Young adults in the Seventh-day Adventist Church must 'become owners, take responsibility . . . in your church, in your congregation,' Pastor Jan Paulsen, world church president, told a multi-national audience of European Adventist students during a live broadcast on 26 April. The programme was held at Marienhöhe Adventist church on the campus of Marienhöhe College, Darmstadt, Germany.

Called Let's Talk – Europe, the broadcast, hosted by Gabi Ziegler, featured church youth from twelve European nations and was aired via the church's Hope Channel television service globally.

'Two thirds of our global family are under 32 years of age. We haven't done very well in linking with them,' said Paulsen. 'I cannot do it all, but I do want to hear what the young people have to say to us.'

During the ensuing hour, Pastor Paulsen addressed a wide range of topics raised by the studio audience and invited further questions via the Let's Talk website.

One of the first questions asked was about the composition of the delegates at the 2005 General Conference session in St Louis, Missouri, the world church's quinquennial business meeting. How many would be young people?

'Delegate selection is done by the church globally. We've asked them not only to pick people elected into office; select some who are young, and also some women,' Pastor Paulsen said, adding that 'we had a short list of twenty-five or thirty vacant slots that were appointed by our [world] headquarters. I said I wanted at least eight of these to be selected under 30 years of age . . . and that was done.'

Encouraging youth participation in church life was a major theme of the broadcast. Asked about tensions created between new churches and older congregations, Pastor Paulsen acknowledged that this is a situation sometimes encountered all over the world.

However, he added, 'I am delighted that so many young people take initiative in establishing a community in the name of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that will attract strangers. Maybe there are some tensions that will cause headache, but I am delighted this is being done.'

He continued: 'If we pray for each other more seriously, we will judge each other less frequently.'

Several audience members raised the matter of inter-church relations. Pastor Paulsen emphasised the need for understanding: 'There should not be a battle between me and Christians of other churches. I am, as each one of us should be, a spokesperson for Christ. [We should] accept the honesty and sincerity of other people, even though we may disagree with them.'

Asked about the recent events in the Roman Catholic Church, Pastor Paulsen said, 'There is no doubt that the new Pope will have an enormous impact on society. I will wait and see what the future holds.'

Confronted with the question of how the church can speak out on homosexuality without seeming homophobic, Pastor Paulsen emphasised the Bible's teachings against homosexual practice, but also noted a need for grace.

'If the Lord was going to start out with only loving, perfect people, I for one would be in trouble,' he said. 'If we minister to them all . . . those who have this tendency may see a better way, but while they do that, we see them as human beings who have great value to God.'

Before concluding the programme with prayer that God would strengthen young people, Pastor Paulsen counselled his audience to become active in church life.

'As you grow and develop and mature in that, also the church's dependence on you will grow. The worst you can do is pull back and be a spectator,' he said.

Let's Talk – Europe is the third of a series of unscripted, unedited conversations between young people and their church leader. The previous two were held in the United States.
It was 4 March and, although we assumed that the final filing of winter was over, flakes of snow were falling, but showers of rain cleaned the sited as treasurers from across South England made their way to Staverton Park for what turned out to be a memorable weekend.

Edward Cole said, ‘I found it very useful, informative and enjoyable. It was pleasant to meet other treasurers in the conference and to learn from them. I came away on Sunday feeling better equipped, spiritually refreshed, and, equivalently, highly motivated and inspired to do all that God has entrusted me with. For me, in one weekend, the treasurer’s role won from routine to dynamic. As a result, the kind of words that underpin everything I do as a local treasurer will be something like… transparency, accountability and building trust in the money in our purse for accomplishing God’s work.’ (Wimbledon)

Thelma Chalcraft said, ‘Staverton Park gave that extra special touch of impor- tance to the occasion, altogether a feast of good things for body, mind and soul. This being my first experience, I admit to hungrily lapping it all up from beginning to end, gaining a refreshing insight into my role as a local church treasurer. I am very grateful for being shown how to perform my task more effectively.’ (Ipswich)

Jennifer Phillips, ‘As a newly-appointed member of the treasurer team, I found this weekend workshop helped me to gain more of an insight into my role. The weekend began with a thought- provoking, practical, follow-up to the course led by senior guest treasurer Pastor Maurice Maughrane. Practical tasks were outlined by Conference treasurer Earl Gaynor, who delegated some welcome reception with calculators, a bank statement, cash book entries and a recon- ciliation exercise. Earl stressed the importance of demonstrating trustworthiness by keeping accurate financial records and regular reporting.

