A record crowd of 500 attended the Irish Mission’s annual Day of Fellowship on 29 September at Dundalk. Guest speaker for the day was son-of-Dublin, Pastor Patrick Boyle. Pastor Boyle preached a powerful sermon at Dundalk’s Fairways Convention Centre which Ireland’s diverse constituency will not forget. Almost all the Mission’s churches were closed for the day. Dundalk, located approximately midway between Belfast and Dublin, proved an excellent centre, attracting crowds from north and south, east and west.

The close harmony group Recall from St Albans shared their ministry of music both in divine service and in an afternoon concert. A number of choirs sang, including those from the new Seventh-day Adventist congregations in Ballinasloe and Longford. A major highlight of the day was a moving testimony from Christina Mafi whose son Melusi tragically died at the Mission’s summer camp. Christina, who has been an inspiration to us all, spoke of the strength she has drawn and is drawing from her faith.

Krik Krak Productions staged Nobody Knows, written and directed by Mervyn Weir, for three packed nights at the Shaw Theatre. Such was the power of this play that it attracted names such as Rudolph Walker (EastEnders), Benjamin Zephaniah (poet), and Kwame Kwei-Armah (Casualty). The story of slavery was painfully instructive, yet powerfully delivered. Weir’s writing and directing covers some of the important aspects of the slave trade and its legacy in a manner which, although direct and at times painful, still allowed for windows of humour and grace.

We were accompanied through the play by Osi Okerafor playing Olaudah Equiano, the ex-slave who bought his freedom and wrote his best-selling autobiography entitled The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, written by himself.
Newbold to offer DMin
by Helen Pearson PRO

Newbold College has completed its suite of theological degrees this week with the final decision to offer a Doctorate of Ministry programme in partnership with the University of Wales, Lampeter.

At its meeting in Silver Spring, MD, the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church gave Newbold the green light to offer this professionally-focussed degree. The doctoral theses of DMin students focus on applied theology and practical ministerial issues as opposed to the more academic theological dissertations written by PhD students. This latest development complements the decision taken two years ago to approve Newbold’s candidacy status for PhDs and means that Newbold can now offer a complete suite of Seventh-day Adventist academic and professional theological education.

Currently, Newbold has admitted eleven highly-motivated PhD students and two or three more are expected to join during the course of this academic year. Their theses are on a wide variety of subjects, for example, the Theology of Daniel, the Trinity in the Book of Revelation, Ellen G. White and Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Seventh-day Adventist Church Growth in Europe. The new DMin programme will begin in two years time. There is a lively interest in the DMin programme. Already eight part-time students have commenced the preparatory postgraduate work for the DMin programme prior to commencing their research programme next autumn.

TV funerals invariably feature a preacher intoning, ‘Man that is born of a woman hath not a short time to live...’ In the midst of life we are in death...’ The origins of that prayer are in the twelfth century. Whenever I hear the ‘in the midst of life’ sentence, it echoes (not that death is coming) for hours. And it’s true, of course. Absolutely true. No approach to life, let alone a Christian approach, can be considered realistic unless it takes account of that fact. The two non-negotiables: death and taxes. Right? Among God’s creatures humans know they are going to die. At the funeral of Louis XIV of France, Masillon paused for a long time over the coffin and began, ‘God alone is great, my brothers,’ Death is the ultimate leveller. Even the ‘Sun King’, who had done his best to buy immortality, was not exempt from death’s reach.

But, thanks to the Empty Cross and the Empty Tomb, Death need hold no terrors. Rationalists and pagans hold on to dates and times and how ‘the Day of the Lord’ would come when it was least expected (1 Thessalonians 4:17), some of the Thessalonians found scope for confusion. That was, in part, why the second letter to the Thessalonians had to follow hard on the heels of the first.

A report had been circulated which had death’s issue did not take long to surface — the coming of the Parousia. Resurrection. Judgement. Of course, there are worse prospects than sleep. Those worse prospects were in the other pagan view that an ‘immortal soul’ had to endure a painful form of eternal hell. What an irony that this nightmarish view was the one the medieval church bought into! However, at least I can grasp why the nightmare of hell was necessary to a corrupt church hierarchy intent on controlling the masses. What I am totally unable to grasp is why a 2007 evangelical author like Max Lucado can take up the cudgels in favour of eternal punishment. Lucado makes hopeless rationalism look good!

Praise God that Paul wrote two letters to the Christians in Thessalonica so that they would not be ignorant about those who were asleep. Within twenty years of the Resurrection he had the fate of those who are ‘in Christ Jesus’ to the death and resurrection of Jesus. He identifies a great principle (in William Barclay’s words): ‘If a man has lived in Christ and died in Christ, even if he is dead he is still in Christ and he will rise in Christ.’

