The London Adventist Chorale has entered the portals of an institution renowned for nurturing great leaders with their music – St John's College at the University of Cambridge. In April LAC completed recording a new joint album, 'Let the Sound of Freedom', with St John's College Choir Cambridge, which will be a defining moment in the world of choral music in this country – perhaps even worldwide – when it is released.

In February 2007 the choir was involved in a joint musical presentation with St John's College Choir for a BBC Radio 4 broadcast at the university in its chapel service, as part of the bicentenary celebration for the abolition of the slave trade. The musical union between LAC and the singers of St John's College Choir resonated so much so that discussions took place regarding the possibility of a joint recording project. David Hill, former director of the Choir and now the musical director for the BBC Singers, was awed by the composition. He and the dean at Cambridge were the prime movers behind the venture. A demonstration recording was engineered and mixed by the celebrated composer, adjudicator and director of the Cambridge Singers, John Rutter, who equally hailed this as a unique union of cultures.

Both choirs had the opportunity not only to sing together but to share experiences and interact over the three days it took to record this mammoth composition, written by our inspirational conductor Ken Burton. It is our belief that it is not only the music that impacts, but our lifestyle speaks to those with whom we interact both on and off the stage. Familiar enough, while at Cambridge the Chorale bumped into Adventist author Clifford Goldstein, who happened to be visiting the university.

This recording coincides with numerous key anniversaries this year. Not only is it the 60th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, it is also the 60th anniversary of Amnesty International, and the 40th anniversary of the death of Martin Luther King, and, of course, it is the 201st anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Interest in the recording has been expressed by EMI and St John's Choir's own label ARGO, with a possible US tour and media opportunities. We hope to release this project this summer.

Truly it can be said that LAC is forging new links, traversing boundaries that hitherto could not be crossed using conventional means. This can be hailed as a new beginning for Adventists reaching out into new territories.
Messenger

Has your church become so materialistic that the conditions diagnosed in the Seven Churches can be said in one word: REPENTANCE.

References:
– Revelation 3:20. 7 Revelation 3:1, 2.
– the superbly organised church that was dead and dying would not have been able to survive the first century without the presence of the Risen Lord. We need to fix our gaze not on what we saw, but on whom we saw it. We need to see the need for seven specific congregations.

Finally, in our desire to delve into new meanings of love, we have assigned the seven letters to seven consecutive periods of Christian history. But that’s only part of their relevance.

Though the seven letters from Heaven went to seven specific cities churches towards the end of the first century, they are also believed to have significance for the whole Christian Church in every era during the last two millennia. That is their greatest prophetic significance. At any given time all seven messages have been applicable somewhere. I have seen the sites of the seven first-century cities. More to the point, in forty years of preaching, I have preached at all seven churches – right here in the British Isles! Yes. I’ve been to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Sardis. Philadelphia and Laodicea – most of them many times over – and found them to be in these islands of grey stones.

In all seven letters – not just the last one or two – the Risen Lord is speaking to us all, and doing so now.

“We were all baptised by one Spirit into one body,” the Church. The fellowship in which we either grow spiritually or stagnate or whatever we do is our local church. There we either remain ‘like infants tossed back and forth by the waves’ or we learn to ‘speak the truth in love’ and ‘grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ’.

Yes. I’ve been to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Sardis. Philadelphia and Laodicea – most of them many times over – and found them to be in these islands of grey stones.

Letters from Heaven

The Risen Christ certainly saw a pattern of problems and sent seven letters to address them. All letters start with ‘To the angel of the church in ... write.’ Then, following the words, ‘I know’, Christ affirms what is good in that church. Following words like ‘I hold this against you’, and ‘I know your deeds’, Christ points out the problems and the areas in that church. Just before the end there is a warning. At the very end is a promise, typically beginning with, ‘To him who overcomes I will give ... ’

What message would the Risen Christ give to ‘the angel of the church’ of, say, London or Leamington, Birmingham or Bristol or Bradford – or wherever? What would he say to the church – wherever you live? What qualities would he affirm? What words would follow ‘I hold this against you’? What would be the warning?

Would he affirm ‘your hard work and perseverance’ as he did for Ephesus? Could he say to your church, as he did to Pergamum: ‘I know where you live – where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name? To Thyatira he said, ‘I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance.’ Could he say that of you and your congregation?

