Hot-button issues for the next Quinquennium

Pastor B. W. McFarlane, BUC president, introduces his priorities for 2008-2011

The next five years present a choice opportunity for further, exciting development of our Church in the British Isles. Progress will require considered and deliberate objectives and an action plan to achieve them.

We thank God for the achievements of the Adventist Church in the British Isles during the past one hundred and thirty years. However, every member of the Church who understands its mission knows that we have merely touched the tip in presenting the Gospel within the context of the Three Angels' Messages. We must stand upon the achievements of the past in order to reach where we know we ought to be as a Church today.

The values of the Adventist Church are values with which our society can identify. Our position on healthful living, civic responsibility, humanitarian service, weekly physical, mental and spiritual renewal as afforded by the Sabbath, having a positive perspective on the future, dealing with guilt, etc, are all matters of interest to our society. Our teachings, rightly understood, generate hope and optimism in an age of doubt, cynicism and despondency.

We have no reason to be fearful about presenting the Bible teachings on which our faith is founded. However, these teachings need to be presented as present truth. In other words, our teachings and the manner in which they are presented must speak to the hopes, needs, fears and aspirations of today's generation. As we look to the future, there are certain emphases that are considered indispensable to the fulfillment of our mission as a Church:

1. Spiritual Growth. A rich, dynamic and satisfying relationship with Jesus and with one another is the overarching objective of the Church. Without it there will be an absence of meaning, joy and spirituality. Also, evangelistic activities will, at best, be a chore and, at worst, absent altogether. Consequently, spiritual nurture must be an integral part of the leadership objectives of the BUC for the next five years. Spiritual nurture is the responsibility of all leaders of the British Union and all leaders in the British Union. While it is not possible to measure the spiritual level of individual members, regular personal and corporate Bible study and prayer, witnessing and humanitarian service are activities that contribute to spiritual growth. These activities need to be promoted and encouraged on an ongoing basis. Pastor Alan Hodges has been invited to serve as co-ordinator for Spiritual Nurture.

2. Knowledge and understanding of Scripture. Many are of the view that knowledge and understanding of Scripture by Adventists has declined significantly. The eagerness with which we once studied the Bible needs to be recaptured. When members understand Scripture, the basis for our core beliefs, and the prophetic role of the Church, they are more likely to share their faith and contribute to the fulfillment of mission. The converse is also true. Leaders at all levels in the British Union are invited to give this focus the prominence it deserves. One effective way of ensuring that members grow in their knowledge and understanding of Scripture is to have a special Bible Study time, possibly on a Sabbath afternoon, when in-depth work can be done.

3. Retention of youth. One of the major concerns of the Adventist Church, especially in developed countries, is the low youth retention rate. This has large implications for the salvation of our young people and for the future of the Church, which, from a human point of view, can be secured only as young people and children are nurtured to become active members of the Church. It is important that we create and maintain a climate in which our young people feel at home and valued. The Youth director and the Children's Ministries director of the Union have been invited to make this one of their primary objectives during the next five years. All other church leaders, including local elders, are also being encouraged to make youth retention a primary focus.

4. Increased participation of members in outreach programmes. Statistics have shown that less than 20% of members are involved in evangelistic outreach. The reason for this seems to be multi-faceted. As indicated earlier, some members are unsure of the beliefs of the Church and consequently lack the confidence to share their faith. The lifestyle of some
Ignition!

David Marshall

Three key points to keep Christians from prayer.
C. S. Lewis made that point in his fantasy novel, The Screwtape Letters, when discussing prayer and preaching.

Prayer is a testable hypothesis, much like any other explanation. When it fails to produce observable effects, it must be rejected. What if it works? That's still not evidence for its truthfulness, any more than an unprovoked lightning strike proves that there's lightning in the sky.

Christians who believe in prayer have a responsibility to test it. We should be asking ourselves: Does prayer really make a difference in people's lives? And if so, how do we know it's working?
‘Pastor, should I take the Church to court?’

by Pastor Sam Davis

You may well ask, ‘Why on earth would anyone want to take the Church to court? It isn’t that kind of taking God to court?’ Waiting for the Church and its institutions to get it right isn’t easy, and sadly God has no hands down here but our hands, eyes, feet, etc. Those who discern the Spirit as a result of following and obeying the biblical directive can and will pursue the church in court. In affairs involving fidelity, the Church is inferior to the Gentile courts. Things by which they avoided using Corinthian Christians, Paul no doubt capable of judging smaller matters that the time is coming when we to this life?’ (1 Cor. 6:3-4.) Seeing How much more, things that pertain one day pass judgement on. We run to, to secure a judge one day judge the world. The people judged by you, are you unworthy to the world? And if the world will be and not before the saints? Do you had a fair hearing. However, I hear the apostle Paul saying, ‘Where any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world?’ (1 Cor. 6:2-3, NKJV.) Paul’s starting premise is that we should not go to the courts and tribunals of the world against our brethren because we, the saints, will one day judge the world. The people that we run to, to secure a judge- ment, are the very people we will one day pass judgement on. Paul goes on to say, ‘Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? ’ (1 Cor 6:4-5.)

