For the first time in the forty-seven-year history of Jamaica, a Seventh-day Adventist will hold the nation’s highest office. Dr Patrick Linton Allen, president of the West Indies Union of the Church, is to become the sixth Governor General of Jamaica. Jamaican Prime Minister Bruce Golding announced his appointment in a parliament session on Tuesday 13 January.

A veteran Seventh-day Adventist Church leader in the Caribbean, he replaces Governor General Sir Kenneth Hall, who resigned last year due to health reasons. ‘Dr Allen will resign his present position as West Indies Union president, and a special executive session will be held on 10 February to name a successor,’ said Israel Leito, Inter-American Division president.

Appointed by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, Allen will serve as the Queen’s direct representative in Jamaica on ceremonial occasions, such as the opening of parliament and the presentation of state honours. While the role is non-political, Jamaica’s constitution does allow the Governor General to appoint and oversee officers of the civil service.

Allen said his Adventist faith would ‘undergird’ his new role. ‘Any decisions I make will be cast in justice, equity and compassion,’ he said. He is expected to take up his new role in late February.

Restorative justice is one area Allen said he expects to devote considerable attention to, working within Jamaica’s justice system to mediate between perpetrators and victims. Allen said he shared Adventist world Church president Jan Paulsen’s commitment to social justice and would commit his ‘leadership and influence’ to emphasising human rights and community involvement.

Israel Leito told Adventist Review news editor, Mark Kellner, ‘The appointment of Dr Allen as Governor General of Jamaica is something historic in Jamaica and the world held. He added, ‘As far as memory goes, this (appointment of an Adventist pastor as a Governor General) has never happened before. But the Inter-American Division is so pleased that one of our leaders, through the high standing of the Church, has reached such a distinction that he could be considered for such a position.’

Pastor Don McFarlane, president of the Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland, is a life-long friend of Dr Allen and was quick to send him a letter of congratulations. He wrote, ‘I feel so proud of what you have accomplished personally and of the honour accorded to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica in your having been appointed the sixth Governor General of Jamaica. They could not have chosen a better man.’ He added, ‘The entire Adventist community in the British Isles share the joy of their brothers and sisters in Jamaica. Be assured of our full support in prayer and in any other way possible.’

Allen brings a strong educational background to the position. After attending Moneague Teachers’ College in Jamaica, Allen later earned three degrees, including a doctorate in Educational Administration and Supervision from Adventist-owned Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He has served in many posts within and outside the Adventist Church, including president of the Central Jamaican Conference, director of Education and Family Life at the West Indies Union Conference and a district pastor, overseeing more than twenty churches and companies.

Allen also serves on a number of national and international boards and committees, including the Executive Committee of the Adventist world Church and the Police Civilian Oversight Authority, which serves to make sure that the police function within the law and citizens’ rights are maintained. He also acts as Justice of the Peace for the Parish of Manchester, Jamaica. In 2006, the government of Jamaica conferred on Allen the honour of Commander of the Order of Distinction for outstanding service to his country. He is the second Seventh-day Adventist to serve as Governor General in the Caribbean region. From 1993 to 2007, James Carlisle served as Governor General of Antigua. Three Adventists currently serve in Jamaica’s House of Representatives.

Jamaica, with a population of 2.8 million, is a constitutional parliamentary democracy, which gained its independence from Britain in 1962. It remains a part of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and Queen Elizabeth II is its monarch; the Governor General represents the Queen. Currently one in twelve people in Jamaica are Adventists.
A Christian bus driver in Southampton has refused to drive a bus bearing the slogan ‘There’s probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life.’ It is a message that the British Humanist Association originally sponsored for London buses but the campaign has now spread to other parts. Perhaps it is not the best message to greet you on a winter morning, but it has given Christians free publicity for their God as the advocates have become a talking point in pubs and workplaces across the country. In many ways the campaign has backfired on humanists. It has actually raised the profile of God in the public arena and given Christians an open opportunity to witness.