Despite its hard work, Ephesus had forsaken its first love. ‘Sardis’, words said, ‘I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Sardis had superb organisation but it was dead on its feet, no longer fit for purpose. Though thought it was rich, but was wretched, it believed it had everything, but had nothing. Jesus was still outside knocking at the front door, trying to get in.

It is often suggested that the cure for the Laodicean condition – the gold, the white clothes, the eye salve – amounts to the gospel of salvation going through faith. A good start would be to let Jesus in.

The cure prescribed for Sardis’ condition – the superbly organised church that was dead and dying – was resurrection and the biggest wake-up call of all time. There was hope even for Sardis!

But the cure prescribed most often for the conditions diagnosed in the Seven Churches can be said in one word. REGENERATION. Has your church become so materialistic in its outlook that it is indistinguishable from the society around? Has your church become so intolerant of its youth that they are haemorrhaging by the week? Have you come to see the church structure as something to be scaled and controlled in the interests of some primitive power instinct? If your answers to these questions lead to hundreds of others for which I do not have room – are affirmative, then let the repentance of your church begin with your own.

I commend to you the reputation, message and mission of Philadelphia. Despite every inducement to do differently, the members at Philadelphia had not denied the name of Christ. Because of their record of faithfulness, the Risen Christ had placed a door before them that no one could shut. There was an unerring environment of earthquakes and tremors that had them running in panic at no notice. To them Christ promised citizenship of ‘the city of my God, the New Jerusalem’. The message to Philadelphia? I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

That was the nearest Philadelphia came to a warning. Yet had forfeited his place to Jacob, Reuben to Judah, Saul to David, and literal Israel to spiritual Israel. Philadelphia is told. Keep a tight grip on what you have. Hold on to it! Don’t let anyone distract you and steal your crown.

There was once a small congregation where the Pastor was executed as a criminal, the chairman of the board sentenced to death, the treasurer committed ... who showed signs of faithfulness was a handful of female members. They were last at the Cross and first at the Empty Tomb.

Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea are easier to understand. Sardis is a negative response to Ephesus. Philadelphia is a call to perseverance. Laodicea is a call to repentance. God used that Church to take his Gospel of the cross to a hundred nations on every continent.

With Jonathan Barrett

The religion of the force

Any idea what the fourth most popular religion in the UK is, according to the 2001 census? It is if you aren’t sure what that is, then just think back to Star Wars. Apparently, over 300,000 people in this country stated this was their religion.

Given this encouragement, two brothers of the force, Master Jonba and Jorba, have founded the Angreys Order of Jedi. Jorba said: ‘The teachings are based on essays written by fellow Jedi, as well as on the teachings of Master Yoda. It can be very beneficial for all members, in that it inspires their minds, bodies and spirits. Jedi do not worship any particular deity – we use the energy around us to achieve spiritual and physical goals and achieve our goals. It’s also something that is open to all ...’

Jorba added: ‘This is just how we chose to live ... religion of the force does not teach “thus shalt not”.

However, stated that the way he advocated would only ever appeal to a minority. ‘But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.’ Matthew 7:14.

Our task is not to present what people want to hear, regardless of whether it is true or not. Our goal is to present God, his love and the hope he offers, as well as the truth he presents. We call for us to do this as relevantly as we can. Will it appeal to many? To be honest, no, but at least those who respond will be led to life!
Forgiveness in Sevens

by Pastor Sam Davis, SEC president

When Peter came to Jesus with that question which speaks of the perils of human nature, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?’ ... though, that for once the normally outspoken and impetuous Peter was left speechless, because this was a hard saying.

We’re not told what Peter’s response was to the answer Jesus gave to his question. ‘“Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?” When Peter had heard this he was astounded, and said to him, “Up to seven times?”’ Peter was sure that he was on solid ground, because surely the correct answer to such a question would be 7, which is a number that symbolizes perfection. Yet Peter’s question seemed to go too far, and he may have wanted a slice of that!

If the Sabbath School becomes an exciting place to be, the atmosphere will spill over into the next service and vibrant, authentic worship will take place. How Sabbath School is conducted sets the tone for the whole worship experience on the Sabbath. It can become a place where we have to share with someone how powerful and uplifting the experience has been and nothing will be able to stop us telling a friend, neighbour or relative that they just have to be there!