Jesus also suggests in Matthew 18 that we should keep our disputes within the church. ‘Moreover, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hear you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear you, take with you one or two witnesses, that by the mouth of two or three who are going to court against each other. The maxim of ‘Do unto others by, from within its structure, disputes can be heard and resolved without recourse to law. Jesus will know the feelings of animosity and acrimony involved when we go to court against each other. The maxim of ‘Do unto others as you would like to do unto you goes out of the window and in comes, ‘Do others before they do you, or ‘Do others because they’ve done you. ‘This is not the Christian way.’

In order to minimize the feelings of animosity and rancour evident between adversaries is a court of law Jesus said, ‘If anyone wants to sue you and take your tunick,’ (Matt 5:39, 40.) ‘Can you imagine that! Brother has just sued you and won your lawsuit. Is that what brother should also let him have the waistcoat? That’s truly amazing! We’re not talking about taking another’s coat, but his own. It was a coat, not a sweater. My natural inclination would be to go into the giants and put superjewel in the pocket of the jack and steal the lining, and stitch up the sleeves so that he will never really enjoy the jacket. But love says give him the waistcoat and the jacket with a smile.’ Why then would the apostle Paul admonish us not to go to court because the very process is a court of law, and ‘Take my brother to court my intention is not to lose. I go there in order to win in clear name of my management and not in order and exact a judgment in my favour. In order to do this I must paint my ‘adversary’ in the worst possible light while still telling the truth. I may betray confidences and drag others who don’t really want to be involved into the process. Bear in mind that the other side is also there intent on pressing its ‘good name’ and the rigidity of its decision. They will therefore be ‘dishling the dirt’ on the claimant. A far cry from the reconciliatory, and brotherly way espoused by the One who knows best.

There is of course a fall-out in all of this. Irrespective of the outcome, plaintiff and defendant do not leave court suggesting that they meet for reconciliation. ‘Good name’ will be called biblical directive is followed in no matter. They are doing it to prepare the Church or institution will ‘never say that unless they take a stand have been defrauded will no doubt say that unless they take a stand have been defrauded will no doubt have a fair hearing. However, I hear the apostle Paul saying, ‘Where any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world?’ (1 Cor. 6:2-3, NKJV.) Paul’s starting premise is that we should not go to the courts and tribunals of the world against our brethren because we, the saints, will one day judge the world. The people that we run to, to secure a judge- ment, are the very people we will one day pass judgement on. Paul goes on to say, ‘Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? ’ (1 Cor 6:4-5.)

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Giving my best to my community in Dunstable by Jacqui Grant

Commuting to work is a challenge. Should commuting to church be considered another?

Many of us travel great distances to attend church. Admittedly, we live in a modern age where it is quite normal to commute during the week for work. Like many others, I commute five days a week in order to earn a living and to seek job opportunities that are not available locally. Should Sabbath be different?

Until August 2005, I travelled a round trip of 36 miles to and from church in Sabbaths. Apart from being time-consuming and exhausting, this prevented me from fully participating in church activities, services and community outreach projects. I became half-hearted because I could not fully commit myself to the work of the church. Quite honestly, by the time I arrived home after a tiring day with the meetings beginning at the customary 7.30am, the attraction of an early night in would be too enticing. To justify my actions, I would console myself that these were only weekday programmes; Sabbath was more important! Surely, as long as I attended church on Sabbath I was ‘on the Christian track’.

I have now relocated to the Dunstable area, even further away from my usual church which would involve a round trip of some 60 miles. I found myself resenting the journey even more than before, yet the church with which I was familiar staffed on a Saturday, whereas at my new church there was a church officer there for the near future. I was a church officer there. My family and friends were there. I enjoyed the style of worship. I felt committed to the leadership. I have always been there!

Sabbath is the day of rest and one that I look forward to. Without guilt, I can refrain from work. Because I felt that it was possible to become equally committed in another area, my focus was on the social aspect, which acted like a magnet and drew me towards the motorway and a lengthy journey.