‘The essential and timely topic of adequate insurance for the church and all its activities was presented by Corinne Lanquetuit of the Adventist Risk Management organisation, who outlined the new ARM policies and how they are applied. Her comprehensive presentation was followed by a wide-ranging question time in which she was able to explain how many common situations that arise in church can be properly insured or resolved. If you are not sure if a church activity you are involved with is properly covered by insurance, your local church treasurer is your first point of enquiry.

‘The weekend has highlighted the heavy responsibilities borne by local church treasurers. It is a great joy and challenge to be able to meet the demands of both financial and risk management aspects of our role.’ (Ipswich)’

South England Conference treasurer team would like to express their gratitude to the co-operation and support they have with the local treasurers, ‘stewards of a faithful people’ in this area of responsibility. As we revile, with new energy and a new ethos, our sense of responsibility, let us go in faith, not wavering, for the task is not ours but the Lord’s.

DONNA BERNARD SEC Treasurer

 Message from the Editor

Contending with Sufficient Fierce Faces

with David Marshall

In the course of the weekend, it became apparent that each sister had a tiny coterie of sympathisers in the congregation. When he contacted the pastor with a view to bringing the two sisters together, the pastor wavered. He had, of course, tried to do things many times previously and he was acutely aware that his congregation could never grow numerically not spiritually while the warring factions remained. But, in some way, the church had become the ‘goal’ that each of the factions meant to win.

So who did win? Neither sister. No one. Well, almost no one. Two lawyers in the community became rich, and in Campolo’s words, ‘Satan was overflowed.

How did the story end? Campolo does not say. All stories – if we pursue them long enough – end in death. (There is no information to indicate that the sisters ever made peace. Medical evidence may just be a beach too far. You can move them to some other place, but if you take away the light of that, have chosen to pass on that for- giveness to others. And the power to forgive is an internal power, because it is a supernatural power; it comes from the Holy Spirit. And it is one of the most blissfully liberating experiences of life.)

It is, of course, bad for the legal business. No lawyer gets rich through the exercise of total forgiveness. As soon as he has told the devil ‘It is all right for you. It will wonderfully transform the expression on your face, the quality of your life and the life and witness of your Church.’

Ever complained that there aren’t many miracles in the Church these days? The blind man not to see? The ears of the deaf not to unstop? The equivalent of such a miracle would be you, through the power of the Holy Spirit, forgive someone who said bad things about bad things to you – it is the equivalent of seeing the dead raised.

And the person who gets the benefit is not the one who is forgiven but the one who does the forgiving. Upright and unoffending lives destroy. Grace and total forgiveness liberate far more than the mere display of facial expression.

References:


SEC Church Treasurers’ Retreat

Healthwise

A beach too far

‘... the story?' asked

... so fierce he resolved to preach

... the one who is forgiven but the one who does the forgiving.

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‘The time was right’

...was the sentiment expressed by Nicholas Blackburn, one of thirteen new members who joined the Briot church family through baptism. He further commented that it was his desire to continue to serve the Lord as long as he was able and would encourage other young people to do the same.

The baptism took place on the heels of a two-week campaign entitled “You Can Make It”, held from 12 to 26 March. A number of inspiring speakers, including Pastors Richard (Jackson), Richard Holter, Ian Sweeney and Stephan Burton-Shníll, presented the love of Jesus Christ in a clear and decisive fashion during the first week of the campaign.