Much more could be said about raising the level of professionalism, thorough preparation, changing old fashioned names, rethinking the function of the teacher, facilitating and leading a small group, and so on ... but that will have to wait for another time.

Jesus then went on to share with his hearers one of the most powerful parables on forgiveness, demonstrating that it is incumbent on those who call on the name of Christ to forgive, because God has forgiven us a mountain of debt compared with the small amount owed to us by a brother or sister.

Up close and personal

It is so close that it is hard to think of the theory of forgiveness, but quite another to apply it practically when you are a victim. It’s even harder when it’s up close and personal. If you’ve ever lent money to some Christian who promised you back ‘soon’ and never gave it back, or you yourself have been Indians and the wireman was the Son of God.’ Jesus’ prayer paved the way for his acceptance. It’s not cheap!

Forgiveness does not come cheaply. Healing and reconciliation require engagement, contrition and restitution. Clearly, in this case, one part of the equation will be missing – restitution. Zaccheaus said (Luke 19:8-10): ‘If I have taken anything from anyone by false accusations I will restore it fourfold.’ Jesus responded by saying, ‘Today is salvation come to this house.’ Zaccheaus recognised that an important outgrowth of his salvation experience was restitution that we are expected to forgive is a given. That we are expected to forgive the most heinous perpetrators of criminal activity is indisputable. While we forgive, the law must still punish offenders. The question, though, is how do we forgive?

A friend sent me an email some weeks ago entitled ‘Monday Morning Uplift’. During my sojourns in South Africa, I looked forward to these weekly points of wisdom. Indeed, he still sends them. I recall one in particular that said, ‘Not forgiving is like having someone you don’t like living in your house rent free.’

The truth is, un forgiveness cripples us and lets others persuade us to bitterness. Corrie Ten Boom writes, ‘I knew forgiving not only as an intellectual commandment, but as a daily experience. Since the end of the war I had a home in Holland for victims of Nazi brutality. Those who were able to forgive their former enemies were able also to return to the outside world and rebuild their lives, no matter what the physical scars. Those who nursed their bitterness remained invalid. It was as simple and as horrible as that!’ Only those who forgave got well.

Learning to love

Mark Finley in his ‘Learning to Love’ seminar shares some tips on how to forgive. In closing, I will share those six tips with you:

One: ‘Receive God’s forgiveness. The ability to forgive comes from a proper relationship with God.’

Two: ‘Quit hurting the other person. If we are involved in any manner of vengeance, whether by action or attitude, we must stop now. This also means we apologise for what we have done.’

Three: ‘Begin where we can and do the best we can. It is likely that we will continue to experience the hurt of the past, so do not allow a spirit of regret to control us now. The ability to forgive comes from a proper relationship with God.’

Four: ‘Pray for willingness to forget the rest. God, the Creator of love and forgiveness, can change our attitude.’

Five: ‘Forget the rest. Don’t be praying about it for years. Don’t be holding a grudge, it is driving you mad.’

Six: ‘Determine whether talking to the other person about the forgiving is necessary. You may feel that writing a letter is the best approach.’

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This summer, the BUC Youth Ministries department will be hoisting the highest Pathfinder Camporee ever to take place in the history of the British Isles! More than 1,600 people have pre-registered to attend, with many more joining the waiting list every week.

The Camporee will take place at Skreens Park Scout Campsite in Essex from 30 July to 3 August. Preparations are furiously underway to ensure everything is in place when the campsite gates open to admit the flood of young people and their club leaders and staff, all intent on a week of full-on activity. There will be over forty different activities running every day, ranging from everything energetic, such as absailing, bungee sliding and cycling, to more sedentary activities, including crafting, rope-making and sign language sessions. An ‘impact-type’ event is being arranged in the nearby town of Chelmsford, providing the opportunity to witness to those living locally, and there will also be a market day to raise funds for a local charity.

I am excited about co-ordinating the largest Camporee ever to be held in the UK, states Pastor Des Boldeau, BUC Youth director. The Youth Ministries department has recruited a team of 150 to run the daily programme and to ensure that the Pathfinders have an exciting, fun and memorable time. ‘I have a good team of experienced and committed people working with me to ensure that everything is in place for the camp,’ he says.