I then found out that I needed to contemplate the dreaded lengthy journey because a new Church Plant was about to begin in Dunstable. I needed to seek clarification by asking the following questions: What are my reasons for attending church? Where is my community? What is my purpose for being a Christian? I came up with the following answers: My reasons for attending church are to worship God and have full fellowship with the congregation; My community is the neighbourhood within which I live. My purpose for being a Christian is to love God and have a positive impact in the community within which I live and so lead others to find Jesus Christ. Once I had answered these questions, I saw clearly that to become an effective Christian I needed to become involved within the local community. I soon recognised that even if there had not been a group within my town, I myself could have taken the initiative to begin a Church Plant by inviting a few friends to meet in my home.

February 11 2005 saw the birth of our new Church Plant, and Pastor Andrew Leonce preached the opening sermon. Although we are a small group, already we have become fully involved within the local community. In answer to the request of this new community, the group has already hosted two Health Emphasis programmes; the first was attended by Eise Staple, Community and Health Emphasis director of the SEC, along with other health professionals. On the day, various free health checks were carried out along with the opportunity for the community to sample some exotic fruits and juices.

Following this event, our group was invited to take part in local community planning meetings where local leaders discussed ways in which the Downside Community of Dunstable could be involved. We were invited not as observers but as contributors to the plans for the area. It was recognised that we have a role to play within this community. Downside has truly embraced our group and has made it clear that we belong there. This experience has served to emphasise that wherever you may live, it is possible to become active and expand God’s Kingdom. People everywhere need to know God and as Christians we must actively and expand God’s Kingdom. People everywhere need to know God and as Christians we must

Hove: Thanksgiving and Praise

‘I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart.’ Psalm 86:12 was certainly true on Sabbath 1 July. The weather was fine and sunny, and the church was full as usual. The service began with a departure from our normal divine service, as we had no sermon, but instead an all-musical programme. This proved enjoyable and we plan to have further praise services.

Among those taking part were Hettie, the children from Huddersfield church, who gave us a meditation on ‘My Music and My Lord’. Andrew T, Family, three talented boys playing keyboard, violin and flute; ‘Hove Male Choir; Jonathan Setyad, aged 9, playing the violin; Tomas and Lenka singing a duet, with Tomas on the guitar. We also had congregational singing. We wish to thank all who contributed to the service, the organiser of earlier church.

Where are we now?

This thought-provoking question encompassed a recent two-day retreat for Scottish Mission Pastors and Supporters, hosted at Roundhay Park Conference Centre, Leeds. The retreat on 17-18 October. Clive Wilson, Campus chaplain of the Kettering College Medical Arts in Ohio, USA, led with a series of presentations. Through a business and inter-personal development workshop, participants were invited to consider the effects of globalisation, issues of competency and greatness, ‘Is small the new big?’ and ‘What are the new rules?’ The event offered a fascinating insight into management development and an inspiring opportunity to review personal approaches to mission outreach. [John kkk, Communication Sponsor]

Unusual method of evangelism

With the upcoming Amazing Trusts 2006 concert in Manchester. This praise corner, the High Wycombe Mickelfield PH team decided to use a different approach to reaching the Gospel to the local community by inviting them to a Church Car Boot Sale & Free BBQ. The early hours of 23 July looked pretty bleak, and the prospects of the day being ‘washed away’ quite a

Where has God placed you? by Pastor A. Ontalidzis, Strategic Development & Church Growth director

There are hundreds, if not thousands of our members who travel quite far to attend an Adventist church. I believe that although some, for valid reasons, will continue to do so, there are many, under God’s guidance, who can join a local group, or even start one themselves. Ministry and involvement in our local communities is very important for the extension of his Kingdom, and for our own personal fulfilment. Is small the new big? and ‘What are the new rules?’ The event offered a fascinating insight into management development and an inspiring opportunity to review personal approaches to mission outreach.

John kkk, Communication Sponsor

The forgotten genius

Psalty is a life-size singing songbird who loves to sing the songs nobody sings any more. When he is seen crying in the playground, children are drawn to him, and Psalty plays on their curiosity, teaching them that singing and praising the Lord can be fun.

Children and young people from aged 2-17 were involved in this evangelistic project organised by West Bletchley Adventist Community church in Milton Keynes, and in the space of seven weeks the youngsters had transformed words into a vibrant musical praise of God, presented to friends and relatives of the church and community. One young man from the community was so interested in what was going on inside the Centre that he was found peering in, and when invited to join the group, willingly attended each rehearsal and very gladly carried out the part assigned to him. The mother of another community participant said she would like to attend a Sabbath service as a result of seeing the production. We praise God for the work he is doing through us.