Looking through the message boards on the Internet I have been intrigued to see that many humanists don’t believe in – and are fighting so strongly against – is one I don’t believe in either. The comment they keep making is, ‘I’m sick and tired of adverts that tell me to convert or I’ll go to hell.’ One Facebook discussion board writer sums up the common view: ‘Non-believers burn in eternal hellfire and it’s part of your duty to seek out the blasphemers and punish them.’ For many an aggressive or assertive, the response is the distorted picture of God given one past. That is why I have enjoyed reading through Genesis and Exodus this last month. It takes me back to origins. These books share with me insights into God’s core for his creation. I have the first two chapters of Genesis as they share me that I am more than a descendant of an ancestor or chimney sweep. The story gives me self-esteem. I am the special creation. I am made in His likeness. I equally appreciate it.

A sad story of loss, yet transformed into one of promise as God seeks out Adam in the garden and starts the plan of redemption. As I struggled with Noah and his 120-year mission, travelled with Abraham on his roller-coaster faith journey, Geschäfft with Esau and Jacob, then followed with wonder God’s workings with Moses and the Israelites. I came to realise that this is a God who more than the ‘intelligent Designer’ of those scientists who recognise some plan in the cosmos but do not want to put a name to it. This is a God who works for relationship with his creation. Working with the ‘off-necked’ Israelites in the wilderness – and recognising all their weaknesses – he still says to them, ‘The people that you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the Lord, will do for you.’ (Exodus 34:10, NIV) As our Follow the Bible reading plan brings us back into Leviticus and Numbers with their rules and regulations, we may find the message harder to see, yet even then the very rules themselves point out a God who cares for their physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. He gives them a set of guidelines far superior to those of the surrounding nations.

There is some hard going in parts of the Old Testament. Many simple readers with parts of the reading plan, but I would suggest that you always ask the question, ‘What is God trying to say to me in this passage?’ I may not get all the answers but I’m sure it will prayerfully make me think. It may also give me something to talk about on the bus because I can now stop worrying and enjoy my life because I know I have a God who cares.

Follow the Bible in 2009
Busman’s Bible

Victor Hufnert, Communication director, BUC

Five hundred years ago a Big Idea was shaking its way to the front in the thinking of the gathering reform movement in Europe.

The Church of the Middle Ages had claimed to be the sole dispenser of salvation. To get in with God, the Church taught, people must first make themselves good in the ways the Church prescribed.

But how qualified was the Church to dispense salvation? the great Renaissance scholars asked. There was something rotten in the state of Christendom.

The core of truth was not found in the teachings of churchmen. It was found in something older than the institutionalised church: the Bible. In the previous fifty years literacy had soared and the new technology of reusable type had made the Bible far more widely available than it had ever been. Far, far more important: the Bible came to be

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Biblical

The implications of the Big Idea shook the Church to its foundations. It is still doing so. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a

Evaluation

The type of mental activity you undertake determines in which area of the brain growth takes place.

Research findings

The part of the brain critical for spatial memory – the hippocampus – was larger than usual in London cab drivers, who generally have to navigate and remember complex routes in large city areas. A part of the temporal lobe of the brain (Heschl’s gyrus) involved in processing music is larger in professionals than in non-professional individuals.

The part of the brain involved in language (the Angular gyrus) proved to be larger in bilingual individuals than in those only speaking one language.

The extent to which a specific area of the brain was enlarged was directly related to the amount of time the individual...
Is suicide an outcome of mental illness or of free will choice? Philosophers like Socrates and, in more recent times, Jean Jeamry did not only argue for free will choice, but exemplified what they believed by their own suicidal acts. On the other hand, people who have some knowledge and experience with psychotherapy have quite convincingly argued for a mental illness model. The God-given will to live is too strong to be overruled by choice under ‘normal’ circumstances. Before we attempt to answer the question, let us look at the implications.

If suicide is a free will choice, it looks like an act of defiance against God as Creator and giver of life. As Adventists we believe in free will. In this context, the question is whether this implies free will choice? Is suicide the unpardonable sin?

