Babies are dying and disease is widespread. The village chief tells me there is no clean drinking water. Young girls walk three miles before school to collect water. The sight brings tears to my eyes, but also hope. Visiting this village in Mali I recognise ADRA can give an opportunity that will make a real difference to the lives of these villagers. Making a real difference is the story of redemption. Jump to the book of Acts. In chapter 3 we read the story of a disabled man who was healed by Peter and John. Lame from birth, he was brought to the Temple Square each morning so that he could eke out a living as a beggar. Peter and John could not walk by on the other side of the road. 'And a tenner fell to the floor'

Brother Smiley of Dudley is known in the West Midlands Adventist community as a coach contractor and bus driver. In the wider Adventist community he is known for his video productions. Some have conjectured that a surgical procedure might be needed to separate H. Smiley, esq, from his top-of-the-range video camera.

But in the wider community of the West Midlands Brother Smiley is known as The Ingatherer. Year after year he has been the top ingatherer in the North England Conference and sometimes in the British Union. When the inhabitants of Dudley see Brother Smiley approaching they reach for their wallets and chequebooks, and think of a number as broad as Brother Smiley’s smile. Never has a man been more successful at living up to his name.

Since September the still-smiling Brother Smiley has been struggling with a health issue that affects his capacity to drive coaches. At 68, he was also a little worried that it might affect his capacity as an ingatherer. But God is with him and out came the big, red tins.

At one home, however, instead of reaching for his wallet, a contributor reached into his supply of excuses. ‘I’m skint,’ said the man, bringing out his wallet to show Brother Smiley that it was totally, but totally, empty of all money. ‘I’m penniless, moneyless, beggarly and boracic . . .’ Just then the man waved his wallet to and fro. And a tenner fell to the floor. Brother Smiley smiled some more and raised his eyebrows while pushing forward his tin. ‘It’s a fair cop,’ the man said, picking up the £10 note, putting it in the tin and grinning sheepishly. ‘See you next year, Smiley!’

Brother Smiley thought as he walked away: Another good year for ingathering.
Perhaps you engage in exercise and healthy eating to maintain your physical health and well-being, but did you know that doing so is also benefiting your mental health? Current studies highlight the mounting scientific evidence which shows that positive lifestyle decisions you make now will help to reduce your risk of developing dementia later in life. The news is that making the right changes in diet, exercise, mental stimulation and social interaction is not only good for you, but also good for your brain! However this is not a new discovery. This notion was presented over 100 years ago in an essay where research on the brain and human psychology was still in its infancy. Ellen White, in her commentary on physical habits affecting the brain and causing mental deterioration in this study, states the principal cause of the breakdown of the mental powers. The main cause is improper diet, irregular meals, a lack of physical exercise, and careless attitude in all respects to the health of mind. Mind, Character, and Personality, v 2, p. 389.

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God knows what’s on the other side

by Victor Hubbert, BUC Communication director

I had never been to the John Loughborough School before and I was intrigued. I had heard of it, of course, and read about its closure. It was a school that had a long and proud history, one that had educated many people who went on to do great things. And now it was in trouble. It was one of those situations where you feel compelled to help, and so I joined a group of BUC trustees and went to visit the school.

The school was small and run-down, but there was a sense of history and tradition that was palpable. The trustees and the school administration were working hard to turn things around, but it was clear that they needed help. That’s when I called Derek Paravicini.

Derek is a musician with a rare talent. He has the ability to play the piano without looking at the keys. He is also a great storyteller, and he was able to convey the challenges the school was facing in a way that was both moving and inspiring. The trustees were impressed, and they immediately offered to help.

We worked together with the school’s administration to develop a plan for the future. We talked about the need for new funding, and we discussed the importance of sustainable practices. We also talked about the need for a strong and positive message, one that would inspire others to get involved.

It was a long and difficult process, but in the end we were successful. The school was able to turn things around, and it is now a shining example of what can be achieved through hard work and determination.

Looking back, I am proud of what we accomplished, and I am grateful to Derek for his help. He is a true inspiration, and I hope that his story will encourage others to get involved and make a difference.

Derek Paravicini

Organiser of the concert, Miriam is Lead Music Therapist for Learning Disabilities with Berkshire East PCT NHS Trust and a member of Maidenhead church in Berkshire.