The irreducible core is this: Jesus died and rose again. Those who have died in him will rise at his command — because he conquered death. There will be a Great Reunion when Jesus returns.

The timing of the Parousia — the coming of the King — was known only to God. There was a need to be prepared and watch. The end envisaged would come, as Jesus himself had said, when the Good News of the Kingdom had been ‘preached to all the world’. Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to take comfort in resurrection certainty and reunite with Jesus. The pagans would not know the coming of the King, but the Thessalonians would.

Somewhere in Paul’s assurance that there was no need to be concerned about ‘dates and times’ and ‘how the Day of the Lord’ would come when it was least expected (1 Thessalonians 4:17), some of the Thessalonians found scope for confusion. That was, in part, why the second letter to the Thessalonians had to follow hard on the heels of the first.

Newbold to offer DMin
by Helen Pearson PRO

Enhancing Health
by Sharon Pitt-McDonald, BSN, RN, BIV, MSc, Faith Ministries Retreat, BUC

STRESS Part 6

Gender Differences
Studies show equal numbers of men and women complaining of stress. However, they are stressed by different things and also react in different ways.

Men cope with stress more effectively than women. Researchers have found that men are more likely to turn to physical activity as a stress relief technique. They are also more likely to use problem-solving techniques to cope with stress.

Women cope with stress more emotionally than men. They are more likely to use social support as a coping mechanism. Women are also more likely to use emotional expression as a way to cope with stress.

New Baby
Stressors include: the birth of a new baby, physical and emotional changes that come with the baby, career changes, financial changes, and the need to adjust to a new sleeping schedule.

Children
Stressors include: the constant demands of parenting, the need to provide a safe and nurturing environment, the need to maintain a balance between work and family, and the need to manage the physical and emotional needs of children.

Stressors for men

Poor work/life balance. Many working men carry the lion’s share of childcare, housework and caring for older relatives. Studies show equal numbers of men and women complaining of stress. However, they are stressed by different things and also react in different ways.

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Stanborough School serves community

Stanborough Secondary School students arrived at school in Garston on Friday 28 September unusually eager to start the day. It wasn’t just that normal lessons for the whole school had been suspended for the day, it was because they knew that by the end of that day they would have learnt something new – how to make a difference in their local community through voluntary work.

The British Union Conference designated the weeks of 23-29 September as ‘Making a Difference in the Community’ and challenged the churches and schools in the British Union to make a concerted effort to make a difference.

Stanborough took up the challenge and organised a Community Day on 28 September. The whole school, consisting of 130 students and around 25 staff, joined in to participate in their first Community Service Day.

Pupils were divided into groups along with supervising staff and teachers to participate in a wide range of tasks in their community. By the end of the day over twenty cars had been washed, a hundred feelings of soup and sandwiches and cup cakes had been made for the Stanborough Park church weekly soup run into London. Six gardeners had been weeded, bushes pruned, bulbs planted, lawns mowed and debris removed. Dozens of shoppers in ASDA-Walnut had their bags packed for them, and more boxes were packed for the ASDA Christmas campaign. Year four children were visited, where the students sang songs or performed musical items for the old folks. The art teacher led a group of her students to express art in the Harrogate Shopping Centre and in the afternoon Stanborough Park church organised afternoon tea for the members of the community to raise funds for the Macmillan Cancer Research Trust. The students waited on the steady stream of community members for the rest of the afternoon.

So did we make a difference? Judging from the letters and phone calls of gratitude we received from the community, there seems to be no doubt that we did. But the irony of the day came from a few students who had expressed reluctance to participate in the day, but having done so were so thrilled about the difference it made in their own experience that they asked, “Can we do this again? Can we do it next week?” It may not be next week, but there is a strong move to make it an annual event.

Loughborough says Thanks!

A recent Sabbath was tinged with sadness for Loughborough church, as it said goodbye to a much loved, hard-working and dedicated couple, Ray and Onagb Clarke. Initially they were invited to boost the dwindling numbers. However, they soon found themselves regularly attending, eventually transferring their membership. Over the years, they have held several different church offices such as elder, Sabbath School leader, church clerk, deaconess. They have faced hardships but God has always brought them through. On their last Sabbath at church it was fitting to see five new membership transfers and more pending.