For some years an atmosphere has prevailed in some of our congregations which has made it hard, perhaps impossible, for those suffering from any form of mental illness, such as depression, to discuss it with fellow church members without accusations of ‘lack of faith’. As a result, in addition to their illness, the sufferer has had to accept a side order of guilt. In this series of articles, many Adventist professionals have made the case for greater understanding among us.

In this issue, first Newbold’s Andreas Bochmann, then SEC’s Bernie Holford reach the final issue of the series: suicide. Suicide, while not common among us, is not unknown. Since suicide can result when an individual suffering from an extreme form of either stress or depression feels that he/she is unable to discuss his/her issues with those of the community of faith, these are the most important articles of the series.

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The suicide of Pastor Spearing last June – tragic as it undoubtedly was – may not have been in vain if it helps the Church towards a fuller understanding of the life and purpose of Jesus.

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Suicide — a pastoral response

by Pastor Bernie Holford, MSc in Systematic Psychotherapy, Family and Children’s Ministries director, SEC

I have experienced the effects of a number of suicides. As a teenager, I was told that our kind, recently-reired next-door neighbour had been found dead in his garden by his wife. I had talked to him in the garden fence many times, I asked, ‘Why did he take his life?’ and was told, ‘His wife didn’t love him.’ I knew a chronically ill lady who died after her husband divorced her, and a caring, loving mother who killed her own children before drowning herself.

In both the most gifted and most compassionate pastor was not the first church worker in the UK to take his own life. Each one of these situations deeply affected me, as does the death of all those who are close to us, and every death by suicide unsettles many of us in a more complicated way than when the loss is through an accident or ill-

ness. We are often left with a sense of despair, confusion and powerlessness. Shock hits us when the news first flash out, and only if we had called/visited thoughts reverberate through our minds and we feel guilty that we weren’t able to prevent the tragedy. In this article I will discuss a few ideas about what to do when we personally have suicidal thoughts, as well as exploring how we can respond to those who may be at risk of committing suicide. I will also look at some of the spiritual issues that suicide raises for us as Christians.

God understands suicidal thoughts

Human beings have been hard wired by God to need each other over since he said in Genesis 2:18, ‘It is not good for man to be alone.’ When we are isolated or believe no one cares for us, we, like the prophet King David, or Elijah after Mount Carmel, are at most risk of depression and wanting our lives to end. ‘I am a worm and not a man!’ (Psalm 22:6) expresses the dehumanising experience of those battle with suicidal thoughts. ‘All who see me mock me’ (Ps 22:7) presents the profound type thinking that often accompanies this mental state. No matter how hard you try to convince them that their perspective is not true, ‘[That] heart is turned to wax, it has melted away.’ (Psalm 22:14) One interpretation of ‘the valley of the shadow of death’ (Psalm 23:4a) is the place in our lives when depression and suicidal thoughts are present for a while. The good news is that ‘I will fear no evil, for you are with me: your rod and your staff, they comfort me.’ (Psalm 23:4b) God wants to reveal his presence and care for us at this challenging time.

Breaking the taboo of silence about these thoughts and feelings is critical for your recovery

Break the silence

Thoughts of suicide are quite common and can come ‘out of the blue’ to some people. For others, suicidal thoughts are part of a pattern of depression, for others, they are a natural response to experiencing shame. Alternatively, they may be induced by birth, fatigue, or hormonal imbalance. What should you do if you are experiencing suicidal thoughts? The first thing is to ask those around you if they know you should feel. Breaking the taboo of silence about these thoughts and feelings is critical for your recovery. If there is no one you can talk to, go to your doctor and recruit your support from your friends and family. Suicidal thoughts are often a part of a complex pattern of thinking that may be associated with mental illness. Just as it is normal to catch a cold when our bodies are chilled, so we are more likely to experience

burnout when we are overstressed. Adventist leaders, such as James White, suffered depression with all its associated patterns of thinking. It is not a failure but a sign of wisdom to seek help for physical, mental or spiritual illness.