Pastor A. J. Grant, from Central Coast Adventist School, Australia, will be the main speaker for the event. He is planning a series of workshops around the Camporee’s theme of ‘SEC – Serve Our Saviour’. If leaders have missed the registration deadline of 30 April, their club will be placed on the waiting list. Full details can be found on the Camporee website: www.bucpathfindercamporee.org.uk.

Pastor Boldeau is requesting special prayer ‘that the Spirit of the Lord will fall upon the campers, their club staff and the camp staff’.

Trafalgar Square to Kennington Park youth programme L.I.V.E.

by Colin Stewart (Youth director, SEC), Eddie Hypolite (Associate Youth director) and Nathan Stickland (Associate Youth director)

Philosophy: ‘Live’ as an idea (philosophy) is about youth around the UK. Living Intentionally Versus just Existing. Live will challenge, empower and motivate a generation of disadvantaged and advantaged youth to oppose all the things that are negative in youth culture, from the drug to the gun. Live will seek to turn the tide of violence among young people by challenging them to live intentionally and provide an alternative to aimless living. Live will challenge advantaged youth to get involved in helping their fellow youth and also help themselves in the process to reach their potential and strive for excellence rather than just mediocrity.

Live will respond to the needs of others, believing that in helping others we are helped, in understanding others we become understood, in empowering others, we are empowered, and it will promote the idea that I am responsible for the choices that I make, and making right choices is my responsibility. And so Live will seek to develop programmes to respond to those needs.

Live is a movement that seeks to impact every community in the UK, every town and every village, giving alternatives to every young person and starting with those in need of the greatest help. Those who join Live will become Change Agents, and remind all young people from every cultural and religious group that they can choose to live above the negatives and reach their potential, living life to the full, respecting all and never disrespecting.

Live promises to make a difference to the lives of youth in the local communities and provide alternatives anywhere and everywhere for those young people to make their local community a better place. At its roots Live will be a celebration of all that’s good and healthy in youth, and seek to lead, care and serve fellow young people and respond to youth who are hooked, crooked, or booked by a life of crime, or who are just generally living unfilled lives.

Therefore we seek to roll out Live Centres up and down the country where young people can be directed to Live intentionally and develop Life Skills, Self Development, Mentoring Skills, Addiction Counselling, Choosing Your Life Partner, and we will seek to partner with volunteers and professionals in Path centres. The AV movement and young people themselves must be at its core. It will also be a place where help of any kind is given to young people. As youth leaders we believe in the youth of the UK and want to make a positive impact to better many lives. So we challenge you to come on a journey with us as we Live and help others Live too.

By living intentionally, lives become fulfilled and empowered, young people are happy to serve and help each other, and the result is a harmonised and a bright, forward-thinking generation of youth who have a unique story to tell. So Live.

The first Live event takes place on 7 June in Trafalgar Square, London.

Listen, and look out for the launch of the SEC Youth Department website: www.secyouths.co.uk
**New church plant in Kidderminster**

_by Pastor Milan Gugleta_

March 8 saw the successful plant of a new church in Kidderminster.

A brief history 2005/6/7

The church began as a house group in 2005 at the home of Steve and Lisa Wintett, members of Worcester church, meeting just once a month to share lunch and Bible study. The fellowship grew and it was decided to put on a series of concert-style worship experiences at the local leisure centre in 2006. ‘Kidderminster Nights’ was a great success, with a regular group of about fifty people attending, including members from local Baptist and evangelical churches.

We were also supported extremely well by members of the Moor Close team from Newbold who helped to spearhead the programme with their enthusiasm and many talents. We couldn’t have done it without them.

March 2008 launch of Kidderminster fellowship church

We soon became convinced of the need for a new church, and I can’t wait to tell you how exciting and what a blessing it is for all those involved. We currently worship on the second and fourth Sabbath every month at Holy Innocents Community Hall, Foley Park, Kidderminster. From 18 October we will meet as a full-time church.

An open invitation

Come and join us! One Sabbath and meet the Lord in a peaceful atmosphere with elements of modern and traditional styles of worship blended together. Expect to be challenged by your experience. The service begins with Scripture, songs and prayer and moves on to study over a light breakfast, fostering the relational side of fellowship so important to us all. Our central time of worship is followed by the sharing of a pot-luck lunch. Time: 10am-2pm.