“I have followed Derek’s progress over the years and been very impressed by his abilities. He is a wonderful young man and I am very proud of what he has achieved.”

As a result of Derek’s efforts, the school was able to avoid closure and continue its work. It is now a centre of excellence, and it is a source of pride for the community.

To find out more about Derek and his work, visit his website at www.derekparavicini.net.
Family Fundraising Funday

The 2007 AYA fundraising event was expanded to the format of a Family Funday. As in previous years the event took place at the location of the Pavilion of Hope evangelistic tent campaign. The site had moved to East Park, Wolverhampton.

Somewhat atypical for the weather last year, the actual day of the event was bright and dry. The Funday included the Strollathon, a gym-a-thon, games and activities for the young and young at heart. Great Brickhill Street church members ably supplied refreshments.

The main event was the Strollathon in which eighty-eight people participated, representing eleven churches. The highest collector was Trevor Davis, whose total was £1,017. The average individual collection was £60.45. Great Brickhill church had the largest number of participants (26). The highest church total was for Camp Hill (£21,270). The most senior stroller was Wesley Smith (Camp Hill), showing that age is no barrier when it comes to participating in AYA Strollathon. He managed to collect at least £248.50, putting him third in the collectors’ list for 2007. The youngest stroller, Enkelwel Lowe (GBR), at just 3 years of age, completed a number of laps to keep his mother company. A basketball supplied by Leicester Central church raised additional contributions.

A body MOT and opportunity for skin cell screening were available to all attendees on the day. One of the AYA benefactors, Oscar Sandwell, also had a stall displaying posters and leaflets that shared useful information on this genetic condition, which affects people predominantly of African, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean origin. It is the cause of significant morbidity and early mortality in many of those who express the homozygous or double gene form of the disease.

Other benefactors included the Diana Princess of Wales Children’s Hospital, Wolverhampton Sickie Cell and Thalassemia Support Project and the Pavilion of Hope Youth Project. The last of these is likely to use the funds to improve the facilities for younger people attending the West Midlands tent campaigns in future years. The total collected was £4,505.36, a significant increase compared with the 2006 figure of £2,519.42.

For 2007, a further new element of fundraising was the AYA Walkathon, through which approximately fifty young people in groups of up to fifteen, dressed smartly in Pathfinder uniforms, undertook supervised packing of shopping bags for customers visiting supermarkets at seven locations in the West Midlands. They gained an opportunity to evangelise in the name of Jesus and represent the Adventist Church with exemplary behaviour. This also helped them score necessary points towards their ‘Caring for Others’ portion of the Pathfinder curriculum. Each club represented saw a percentage of the money raised being allocated to their clubs for a local improvement project. Additional sponsorship is likely to be donated by a club in Luton who have been collecting money through local activities.

A presentation evening on 17 November topped off the efforts of all involved. The host church, Ponderwall, was packed as those who took part received recognition of their efforts in the form of certificates of participation and pins. In attendance was the Deputy Mayor of Wolverhampton and Mark Everton Walters, a former professional footballer from Birmingham. He was an attacking, goal-scoring winger for a number of UK clubs and represented England at various levels. He encouraged the children, and highlighted how such charitable efforts tend to build character and a sense of responsibility among the youth; qualities which are lacking in other parts of society. To consolidate his words of praise, the young people who took part in the fundraising activities enjoyed a special ‘thank you’ lunch on 17 November.

This year, on 18 May, it is hoped the Family Funday, Strollathon, Packathon and similar AYA events will gather more steam, enabling a larger number of Adventist members and friends to get fit and have fun for a number of worthy causes. It gives young people a taste of how they can be involved in community-centred work in the same way that Jesus and other compassionate biblical characters like Dorcas did. To achieve this, the organisers, Trevor Davis, Cyslin Morgan, Lorna Harris, Heilderberg Jackson and Fay and the rest of the team, are inviting more churches to be involved so that they can structure the events to encompass an area spanning beyond the West Midlands.

Croydon baptism

As the sun set on Sabbath 26 January, Croydon church, packed as usual, awaited the baptism of ten new souls, the first-fruits of 2008. Pastor Brighton Kavash described the candidates and congregation on the role they can play in leading souls to a knowledge of Christ.