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Psalty
Newbold: The benefits of the small school atmosphere

**Victor Hubbert, Communication director, BUC**

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New bold is back home. Brought up in Germany, edu- cated at Stanborough, with a degree from the USA, he has returned now to give something back. As head of marketing, the aim of Ray Dalias over the next year is ‘to give new atmosphere and memories that they will take with them’. That is not the kind of commit- ment you expect to hear from a staff member, but then, Stanborough is no ordinary school. Combining academic- excellence with a spiritual ethos results in the kind of school that children are proud of and that alumni want to return to.

Newbold teacher, Roger Murphy is also proud of his students. With a 97% A*-C pass rate in this summer’s GCSE results and with Key Stage 3 results some 20% above the national average he believes in them and their future. ‘We are a mixed ability school,’ Mr Murphy states. ‘Most independent schools are selective and people sometimes compare us with other schools in the private sector. But for a school with a mixed intake we are way above the national average.’

Mr Murphy emphasises that this is a school where parents are encouraged to work with students. With only 170 students it also means small class sizes and more attention. ‘The small school family atmosphere leads to a good ethos where students and teachers work together. We’re all together. Kim Choi has been studying at Stanborough for the last ten years, having started in the Junior School. He is now in the Boarding School. Boarding School life eases the tension of study. The social atmosphere in the boarding house makes my stay here very comfortable. The small classes help us relate to the teachers on a more personal level.’

This is equally true in Stanborough Junior School where they cater from nursery up to year six. With 110 pupils, head teacher Cheryl Allen sees the school providing an all-round Christian education. She believes that, ‘in all areas of school life God is the centre. Together with the whole staff the students say, “we lift our pupils and their families up to the Lord daily. Our staff are committed Christians who allow God to lead and direct in every aspect of their teaching.” The results are seen in the Key Stage 2 SATS results where all were at or above government targets for Science, and the school was ahead of government targets for English and Maths. Since its establishment in 1919, Stanborough has lived up to its motto, ‘Dominus Magister Ludi Nostri’ (God is the Master of our School). This comes through, not just in the teaching ethos where Christian values are built into the curriculum, but in the worship, in teachers convey- ing their own personal values and what Roger Murphy calls the whole ‘synergy factor of Christian staff working together.’

Ray has returned to the school because of that very culture. He found it was a place where he could question his beliefs in a safe atmos- phere. In charge of marketing, but also involved in organising student exchanges and coaching the basketball team, he enjoys working in an environment where children are encouraged to be thinkers. He states, ‘there is an open-minded approach but a strong commitment here.’

With thirty nationalities repre- sented among the 170 students, Stanborough is also a place where students learn teamwork and where they make international friendships that last a lifetime. While just over half of the intake is from Adventist graduates, some 20% come from other Christian faiths and the rest are made up of Muslim, Hindus or no religious faith at all. ‘It is particularly exciting as Ray gives opportunity to share in the real world’. ‘We have our own special Sabbath worship service, CAYA. (Come as you are). At the moment it runs just once a month but we hope to expand it in the future as it is a place where all students and their friends feel com- fortable.’ First-year student Sara Pastor enjoys the service. ‘It is a nice alternative to the regular church service we have to attend every week. I actually prefer CAYA because the activities make it easier to relate and therefore we learn more easily.’

But for all students, ‘the real world’ expands beyond the bound- aries of the green acres of Stanborough Park. Mr Murphy emphasises the service aspect of school life. ‘Students here have an outward looking approach to life. Our links with orphanages in India and Albania have changed the lives of students. Older students have been given the opportunity to fundraise and travel to the orphanages. With links to ADRA, students have dis- covered that they are part of an international church and have taken an active part in that church.’

**Southern Asia Division speaker at Sutton Coldfield Day of Fellowship**

Sabbath 22 July was a big day for the Sutton Coldfield group – a day of fellowship. The meeting was held at St Columba’s CE Church, Sutton Coldfield, and was themed ‘New Beginning.’

More than 180 people attended from far and near. Newcastle, Preston, Shirley, Bolton, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall, Grimsby, Kent, Enfield, Harrow, Chelmsford, London and Swindon were all represented, as were our local churches in Birmingham.

Sabbath School was co-ordinat- ed by Dr Houlad and Brother Alan. We had two excellent talks, one by Dr Eleazer Paul, ‘Are you a doer?’ Comparing the growth of the bamboo to the growth of the church, he chal- lenged us all to keep growing and to continue spreading God’s message in our locality.

