In the footsteps of Jesus
by Jacqui Grant, associate SEC executive secretary, and Sam O. Davis, ministerial intern, Lewisham

A meeting of ministers that was almost abandoned because of the prevailing credit crunch has energised ministers across the South England Conference. Amazing! Brilliant! An unforgettable experience! It will change the way I conduct my ministry!” were some of the words used by participants to describe the experience of visiting the land where Jesus walked. Under the theme, ‘The Pastor as a Shepherd’, the SEC ministerial workers met in Jerusalem from 1 to 8 March.

With revised funding for the trip, ministerial workers who wanted their spouses to accompany them paid for their costs, while the ministers had to forfeit their yearly professional development allowance in order to attend. In total, 153 Adventist pilgrims visited the Holy Land. They all found it worthwhile.

At the start, SEC president, Pastor Sam Davis, quoted 1 Samuel 17 as evidence that God expects us to give good leadership. ‘He has called us to minister, and we must be good shepherds.’

The group was also privileged to hear from the Israel Mission president, Pastor Richard Eldier, who welcomed the group and shared how God is blessing the growth of the Church there. Pastor Eldier reported that membership has doubled in the past five years, with the vast majority being Jews. He said they have made progress in negotiating with national TV to have an hour slot every day for the Adventist Church in Israel. Currently, he said, their work covers Israel, the West Bank and Bethlehem, except Gaza. He spoke of

The entire group of church workers stand on the Mount of Olives with the Old City in the background. Where the Dome of the Rock stands was once the site of the temple.
Have you ever wondered what it must have been like for our early pioneers immediately following the Great Disappointment? They had expected Jesus to return in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.' (Galatians 3:24.) By observing the law no one will be justified, ‘(2:16) Paul had said, ‘I do not set aside the grace of God... righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing?’ (2:21). At the 1886 General Conference ‘the message of Christ’s righteousness, the everlasting gospel of God’s saving grace, was placed so firmly in a central position that no one (could) ever again discuss Adventist theology without referring to this cardinal, fundamental feature of our faith.’ (2:12) In the two decades following 1888 Mrs White’s output of books made her ‘the most translated female non-fiction author in the history of literature.’

We are amazed at the strength of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.’

References:

The strongest argument in favour of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.’

Ministry of Healing, p. 470. The passage from which this quote is taken (MOH, pages 469-471) states that it is not just ‘the strongest argument’. It is the only unanswerable argument.

At the recent BUC Nutrition conference, Angelette David Marshall, introduced Samuel and Kings to the audience. As she told the story of Samuel, she prayed for a child. We sympathise and empathise with many of our members with God for a son of her own.

We are at the strength of the grace that saves us; and is the grace that saves us; and is the grace that saves us;...
**Why the grass roots popularity of Intelligent Design and Creationism?**

by Dr John Walton, Professor of Reactive Chemistry, University of St Andrews*

In February the theological think tank ‘THOES’ reported on an independent survey carried out by ComRes in which a sample of 2,000 adult Britons were asked their opinions on four theories of creation, namely: ‘Young earth’ creationism, Intelligent Design, theistic evolution and atheistic evolution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitively or probably true</th>
<th>Definitively or probably untrue</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young earth</td>
<td>32 %</td>
<td>60 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent Design</td>
<td>51 %</td>
<td>40 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theistic evolution</td>
<td>44 %</td>
<td>46 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheistic evolution</td>
<td>34 %</td>
<td>57 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*Figures don’t necessarily add up to 100% as they are rounded.*

Bearing in mind the virtually unbroken diet of evolution generations of Britons have been fed in schools and by the media, these results can only be viewed as astonishing. Even after nearly 150 years of Darwinian indoctrination, support for evolutionary theory is just about equal support for alternatives. Intelligent Design continues to have the most support of the four, whereas atheistic evolution is only marginally more popular than belief in ‘young earth’ creationism.

Why hasn’t the ruling cultural elite been able to convince the British public of the truth of evolution? British people believe passionately in freedom of thought and in discussing different ideas. But the cultural elite have failed to convince the British public of the truth of evolution.