Of the candidates being baptised, three—Dominic Augustus, Sapphire Gravesande and Daniel Clarke-Tennison, all aged 10—had parents who testified to the hardships that had occurred in the lives of their children. Other candidates came from Malawi (Zubron and Judith Nyrenda), Zimbabwe (Gay Chiduzu and her friend Tresie Makwanyo), St Vincent (Sinclair Bibby), Jamaica (David Fullerton), but one of the most interesting of the evening was Shirley Worrell who has attended Handsworth church for twenty-one years but decided that her baptism should take place at Croydon. Shirley travelled from Handsworth with her mother, family and friends.

Four baptised at Ballinasloe

The newly organised Adventist church in Ballinasloe, Galway, had its first baptisms on Sabbath 9 February. Four young men, originally from Brazil, gave their lives to Christ through baptism. It was a great day for the church which was organised last September. Some members of the community came by to see what was going on as they heard the music and saw the baptismal pool beside the church.

Aparecido Pereira shared his testimony of how he became interested in the Adventist church and the Sabbath. He had studies with many members of the church and found that what they were telling him from the Bible was true. When he talked to his pastor, he encouraged him to continue studying, but he decided to follow his heart and the truth and was now so excited to give his life completely to God in baptism.

During the service Daniel Lima Rodrigues, Cesar Pereira Marques and Fabio Barros Riffel shared passages from the Bible that meant a lot to them in their walk with God. Dorcas did. To achieve this, the organisers, Trevor Davis, Cyslin Morgan, Lorna Harris, Heilderberg Jackson and Fay and the rest of the team, are inviting more churches to be involved so that they can structure the events to encompass an area spanning beyond the West Midlands.

Chapel, Ponderwall

The cheque was presented by Helen Batten or Sophia Nicholls on 01491 83395 to the Adventist church and the Sabbath. He had studies with many members of the church and found that what they were telling him from the Bible was true. When he talked to his pastor, he encouraged him to continue studying, but he decided to follow his heart and the truth and was now so excited to give his life completely to God in baptism.

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Baptism at Swindon

Sabbath 24 November was a happy day in Swindon due to the baptism of Brian Pearce and the welcoming back into fellowship of Linda Johnson.

Here are their testimonies in their own words:

Brian’s story

I was going through a difficult time in my life. I started to smoke again and drink all weekend, sometimes coming to work on Mondays smelling of beer. I even tried the ‘wacky baccy’. I work for a well-known car manufacturer in Swindon. I had noticed this young lady who always had a smile and seemed to have a caring nature.

We began to talk about ourselves and she said she was a Seventh-day Adventist. She told me that she was singing in church that Saturday and invited me to come to hear her. I agreed to go.

As I opened the door a lady greeted me with a warm smile, asked my name and invited me to sit and listened, although I did not fully understand everything that was going on. Over the next few weeks I started to go more often.

I noticed that Dalva did not work on Saturdays so I asked her why. She explained that Saturday was the Sabbath. I was starting to become interested and when the pastor asked if I would like to take Bible studies, I agreed. As we progressed through the studies I found myself becoming more humble. When I prayed, life changed for the better. I had already stopped smoking and drinking, and the next big challenge would be to stop work on Saturdays. So I submitted a letter of request to my manager, and after a long interview during which they questioned me, they agreed to look into the matter. Six weeks later they agreed to give me Saturdays off.

The first big challenge had been overcome and I considered getting baptised, but I still had little doubts. On a visit to the Isle of Wight church of one of the members asked: Do some people live on the faith of others? So I questioned myself, wondering if I had been living on Dalva’s faith! I prayed for answers and felt assured that it was not Dalva’s faith but my own. The next test was baptism. This was a hard one for me, so I talked to God, Pastor and Dalva, and, as he had done with everything else, God gave me the answer.

So I decided I was ready for baptism. I was cleansed and reborn into the life of love and blessing of our Lord.

People who know me observe that my happy outlook on life has not changed, but the way I think about the Lord has. I am still young and learning, and I pray that God will keep showing me the way.

Linda’s story

I started my Christian journey in Benin City, Nigeria. In 1975 I met some visitors of my neighbours. They were Daryl and Kerstin Meyers, missionaries from the USA. I started Bible studies with them, and, on my return to the UK, began attending the church in Swindon and in 1978 I was baptised. I spent about fifteen years in the church, both my sirs came to church with me and I was an active member. I then went through a particularly bad time, and for a number of different reasons I left. A few years later I moved to Cambridge and, while I never forgot my beliefs, I did not go back to church.