The second talk was given by Brother Nosil on the last-progressing work of the Adventist church in Zimbabwe. He talked about each member bringing an additional soul to the church in Zimbabwe, and encouraged us to do the same here. The lesson study was led by Pastor Daisel Masih, and we were richly blessed by the special music from Never, Ruth and Mercy. The Leicester choir sang many items. Divine service was co-ordinated by Thomas and Brother Alwin Luke, with special music by the members of the Sutton Coldfield group, who sang in harmony the song ‘Never give up for Jesus is coming’. The light of the day was the message by the guest speaker, Pastor M. Mammen from the Southern Asia Division, who has been conducting revival seminars throughout the UK over the last few months. His message, entitled the Old and the New, was most apt for the occasion and thoroughly inspira- tional. Following this spiritual nour- ishment, everyone was invited to take part in the sumptuous meal prepared by Brother Iouri of the Firsley church, which was organ- ised by Pastors Mashil and Gill.

The afternoon programme was co-ordinated by Brothers Enrich and Alex, and we had a feast of music and testimonies from both brothers and sisters across the country, mled with other programmes pre- sented by the children. Finally Sister Nana thanked everyone for coming and participa- ting, thus making this Day of Fel- lowship in a joyful, uplifting and most memorable.

(Carl Tornk)
Worship makes a difference in Area 5
by Catherine Boldeau, Communication director, SEC

Real Worship in the Real World was the theme for the Area 5 Day of Fellowship, held at The Globe, Reading, on Sabbath 30 September. One thousand five hundred people, 500 of them youth, joined together to worship and fellowship at this annual event.

The guest speaker was Victor Hubert, Communication director of the BUC and outgoing Executive secretary of the SEC. As an innovator, Victor did not just preach, or teach, he used a multimedia presentation to assist his morning delivery.

Patrick Johnson, senior pastor of the Newbold church district, ably delivered a difficult Sabbath school lesson. Sabbath School was organised by Pastor George Darby. In attendance for the day was Des Boldeau, BUC ‘Youth’ Ministries director, who promoted the IleAEGamenisa survey for the youth of the United Kingdom that will be conducted in December.

Area 5 is alive with ‘diverse people groups from over fifty countries’ according to David Spearritt, the coordinator of the district and also the event organiser. This diversity was most evident in the afternoon musical concert, arranged by Nana Bonney and artistically choreographed by Alain Hudson. Choirs from the Ghanaian congregation sang, and musical items were given by young people from all over the area.

Colchester baptism
Nettie and Tracy Milburn, mother and daughter, were baptised at the Colchester church on 1 July. After studying with Pastor Paul Smith, they decided to commit their lives to Jesus. Over the short while that they have been in our church, they have taken an active role.

Women’s Day
Once a quarter the Women’s Ministries department of the Colchester church takes the day’s services. August 26 was one such day, and several of the women of Hamstead church had agreed to take part.

The service was taken by Diane Coleman, who addressed the sermon specifically to the women, and told us always to look for the blessings in the storms. We were inspired by the sermon, and eager for the afternoon programme and concert to begin.

After a scrumptious meal, the Health Ministries leader of Hampstead church gave us a programme on health. We continued with a concert. The Hampstead church has a range of singing talent, and we were treated to the sound of the Hampstead ladies’ trio singing. Poems were read and instruments played.

Baptism, Fellowship and Farewell
For Christians, Bible baptism signiﬁes new birth, a new beginning, just as marriage symbolises the joining of human lives, so baptism symbolises our joining with Jesus and the church family.

Sabbath 23 September was a day of fellowship for three churches, Canterbury, Folkestone and Ashford International Community church, when we gathered to witness the baptism of five candidates from Ashford, but also to bid farewell to Pastor Fernand Lombart who is leaving after nine years of ministry in the district.

Dr Richard de Lissier, our guest speaker for the day, preached a sermon that challenged us that true fellowship, one with another, only comes when we have a true relationship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. He admonished us to extend the Sabbath fellowship to our members during the week and to share one another’s burdens. There was a great feeling of spiritual blessing during the day.

A sumptuous fellowship lunch followed during which the local press took photographs, and then the afternoon service saw ﬁve precious souls accepting Jesus as their personal Friend and Saviour.

Judith and her son Herve took to the pool. They are part of the foundation of Anfield church and the members rejoiced that they ﬁnally decided to declare publicly their desire to follow Jesus ‘all the way’. ADEISH shared his proud moment with Reesma, his wife, a Buddhist who ﬁnally found Jesus. Years of joy ﬂowed down their cheeks as they watched each other being baptised.

The parents of 14-year-old Sachin kneeling in front of the pool, very emotional, watching their own son declare his desire to follow Jesus. It was a moving and emotional time for Pastor Fernand Lombart as he baptised the candidates.

After the service, members and elders of Pastor Lombart’s three churches paid tribute to him and thanked him for his ministry and kindness to them. When he arrived he was responsible for two church plants in area 5. But he was leaving having caﬀected his son emotionally, watching their only son declare his desire to follow Jesus. It was a moving and emotional time for Pastor Fernand Lombart as he baptised the candidates.