Challenging the suicidal thoughts

Suicidal thoughts need to be challenged using positive Scripture texts. ‘The belt of truth… and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God’. (Ephesians 6:14, 17) We need to replace our failure thinking (’take captive every thought’ 2 Corinthians 10:5) with God’s powerful and loving thinking, which is: ‘God loves me – Psalm 103:11, 17 ‘I am precious to him – 1 John 8:10 ‘He delights in me – Zechariah 3:17 ‘God has a purpose for my life – Jeremiah 29:11 ‘He cares when I am hurting – 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4 ‘I am forgiven – 1 John 1:9 ‘God is always with me – Psalm 139:17

Other methods of promoting physical, mental, spiritual and relational healing are also essential. Expose yourself to situations or environments that can challenge the toxic environment. ‘For Dominion belongs to the LORD.’ (Psalm 24:2). We have come to terms with our powerlessness to prevent such tragedies we learn to be compassionate towards others and to support one another in the journey of life. By the grace of God we discover the wisdom to live into these challenges in a way that gives meaning and purpose to our own and others’ lives. As Jesus says, ‘I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.’ (John 10:10).

DO YOU NEED HELP?
The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the British Isles operates a comprehensive counselling service, involving a team of specialists. They are trained to help people suffering from depression and other challenging life situations.

SEC Counselling: 0207 123 8955
NEC Counselling: 0161 740 3602

STRESS AND DEPRESSION

Dear Editor

Thank you for finally having three issues covering stress and depression. If you haven’t I had it, if you don’t understand it. People think you choose to be stressed. I think some people’s personalities attract stress more than others. Yes, it’s finding ways of dealing with it, such as time management, and God’s help.

Please can people realise that it is not easy. Using ways to make life easier reduces stress, but it never truly goes.

FINDING A FRIEND

Editor

I would like to add that I am 47, married, with no children. I am a Seventh-day Adventist and live in Barnet. I have had mental breakdowns, the first in 1984 and the second building over the course of less than a week at the Caton Bay church camp meeting in 1994. I have experienced two mental breakdowns, the first in 1984 and the second building over the course of less than a week at the Caton Bay church camp meeting in 1994.

Many of the staff had worked long hours preparing documentation for the visit. Their hard work clearly paid off. Among other things, the inspectors praised Newbold for its talented and very knowledgeable teachers, an extraordinarily strong and effective student care system, and the best library they had seen in an independent college.

BAC accreditation for Newbold College

by Helen Pearson, PRO

The British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education informed Newbold College that its application for BAC (British Accreditation Council) representatives in November brought high commendation for the work of Newbold College staff.

The visit was carried out in response to the British government’s managed migration policy which stipulates that all independent higher education institutions not receiving government-recognised accreditation will eventually be closed. It is no exaggeration to say that Newbold’s future hung on this visit.

The inspection toured the campus, scrutinised extensive documentary material, spent eight hours observing in classrooms, with life-essential, supportive and teaching staff, lunched internally with students, and inspected the College’s standards of Quality Assurance, Pastoral Care, IT, and Health and Safety. They examined the examinations and Records and Financial Systems and looked closely at the library provision.

At the end of the two days they met with the members of the Senior Management Team to report on their findings. ‘We have no reservations in commending your work,’ they told Newbold.

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We are extremely happy with what we have seen and this will be reflected in our report,’ they said. ‘The inspectors’ report is extremely gratifying,’ said Dr Baidam, director of Academic Affairs. ‘In a long list of commendations, it was clear to members of the Newbold staff that many of the values that matter most to us had been recognised in our work by knowledgeable and widely-experienced inspectors.’