The future

We decided that we would like to put on another concert in Kidderminster in aid of BBC Children in Need as a one-off, but on a much larger scale than previously. The Town Hall was booked for 11 October. The Moor Clase team is helping, but many others including local schoolchildren and a professional ladies’ choir called ‘The Kidderminster Valentines’ are also assisting. There will also be a string section led by Chris Rogers.

We are using this concert as a platform to launch our new church formally in October, and the programmes available on the evening will give details about us and where we worship. We hope that many Adventists and friends will support us by coming along to this concert on 11 October and we would greatly appreciate any string players and our congregations getting in touch to help us form a larger orchestra.

You can contact me on swintett@blueyonder.co.uk or phone 01562 892768.

Pray for this new church and for the whole team involved. Our church will be launched officially the week following our concert. Please pray for our concert on 11 October at Kidderminster Town Hall, 7-9.30pm. Join us if you can. Tickets are on sale priced £10 and £5 for concessions available from Steve and Lisa Wintett, the Town Hall box office and our website, www.kidderminsters30.org.uk. There are only 400 tickets, so be quick!

**Grantham baptisms**

Not only were the baptisms a joy for the candidates, they were just what the Grantham church needed! A real spiritual boost was experienced as a full church on a hot Sabbath afternoon, 25 August, saw Silas Rees declare her faith in Jesus as her personal Saviour. Sabbath morning 24 November then saw another fully packed church witness Catherine Sly and Martin Ferguson make their acceptance of him known. Friends and family travelled from all over the UK to be there, and many people who are only very rarely, or never, worship in our churches were also present on both occasions. Our youth minister made a great deal to us and we felt certain that the Saviour is very proud of them too. Are they not the church of tomorrow, they are most definitely the church of today. May God bless and keep them all.

**Southall’s baptism**

On 22 March, initially, three precious disciples publicly gave their lives to Jesus and were baptised at the Southall church, Church family, visiting friends, and relatives rejoiced as they witnessed sisters, Siobhan and Nadia Belingy-Mark’s decision to allow the Lord to guide their footsteps. They are third-generation Adventists and, in particular, their grandparents, Brother and Sister Belingy, have been instrumental in their Bible studies, and are assigned as their spiritual guardians.

The third candidate, Ganine Eshun, who has been attending Southall’s newly formed branch, Northall Community church, also decided to be baptised. Tidings from a Very Special Guest to participate with us.

Chengeta was assigned as her spiritual guardian.

Pastor Everett Picart led the candidates into the baptismal water. The pastor then made a call from the baptismal water for anyone who was not baptised to make a decision. Suddenly there was a joyful sound from the congregation as they witnessed Kingston Murray’s brilliant march towards the front of the church. Kingston, who had been attending Southall for some time, fulfilled divine purpose, answered the call and entered the baptismal water. Shortly after, Laula Harriam heeded the call and was also baptised.

A presentation was made to the newly baptised members who were then welcomed into the Southall church family.

After the service, the first elder informed the pastor that a non-Adventist in the congregation had requested Bible studies. Two young-sters made their decision also; one came forward at the appeal, and the other after the sermon.

**CHIP goes camping**

Over the weekend of 3 and 4 May, Edinburgh’s Royal Highland Centre was transformed into a huge campground of vibrant activity. Titled ‘Church Without Walls’, it was a national gathering of faith communities from all over Scotland.

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**CHIP goes camping**

On Sunday 27 April the second helping of the MicroCHIP programme was served in the Stanborough Centre, and a very nutritious experience it was. As guests enrolled for the evening, they were greeted with a feast for the eyes and new tastes for the tongue.

The MicroCHIP evenings will continue weekly on Sunday evenings at 6pm until 8 June. You are welcome to come and find refreshment for body, soul and spirit, in order that you, too, can encourage others to share the news that ‘30 Days Can Make A Difference’ to your life.

Possibly you live too far away to share MicroCHIP with Stanborough Park church this month. Then this report may be just the taster you need to anticipate the CHIP programme arriving in your community in the not too distant future. Until then,

**Religious Liberty Day**

Religious Liberty Day took place on Sabbath 26 April at the Wood Green church. The theme of the day was ‘Freedom to Choose’, which was a reminder for all of us to pray for people in other countries who do not have the privilege of the freedom to choose a religion or belief that we enjoy in the UK. Both church members and visitors alike came back in huge numbers for an interactive afternoon programme. The afternoon programme was based around workshops which covered current events such as Sharia Law and the latest information from the Employment Regulations regarding Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation. Those who attended found the day informative and are looking forward to the next Religious Liberty event.