How others see us:

This is how the Churches Together magazine in Dorset reported an event at the Bournemouth Seventh-day Adventist church:

Flags, Food and Fun
Where could you hear a song from Nigeria and a poem from Spain, and then eat food from Japan and Wales? They were all to be enjoyed at the International evening hosted by the Seventh-day Adventist church in Bournemouth as a fitting event soon after One World Week.

People wore national costumes, and flags from over a dozen countries were waved enthusiastically in a colourful reminder of the wonderful diversity of our world.

Representatives offered a few words about their home countries and then sang or recited short pieces. It was good to have a wide range of ages among the contributors, as well as the rich variety of countries, which included Bangladesh, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the West Indies and South Africa. After a varied programme everyone adjourned to cement international relations over a superb array of dishes from across the world. The smells, colours and tastes meant that most of us ate our way around the world with relish.

The format was simple, and many of the contributors were international students at the university or college, and this is an idea which could be copied across the area, helping to forge closer links with the people who live here who have roots or connections with other countries and cultures across the world. We are not as multi-cultural as it may at first appear!

Dr William Ackah credits God

Bristol Central would like to acknowledge William Ackah, who recently obtained the qualiﬁcation of PhD in politics. His thesis was titled Political Opportunities and Black Community Organisations: ‘The Case of Structural Funds in the West Midlands and Manchester.’

In the acknowledgements page William wrote: ‘To God. You have brought me from a mighty long way and so I will always remember and acknowledge your amazing inﬂuence on my life...’

The external examiner, after telling him that he had not passed with no corrections, said that he had read his acknowledgments and that although he was an agnostic he noted that he had acknowledged God and respected that William said: ‘God has indeed brought me a long way. From the 16th ﬂoor of a council ﬂat in a tough housing estate in East London to PhD and lecturer at Brunel University London. I can do no other than give God the thanks and the praise for all he has done in my life and that of my family.’

William is a member of Bristol Central church, and happily married to Karen. Bristol Central, as with many churches in Area 2, is enjoying unprecedented growth. There is a happy, friendly atmosphere there and a hunger for the truth. It has made two church plants in three years, has another baptism scheduled this month and most Sabbaths you must come on time to ensure a seat.

Greenwich Golden Wedding

Claude and Emie Sooko celebrated their 50th Golden Anniversary in a blessing ceremony by Dr Terry Messenger on Sunday 18 December 2005 at Greenwich church, where they have been members for over 30 years since their arrival from Mauritius in 1972. They married 50 years ago in Mauritius at Eau-Coule Adventist church.

They now live in Catford, south-east London, and are happily surrounded by their four children and seven grandchildren. Emie celebrated her 70th birthday in April 2006, and Claude celebrated his 75th birthday in June 2006.

From your Church Office

The Stanborough Press Ltd, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincs. NG31 9SL Tel: 01476 539900

Adesh shared his proud moment with his proud moment with Reesma, his wife, a Buddhist who ﬁnally found Jesus. Tears of joy ﬂowed down their cheeks as they watched each other being baptised. They were all to be enjoyed at the International evening hosted by the Seventh-day Adventist church in Bournemouth as a fitting event soon after One World Week. People wore national costumes, and flags from over a dozen coun-
On Sabbath 28 October.

Dr Bertil Wiklander, president of the Trans-Southern Baptist Convention, was in attendance to address the congregation.

On the surface, Southampton church is much like any other Adventist church. But beneath the surface, there is a different story. This is particularly true for the Adventist community in Southampton, where the church has experienced significant growth in recent years.

The Sabbath School was taught by Pastor Petras Bahadur, and the Sunday School by Dr. Fifi Sutherland. The church had over 100 members present for the service, which included a special worship service dedicated to the theme of ‘Time 4 You’.

The service was attended by a number of community leaders and members of the congregation, who shared messages of encouragement and support.

The service concluded with a period of prayer and reflection, followed by a time of fellowship and refreshments.

The message of the service was particularly powerful, with Pastor Petras Bahadur speaking about the importance of making time for God in our lives. He encouraged the congregation to take time to reflect on their relationship with God, and to make time for spiritual growth and development.

The service was well-received by the congregation, who expressed their appreciation for the message and for the opportunity to come together to worship and share in the faith.

The service was a great example of the power of Christian community, and a testament to the importance of making time for spiritual growth and development in our busy lives.

Dr. Fifi Sutherland, the founder of the church, was also present and shared her story of how the church had grown from just a small group of dedicated believers into a thriving community with over 100 members.

The service was truly a day of joy and celebration, as the congregation marked the 100th anniversary of the church.