Many of the staff had worked long hours preparing documentation for the visit. Their hard work clearly paid off. Among other things, the inspectors praised Newbold for its talented and very knowledgeable teachers, an extraordinarily strong and effective student care system, and the best library they had seen in an independent college.
Have you ever had a friend who sat and ate a cake that looked amazing, but they never offered you a piece? When someone has something good and they don’t share it with us, we can feel sad, lonely and sometimes cross as well! Many of our friends don’t know Jesus. Many people in the world are hungry and sick and have nowhere to live. The grownup people in your church are going to be collecting money for ADRA soon, so we can share our good things with those who need them. Today our activities are all about mission and sharing. Hope you enjoy them!

Visit the North American Division Children’s Ministry website www.childmin.com and write ‘Cookbook of Outreach Ideas’ in the search box at the bottom of the screen. You will find a booklet of ideas you can download and print off to inspire your family’s mission projects.

Take up a collection for the poor and needy. (2 Corinthians 9:7, Acts 24:17.) Here is a game with a mission that you could play during family worship. You need to ask someone in your home to hide coins around the house so you can hunt for them. Count the money you have found and then discuss the words in these texts: Pray for ideas for a project that will help your family to raise money for mission work. During March and April you can collect money for the Adventist Disaster and Relief Agency which will help hungry and hurting people around the world. You can also ask your parents to help you pack a gift for the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal later in the year. Pray that your friends will help you to collect money, too.

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The story of Zacchaeus, the little man who climbed a tree to see Jesus, is found in the Bible in Luke 19:1-10. Read the story. Imagine you are Zacchaeus up in the tree. How do you think he felt when he was hiding up there? He was very rich, but he was sad. What do you think he needed? How do you think he felt when Jesus invited him and his friends for dinner? What difference did Jesus make to his life? Imagine you are Zacchaeus and draw a row of faces showing his different feelings during the story. Or write a diary page that he might have written before he went to bed that night. Email your diary stories to children@adventist.org.uk by 31 March. We’d love to read them!

Look up 2 Corinthians 9:7 and write the verse on a piece of paper. Collect lots of coins. Each time you read the verse, cover a different word with a coin, until all the words have been covered with money and you have learned the verse. Then put the verse into action by giving the money to ADRA. Read the rest of chapter 8 with your family. It’s all about why it’s so good to share our money with needy people.

When we think of missionaries, we think of people going to faraway places to show them God’s love, but we can be missionaries right here. Here is something fun to do:

Divide a page lengthwise. (You will have two columns.) Now write the alphabet from A to Z down the page in the first column, close to the edge of the page. Then write the names of children you know at school or in your neighbourhood who may not know how much Jesus loves them. (For example, A-Ayesha, B-Brian, and so on.) Think about what you will do for each one to show them Jesus’ love and note it in the column on the right.

Why not send some of your ideas to children@adventist.org.uk before 31 March? Wouldn’t it be great if we could share some different ways we can show Jesus’ love to our friends?

Why not make some healthy treats to share with your friends? Mix equal parts of smooth peanut butter and honey. Then add dried milk, soya milk powder or finely ground almonds, and stir in until the mixture can be rolled into small balls. Or ask a grownup to help you add hot orange juice slowly to chopped dates and stir until the mixture is smooth. Add ground almonds to thicken the mixture and extra orange oil if you like a stronger fruit flavour. Shape into balls or logs and roll in flaked coconut. Perhaps you could sell them to raise money for ADRA.

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Take a piece of card and turn it so that one of the long sides of the card is at the top. Write the name of Jesus on the card with big fat letters. Colour the letters so that they are bright and beautiful. Punch a row of holes along the bottom of the piece of card using a hole-punch. Ask an adult to find you some little tags on strings. Write the names of your friends on the tags and tie them to your ‘Jesus’ card. Every time you see the card, pray for your friends.

Name

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Baptisms at Brixton

Brixton church is always in the frontline of reaching out for souls. Therefore when we began promoting the ‘Proclaiming his Grace’ campaign, which ran from 4 to 18 October, we were all praying that the power of the Holy Spirit would touch the hearts of those who would hear the Word.