During the second week, Pastor Eugene Lewis was the main speaker. Pastor Lewis, who was accompanied by his wife Jenette, currently serves as the pastor of the Emerald City Community Church in Seattle. He embraced the theme, and each night, except Thursday, those who were present were deeply moved and richly blessed with biblical and real-life truths substantiated by a number of his own life’s experiences.

The campaign was further highlighted by the singing evangelist, Cynthia Palmer, an international gospel recording artist from Mississippi, USA. Cynthia attested that eight years ago the Lord called her to her ministry of music and without hesitation she resigned her job and took it up full time. As the singing evangelist for the campaign she warmed the hearts of all who attended that eight years ago the Lord called her to her ministry of music and without hesitation she resigned her job and took it up full time.

At the end of the campaign thirteen people were baptised by Pastor Hamilton Williams: Trevor Durkey, Andrew Armadi, Richard Ramsey, Olveen Coates, Samuel Prendergast, Chris Nairn, Christiana Campbell, Natalie and Omar Scarlett, Nadine Murray, Nicholas Blackburn, Walford Goodson and Sullivan Samuels.

Newbold Arts Festival

Newbold's week-long Arts Festival in April included music, art, drama, fashion, and a lecture on garden architecture and history. The week began with a lecture by Dr Harry Leonard, former head of Newbold's week-long Arts Festival in April included music, art, drama, fashion, and a lecture on garden architecture and history. The week began with a lecture by Dr Harry Leonard, former head of Newbold's week-long Arts Festival in April included music, art, drama, fashion, and a lecture on garden architecture and history. The week began with a lecture by Dr Harry Leonard, former head of Newbold's week-long Arts Festival in April included music, art, drama, fashion, and a lecture on garden architecture and history. The week began with a lecture by Dr Harry Leonard, former head of Newbold's week-long Arts Festival in April included music, art, drama, fashion, and a lecture on garden architecture and history. The week began with a lecture by Dr Harry Leonard, former head of

Hot Cross Buns

Between them the Llandinord Welsh church plant and the Hertford church gave away 450 hot cross buns on Good Friday. Passersby were wished a ‘Happy Easter’ and given a bun on a saucer that contained the following message: ‘Why a cross on a hot cross bun? Traditionally eaten on Good Friday, when Jesus Christ was put to death, the bun’s cross reminds us of what Christ did for all mankind – including you! – a story or the most significant event in all history! There’s more to a hot cross bun than you realise and there’s even more to Jesus Christ than you think.’

Norwich newcomers

It was party time for the Norwich church family on the weekend of 29 January. Our social committee gave us a good mix of entertainment in the form of quizzes, jokes and sports. Ginny as usual put his imitable stamp on the proceedings, if the whoops and gouts of laughter were anything to go by. The party also helped us to get to know better the whole membership of new-comers whom we are so happy to welcome into our midst. Because Norwich is an university city we are blessed with a multicultural church. The early part of the evening was given over to games and activities led by Freeda for the children. The rise in decibels showed that they were having a wonderful time. A big thanks to Beryl and her team for the splendid moments which were enjoyed by all. The joining of hands for ‘Auld Lang Syne’ encouraged the feeling of warmth and friendship as the evening drew to a close. As Washington said, ‘Let’s do it again’.

Comrie girl raises £400 for hospice

Eleven-year-old Mariann Walker from Comrie has raised the incredible sum of £400 for Rachael House Children’s Hospice. Mariann attends the Crieff Adventist church, and all the children in her Junior School were challenged by their leader Myra Rodd and her dedicated team of helpers to raise money for charity. Mariann chose Rachael House Children’s Hospice as her charity and then began to think of ways of raising money. She bought a considerable number of tubes of Smartie sweets, which she decorated and gave to friends, family, church members and anyone else she could think of. She then asked them to fill the tubes with coins. She admitted she ate all the sweets before giving the tubes away! Much to her joy the money began coming in, and also one large donation. When all the money was counted, it amounted to £400.