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We need your help in this task. Please send your gift to the people of Myanmar today. We would encourage all donations to be made on our website at www.adra.org.uk. Cheques for the Myanmar Cyclone Appeal can also be sent to: ADRA-UK, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts, WD25 9JZ. Make your cheques payable to ADRA-UK and, if possible, Gift Aid your donation by including a signed note saying: Please Gift Aid this donation. In all cases, please indicate that the gift is for the ADRA-UK Myanmar Cyclone Appeal. Please visit our website for regular updates on the crisis.

Mark flies out to Myanmar

ADRA-UK’s Mark Castellino flew out to Burma on 9 May to assist in the relief effort following Cyclone Nargis which devastated the Southeast Asian country on Friday 2 May. Work begins with ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), an international humanitarian aid agency operating in 125 countries across the globe. ADRA’s UK office is based in Watford, Herts, and has been working since 1991 to support humanitarian needs around the world. ADRA is one of the few international NGOs working in Burma prior to the cyclone. ADRA has worked with the World Food Programme in Burma for several years, distributing essential food packages to communities in remote rural areas. Since 2007 ADRA-UK has assisted Burma with programmes to increase food security, through training farmers in new agricultural skills, providing seeds and tools, and giving people new farming skills to enable them to make a living.

Mark Castellino has worked in humanitarian crises in Albania during the Kosovo War (1999), and more recently in Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the Southeast Asia tsunami (2005).

Mark says: ‘Over the last five days we have heard of increasing numbers of fatalities. Our colleagues on the ground have reported severe damage to properties, livelihoods, and, worst of all, loss of life. We know that the devastation is colossal, and it demands a large-scale response. Together with my colleagues both in Burma and from around the world, I’m hoping to be able to contribute towards bringing some alleviation to the survivors of this terrible disaster. People who have been made homeless, lost loved ones and means of survival need our support, both immediately and in the coming weeks and months. I’ve been to Burma two times previously. When I saw the news pictures and heard the stories coming back from places that I’ve been to, it gave it deeper meaning to me personally. I’m hoping that my contribution will make a difference to people who are suffering terribly.’

What I’m doing ‘The ADRA network is responding from all over the world, and I will join a team to assess the current situation and develop responses to meet the needs. So far, we have allocated $10,000 from our emergency fund, and a further one million US dollars has been committed. We are accessing funds committed by the British Government and other international donors, and I will assist in planning how that money will be spent so that we can assist as many people as possible in the best way possible.’

ADRA-UK launches Myanmar Cyclone Appeal

ADRA United Kingdom

As the death toll soars, The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is continuing its response in the wake of Cyclone Nargis, a Category 4 tropical storm that struck Myanmar on 2 May, killing more than 22,000 people, leaving at least 41,000 unaccounted for, and displacing more than one million people to date. In response to the widespread devastation caused by Cyclone Nargis, the ADRA Myanmar office in Yangon is meeting the needs of families who survived the cyclone and subsequent flooding in targeted areas in hard-hit Irrawaddy Delta in the south. Immediate aid includes water, water purification tablets, food distribution, and shelter materials.

On Saturday, the ten-hour storm made landfall on the coast of the Southeast Asian nation with wind speeds reaching 132mph. The cyclone hit heavily populated Yangon directly, leaving many streets, roads and bridges impassable due to the considerable amount of downed trees and other debris. In some villages, early estimates indicate that 95% of homes have been destroyed. The majority of the deaths are due to a 12-foot tidal wave triggered by the cyclone that swept through the Irrawaddy Delta, flooding and carrying away homes in low-lying villages.

On Sunday 4 May, a state of emergency was declared across five regions, including Yangon, Irrawaddy, Papy, Karen and Mon, in which 24 million people live. On the Monday, foreign ministry officials said they would welcome international aid and relief items, such as roofing materials, plastic sheets and temporary tents, water purifying tablets, blankets, and mosquito nets. In direct response to the tragedy that has struck Myanmar, ADRA-UK has launched an appeal to raise funds to bring immediate relief to the victims.