Baptisms at Brixton

On Sabbath afternoon 10 January 2009, Jeremy Tremeer and Jan McKenzie were ordained to the gospel ministry in a special service at the Cardiff Church. The church was ... from all over Wales to support the ordinands. All of the other serving ministers from the Welsh Mission were present.

Ordination of Jeremy Tremeer and Jan McKenzie

by John Surridge, Welsh Mission president

On Sabbath afternoon 10 January 2009, Jeremy Tremeer and Jan McKenzie were ordained to the gospel ministry in a special service at the Cardiff Church. The church was filled to capacity for the event, with members travelling from all over Wales to support the ordinands. All of the other serving ministers from the Welsh Mission were present.

Jeremy Tremeer serves in the Ystrad Mynach, Llandrindod Wells and Hereford district, as well as being the Youth Sponsor for the Welsh Mission, and he has worked in the Mission since September 2002. Jan McKenzie serves in the Cardiff and Newport district and has worked in the Welsh Mission since June 2003. As well as being fellow ordinands and colleagues, they are good friends with a number of interests in common, including counselling and computers. The ordination candidates were warmly introduced and presented by Pastor Brian Phillips, who had brought them into ministry when he was president of the Mission.

The main ordination address was given by BUC president Pastor Don McFarlane, who had earlier preached in the morning service. He emphasised that Pastors Tremeer and McKenzie now had the full ecclesiastical authority of the Seventh-day Adventist Church within the territory of the British Union Conference, but also worldwide. Expounding on their role as shepherds of the flock, he pointed out that ‘the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep’ and that self-sacrifice would be needed if they were to be effective pastors.

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SEC Expo attracts 1,000 delegates by Jacqui Grant, Human Resources manager, SEC

The South England Conference’s (SEC) 2009 Evangelism Expo took place on the Newbold College campus and at Newbold church on Sunday 11 January, with approximately 1,000 members from around the Conference gathered to learn the various methods available to them in their desire to make 2009 the year of evangelism.

The South England Conference president, Pastor Sam Davis, commenced the day with a powerful welcome. With his use of a PowerPoint presentation, Pastor Davis showed that when our hearts are in unison with God, we can become truly effective in our evangelising.

Pastor Terry Messenger conducted the devotional for the day, which he based on Luke 9:51-52. Here we saw that Jesus had a passion for seeking and saving the lost. With his message entitled ‘A Single Passion’, Pastor Messenger demonstrated the importance of our having one single passion, which is to share the good news through evangelism. Christ first prepared his disciples for the task before they were engaged in evangelism. Likewise, we, too, must be prepared.

Within numerous workshops and seminars, the various presenters passionately introduced different forms of evangelism to their delegates. Presenters highlighted and demonstrated how best creative, innovative and postmodern approaches can be used or combined with the traditional and contemporary methods for reaching out to theunchurched.

With as many as fifteen presenters, there was a live of activity as delegates made their way from one seminar to another, not wanting to miss out. Like a well-oiled machine, the activities of the day ran smoothly.

Pastor Michael Walker continued from Care for the Family’s seminar on behalf of the Family Ministries department of the SEC. Pastor Walker highlighted that ‘Great Britain is a culture in crisis’, reminding delegates that ‘we are called by God, therefore, it is a divine invitation’. ‘All are soldiers in the army of God and should be ready and fully equipped for service.’

Ladywood Talent Explosion

Ladywood church held its Talent Explosion on 27 December. This was in aid of the church’s building fund. For some twenty years, members have worshipped in a rented hall in the Ladywood area of Birmingham. This year, amid all the calamities and signs of the times, the Lord has provided an opportunity for us to purchase a building so that we can finally have our own place of worship.

In the Great Yarmouth church a very successful outreach venture took place on 17 August when a health-screening programme was run at the main shopping mall in the town centre. Over a hundred people were screened, with blood pressure, blood cholesterol, sugar, calcium and Body Mass Index tests being done. Comments from the public were extremely positive and complimentary about what our church is doing.