Baptism after pastor’s ‘close call’

It was an afternoon of rejoicing at Ilford church as Letoria McCarthy (affectionately known as Pearl) took her stand for Christ in baptism on 16 April. Pearl had been attending church for over a year with her dear friend Alma Hall and, over a number of months, had faithfully studied the scriptures under the guidance of our head elder, Gladiot Austin. Pearl was reminded in the baptismal address that her duty was to remain faithful both in times of peace and tribulation; and, in song, to “hold fast” til Jesus comes. Our pastor, Nigel G. David, Snr, who himself had a ‘close call’ following a car accident just the night before, resulting in injuries to himself and his daughter, bravely came out to immerse Pearl in the watery grave of baptism.

We had the privilege of watching Pearl emerge as a new creature in Christ, representing another ‘jewel in the crown’.

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Woodford Green baptism

Fiona Wright and Judith Mills went to Plaistow Adventist church on Sabbath 28 March to be baptised. They are from Woodford Green church. Plaistow also had a baptism. Judith Mills was renewing her commitment to the Lord; she had studied with Pastor Rodney; and Brother Belliot spoke of Fiona’s commitment to the Lord; she had studied with Pastor Rodney; and Brother Belliot spoke of Fiona’s commitment to the Lord; she had studied with Pastor Rodney; and Brother Belliot spoke of Fiona’s commitment to the Lord; she had studied with Pastor Rodney; and Brother Belliot spoke of Fiona’s commitment to the Lord; she had studied with Pastor Rodney; and Brother Belliot spoke of Fiona’s commitment to the Lord; she had studied with Pastor Rodney; and Brother Belliot spoke of Fiona’s commitment to

Aylesbury baptism

On Sabbath 9 April the Aylesbury and Oxford churches joined together in Oxford for the baptism of Carol Chikwaya. Carol has been attending the Aylesbury church regularly and joined the Bible class that began in May 2005. She studied the full calendar of ceremonies. The pastors were no strangers to either church as they are the pastorial team for Woodford Green, Plaistow and Daykenham churches.

Hanwell baptism

There was unbridled joy in Hanwell church, West London, and most in Heaven too, when David Patience declared his love for the Lord Jesus Christ through baptism on 5 March.

Daphne, a 25-year-old Ugandan student, was introduced to the Adventist faith by friends Nikita and Tresor. She had watched Dr Walter Pearson’s inspiring messages from the NET 2004 broadcasts and had also responded to an altar call at her previous baptism. The picture shows Hanwell’s pastor, Pavel Agiar, conducting the baptism.

Golden wedding

During March the Newark group were happy to share in celebrating the golden wedding anniversary of Gwen and Dennis Archer and they were presented with a gift from Newark members. Growing up in the Watford area they were married by the late Pastor A. W. Cook in the Watford Town church on 28 March 1955. They moved to Grantham with The Stanborough Press in 1966 and Dennis eventually became manager. Dennis has spent his life working for the Lord – always with Gwen by his side. However, it was their friend and Saviour Jesus Christ who, throughout their years together, has been with them every step of the way. They recalled the words of one of the hymns sung on their wedding day. With so blessed a Friend accompanies us, nothing need be of us save being guarded/Guarded well from every foe.

A truly Christian marriage that is an example of love, commitment and service to God.

Aylesbury church elders, and during the course of the studies requested that she be baptised. It was agreed that she could be, but she decided to finish the studies first. Carol was baptised by Pastor David Spearing in front of a full church. There were four other Aylesbury members present who were given the right hand of fellowship: Mbsani and Sikanysile Duba, Rosi Othimbo and Akhri Kidjana. It was also a memorable day for all present.

Roundelwood Health Spa

The British Union Conference is looking to appoint a new manager for the Roundelwood Health Spa, Crieff, Tayside. Candidates for the post should have a proven success in business management and be sympathetic to the ethos and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The position requires a team player with strong entrepreneurial and adaptable interpersonal skills with a flexible approach to work. Please send CV to Health Ministries Director (Executive Secretary), BUC Offices, Stornoway Park, Woodford Hwy, WD25 9JZ.