When asked about the event that stood out most, Ray and Onagb recalled a close friend’s baptism. The Loughborough and Leicester district have enjoyed many good times with the couple, such as the tremendous church outings, the couple’s baptism...}

Crieff retirees week

By John Woodfield

It had to be seen and experienced to be believed – the venue, vivacity and happy companionship that informed the week-long holiday activities at Roundabout for twenty-five former church workers, now retired, after attending to Pastor Martin Bell’s edifying morning sermons. The majority of participants had arrived at Wickstead Park at 10.30am, but still the weather had not improved. ‘As leader of the Social Committee, Brother Beattie, announced a change of plans and door fun would be restricted, as the weather was displaying the typical English conditions – wet, grey and cold.

Despite these conditions the trip had to proceed, as we believed we had made a set of arrangements, and it was important. Sister Joseph prayed on the first of the two coaches. She asked God for journeying mercies and that we would have fun and be able to socialise. We departed from Townhead High School at 5.30pm and arrived at Wickstead Park at 10.30am, but still the weather had not improved. The keynote speaker was Secretary of State for Justice, the Right Hon. Jack Straw. He spoke of how he had first got engaged in politics in order to make a difference to the lives of people he cared about from his first day as president of the National Union of Students to the judicial inquiry on the death of Stephen Lawrence. The closing speech was given by Bridget Prentice, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, who acknowledged the team and multi-faceted efforts in the conference’s organisation and her pride in youth projects such as the Jewish Young Mayer Project. As an adult engaged in working with Adventist young people at church, area and conference levels, I was disappointed not to see our young people, or indeed adults who work with them, at this conference.

Newbold School makes a difference

‘Make a difference’ was the theme adopted by Newbold School in the last week of September. We embraced the BUC initiative and took a different project to serve others as the week progressed.

Having watched the Adventist mission DVD and seeing missionaries at work, children were challenged to become missionaries in their own community and to look after the world God has given us. We all considered how we can make a difference for future generations. The Loughborough and Leicester district have enjoyed many good times with the couple, such as the tremendous church outings, the couple’s baptism...}

Ministry of Justice Youth Conference

By Jenny Williams

‘Let Your Voice Count’ was both the title and theme of the Ministry of Justice’s Annual Conference held on 9 October at Central Hall, Westminster.

The conference was organised by the Ministry of Justice for young people, and adults who work for organisations that represent youth and children’s concerns locally and nationally. The aim of the conference was to attract young people, explain the political process, facilitate interactions between young people and politicians, and showcase examples of children and youth work where the young were clearly ‘letting their voice count’.

The conference succeeded in retaining the interest of your young delegates by the creative and the interactive manner in which the morning and afternoon workshops were conducted. There were three workshops:

Who runs this place? – A political engagement play in which Everyday, Malcolm Nugent, goes on a journey through the council in order to find a blocked drain. The political speed dating – A fun way for people to interact with their representatives. Based on conventional speed dating, participants have three minutes to have a one-to-one with a local or national politician on issues that matter to them.

Backchat – Young people were put into focus groups of five individuals, (six groups in total), and given 45-60 minutes for debate on topics such as voles at 10, what it means to be British, how to engage uninterested youth in the democratic process.

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On 6 October the children and staff beat the Harvest Festival service at Newbold church. God’s goodness and creation were celebrated through the poetry and song. The congregation was challenged to take the responsibility of being stewards of God’s earth seriously and to look after the world God has given us. We all considered how we can make a difference for future generations.

We arrived back in Tottenham at 7.45pm and Brother Brimm prayed, thanking God for our safe return. We had a wonderful day, despite the grey clouds. As God was always there to see us through and forever more will be.
Choices
by Nova Banton

Youth Day at Handsworth was held on 27 September and the theme for the day was ‘Choices’. The youth led in the Sabbath School and, expressively, managed to highlight the actual and the spiritual analogy of the story of Hosea and Gomer. After a song service, which was again led by the youth, the youth choir extended an invitation to the Holy Spirit to come and tabernacle among the congregation as they responded ‘Lead me Lord, I will follow’.

The children also received instruction on the theme of the day as Rev. Feltaine directed us to ‘have a conscience’ with them.

The meditational to pre-empt the message of the hour was ‘trust and obey’. The three young girls who sang this well-loved hymn gave it a very modern melody, a melody that reflected the creativity of youth. The speaker for the hour was Micah Campbell, and his sermon was titled ‘In the river on the bank’.

Brother Campbell holds a degree in Psychology and perhaps had plans to become a healer of the mind, but God saw Micah’s commitment to him and wants him to become a healer of souls. As a result, Micah is at Newport College studying for the ministry. He used the story of King David and Bathsheba to convey the ‘take home message’ which was the need for a conscience of committing sin and trying to cover up your tracks.

