Ethiopia. Paul Smart, then ADRA country director, was driving through a remote part of the country. Watching the emaciated cattle and the people, who were barely more than skin and bones, caused his heart to ache.

Getting out of his vehicle and walking into a village, he greeted a small boy standing by the path. After they had said a few friendly words to one another, Paul asked the boy, “Would you like a drink of water?”

It was a simple offer – nothing that would excite most children. However, Paul knew that this village was experiencing a severe famine and water shortages.

“No. No thank you,” the little boy replied. “Today is not my turn to drink water.”

Paul was taken aback by this answer. However, he knew what it meant. In this drought-devastated area, children get a drink of water every second day – if they’re lucky. The rest of the time they must live with the dryness in their mouth and their whole body.

Unfortunately, when children in arid areas do get water to drink, it’s often muddy. Most likely it’s contaminated with bacteria, which can cause life-threatening diarrhoea to someone who is already dehydrated. Children are the first to get sick and die from water-related diseases. In fact, dirty water kills nearly 5,000 children each day. ADRA is committed to changing this disturbing fact. And your generosity to give becomes the cup of water that keeps a child alive.

Will you help ADRA provide clean, pure water systems?

Clean water is a building block of life. It is a basic requirement of living. Access to a plentiful supply of fresh, clean water is fundamental to health and growth. That’s why ADRA has been actively developing water resources for more than twenty years. Water is life, and we know in the communities that we serve around the world, no need is more urgent than the need for good, clean water.

Your financial support will help us provide water to many more families and villages.

Families must have water to survive. When there is no clean water in the village, it becomes the duty of young girls to spend their day searching for and carrying water to their homes. Many times they are forced to walk great distances, which puts them at risk of physical danger and usually closes the door to an education.

The needy are desperate for water, and in Isaiah 41:17, 18 (NIV) we find that God has indeed promised them water. ‘The poor and needy search for water, and their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the Lord will answer them, I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs.’

Through the Annual Appeal you have the opportunity to bring God’s Word into action. Why not donate a couple of hours to collect this year, when every pound counts even more than before? Or participate in the many other fundraising activities that are organised? You can share the blessings of also bringing water to those whom God has promised not to forget. ADRA is keeping individuals alive and bringing hope to their communities. Your help represents the love and support that encourages and enables our staff to carry on their work.

Providing people and their communities with access to clean water is fundamental to easing the bondage of poverty. Please help this year with the Annual Appeal and enable ADRA to provide essential, life-giving water.

P.S. Providing pure, clean, life-giving water is the single initiative with the greatest impact. The benefits of clean water impact every aspect of life in a community. Your help will make it possible for ADRA to give a glimpse of God’s mercy and grace to individuals who are literally dying for a drop of clean water.

Ingathering dates 2009

METROPOLITAN AREA: 28 March - 19 April
PROVINCES: 28 March - 12 April
Follow the Bible in 2009

That I may know him

by David Marshall

What would you say to someone who accused you of bibliolatry? The first thing you could say would be, ‘What does that mean?’ At all events, that’s what I did when it happened to me. When the reply came, ‘excessive passion for the Bible’, I could recall being accused of worse things! In common with the late Rumpole of the Bailey I rarely, if ever, plead ‘Guilty as charged’. But the evidence against me was considerable. I own most of the English versions of the Bible currently in print. One or other of these versions is invariably close to hand, and I habitually walk around with a copy about my person. Nothing gives me greater, deep-down satisfaction these days than studying the Bible. That satisfaction is never greater than when I discover some new insight into a Bible book, a parable of Jesus, a prophetic book, the gospel story or the letters of Paul.

That evidence would all seem to point to a Guilty verdict. A final piece of evidence – that the wrapper of the Bible was torn in the first place – was that, with the help of a friend, I have recently completed the construction of a log cabin at my garden in the end of my yard. It is insulated, carpeted, treated (my wife calls it ‘GCHQ’) and exists so that, when I so choose, my studies can be uninterrupted.

Nevertheless, I enter a plea of Not Guilty to the bibliolatry charge! And not just because of my Rumpole of the Bailey instincts!