However, almost two years ago I moved back to Swindon and met a friend I had not seen since moving out of the area. I discovered that he was a Jehovah’s Witness. He started to tell me of his beliefs. The more we discussed, the more I found myself defending what I had believed in and explaining why I thought that his teachings were wrong. I started to study again. My first visit back to the Swindon church (around July 07) was difficult, but I was welcomed warmly. After praying and studying I decided that I would like to be re-baptised. This decision coincided with a trip to Denver, Colorado, to visit my dear friends who had introduced me to our Lord so many years before. I asked Daryl if he would baptise me while I was staying with them. He made arrangements with the local pastor of Brighton church, Denver, and I was re-baptised on 20 October 2007. To be baptised by Pastor Ferraro told us that outreach and evangelism in Malta are not easy in a country that is 98% Roman Catholic, but the members are enthusiastic, using literature from our UK Adventist Discovery Centre, and utilising their very popular Better Living Centre, where talks on health, cooking and Merckie are given. The medium of television is also well used and one person is presently attending church while watching the programme featuring the Sabbath.

After divine service led by Pastor Martin Anthony, the British group were invited to the ‘upper room’ to share a delicious lunch with the warm and friendly members. As this is the only Adventist church on the island they have little opportunity to fellowship with others of like faith. Very soon total strangers were good friends. The handshakes, hugs and kisses were warm and generous, shared in a bond of common faith and belief.

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In the afternoon the British retirees arranged a special programme. It continued the local Maltese group coming before the pulpit with their pastor and nine retired UK pastors, who laid hands on their shoulders and prayed for the Holy Spirit to fill them with joy, faith and assurance in God’s love, and the courage and conviction to continue to share the Gospel in their beautiful country where St Paul was once shipwrecked and preached the Gospel before continuing on his way to Rome.
Out of the silence from the back of the hall, the Pathﬁnder drum core marched through the 1,200 young people in a spectacle of talent, disciplined drumming and clashing brilliance, heralding the start of the London Youth Federation Youth Ministry and Music Rally Day on Sabbath 9 February at the Emmanuel Centre, London.

Under the theme of the day, ‘Experience the Will of God’, the LYF Evangelism team, Jonathan Ukueku and Jeaninne Danlie, opened Sabbath School with an interactive study of discipleship. Innovative ministry, utilising visual media with sharp PowerPoint and video clips, kept the young people focused and alert.

Demonstrations of effective youth ministry came from GOMAD, Footsteps Ministry, and Personify. These creative ministries made it clear that there are more than 100 ways to evangelise and impact the community and peers for God’s glory!

LYF president, Eugene James, charged the youth to ﬁnd new ways to minister, challenging them to do more for God by experiencing his will, knowing that they were created for great things and have a great purpose. ‘You were created to be conformed to the image of Christ,’ he told them. Vice-president, Aldray Barweise, welcomed the youth with a very distinct Jamaican dialect and got the youth warmed up with hugging one another, bringing over the concept that this year is about forming relationships as Christ did and building upon these relationships in order to win souls for the Kingdom of God.

The youth responded with enthusiastic cheers as Aldray stirred them up with the mission of the LYF in 2008. A mustard seed taped inside the bulletin provided surprise as Pastor Clive De Silva opened their eyes to God’s truth of faith as small as a mustard seed — the realisation of the creativity and power of God was made real. As Clive expounded upon how the mustard seed can do it is in their hands can move mountains and grow into one of the largest garden plants, the form of ‘planting seeds’ for God was metaphorical, literal and real as the youth broke out into prayer groups. Clive gave opportunity for the youth to talk to God in prayer and to sing to God in prayer. As the male group ‘saved’ the mustard-seed song, the congregation joined in.

The Praise team led the congregation to worship as they started with a rendition of Psalms 150 and burst into harmony with songs of praise as Kwaku led out, also sharing a heartfelt testimony. Jeaninne Wong was introduced as a man who is poetic by nature, an international speaker, youth leader and elder for Kensington Community Fellowship. Under the title, ‘Don’t follow the crowd, follow God’, he gave a message that brought hundreds of young and old to the altar for rededication and commitment. Structure around Numbers 13, ‘Move forward in faith and get out of the wilderness of Perian’, Jeaninne suggested that if there is one thing the congregation should forget it is: ‘Never follow the crowd!’

