme.
How much is it?
A ☑ The actual cost of production is £1 per magazine.

Because the BUC are subsidising the pre-print production cost, the magazine will be made available to church members for just 20 pence each. This price does not, however, include postage. The cost of postage can be minimised if magazines are delivered, in bulk, to churches with other Press supplies. (Bulk orders could then be divided and shared among those church members who wished to use the magazine.)

How do I pay?
A In order to ensure a regular print-run we need regular income. There are two suggested options:

1) Set up a standing order as an individual church member.
2) Set up a standing order corporately as a church.*

*If you are unable to set up a standing order, for whatever reason, it may be possible for you to club together with other members from your church and ask your church treasurer to set up a standing order on your behalf. Alternatively your church might consider using some of its annual evangelistic budget to provide magazines for members to distribute. [The more standing orders we get, the more magazines we print - the more magazines we print, the more people we can reach for Christ.]

Who do I contact?
A Every church member will be receiving one free copy of the next issue of LIFE.info magazine.

If you want to order more copies of the magazine or if you have any standing order enquiries contact: Pastor Dalbert Elias, BUC LIFE.info Marketing Director, BUC offices, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts., WD25 9JZ. Tel: 01923 672251.

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ADRA intervenes in Ethiopia crisis.

ADRA is currently assisting ten thousand people in the two areas most affected by the recent famine crisis in Ethiopia. ADRA’s intervention, which is currently scheduled to last for at least two months, is focusing on the Sidama region in the Oromiya province, and the Wayde and Humbo districts of the southern region. Together with ADRA-International, ADRA-UK is closely monitoring developments in Ethiopia in preparation for a second intervention.

Once again Ethiopia is facing a serious food shortage. 6.4 million people are in need of food aid, and that number is expected to rise sharply to about 14 million in 2003. Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries of East Africa and has a population of approximately 67 million. For the last two decades food availability in Ethiopia has been consistently below that required to sustain normal life.

Rafael Kamal

ADRA干预在埃塞俄比亚危机。

ADRA目前正在援助埃塞俄比亚的两个地区，这两个地区受最近发生的饥荒影响最大。ADRA的干预行动，目前计划持续至少两个月，重点是索马里省的奥罗米亚地区，以及西南地区的怀德和胡姆博地区。与ADRA-国际和ADRA-英国合作，ADRA-UK正密切监控埃塞俄比亚的局势，为可能的第二次干预做准备。

埃塞俄比亚再次面临严重的粮食短缺。640万人需要食物援助，人数预计将急剧上升至2003年的1400万人。埃塞俄比亚是东非最贫穷的国家之一，人口约6700万。过去二十年，埃塞俄比亚的粮食供应一直低于维持正常生活的水平。

Rafael Kamal

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International News

UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>HOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End of Year Banquet</td>
<td>29 December</td>
<td>The Advent Centre, 37 Brandon Street, London W1H 5JE</td>
<td>Wilma Williams 07732 804815</td>
<td>Dinner and Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Year Advent Single’s Ball</td>
<td>5 January</td>
<td>The Advent Centre, 37 Brandon Street, London W1H 5JE</td>
<td>TIXTIES ONLY! Maureen Raphael 020 89444816 or 07965 419926</td>
<td>Dinner and Concert</td>
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Please submit advertisements in this format. Please make the church connection clear. For a complete list of upcoming events check out the database on the BUC website: www.adventist.org.uk.