Bible study is a means to an end, insular as I am concerned. The end is not simply satisfaction at discovering some new take on the truth or grip on the Gospel. It is not just (to paraphrase A. T. Pierson) that ‘The Bible is the study of the evidences of the evidences of the evidences of the evidences of the evidences of all of all of all of all the evidences of the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of the evidences of the evidences of the evidences of all of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences of all the evidences’.

But that is not to dismiss the extraordinary way in which the books of the two testaments validated themselves and came to be included in the ‘canon’. Nor is it to detract from the astounding manuscript and archaeological discoveries of the last two centuries which have proved the accuracy of the Bible.

The Bible is not an accurate book. There are many it is not just a powerful book. There are others. It is not just that it is an inspiring book: books about the Bible can also be inspiring. The Bible is a book with a Voice: it speaks to me. Above all things the Bible is the supreme revelation of God. The central focus of the Bible is on a Person, and it is a Person whose ‘voice’ I hear. The perfect revelation of God in Scripture is in Jesus Christ. Jesus makes the unity between the two testaments. In the New Testament he fulfills hundreds of Old Testament prophecies. All sixty-six books enshrine him. The chief characters, institutions and histories prefigure him. The best ‘windows’ on Jesus are the four gospels. That is why any study of the Bible must begin there.

Christ is the central figure of Scripture and the Cross is its central symbol. The very shape of the cross suggests the length, breadth and height of love which the God of Men may reject as an angry God, but how can they reject a God who, even at the point of their rejection, leans forward in empathy!

Only one day in every 350 in the life of Jesus is referred to in the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But the record of the events of the last seven days takes up one third of the accounts.

Why? Because the Cross is the clearest depiction of the heart and the mind of the God I study the Bible to know and to hear.

The sleep impact

A shocking health hazard appeared in an article in New Scientist on 6 September 2003. It stated: ‘Lack of sleep can cause brain damage and affect memory’. OK, sleep is important, but surely losing some sleep could not amount to so much damage, could it? In this fast-paced, pressurised world we sometimes find ourselves struggling to sleep and not enough time in which to accomplish it. In an attempt to meet deadlines and squeeze more into a twenty-four-hour period than is reasonably possible, we can find ourselves cutting back on much needed sleep. New scientists are finding that this is to our detriment.

Rahmeen Khamsi, reporting in New Scientist on 11 February 2003, highlighted a new study which demonstrated that school children who fail to get a good night’s sleep before studying new information did not retain as much information as individuals who slept well. In fact, the results showed that they remembered roughly 10% less than their well-rested counterparts.

The researchers concluding the report stated that it was ‘a worrying finding’, particularly in light of other current findings which suggested that the average amount of sleep people get each night is decreasing. ‘This study shows that the brain has to be well rested to receive and store information for future use or processing,’ stated Snoring-Schlub-Two.

Previous studies have also shown that a full night’s rest after studying can improve learning. So what happens to the brain during sleep?

Scientists have found that when we’re asleep, our brain continues to learn the material we’ve been expected to work so far was unaware. From all the information that the brain processes during the day it derives meaning. Subconsciously the brain analyses the information and works through unresolved problems. During this process the physical structure of the brain cells alters so that specific pieces of knowledge are etched more permanently in the memory. Neurologists refer to this process as consolidation.

Facts

- Adequate sleep is essential for study, retention and retrieval of information.
- Hours of sleep gained before midnight are twice as valuable and restful to body and mind as the hours after midnight.
- An hour of work in the morning is twice as productive as an hour of work late at night.

Good health!
Reconnecting with inactive and former church members

by Mike Jones*

1 Leave the Adventist Church in 1983 following a divorce. I'd been the editor of *Insight*, served as a pastor for five years, and had written three books. After a few years, I was doing departmental work in the South-western Union Conference Ministerial Association.

Several years ago, the *Adventist Review* ran an article I wrote about my return to church membership.

I had been an inactive member because my name was removed from the church books. I had also stopped receiving the union paper and the *Adventist Review*. The purpose of this article is to share some ideas on how to reconnect with inactive or perhaps reach those who have been inactive or who have left church membership completely.