Closing date for applications: 30 June 2005.
O

Sunday 17 April staff and friends lined the streets of London to support Stanborough School’s Physical Education teacher, Russell McKie, on his first ever London Marathon run. Russell ran for the Stanborough School sponsored charity ‘Dinnertime’, which was set up by the School’s music and drama teams, teacher, Deborah St Cyr, and funds lunch meals for the Kiyaku Primary School in Uganda. Russell completed the London Marathon in 4 hours 19 minutes and 20 seconds, and raised over £1,000 for the charity.

Speaking at the school, Russell explained that he had dreamt of running the London Marathon for many years. “This was the fourth year in a row that I have applied to run the Marathon, and I was really pleased when I got the confirmation in mid-November last year. I started training seriously in December, running three times a week. Initially I would do six miles on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and ten miles on Sundays. Pretty soon I was able to increase this to eight miles on each evening and thirteen on Sunday, together with other general fitness training such as swimming, weights and cycling. By the beginning of April I was doing eighteen miles on Sundays and finally, on a trip to Scotland, I did twenty-two, with my dad coaching from a bike. My target time was anywhere between four and four-and-a-half hours, so I wasn’t too disappointed with my final result. Not only a fitness enthusiast, Russell is also a vegetarian who is careful about his food. ‘Marathon training requires a special diet’, he said. ‘In the week before the Marathon I had three days of high fat and high protein, and then it was four days of carbohydrates loading. On the day itself I had my usual hearty breakfast, mainy cereal, and then just drank lots of water.’

Running the London Marathon had been a personal ambition for Russell, but it was the supporter he had from the School which helped him to keep going. ‘My colleagues and the kids at the School were very supportive’, he said.

David Runs for AMR

David Ferguson completed the Flora London Marathon this year despite his problem was his heart. ‘In the week before the event, yet he completed in a time of four hours 19 minutes and 20 seconds, raising to date some £600 for the charity. David very much appreciates the generosity of Grantham church members, and that of three members of the Adventist Business & Professionals’ Association (who each gave £100), and would like readers to note that donations can still be forwarded to him (c/o Grantham church) until the end of June.

Alphabetically

I praise you, God, because you are Amazing, Beautiful, Creative, Delivering. Go through the alphabet together, finding a word to praise God to pass on to each other until you can think of no more words.

Geographically

Dear God, I’ve been thinking about the people in Africa [whenever] . . . Everyone thinks about a different area of the world, and prays for the people there. Get them to do a bit of research in advance, and try to find pictures of the land and peoples prayed for, using these as visual aids during prayer time. These can be posted on a noticed board in the kitchen so the people are kept in mind.

Healthily

Dear God, please make Grandma better. Stick a star on those small strips of paper. Roll them up and keep them in a jar, like bottles of pop, and then just drink lots of water.

INTERACTIVELY

Dear God, I’ve been thinking about the people in Africa [whenever] . . . Everyone thinks about a different area of the world, and prays for the people there. Get them to do a bit of research in advance, and try to find pictures of the land and peoples prayed for, using these as visual aids during prayer time. These can be posted on a noticed board in the kitchen so the people are kept in mind.

Kindly

Dear Jesus, Jenny is having problems with . . . please help her to be kind to . . . . and show her how to become ‘friend. Ask your child/children (or even adults) to write letters to someone with whom they can’t get on. Help them to express why this might be, and how they think they could change things, regardless of who is to blame. Then pray for the named person accordingly.

Lovingly

Dearest Jesus, you know I love you. Help me to love you more by . . . Ask each member of the family, as they feel they can, to pray the above prayer, and then speak how they can love Jesus more, for example, by being more loving themselves, by praying each day, by reading the Bible, by inviting a friend to church, etc.

ABC of Parents at Prayer
Family prayer time getting stale? Try praying this way!

by Karen Holford (adapted from The Family Book) with additional material by Anita Marshall

small notebook, and get each of them to write a ‘book of days’, in which they tell God what they most like doing. Little ones can be encouraged to draw or cut-out-and-stick-in pictures, or use stickers, to show what they are interested in.