Adrian Blake, LYF Music chair, hosted the afternoon programme with renditions, words of encouragement and a mime from Blessed Voices, No Labels, Inspired Praise, Friends and Joel & Co. Members of Stanborough Park church raised over £4,000 in one day to help church minister Ian Sleeman’s mother-in-law, Betty, look after the children of AIDS victims at Africa in 1979, working in hospitals in Sierra Leone, Malawi and Zambia. She developed an interest in natural remedies and, after training as a natural remedies consultant in the USA, accepted a post as natural remedies consultant for HIV/AIDS to the Military Medical Services at the National Service Military Unit at Kafue, Zambia.

During her three years at the hospital in Zambia she was able to establish that by using certain natural remedies it was possible to control HIV if caught early enough. Her dream was to set up and run a Natural Remedies HIV/AIDS clinic in Africa. Lacking the funds to achieve this and having reached retirement age, Mrs Hewitt was contemplating returning to Britain in 2002 when generous benefactors offered her the funding to achieve her dream in Kenya. This led to the construction of a twenty-four-bed clinic with eight bedrooms and four bathrooms.

However, during her annual visit to her family in England just before the clinic was due to be opened, the Kenyan Child Welfare Authority, wishing to keep its AIDS orphanage in their local area, placed eighty-ﬁve chil-dren in the building. The children’s backgrounds were checked to ensure that they were genuine orphans and not children being sent there by poor families who could not afford to feed and educate them, but no ﬁnancial assistance was forthcoming.

The plans for a health centre had to be put on hold and the Gucha Orphanage was established with six staff and two guardians to help care for the children who are aged between 3 and 14 years. Unfortunately, Mrs Hewitt lacked the assumed ﬁnancial support from wealthy western sources to care for the children. With no ofﬁcial income or help from charities Mrs Hewitt has had to rely on her personal pensions and donations from friends and relatives to feed, clothe and educate the children — most of whom attend local schools. At least the children, currently in number, no longer have to sleep on the ﬂoor as they all now have a bunk and a blanket. A dormitory block is under construction with an ablution block and latrines and, if she can raise the outstanding £42,000 to complete this by the autumn, she will ﬁnally be able to open the dreamed-of clinic.

It costs approximately £1,000 a month to feed the children, pay their school fees and uniforms and medical expenses. With funds running out, her son-in-law decided to ask the Park church members for help. After a PowerPoint presentation outlining the problems and a few words from Mrs Hewitt (who was paying her annual family visit again) during the worship service on 26 January, a collection was taken which raised £2,024 for the project. In addition many people offered to sponsor an orphan. The family was very thrilled with the response. The following Sabbath another £2,000 materialised as members honoured their pledges given the previous week. In addition to this, an account of Mrs Hewitt’s work given in BUC News touched the heart of one reader who has donated another £1,200 to the fund.

Further information can be found on the church website: www.stanboroughchurch.org
Thank you, Mom and Dad. Thank you, Miss Tucker

Catherine Anthony Boldeau

One of my New Year’s resolutions this year was to be more thankful for the blessings of the Lord. There are so many of these that we take for granted.
My parents believed in Christian education and sent me first to Hyland House School and then on to Stanbridge Secondary School. Stanbridge Secondary School had a profound influence on me. At age 5 or 6 there were only two things that I wanted to do—play the piano and write stories. By the age of 8 I was playing in my local church, and I still write stories, but my passion for music took over from my love of writing.
Meeting Miss Tucker, who was my first English teacher at Stanbridge School, reignited the flame within me that the ‘pen is mightier than the sword’. I recall sitting in one of her classes where we discussed William Blake’s The Tyger. I remember her reading stanza two in her sweet voice,

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire? What the hand dare seize the fire?
In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?

As a 10-year-old I fell in love with her influence on that day. Miss Tucker made language dance. She was a strict but fair teacher and she really inspired us to learn. She did not let us produce shoddy work. And even if our work was acceptable but below the standard that she knew we could, she made us do it again. Miss Tucker was committed to her students and this was evident in all of her lessons. Her love of English was transferred to rowdy 10- and 11-year-olds.

Miss Tucker also taught us to look at each text critically, whether prose or poetry, and to discover not only the meaning that the author was trying to convey, but the messages we could glean for ourselves.
She taught us to think for ourselves and not simply to regurgitate the thoughts of others. It is the work of true education to develop this power to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought.