In my case, I submitted a letter of resignation to my local church. I had no major doctrinal differences with the Church — but ministers aren't supposed to get divorced, and I was embarrassed. So I decided to stop attending and later didn't expect to be gone for sixteen years.

After turning in my resignation, I never heard from anyone at my local church. So I called a few months later to tell me I was no longer a member. When I asked him how he knew that, he told me he'd just read about it in the church bulletin.

After returning to membership about eight years ago, I feel I hadn't been alone in leaving. Denominational statistics show that more than 1.6 million members worldwide were dropped from membership or went missing between 2002 and 2006.[3] Some church leaders believe that number could be much higher. Each of the first two pastors of the church that my wife Diane and I joined after returning to membership also left the Church, which was a bit disconcerting. Here are some numbers that may interest you:

- The ratio of new members who join the Adventist Church to the number who leave is about 1:7.

- Worldwide between 2002 and 2006, 1,684,303 Adventists dropped out or went missing. This breaks down to an average of 4,780 who slipped away every week during this five-year period.

- Forty to 50% of Adventist teenagers in North America become inactive by age 25. As you can see, we're haemorrhaging. So how do we reach those who've left? How do we stop the bleeding? Here are a few thoughts for your consideration:

2 Watch for inactive members on Sabbath mornings when they visit. During my years away from church, I used to visit local churches several times a year — and so do other inactive and former members. Frankly, I was usually lost in church once I got past the deacons. I can recall only one time when a pastor encountered and spoke with me.

Diane and I were invited once to speak at a small church whose leaders told us they had a plan in place to reach former members. After the sermon, I chatted with a man in the lobby and learned he was a former member who hadn't attended church in twenty-three years. I asked him how many of the members had greeted him. He said, "None." During the afternoon meeting, I told the group about him, and they were shocked. They also confirmed what I had told me — not one of them had connected with him.

So let's look at these people. We tend to think of inactive or former members as being "out in the world" when, in reality, they may be sitting in church only a few feet away from us. And keep in mind that they don't always wear "backslider" signs, and they may arrive late and leave early.

The church I used to pastor in Anchorage, Alaska, included a large number of inactive and former members largely because the church leaders joined me in greeting and talking with people in the lobby. We focused on getting acquainted with people who were isolated. The church leaders were often members who had struggled in the past. I'm convinced that the church would be much more effective if we did that.

3 Pray for those who have been inactive. Several years ago I discovered I was trying to do the Holy Spirit's work with my oldest son, who had been inactive for more than twenty years. How do I know I was doing that? Because he learned from a family rampsy that he was frustrated when he came to visit because "all Dad can do is talk about religion." In fact, I did, quite a lot, because his boys were growing up with little touch from me. But I decided to clean up my act. The next time I visited I didn't say a word about God or church. I mainly asked questions about his favourite hobbies, which are coaching basketball and football. A few weeks later, my daughter-in-law emailed my wife and told her that Mike Jr was talking about coming back to church. About a year later, he was re-baptised, along with two of his sons.

This doesn't mean, however, that we shouldn't encourage inactive members to come back. Recently I talked with a businessman in my home church about his time out of the church. I asked him if he had been out for a few years. He told me, "Yes, I got a bit dry and drifted out. If anyone had invited me to return during those years, I believe I would have," he said.

4 Consider anointing the former member who has become ill. My friend Don Gray tells the story of anointing his brother Burt, who had been out of the Church for forty-three years, in part because of a drinking problem. Don stayed in touch with Burt throughout the years, but was unable to reach him spiritually until Burt was in the last stages of cancer.

Don's first hospital visit found Burt in coma with four tubes coming out of his body, his skin the colour of a pumpkin. A few days later, when Burt was able to hold a conversation, Don asked him if he'd like to be anointed. He agreed, and the day after Don found him sitting up and alert. Not long after that wondrous event, Don re-baptised him, and Burt rejoined the Church and lived for another nine years.