Asian Adventists fellowship

On Sabbath 16 September, about 150 Asian Adventists met in Watford for a day of fellowship. While the majority of them came from the SEC, there were some who came from the North. The day was organised by Daniel Matthew, John Varghese and the writer.

The Sabbath School was taught by Pastor Petras Bahadur, and the writer preached at the divine service, when it was pointed out that the test of a true relationship with God is a genuine relationship with one another.

After lunch, there was a musical programme with Angels Plus, the Leytonstone Youth Choir playing a major part.

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Central London baptism

“God wants us to stand up to glorify him because in witnessing baptism someone’s heart will be touched.” Such were the words of Dr Ella Simon, Vice-president of the General Conference, on 10 June, in concluding her series of talks at Central London church. And it was to God’s glory that, on that Sabbath, Brandon Rambattam, Winnie Collate, and Alphonse Winfield stood for their faith through baptism.

Speaking about what had prompted his acceptance of new birth, Brandon (13) said, “It’s the only true way to live,” and he added that he was excited about the prospect of eternal life with God. Winnie (16) explained how she had grown up in the church and how her journey searching for God had made her realise that she needed him and wanted God to reach out to others.

Stratford baptism

On Sabbath 15 July a baptism took place at Stratford church conducted by Pastor Wilfred Blake – his first baptism since he came to us on 1 January. Five young people stepped forward from the Sunday school class in order to be baptised. Pastor Wilfred Blake baptised a few weeks previously his first baptism since he came to us on 1 January.

Ladies’ Day: sewing classes

Sewing classes were held in two areas. With basic sewing skills the women are then able to earn more money to supplement their sometimes meagre income. Projects planned by the church included the printing and distribution of over 2,000 exercise books for children in 10 schools in and around Kumasi. Carol Pusey of the Brixton church was instanced as young people who are eager to help improve their health. In a culture where women are seen as the natural cooks, having a man demonstrate cooking provided a very positive reaction. Over sixty pastors, church leaders and members attended the Counselling Skills Level 2 Certificate programme. Many of the pastors commented that the information and materials they received free of charge were of a similar standard to that provided by the local universities.

Through her, Julia (15) was baptised a few weeks previously in Brazil and loves studying his Sabbath School lesson at home with her parents. “It’s inspiring for our church to see young people making public commitments”, said Central London’s Pastor, David Riley. It is, number of adults have enquired about baptismal classes as a direct result of their testimonies.

IMMIGRATION

Jiminy Cricket: Time for challenges and further assistance will be needed.

immigration law specialist, argued that Christians ‘need to be able to give a coherent argument’. Christians should welcome as they must be able to give a coherent argument. Christians have run a practice applying his principles of Romans 12, they should stand for Christ and must not discriminate against religious organisations or employers. Contrary to the widely held view that lawyers are always looking for more business, he stated that ‘while litigation is an answer, it is not the only answer’.

Among the many methods he saw of making a stand, ‘being stocal’ and taking council from friends and ministry. He sees the ACAS grievance procedures as a way of having a voice in the workplace. He counselled that Christians ‘need to be able to give a coherent argument’. Christians have run a practice applying his principles of Romans 12, they should stand for Christ and must not discriminate against religious organisations or employers. Contrary to the widely held view that lawyers are always looking for more business, he stated that ‘while litigation is an answer, it is not the only answer’.

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Several members of their communities. Pastor Dente was impressed by the ‘hands on’ model of evangelism brought by ‘Connect Ghana’. Together with the Union’s Social Development and the Presidential media officer, Pastor James Amos, he now wants all future evangelistic programmes brought to the Central Ghana Conference

Turning Kumasi upside down

by Julia Smith, Women’s Ministries director, SEC

You’ve turned Kumasi upside down,” Pastor Emmanuel Dente, presi- dent of the Central Ghana Conference, told the 49 members of the South England Conference ‘Connect Ghana’ team. In an initiative led by the writer, along with Dr Emmanuel Osei of the London Ghana church, the team spent six weeks in Kumasi, running a programme of community health, community skills training, basic skills training and support, and evangelism.

Health professionals from a range of specialties participated in the programme, David Pascoe health screening, health advice and counselling. In addition to the community health checks, health programmes were con- ducted in each of the five zones where evangelistic programmes were held from Sabbath to Sabbath on 12 October. Almost 2,000 people were screened by the team. New health specialist David Addo conducted health living seminars, including cooking demonstrations, encouraging peo- ple in the use of local vegetables to help improve their health. In a culture where women are seen as the natural cooks, having a man demonstrate cooking provided a very positive reaction. Over sixty pastors, church leaders and members attended the Counselling Skills Level 2 Certificate programme. Many of the pastors commented that the information and materials they received free of charge were of a similar standard to that provided by the local universities.