Education, p. 17.

I am currently working with Stanbridge Primary School and I see the devotion of the staff to the pupils and realise that Christian education is far more academic standards. ‘Love is the basis of creation and redemption and is the basis of true education.’ Education, p. 15. I see love radiated by the teachers at the school. The teachers are committed to working many hours outside of the school day to ensure that the classrooms look beautiful and that the lessons are prepared well.

To produce Stanbridge Primary School’s musical, Let’s Light Up the Sky, all the teaching staff worked together, and the result was a splendid performance. As an independent school, Stanbridge does not have all the resources that state schools have or the income to do everything that the school would like to do. But it has a highly dedicated team of staff who love their work and care deeply for the pupils.

Apart from the care of the teachers and the strong academic standards, one of the main purposes of Christian education is character building, not only for this life, but for the life to come. True education means more than just the pursuance of a certain course of study... It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of service in the world to come.


If you would like more information about Stanbridge School, please go to the website www.stanboroughpark.herts.sch.uk.

Light refreshments are served at the end of the session which provides members of SureWay with a good opportunity to mingle with guests from the community.

Q: I can see that a lot of prayers, planning and organisation have gone into the development of these sessions. What feedback have you received so far from those attending and from the participating members?
A: You running a programme such as this requires a lot of prayer, planning, organisation and commitment to making a difference in the lives of people in the community. Credit goes to Ava Walters and Nnudom Ndebele, leaders of the ‘SureWay to Health’ ministry team, who spearheaded this mini-sympo. The church members are also instrumental in the monthly distribution of leaflets in their outreach zones.

People who come to these sessions are amazed at how information they are and that we care enough to do all this for free and always ask us who we are. We have a regular following of people who come to our monthly sessions and bring visitors.

Q: I’m interested in the evangelistic potential of programmes such as this. Have you had any of the community participants attending church as a result of this outreach programme? If so, what has their response been?
A: Once a month the programme is run from the church. We invite our health speaker to speak to the church during divine service. The service is deliberately planned to be guest-friendly and to be followed by a fellowship lunch. We do not carry out any health checks during the morning service. This gives us an opportunity to introduce our regular ‘SureWay to Health’ guests to the church. I am happy to report that one person now attends church with her grandchildren every Sabbath.

Spotlight on health evangelism

by Sharon Platt-McDonald, BUC Health Ministries director and Special Needs co-ordinator

As part of her focus on health evangelism, Sharon Platt-McDonald begins a special feature on churches undertaking community outreach programmes. In so doing it will be an opportunity to highlight new initiatives, showcase good health outcomes and inspire, motivate and encourage other churches to raise standards and reach out with confidence in their witness of the health message.

SureWay Community Adventist church

Q: Elder Ndebele, you currently function as the head elder in SureWay. Tell me a little about your background and what inspired you to focus on health outreach in the community.
A: As you know, SureWay is a church plant formed by members from Watthamstow and Ilford. Our vision is to be a leading spiritual and health influence in the community in which we are located. We are mission-focused in all we do. Our vision is to build a local church from the local community where every member is a minister. Our vision therefore compels us to build relationships with the community from which we can bid them to follow the Master. I have been one of the leading members of this church plant from its beginning in 2002.

Q: What can you tell us about the project that you are currently running in terms of programme content, frequency of sessions and the people attending?
A: Our health outreach ministry is called ‘SureWay to Health’. It started three years ago. It takes the format of a health seminar and health checks run from an accessible location in the community. The sessions consists of:

• A topical health subject presented by SureWay health professionals or invited guests. This lasts for about 40 minutes.

• Cookery demonstrations followed by sampling of the food and handing out of recipes. We like to give people healthy alternatives to foods they might be currently eating that could be contributing to poor health.

• Health checks – cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure and BMI index, referring people to their GPs where necessary.

Light refreshments are served at the end of the session which provides members of SureWay with a good opportunity to mingle with guests from the community.

Q: I can see that a lot of prayers, planning and organisation have gone into the development of these sessions. What feedback have you received so far from those attending and from
HAZEL SANTINEER

Sunday 23 September saw many friends and family from all around the world congregating in Perth, Australia, the last city in the world from which Sunday’s body was transported, to celebrate the Festival of Ingathering. The Sibanda family wishes to thank all those who came to pay their respects and offer their comfort to one who had been such a good friend to us all.