In addition, the Great Yarmouth church has now commenced a marketing campaign in an old folk’s home in the town. The first, in August, was very well received. Organised by Isabella Wakefield, the purpose was to have a worker at the home and a very active church member, if it is understood that this is the church being conducted in the town at this present time.

Pastor Michael Walker continues his public evangelistic seminars in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, on Tuesday and Wednesday nights respectively, and recently presented the Sabbath truth. The church has a regular core interest in both groups. They asked our continued prayers that the Holy Spirit will bless their venture with positive results to the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom as they endeavour to Make a Difference!

SEC participates in World Peace gathering

On 26 October 2008, Pastor Petras Bahadur was invited by an Inter-faith group based in Watford to their Week of Prayer for World Peace gathering. The representatives of twelve major religions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism and Sikhism, were invited to present their view about peace.

The theme of the thing was that ‘Seven-day Adventists were placed separately from Christianity’. This gave Pastor Walker an opportunity to present the biblical view of peace, which stunned the other presenters and made a lasting impression in the hall.

At the end of the programme he was especially complimented by the Mayor of Watford, Dorothy Thomas, who said, ‘Thank you for your presentation which was full of passion. It is a real gift to church and I encourage you to hear your sermon.’ The organisers of the programme were also astonished at the feedback that Adventists are very biblically oriented.


dr richard de lisser
SEC Communication director

The Seventh-day Adventist Church exists in the heart of many communities around the world, not as merely places of worship, but as places of refuge, rescue, hope and healing. During the month of September 2008 many churches here in the South England Conference responded to the challenges set out by the British Union Conference to engage their communities with the sole intention of Making a Difference.

Basildon

The Basildon church rose to this challenge, and on Mother’s day 2008 organised its first outreach programme. Armed with three hundred tulips and roses, as well as three hundred cards inscribed with a text or thought and the contact details of the church, the members went out to the homes around the church and gave these flowers to mothers while wishing them a very cheerful day. It was fantastic. We were well received. We got cards through the post the next week saying thank you, 2009 was a year of the rest of the year.

In many years the Basildon church has held an open-air programme in the town centre.

Making a Difference!

Two new Business scholarships on offer at Newbold

Two new British students of Business will be able to study at Newbold next academic year, thanks to ASI-UK, an organisation of Seventh-day Adventist businessmen and women. The confirmed offer was made by Dr Richard de Lisser, SEC Communication director.

Ladywood church also attended the seminar on Global Evangelism which she described as being motivating and helpful. The Revd Hardy is a freelance Bible worker, she is looking forward to encouraging the implementation of some of the ideas in the Personal Ministries and other departments within her church.

All in all, it was a very successful and well-planned event. The kind and professional assistance of the Newbold staff, who did a tremendous job in co-ordinating and serving an excellent lunch, was much appreciated. They also ensured that delegates were properly directed to their various seminar locations around the Newbold church and College complex.

At the close, Pastor Davis reminded delegates that ‘let us be prepared to do this at all costs. Let us be prepared to do this at all costs, just as God along with the people. I should be ready and fully equipped for service.’

Members who attended the Expo were eager to share their experiences of the day, and several people gave their personal views.

Eddie Sinclair, who attends Wycombe Sands church, was happy about the workshop he attended pertaining to Men’s Ministries.

Martin Emmanuel, who is a member of the Plumstead church, attended the seminar presented by Brian Davison which addressed Global Evangelism. Brother Emmanuel was happy to have picked up some creative ideas on how to promote his church within the community.

Osborne Thomas from the Aylesbury church commented on the presentation given by the Revd Hardy: ‘Most of what was presented can be adapted. I understand that there is truth that can be taught to us from those who do not share all of our beliefs. It is said that we do not have such an expert within our own Church but as we focus on reaching out within our respective communities, over time this will change.’

Hyacinth Walker from the Birston church also attended the seminar on Global Evangelism which she described as being motivating and helpful. The Revd Walker is a freelance Bible worker, she is looking forward to encouraging the implementation of some of the ideas in the Personal Ministries and other departments within her church.