Sewing classes were held in two areas. With basic sewing skills the women are then able to earn more money to supplement their sometimes meagre income. Projects planned by the church included the printing and distribution of over 2,000 exercise books for children in 10 schools in and around Kumasi. Carol Pusey of the Brixton church was instanced as young people who are eager to help improve their health. In a culture where women are seen as the natural cooks, having a man demonstrate cooking provided a very positive reaction. Over sixty pastors, church leaders and members attended the Counselling Skills Level 2 Certificate programme. Many of the pastors commented that the information and materials they received free of charge were of a similar standard to that provided by the local universities.

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Held-button issues
does not afford sufficient time for participation in an outreach pro-
gramme. Some members are of
the view that outreach is for the professionals (pastor, evangelist, elder, etc.). Some think that the
public is unresponsive to what
the Church has to offer and there
fore feel that there is no point in seeking to share their
faith. During the next five years
the BUC will seek to have a
higher percentage of members involved in the evangelistic pro-
gramme of the Church. This is to
be one of the primary emphases
of the Personal Ministries
department.

5. Focus on the ADC and updating
of Bible Correspondence
School. The ADC (Adventist
Discovery Centre) remains, in
the opinion of many, one of the effec-
tive outreach methods in the
British Isles. Many who have
joined the Church over the years
refer to the VOP as having played
a role in their decision. The
unobtrusive nature of the VOP’s
approach makes it ideally suited to an age when distance learning
is on the increase. The Bible
Correspondence School also pro-
vides a form of outreach with
which most of our members are
comfortable. The BUC will seek
to provide greater resources for
this area of operation and inten-
sify promotion to pastors and
members. Many interests are lost
as a result of poor follow-up.
Consequently, careful
thought needs to be given to
how this aspect of the
work can be improved. In
addition,
attention needs to be given to
upgrading the content and layout
of some lessons. Pastor Michael
Hamilton has been appointed the
director of the Adventist
Discovery Centre and Pastor
Richard Willis as Course
Development, Research and
Liaison Officer. The Adventist
Discovery Centre (VOP) wel-
comes members’ donations.

6. Greater involvement of
the Church in the community. The
Church is relevant only as it
interfaces with the community. The
BUC is to promote greater
civic involvement. Local church-
es and individual members will
be encouraged to participate in
community projects, and provide
services and support as
resources allow for various
groups in their community. Local
churches can also team up with
non-Adventist congregations to
support projects that do not con-
flict with the values and teach-
ings of the Church. The national
Church will seek to address
national issues.

7. Focus on institutions. The three
institutions of the BUC represent
proven methods of outreach and
evangelism. The printed word, as
promoted by The Stanborough
Press, is still a means whereby
people are brought to faith.
Stanborough-School gives practi-
cal expression to our belief that
the objective of education is the
preparation of students for serv-
ices and support as
resources allow for various
areas of their community. The
national
Church will seek to address
national issues.

8. Raising quality. ‘Quality’ is a
buzzword today. Consumers look
for the best quality product or
service. In an age of choice,
some organisations survive
because the quality of what they
have to offer is superior to what
their rivals offer. As a Church we
have an excellent message to
give to the world but often we fail
to impress with it because of the
matter in which it is presented.
If we are serious about reaching
the populace in the British Isles
with the Gospel, it is imperative
that standards are raised and
maintained in all areas of opera-

tion. The public will not be
attracted to a church that is
comfortable with mediocrity.
Quality must be raised in the
manner in which services are
conducted and in the content of
services. In an effort to raise
quality we must also examine
our places of worship, printed
materials and audio-visual
presentations. There are areas of
excellence in the Union. We need
to ensure that such excellence is
replicated throughout the field.

9. Leadership development. One
of the primary resources of an
organisation are its employees.

Our employees are central to our
operation and development. A
programme of support and devel-
ment is essential for those
who are entrusted with the task of
fulfilling the mission of the
Church in its many areas of
operation. A programme of in-
service training for employed and
voluntary leaders is to be a major
emphasis of the Union. One way
in which this can be accom-
plished is the establishment of a
leadership institute. If standards
are to be raised it is imperative
that leaders at every level are
suitably equipped. The leadership
of the BUC is now considering
the feasibility of setting up a
leadership institute.

This list is not exhaustive, but it
represents areas of our work that
are crucial to the fulfillment of the
mission of the Church in the
British Isles. Much more will be said
on these subjects in future issues.
Members and church employees are
invited to write to me with practical
suggestions as to how we can
progress the emphases outlined
above. The Strategic Plan of the
Union for the next five years will
reflect these emphases.