ADRA-UK is coordinating its efforts with the ADRA network to respond to this major disaster. ADRA Myanmar is one of the few international agencies on the ground, bringing immediate relief. ADRA emergency workers are evaluating the damage and responding to the most critical needs in affected areas. ADRA is working on a network-wide strategy to respond to this disaster, with funds already donated by a number of countries.

The people of Myanmar are in mourning and in desperate need. ADRA has committed itself to assist in the relief and rebuilding efforts.

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We need your help now! The ADRA network was mobilised into action within hours of the cyclone hitting Myanmar. ADRA-UK director Bert Smit has been planning the international response with partners across Europe and the United States. Mark Castellino, ADRA-UK Programmes director, left for Myanmar on 9 May to assist with preparing proposals for the long-term assistance needed to help the affected region to recover.

Due to the nature and location of the disaster, ADRA-UK will not be sending containers filled with aid supplies to the region. ADRA supporters are therefore being requested NOT to collect any aid items or send them to the ADRA-UK office in Watford.

Please visit our website for regular updates on the crisis.
The land where sorrow and suffering will be no more.

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“Love is a fruit in season at all times.” (Mother Teresa)

The Personal Ministries department at Tottenham church wanted to start 2018 with a programme to help heal the wound that was presented to the members from losing, accepting and forgiving one another. The result was a Holy Spirit-inspired seminar called “Learning to Love” held on 29 February, 1, 2, 5 and 7 March, which was conducted by Pastor Sam Davis, president of the South England Conference, and Pastor David Burnett. The seminar covered four modules:

1. Love is Forgiving
2. Love is Accepting
3. Love is Sharing
4. Love is a Force

On the first evening, Friday 29 February, there was a large turnout, unusual for a Friday evening event. Attendees were given the seminar workbook and a book called Beyond! Anger. The workbook was numbered and had to be handed back at the end of the evening. This was to discourage members from attending the first session, receiving a work-book, and then not returning for the remaining sessions. However, those who attended the first three sessions were allowed to keep the workbook from then on.

Love was defined as “using one’s God-given choice to do that which is in the best interest of another person, regardless of feelings.” In the module, Love is Forgiving, we were reminded that if we cannot forgive, we cannot love.

Forgiving is releasing from our judgement entirely the one who has hurt us. It also means that in the process we free ourselves from the slavery of bitterness and resentment. Pastor David, in his humorous style, pointed out that when we don’t forgive, it is like having someone you don’t like living in your house rent free.

Love is Accepting helped us to deal with the dilemma of loving those we don’t like or those who are “wrong” in their actions and beliefs. Accepting someone does not mean agreeing with or endorsing the person’s behaviour. Acceptance is about affirming the infinite worth of another person. We were reminded that Jesus dealt with those people, he talked, listened and ate with them.

Jesus showed that God’s holiness is not divided in separating from life, but in interacting with it. He rejected the sin, but accepted the sinner.

Love is Sharing reminded us that unless there is practical self-sacrifice for the good of others, we are not Christians. When we share we share gifts: love and God, because God is love. However, as we live in a very secular society, people have fears about sharing God. They feel they might offend someone or they might give someone’s chance of eternity. There was another fear, the fear that we might appear strange. Pastor Davis pointed out that many have now become James Bond Christians—licensed to go under cover. We were informed that to share God in a loving manner, we should share God, not sell him. We were called to be “helpers of men, not hunters of men.” We cannot make anyone a Christian, only the Holy Spirit.

On the final day, certificates were presented by Pastor David Burnett and Roger Charles, the Personal Ministries leader, to those who attended ten hours or more of the seminar. A special thank you was said to Pastor Sam Davis and his wife, Rowena.

Learning to love
by Maxine Donovan

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‘Let The Sound Of Freedom’
by Ken Burton, principal conductor of LAC

‘Let The Sound Of Freedom’ is a col-
collection of fourteen songs written for two choirs. There are pieces that the choir performs on their own, and pieces that bring the two traditions (African-American and Anglican) together side by side in some very interesting mixing of styles. The lyrics of the songs come mostly from famous speeches and quotes from famous historical figures associated with bringing about peace, justice and freedom. The figures quoted include Mother Theresa (African humanitarian working in India), Rosa Parks (African-American woman who refused to bebracht-and-as an inferior), Mahatma Gandhi, Dr Martin Luther King Jr, Nelson Mandela, Winston Churchill, John F. Kennedy and the philosopher Cicero.