5 Apologise for the church when a former member feels wounded. You and I know never for sure how accurate their "church-done-me-wrong" story is. But we can tell our families of the church that we were shocked when we came to visit because "all Dad can do is talk about religion." It is very common for inactive members to say this. Several people have told me it wasn't me but the church that caused their problem. And I always tell them to tell the church. I'd still say the same. It's an apology on behalf of the church for whatever happened or didn't happen. Then I ask if they would be willing to forgive me. Very few turn me down. And when they say yes, I quickly pray with them, thanking God for the forgiveness He gave the person. I also pray that the Holy Spirit will make their decision a reality and bring great healing into their lives. Believe me, these are always healing moments.

6 Consider prayer warrior Roger Morneau's protocol for the inactive.

Morneau, author of the books Incredible Answers to Prayer, and *Incredible Answers to Prayer and others*, developed the following plan to reclaim inactive and former members.

- Read Matthew 27:24-54 daily, then plead the merits of Jesus' shed blood on behalf of the inactive person and pray that their sins will be blotted out.

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to minister the graces of redemption for them and light their spiritual bubbling springs. They have not asked for this kind of help.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to re-create their spiritual faculties, looking to the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2) to do this miraculous work.

- Pray this way daily, recognising that the person you're praying for has the power of choice, but that the Holy Spirit now can work with added power. He can work with the person who has just exercised it.

- Give thanks daily for what God is doing in the life of the person you're praying for, whether you see any results or not.

7 Remember to claim God's promises on behalf of the inactive or former member. Then let God do what God does best.

There's an example in Jeremiah 3:22 in which the Lord promises "If I do not recompense that man who is innocent of blood, I will require it at your hand." Similarly, verse 23 says that if I don't bring them back, God will do it. But I'll still be looking for reasons to look to God to do it. And I won't be surprised if I have a chance to witness at the beginning of my return to church, and a beautiful relationship that culminated in marriage.

References:
- "Muslim or whatever?" *Adventist Review*, 16 Feb. 2010.

*Mike Jones lives in Portland, Oregon, with his wife Diane. He writes a newspaper column. Sometimes I Feel Like Praying! *Roger Morneau tells of a church in Anchorage, Alaska, that included a large number of inactive and former members largely because the church leaders joined me in greeting and talking with people in the lobby. We focused on getting acquainted with people who were isolated. The church leaders were often members who had struggled in the past. I'm convinced that the church would be much more effective if we did that.

I don't Feel Like Praying! by Roger Morneau will be available in February 2010. Actual prices may vary.

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Ipswich: Starting the New Year right

Ipswich church witnessed a very special occasion on the first Sabbath of 2009. It was a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving when mother and daughter, Margaret Long and Tomisha Kersey, were baptised by Pastor Samuel Ouadjo. Margaret and Tomisha (also fondly known as Maggie and Tammy) have been attending for over a year and made a public declaration of their commitment to God after a series of Bible studies. The elders and church family warmly welcomed the new members. Husband and wife Stan and Sophia Sigawale graced us with the special item ‘Surrender All’ — a lovely rendition which complemented a very special day.

Norwich and Kings Lynn

Sabbath 8 November was a day of joy and celebration for the churches of Norwich and Kings Lynn, as the Norwich church hosted a mighty service. To begin with, Marc and Janice Nkomo of Kings Lynn brought their children to be dedicated to the Lord and accepted into the Christian family. Then two young ladies, Selu Sibanda and Avis Davidson, gave their lives to the Lord in baptism. Selu had studied with the elders of the Norwich church, and Avis, who is the first person ever to be baptised from the Kings Lynn group, had prepared for baptism with the pastor, Chris Peake. Both gave many testimonies of how God had led them. The children were also delighted and wanting to be a part of the moment, sat and stood close by the baptistery to see for themselves what ‘dying to sin and rising to faith’ really meant. They watched intently as each went under the water and then rose again to welcome a new beginning in their lives.

During the service we were likewise blessed with a moving song by Sidney Grant of Norwich, Marc and Janice. The service was followed by food and fellowship and much welcoming of visitors and friends.