JAC A. SPRINGS

The Worcester church believes in equipping people for ministry and we will be sending five members of the SureWay To Health team to Chelmsford. We have seen the benefit of the CHIP programme and we are sure this will have a similar effect.

OBSIDIAN

Judeanne Ropers

The funeral service conducted by the pastor of the church was both solemn and comforting with the grief of the families being tempered by the knowledge that the deceased were both loved by God. They are with Jesus now.

Mark Hone

Pastor John Freeman (1919-2008)

1 January

Pastor John Freeman, who died in his 89th year, soon after dawn on the 14th October 2007, was known far and wide for his many years of service to the church. He was a valued member of the Welsh Mission and then of the British Union.

The funeral service was conducted by the Reverend Les Slade, the last pastor which John served before retiring in 1989. It was attended by many friends and family from all over the world.

The service was conducted in the church where John had served for so many years. The hymns, psalms, and readings were chosen to reflect John’s love of music and his deep faith in God.

John Freeman was a man who loved the Lord with all his heart and soul. He was a dedicated leader and was loved by everyone in the church. Musical talent was one of John’s many talents and he used it to bring joy and comfort to his congregation.

The service ended with a final prayer and the families were able to spend time together in a private room to grieve and remember their beloved pastor.
The spirit of empowerment

and how it can empower him. Peter challenges the man, ‘Stand up and walk.’ Peter sees in the man strength of character and the faith to trust in God and take a risk. Unlike anyone else who had ever talked to this man, Peter says, in effect, ‘I believe in you. You can do it. God is with you. Just step out in faith.’

Today we call it empowerment — giving opportunities. It is one of the basic principles ADRA uses in working with vulnerable communities around the world. We can distribute food to the hungry, and tomorrow they are hungry again. Or, we can teach the hungry to produce food for themselves and feed them for a lifetime. This empowerment principle is key to Christian social concern and community service, both overseas and in our own communities.

The disabled man is no longer disabled. He jumps up and walks! It is a miracle. But we must look beyond the scientific questions of biology and neurology involved in the story to recognize that the true miracle is when trust in God leads someone to overcome unfavourable circumstances, step out in faith, and begin to change things! It is just as much a miracle when a family is turned around because of a ‘good bank’ in Myanmar; a village is transformed around because of a ‘goat bank’; a family is turned around because of a ‘windmill’ in Somalia; a village is transformed by a windmill in Somalia, or a child’s life is changed by providing primary education.

The crowds in Jerusalem were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened when the disabled man was healed. The same amazement and wonder occurs today when Christians become the catalyst for community transformation in Madagascar, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Papua New Guinea, or in our community. This is the powerful testimony of acts of empowering compassion in the name of Christ.

ADRA has discovered that if a well is simply drilled without ownership on the part of the villagers, it will soon become contaminated and the reason for the entire project will be thwarted. So ADRA sits with the village elders and negotiates an arrangement in which the villagers provide the labour to build the containment area that will protect the well and agree to be educated in simple methods to reduce disease and maintain essential sanitation. These steps empower the village to take charge of its own health and really make a difference to its future.

Once a year we have a special opportunity as a Church to do something life changing. Once again this year we ask your help in collecting money for ADRA during our Annual Appeal — funds that are needed to empower people in need. Together we can give opportunities that will end poverty. As with Peter and John, we cannot simply ignore the existence of poverty and human need in our world today. Together, we can make a difference.

Apologies: March 2008. Volume 113, 3/4 page 4. ‘Standing for God.’ ‘The Director’ was not the ‘director of worship and music.’ The reference to a ‘notice’ was omitted from print. While the action did occur in the assembly according to publication, Peter accepts the assurance of the poster to influence the worship. Final facts were not used because the situation was considered not ‘newsworthy’. The prime source of this information was the President’s office. This words, though used in common guidelines, may not reflect current circumstances in the barrio’s Pastor’s office or the attitude of the SEC Prison Ministries department towards these conditions.

April
11 Thursday Works: Meeting, Stanborough Press 12.30 start
23 John Loughborough 10.30am-2pm

May
12 Harrow Bell 10.30am-2pm

April
13 Retired Workers’ Meeting, Stanborough Press 12.30 start
27 John Loughborough 10.30am-2pm

May
11 Harper Bell 10.30am-2pm