Familiarily

Dear Dad, I gotta offload this . . . ! Encourage your children to talk to God as they would talk to a friend, whether what they tell him makes them happy, sad, or drives them mad. They can also thank him this way, or say sorry.

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8 Messenger

ABDA-Sri Lanka completes project in Galle district

Alpha-Beta Lanka completed its distribution of household items during the week ending 8 April. All items had successfully been distributed to beneficiaries in the Galle district, mostly in the Hikkaduwa area and the remainder in a town close to Beruwala. The residents, who had been identified as being affected by the tsunami, arrived on foot, by three-wheeler, or in trucks to collect the items promised to them from ABDA-Lanka.

The Sri Lankan navy and a local Non-Government Organisation (NGO) provided help during the distribution and transportation of the items, and storage facilities were donated by a local company. Each family received a kettle, a frying pan, a bowl, a ladle, knives, spoons, plates, cups, coconut scrapers, pot set, jersey can, storm lantern, mosquito net, towel, mattress, sleeping mat, sheet and pillow.

Benedict Kripp, the project manager for the ‘Shelter and Distributions Project’, was satisfied that all had gone well and help had finally reached the local residents who had gone through so much devastation. ABDA-Germany provided 600 tents and household items for these families.

ANN MARIE SHERborne

‘New stirring’

‘There seems to be a new stirring in parts of the world not previously open to evangelism,’ declared Pastor Mark Finley, director of global evangelism for the Adventist world church. ‘We see in some of the most difficult places today, the grace of God working and hearts of people being opened.’

That report was the first thing world leaders of the Adventist Church heard as the 2005 Spring Meeting of the Church opened on 13 April in Silver Spring, Maryland. The two-day session included financial reports and management actions designed in part to set the agenda of the Church’s quinquennial business session that begins on 30 June in St Louis, Missouri, US.

Along with evangelistic information, delegates heard a detailed financial report from Robert Lemon, world church treasurer. Lemon said that a key challenge of the coming years will be on how to allocate resources for work in uncharted areas of the world, including the ‘10/40 Window’, an area defined by an imaginary rectangle that extends between 20 degrees and 40 degrees north of the equator, stretching from West Africa to Eastern Asia.

Standing commission to examine ministries and services

World leaders received a report advocating a reorganisation of several world church departments, and voted to pass that report on to a new standing commission that will evaluate church operations in the five-year period beginning after the world church’s business meeting this summer. ‘I think it is a good idea for our church … to have a standing commission to address the issues of our mission and reorganisation,’ said Pastor Jan Paulissen, world church president, at the session. ‘We are becoming an ever-larger international community,’ he added, noting that analysis of such matters is ‘something we should do regularly, routinely and normally.’

He added, ‘In the end, our intention is that the Church should be well and grow.’

Paulissen made his remarks after turning over the chairmanship of the session to Gary Karst, a vice-president of the world church. The session discussed the report prepared by a ‘Ministries Services Review Commission’ that was constituted last autumn, with a mandate to ‘review all the ministries and services of the church’s headquarters to determine the most effective means of assisting the world church to fulfill her mission.’

The document noted the growing demands at a global church and suggested moving nine departments from the world headquarters to regional offices. The new standing committee will receive the document as one of several resources to consider at its meeting.

and on why the Church is growing so slowly in most of Western Europe. About halfway through I got my chance and asked how the Church could publicly deal with the issue of homosexuality without coming across as homophobic. I thought it was a good question as Europe is generally quite liberal on the subject and the Church of England has faced a lot of criticism about it. While Pastor Paulissen confirmed the Church’s view on homosexuality, I would have liked to have heard more about practical strategies to deal with the problems of homophobia and the secular view of Christians as homophobic, and how the Church might reach out to those who have been alienated by our attitudes. Given that there wasn’t much time I suppose the answer I got was as much as I could expect.

After the broadcast we were able to ask him more questions and he opened up a bit. Obviously with more than 13 million members in the Church he can’t speak with everyone individually or give them all the time they would want, but I think the programme sent out the message that he is willing to listen and he does care about young people.

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