What’s cooking?

by Brian Pilmoor

Visiting Newbold church cafeteria, beginning at 7pm, I discovered thirty-eight individuals attending the first evening supper to taste ten different dishes of food. Buttered squash soup, an agreeable starter and acceptable to all, was our first taste. I asked a number of those attending, ‘How did you like it?’ One man sitting next to me, Geoff, responded in one word, ‘Excellent.’

Viewing the long table of various dishes, I soon discovered the theme for the evening was ‘Colourful Cookery’. Yes — this arrangement of cream, yellow, pink, orange, red and purple colours followed the starter in rainbow order of yellow and orange peppers, pink mashed potato, red cabbage and purple beetroot slices with greens. I mentioned the ‘rainbow’ spectrum because I spotted one young lady wearing a rainbow horizontally striped jersey spoon-feeding her daughter dressed in a bright red frock. I enquired of her, ‘How did she like it?’ ‘Lovely!’ she replied. I was glad to see a number of mothers in attendance with their children, because a healthy diet for the family is so important.

After every meal had been eaten, Dr Clemency Mitchell, the organiser, with her team of healthy helpers, gave a commentary on some of the foods and also spoke on the positive side of preventing diseases like cancer. Another helper named Brit, hailing from Norway, also explained one of her dishes. This was immediately followed by a lecture on vitamins conducted by Dr Isabel Moraes from Brazil. Her illustrated talk was about fifteen minutes. She was dressed in a bright red sleeveless jacket and white blouse. Her shoulder-length black hair was clear of her ears which were ready to listen to the many questions that were posed.

One thing I liked about this item in the evening programme was the issue of vitamins. We were given five things which contain vitamin E — sunflower seeds (which I am feeding to the blue tits on my garden bird table) and sunflower oil, wheat-germ, almonds and pine nuts. This was my ‘take-away’ morsel to chew over.

This evening’s meeting concluded on a clap-happy note as everyone expressed their appreciation of the work that had been undertaken to make this ‘colour cookery’ evening a success. A further three cookery evenings were held in February.
Valentine’s Day baptism
The demonstration of God’s love for Jason Collins was reciprocated in the pool at St Austell church on 14 February.
Jason lives near the church and started attending a Friday evening programme during the early days of the St Austell Youth Project. When he found himself and a friend stranded in a local town with no way home, he knew what to do. He rang Ashley Brooks, one of the youth volunteers, confident that he would be helped. However, this came with a price. ‘Sure, I’ll pick you up, if you help me with an item at church next week.’

By the grace of God was with us on Sabbath 31 January.
On 17 January I had met with the Plaistow Active Team Community Forum and we formulated plans for the Environmental Awareness community event at Lister on 23 March. Counsellor Ali and the Community Participation Unit officer for Plaistow were present. It was here that I suggested that the Pathfinders club could be involved on the day and I was asked to coordinate with the Pathfinders club.

It was an extended Junior Sabbath Activity in which we met parents and children of all nationalities. Many were interested in the Pathfinders club and indicated that they would like to get their children involved. We gave Pathfinder literature to those who requested and answered questions as necessary.

One parent left her details and asked when her 5- and 7-year-old children could start!

The jumbo cigarette for the anti-smoking display was on display. Melodie and Alberto were performing with the puppets and playing the kids gospel music at intervals. Meanwhile, Carol and I were helping children to make little origami from recycled paper/carrier bags.
All day long swarms of children and their parents queued for their chance to make a nicely decorated bag with the message: ‘My Litter Bag – Keep God’s World Clean’.

It was a good experience. We were located right outside the principal’s office of the Cleves Primary School. When we met her she said we were doing a great job and she liked the display and interested the children had in what we had to offer. We also met the Community Participation Unit officer for the area who said she could link us to all the other activities in the borough if we wanted to become more involved. As a result, we have been added to the list of ‘stakeholders’, which are different groups invited to community events in the borough.