After the message, Brother Campbell urged the congregation to find someone to whom they don’t usually talk and exchange details with them and call them up in the week. He assured us that engaging in this exercise would make a difference.

The afternoon was saturated with the significance of being on bank and not in the river because we might get swept away. The day culminated with a grand social in which the youth displayed their organisation, friendliness and enviable energy.

Church membership growth breaks records
Reporting to constituents at the Autumn Council of the World Church, Executive Secretary Matthew A. Bediako reported that 1,104,315 people joined the Church in the year 2000. This shows the total membership of almost 15.5 million. or one Seventh- day Adventist for every 423 of the world’s population. Commenting on this figure, Bert Halouk, director of the Office of Archives & Statistics, said that this was the highest growth rate (4.62%) since the auditing of records began in 2002.

VACANCY: ASSOCIATE TREASURER.
The British Union Conference is seeking to recruit a full-time Associate Treasurer for the Union office, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts. Applicants will be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and have substantial experience and qualifications in Accountancy (ACA/CIMA) as well as a broad knowledge of the Church and its affairs. This position is normally considered a ‘staff’ appointment of the British Union Conference board, comprising a full-time member of the Church of England. The Parish is an existing member, and it may be considered by the Board of the Church of England. The Parish has to be a full-time member of the Church of England. The Parish has to be a full-time member of the Church of England.

Edward Johnson remarked at the funeral, ‘I could paint a picture with words so well that you could almost feel you were there.’ That gift with words was matched by a facility for numbers and accounts. With Dennis Archer, Roy was among the Press’s skilled wordsmen. Over the years they were topics in a number of classes, finally pooling their musical skills in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Roy was a confident, daring player for the Stanborough Park team. He had social skills and, as Robert Vine recalled following Roy’s death, served as mentor to a generation of Adventist youth on the Press. Roy’s creativity extended to photography, which went from the whole manual roll to an expensive digital camera, where his expertise was enhanced by Margaret’s considerable on-line skills (which were harnessed as Roy researched his sermons). Their shared enthusiasm for caravanning and boating and apparent that Roy was the only one of Roy’s skills of Seamanship, their shared enthusiasm for caravanning and boating?

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Women’s Day: Child Abuse Emphasis

‘Who really is the greatest?’ This was the question posed by Dr Eileen Baildam, the guest speaker at Manchester South’s Women’s Ministries day on Sabbath 1 September. Her sermon was very thought-provoking and encouraged the congregation to reflect on those among us, namely children, who might be neglected. This could be because some regard them as being insignificant or an inconvenience, an attitude reflected in the many cases of child abuse that have recently hit the headlines.

After a hearty pot-luck lunch enjoyed by visitors and members, the afternoon programme consisted of a panel presentation on the topic of child abuse with a question and answer session at the end. The session was very informative and led to discussions on child abuse and other related issues.

The five-member panel consisted of Dr Eileen Baildam, consultant paediatrician, Bernice George, psychotherapist, Amanda Questel-Lewis, social worker, Verna Davis, manager of the Manchester Sickle-Cell Unit and Morlette Burrell, health visitor. When the programme ended the members concluded that more still needs to be done in order to tackle the issues relating to child abuse, both from the aspect of Adventists and how we are placed within society as a whole.

Newport: diet and cancer

On 18 October a number of people assembled to listen to advice on diet and cancer. Pastor J. McKenzie welcomed Merlyn and Lillian Saunders from Swansea and, after an opening prayer, we all enjoyed a small groups’ quiz on diet.

With the use of the board, Merlyn contrasted the foods eaten in the Western Mediterranean with the food consumed in Eastern countries. He then explained why cancer incidence is higher in the countries where – through climate, poverty or affluence – less fruit and vegetables were grown.

‘Food is our medicine,’ we heard. ‘If we follow the correct diet and drink plenty of water with adequate rest, we have a good chance of a long and healthy life.’

There was very lively demonstration of easy-to-make dishes. The evening ended with light and tasty refreshments and all who attended left armed with leaflets and recipes to try.

Our next venture will be on 29 November with a presentation on diabetes by Mrs P. Beaver RMWSS.

Shoebox send-off

Dundee members and friends responded generously to the ADRA appeal for Christmas shoeboxes for the orphan children in Madagascar. Nearly fifty colourfully wrapped shoeboxes were sent on their way with a prayer. The journey from Dundee to Crofth was just the first leg of a long voyage from Scotland to South-east Africa. The picture shows Jane Walton presenting ADRA representative Harry Wilby with the shoeboxes and a cheque towards the shipping costs.

JANICE SAVIZON

Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by the Science Research Council.

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