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WANTED: Training Light Bearers or have any of these Bible study books. Do you have any of these on your shelves, or could you let us know where you could come to see them put to good use? Please contact Vi Ven on 01933 273922.
In very personal and powerful 2008 year-end message, our GC president, Pastor Jan Paulsen, made an appeal to Adventists all over the world to become more involved in the local community. Pastor Paulsen spoke of shared humanity, and said that our faith should express itself in active concern for people in our community. He said: ‘I want to know the world to believe that our faith inevitably leads us to care for other people.’

Matthew, a busy university student, nevertheless makes time to serve the less fortunate in his local community. The report focussed on Matthew’s baptism as a young chaplain and also as a singer and fundraiser for various charities. In the end, Matthew even continued to serve as the head chaplain, described Matthew with the words: ‘He has a wisdom beyond his years. We are lucky to have him as part of our team.’

Patients who had received pastoral care from Matthew were interviewed about their impressions of him, and they spoke of how he had helped them to view life more positively.

The BBC reporter, Ian Palmer, was very impressed with what he had seen of Matthew’s work in the community and ended his report with the words: ‘Matthew is a lamplighter in a world full of darkness.’

When asked about his reasons for what he did, Matthew answered: ‘I wanted my mum to be proud and to say to me “I’m so proud that you are willing to help people in need.”’

If you wish to view the full BBC interview with Matthew, please go to the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUd7C7Z2s.

THE HOMECHURCH IN CANADA

In its introduction, the report said: ‘Canada’s Heritage and volunteerism are key perspectives. Mr Edwards spoke movingly about his Christian characteristics, his sense of fun, and what many remember of him, a warm and gentle man who will be missed by all. He challenged all who attended of the glorious hope that will relieve the suffering his widow, friends and acquaintances feel now.’

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Weimar New Start experts visit Newbold

by Dr Clemency Mitchell

The experts were Dr Clarence Ing, director of the Weimar NewStart programme, and his wife and colleague, Mrs May Ing, NewStart dietician and lecturer. Are you taking advantage of the Adventist Advantage? This was the topic of the AMS (Adventist International Medical Fellowship) day of fellowship on Sabbath 13 December. Although it was so near Christmas, around fifty Adventist medics and health leaders spent the day with the Ings. Dr Clarence, with his years of experience at directing the Weimar Institute NewStart programme, as well as years of medical missionary service, convincingly demonstrated the advantage that committed Adventists have in mental as well as physical and spiritual health. Mrs May Ing, shared her experience of the soul-winning potential of medical missionary work, both in the home and at Weimar.

The next day the Newbold church Health Ministries team hosted a New Start for Mental Health day seminar, where the Ings shared precious information on such topics as New Start for troubled minds, the real way to cope with stress, food and your brain and the latest news about phytochemicals, the wonder substances that give plant foods their healing properties as well as their distinctive colours and flavours.

The Weimar Institute was founded in 1978 by a group of Adventist physicians committed to the practice of medicine, using the truly natural remedies recommended by Adventist pioneer health reformer Ellen G. White. They developed the NEWSTART programme, a simple, rational, scientific regime based on eight lifestyle factors: Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunlight, Temperature, Air, Rest, Trust in divine power. Nutrition here is the simple, natural plant-food-based diet that is associated in numerous research papers with longer life and less disease. Temperance is understood as moderation in the use of all good things, such as food and exercise, as well as abstinence from health-destroying substances and habits. This programme has been shown to begin the process of chronic disease reversal in thousands of sufferers, particularly those with type two diabetes and coronary artery disease. Because they feel its benefits very quickly, people are motivated to continue. It is not an all-or-nothing programme; one can follow part or all of it. However, the more completely one follows the programme, the better the results will be.

For more information about the NEWSTART programme or AMS, contact splattmcdonald@adventist.org.uk or clemency@themitchells.eclipse.co.uk.

For orders for the missionary book of the year, phone 01476 591006 from week commencing Monday 2 March.