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In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul says, ‘By the grace of God was with us on Sabbath 31 January.
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An evangelistic campaign held in the autumn of 2009 led to five baptisms, with Kestine bringing the total to six baptisms in less than six months. The evangelistic emphasis continues. On Sabbath 7 February, the Welsh Mission president Pastor Asiamah and the leaders of the Cardiff African Fellowship have introduced a number of other initiatives to help build members’ spirituality and capacity to be effective witnesses for Christ. These include a prayer chain programme, where each group prays and fasts on certain days throughout the year. In addition to this, Bible studies, active worship services and amicable social interactions, all add to the plan for equipping members and building capacity for the task ahead. Pictures from the baptism can be seen on the SWAAF website at: www.swAAF.org.uk.

On Sabbath afternoon, 14 February 2009, Mrs Kestine Mpofu Lusinga was baptised in the Cardiff Central church and welcomed by Pastor Asiamah and the leaders of the Cardiff African Fellowship, known in the community as the South Wales African Adventist Fellowship, or SWAAF, grew out of the Cardiff Central church nearly two years ago with the primary intention of reaching out to members of the African community living in South Wales. Under the leadership of Pastor George Asiamah it has retained its evangelistic emphasis and has grown considerably – to the extent that in May 2008 it was formed into an official company of the Welsh Mission.

December 13 was wet, windy and cold, but inside the Balham Central church it was warm, friendly and exciting. Invitations had been sent to members of the community to a concert organised by Pastor Garry Gordon entitled ‘Learning to make the right choices’. The week concluded with a sermon by Pastor Gordon entitled ‘Bringing Back the Love’ in the West Bromwich church and members of the NEC Family Ministries team sharing ‘Top ten tips to keep the love flowing’. The youth were not left out during the week with a Friday night focus:

Pastor Anthony said, again to paraphrase, ‘The Holy Spirit is not only in the spontaneous but also, and maybe especially, in systematic study and preparation.’ For many this will mean a paradigm shift in thinking, as the method used by some preachers is to think of a subject and then try to find Scripture to support it or to try to manoeuvre Scripture in such a way as to mean something that it was never intended to mean in the first place. Pastor Anthony led out in time seminars on expository preaching, demonstrating the depth of application required to move to an expanded level of understanding, with brief exercises for illustration. It was a revelation to hear that to prepare an expository sermon is like to discern and comprehend sermons taken fifteen to twenty hours! This, of course, is above and beyond devotional Bible study and a need to be totally immersed in the Word. Pastor Boyle preached two exemplary sermons that not only demonstrated the skill of handling the Word appropriately but also succeeded in lifting up Christ. His sermons were inspirational and brought the hearer closer to the Saviour. Pastor Boyle also gave practical hints on sermon preparation. For example, he always uses the mnemonic CRC: encourage, relevance, instruction/illustration and Christ in the sermon. Filling these four elements into a sermon will satisfy the needs of a hungry congregation. The emphasis Pastor Boyle used that sticks in my mind regarding Christ is that the preacher is to ‘lift him up, lift him up, lift him up’. On the Saturday evening we had a lecture in the art of public speaking from an outside consultancy firm, Executive Leadership – Ireland, which received a positive response. Additionally, each of us was given a textbook and workbook, ‘Heroes of God’s Word’ by the late Mike Stickland, to encourage continuing study, particularly for the lay preacher. The Emmaus Centre is a place of peace and tranquillity. Set in pleasant grounds, it is comfortable and well equipped with very pleasant and helpful staff. It was good to see so many at the seminar, almost forty for the weekend, with many more attending for the Sabbath lectures. Our Mission president, Pastor David Neil, was to be congratulated for arranging and participating in such a helpful programme. This preaching seminar is now added to the previous two successful elders’ seminars Pastor Neil has run in the Emmaus Centre.
Levi Lawrence at 90

On Sunday 8 November members of the Stoke Newington church honoured their oldest member Levi Lawrence on his 90th birthday.

The youth department of the Stoke Newington church held a week of revival from 22 to 29 November. The theme for the week was ‘We would see Jesus’. Youth Day on Sabbath 22 November launched the week of revival. In the Sabbath School session the lesson study period took the form of a scene in a doctor’s surgery. There were five young speakers in the divine service basing their talks on ‘Portrait of Jesus’. Each speaker told how they see Jesus.