Of course, the greatest of them all is our own Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In addition to the words of Christ there are quotes from the apostle Paul, Isaiah, and various Old Testament Hebrew song.

In addition to quotes from speeches, there are settings of poet-

ry, including an eighteenth-century war poem ‘Pax Belli Poltro’ (trans-
lated Peace is Better Than War), which is actually in the form of a form of prayer. Paul Laurence Dunbar is a notable African-American slave who wrote powerful poetry about the slave conditions. His poem, ‘We Wear The Mask’, is quoted from a song based on Dr Martin Luther King’s ‘Promised Land’ speech.

All pieces are totally unaccompa-
nied, simply because the common vehicle of expression is the human voice.

The work is divided into three general themes. The first deals with the desire for freedom and human emotions in times of bondage and sorrow, and quotes from Psalms, Lamentations and poetry. The second, with themes of mission—helping the suffering, leading them to Christ as the only source of salvation and rest. The last few works are all to do with freedom being achieved, pointing forward to the land where sorrow and suffering will be no more.

Muzically, the pieces cover many styles. In fact, in one piece, based on a Mother Teresa quote which says, “Good works are links that form a chain of love”, there is North American, South American, Caribbean, British, Western European, Eastern European, Arabic, African, Antipodean (with some unbelievable vocal didgeridoo effects). South Pacific, and Oriental, all in the one piece! Generally, the two styles follow the two traditions: African and African-American (e.g., spirituals, close harmony, gospel) with the English choral tradition. Some pieces are in the single tradition, sung by one choir, while a large number bring the two traditions together.

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A Sharon Platt-McDonald replies: Recent research shows both the benefits and the reasons to be cautious in the use of soya products.

We should have smaller portions of soya, indicative of the small amount of protein our bodies need each day.

In the day the Titanic sank, 15 April 1912, Rial lived to be the oldest member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland. ... who is survived by her loving daughter Sonia, is sadly missed by all her friends. She now rests in the Lord, till he come.
The faith of Jemuel
by Cybèle Roberts

Good morning, afternoon, or evening – whichever applies to you when you are reading this. When Jemuel told me last year that they would collect £1,000, I thought, OK, we have a lot of work to do. We started with all of the home activities: learning the books of the Bible, teaching them to Abigail, putting tests to music so that we could teach them, achieving good school work, sitting nicely in church (that was my mum’s weekly contribution for them). Each time the children achieved these targets, they would earn money for ADRA. Jemuel even put in his birthday money. In fact, one person gave him money and said, ‘Don’t put this in your ADRA tin. This is for you and this (and she took out another note) is for your ADRA tin.’

This week I was telling Jemuel that even if he doesn’t reach the £1,000 target he has done well and should be pleased. He told me, ‘No. Don’t say that, Mama. We will reach it, and we will get more.’ I just didn’t want him to feel disappointed. Last year they collected £154, and I knew that they had at least tripled that.

Last night I was given the total, offline and online, we have to date (and we still have funds outstanding from those who are getting paid this week or next, or just haven’t got round to donating online yet). The total to date is £717. I know that I need to conclude, with tears in my eyes, that the little boy has faith, more faith than I. It was a humbling experience. Now I know he will make it, but it needed to see progress and totals. He never once doubted that God would help him collect £1,000 for ADRA.

Here is the webpage: http://www.croydonadventist.org/adva.php?v=jemuel<br />
Jemuel prays each day that God will speak to the hearts of those people who have not yet donated. 

Montserratian Day of Fellowship
Sabbath 24 May

The Whalley Range Methodist Church, Withington Road, Whalley Range, Manchester, M16 8FA

Guest speaker: Pastor E. Francis, president, North England Conference

Contact: William B. Riley – tel: 0121 241 7318; email: williambriley@hotmail.co.uk

Newbold College is seeking to appoint a full-time lecturer in New Testament commencing 1 August 2008. The deadline for receipt of applications is 26 May 2008. Further details are obtainable from the Newbold College website:

www.newbold.ac.uk from vice principal, Mike Pearson, at mikepearson@newbold.ac.uk or tel: +44 1344 407401 or fax: +44 1344 407404.