From Sabbath afternoon our speaker for the day was Nicardo Delahayes, a 20-year-old final-year theological student from Oakwood College. Nicardo was making a return visit after two years. Each night he delivered sermons with titles such as ‘Blind Faith’, ‘Thou art the man’, ‘This Man receives sinners’ and ‘There is a lesson to be learnt and a blessing to be gained’. Each night we were blessed with a different praise team from other churches.

On Sabbath afternoon, 29 November, family, friends and church members witnessed the baptism by our minister, Pastor Wilfred Blake, of three candidates. Sister and brother Monique and Lamont Roper, our church children who joined their mother Sandra who is a member of our church, and Keith Dyer, who has been attending our church since this year. In his short sermon, Nicardo told the candidates that if they put their hands in the Master’s hand everything will be all right, which fitted in with his sermon title: ‘Everything will be all right’.

Spiritual mentors were assigned to each candidate, and each was given the usual baptism package.

Stake Newington: Youth week of revival baptism

The convention commenced on Saturday 10 January with twenty-two members of their family in Germany. A week later, Manchester South church opened its doors and seventy friends came to join the couple as they celebrated their half century together. The master of ceremonies for the day was Pastor Peter Jeynes, and Pastor Jeff Couzins delivered a short message in which he said that Heaven intended marriage to last a lifetime, a fact beautifully illustrated in the lives of Margaret and John.

John and Margaret met fifty-two years ago while at a camp in Whitley and have raised four children. They, in turn, have given them seven grandchildren, and two delightful great-grandchildren. Camping has remained an important feature in the lives of John and Margaret and they delighted in running camps for young people and older members alike. Before leaving Manchester South they regularly organised camping retreats, in association with the NEC Youth department, for up to 120 senior and junior youth. For the last few years they have organised the Bury retreat to Aberdon.

The couple’s life has been one of service for the Lord in sustaining the work of the church. Although they moved to support the work in Bury in 2000, John was the first elder in Manchester South for many years prior to that, where both he and Margaret were founder members.

The members present for their special day shared fond memories of John and Margaret. Many of those present recalled how the couple had influenced their lives over the years. For example, Margaret, a machinist, produced ten 14ft x 14ft tents and a marquee to hold 120 people, and new shirts for the Pathfinder troop. She also made robes for the church choir, along with seal covers for use in the sanctuary and curtilms for both Manchester South and Oldham churches. John has blessed the church over the years as elder, lay preacher, and the longest-serving Pathfinder leader in the NEC. The Bury members also present expressed their appreciation for all that John and Margaret have done since transferring their membership to Bury.

On 14 September 2008, John and Margaret Barron celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary with twenty-two members of their family in Germany. A week later, Manchester South church opened its doors and seventy friends came to join the couple as they celebrated their half century together. The master of ceremonies for the day was Pastor Peter Jeynes, and Pastor Jeff Couzins delivered a short message in which he said that Heaven intended marriage to last a lifetime, a fact beautifully illustrated in the lives of Margaret and John.

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Jesus loves to hear his followers sing their praises to him. In Luke 19:10 Jesus says that if we don’t praise and witness then the ‘very stones will cry out’. The Watering Hole church plant did not use stones; it was puppets that did the witnessing over the Christmas period.

On 22 January 2009 Eric Samuel Burton was born in Santiago de Cuba on the beautiful Caribbean island of Cuba. His parents, Charles and Anita, were Jamaican missionaries who had arrived in Jamaica in the early 1920s. They had two children, Eleanor and Eric, before the family settled in Kingston. By the age of fourteen, Eric was already assisting his family with their home. He would work in the fields while his father, Charles, was a mechanic and his mother, Anita, was a teacher.

As Eric slept, he leaves to mourn his memory one brother, Nehemiah (Cynthia); five children, Lorraine (Ken), Shirley (Lloyd), Marjorie (Marshall), Rosemary (David); fourteen grandchildren; twelve great-grandchildren; sixteen nieces and nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

**Erich Samuel Burton, Sr (1921-2009) d. 22 January.**

On 5 May 1921 Eric Samuel Burton was born in the Santiago region on the beautiful Caribbean island of Cuba. His parents, Charles and Anita, were Jamaican missionaries who had arrived in Jamaica in the early 1920s. They had two children, Eleanor and Eric, before the family settled in Kingston. By the age of fourteen, Eric was already assisting his family with their home. He would work in the fields while his father, Charles, was a mechanic and his mother, Anita, was a teacher.

Eric’s dedication to service continued as a result of warfare – a war that began at the beginning of time; a war that Eric would become a part of. He has been laid to rest, but one day soon the Life-giver will return and usher him to the place of his final destination.

In addition to his contribution to the economic empowerment of his community, Mr Burton also helped in providing opportunities for social engagement. Eric’s dedication to service often inspired others to go beyond their homes. Eric was a man of faith and was often called upon for advice in times of need.

Upon retirement at the age of 65, the normally healthy Eric experienced some serious health problems. As his condition worsened, his doctors calmly informed him that he had only months to live. He continued to manage his health, even in the face of despair. He would often speak to his family, friends, and community about the importance of living a life of service and dedication.

On 22 January 2009 Eric Samuel Burton continued to challenge, entertain and inspire. He was determined to enjoy life to the fullest, and would divide his time between family, church, and community service. With renewed vigour, Brother Burton continued to challenge, entertain, and inspire. He was determined to continue his work of service and dedication, even in the face of despair. He would often speak to his family, friends, and community about the importance of living a life of service and dedication.

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Meet Gene Kol
by Sharon Platt-McDonald
Gene Kol currently serves as the BUC National CHIP coordinator, responsible for leading the implementation and development of CHIP in the British Isles. As part of Gene’s induction to the post, she attended the Corporate CHIP training in Rockford, USA, and is now qualified as a Corporate CHIP director with the remit of introducing CHIP to external organisations. She also attended the CHIP Summit in Orlando, Florida, for the advanced CHIP training, the purpose of which is to bring holistic health to the community. This has the added advantage of being an excellent evangelistic tool.

CHIP stands for Coronary Health Improvement Project—a community-based lifestyle change programme, which runs for a period of thirty days. It has been scientifically validated and peer reviewed, and case studies have proved that it is able to reverse chronic lifestyle illnesses such as Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, atherosclerosis, obesity and depression. It also can help to lower high cholesterol and improve other lifestyle-related illnesses. It is both participative and demonstrative, involving food demonstration, educational DVDs, workbooks, weekly goal setting and a number of other facilitative aspects. For more information on CHIP visit www.chip-health.org and www.adventist-chip.org.

Since commencing with the BUC Gene has contacted close to forty churches to assist in the facilitation of the CHIP programme. Realising the potential of the health ministry to impact lives, Gene says of her role: ‘My mission statement is to allow God to use me in his healing ministry, whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual healing and to be the enabler of people who wish to live more effective lives in the UK and Ireland communities.

If you are interested in using CHIP as an evangelistic tool, Gene will make an appointment to meet with you and your team to discuss the process of commencing a MicroCHIP or CHIP programme.

Mailbox

The Church and democracy
Dear Editor
I have been a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for over sixty years. However, there is something that has puzzled me. Why, being a Christian Church, has it adopted the policy of democracy in order to bring about decisions?

Editor replies:
The Reformation was about the democratisation of Christian institutions as well as about justification by faith. Churches in the Reformed tradition, like ours, have followed the electoral process to determine leadership and have left decision-making to elected leaders and elected committees. Among the alternative models are the Popacy (the Pope) and what is called Episcopacy (bishops).

What happened to captions?
(This was a P.S. to a personal letter and was not meant for publication. However, it asks a question to which I, too, would like to have the answer! Editor)
P.S. I continue to enjoy Messenger—so colourful and newsy. And I like your photos! My only suggestion would be that you gents use more captions. When I see a news photo, I immediately want to know two things: Who are those people? What are they doing? I don’t want to read the entire article to find out.

Editor replies: Are captions a victim of email? The fact that pictures arrive so quickly, and are not meant for publication. However, it asks a question to which I, too, would like to have the answer! Editor)

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