In 1999 biologist Ford Doolittle provocatively claimed: ‘The history of life cannot properly be represented by a tree.’

Subsequently, philosopher of biology Jon Dupre went much further in stating: ‘If there is a tree, it is a small, anomalous structure growing out of the web of life.’

Evolutionary biologist Michael Rose summed the situation up. ‘The tree of life is being politely buried, we all know that. What’s less accepted is that our whole fundamental view of biology needs to change.’

Now new, then, that the media chose to feature Darwin’s Tree of Life as the jewel in the crown of evolution programmes screened in the following month! Against a background of ferment over this issue in the biological world, what is the vested interest to be made of repeated statements by expert evolutionary presenters that the DNA evidence had ‘trumpantly confirmed Darwin’s Tree of Life?’

Many viewers, even those unacquainted with the real evidence, will have a shrewd suspicion that they aren’t being told the whole truth, that the reports are biased and have been spun to promote the naturalist/materialist agenda.

In recognition of 2009 being the Year of Evangelism and the fortieth anniversary of the International Year of the Child, Heather Haworth, the BUC Children’s Ministries director, has invited Karen Holford from the SEC to share some creative ways for involving children in your weekly church services.

Churches that take the time to involve children in their services grow the fastest.

Many children have already decided by the age of nine that they will leave the church as soon as they are old enough, because there is so little in the church services that they can understand or find relevant.

But the spiritual damage done years earlier as they sat through hundreds of church services that did not involve them, or consider their physical, spiritual and developmental needs.

Research is teaching us important information about growing a healthy church by nurturing the spiritual development of our children, and we know better now. Jesus already knew this, and taught us by his example to preach, using stories that children can understand, too.

**Phylogenetic or Evolutionary Tree of Life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bacteria</th>
<th>Archaea</th>
<th>Eukaryota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spiroplasmas</td>
<td>Green methanogens</td>
<td>Animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proteobacteria</td>
<td>Methanococci</td>
<td>Plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyanobacteria</td>
<td>Methanobacteriaceae</td>
<td>Ciliae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteroidetes</td>
<td>Methanobacteria</td>
<td>Flagellates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloroflexi</td>
<td>Methanothermobacter</td>
<td>Trichomonads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquificae</td>
<td>Thermoplasma</td>
<td>Microsporidia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pyrococcus</td>
<td>Diplonemids</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In an article by Graham Lawton with the title: ‘Why Darwin was wrong about the tree of life’. Lawton recounts how molecular evolutionists set out to decode DNA and RNA from a large range of micro-organisms, plants and animals. What actually emerged was quite the opposite. Different genes taken from many diverse organisms led to discordant phylogenetic trees. It gradually became apparent that there was no definitive tree of life.

So why hasn’t the ruling cultural elite been able to convince the British public of the truth of evolution? British people believe passionately in freedom of thought and in discussing different ideas. But the cultural elite have failed to convince the British public of the truth of evolution.

In 1999 biologist Ford Doolittle provocatively claimed: ‘The history of life cannot properly be represented by a tree.’

Subsequently, philosopher of biology Jon Dupre went much further in stating: ‘If there is a tree, it is a small, anomalous structure growing out of the web of life.’

Evolutionary biologist Michael Rose summed the situation up. ‘The tree of life is being politely buried, we all know that. What’s less accepted is that our whole fundamental view of biology needs to change.’

Now new, then, that the media chose to feature Darwin’s Tree of Life as the jewel in the crown of evolution programmes screened in the following month! Against a background of ferment over this issue in the biological world, what is the vested interest to be made of repeated statements by expert evolutionary presenters that the DNA evidence had ‘trumpantly confirmed Darwin’s Tree of Life?’

Many viewers, even those unacquainted with the real evidence, will have a shrewd suspicion that they aren’t being told the whole truth, that the reports are biased and have been spun to promote the naturalist/materialist agenda.

Many viewers, even those unacquainted with the real evidence, will have a shrewd suspicion that they aren’t being told the whole truth, that the reports are biased and have been spun to promote the naturalist/materialist agenda.

**Four sticker books for the price of two**

Order through your Personal Ministries secretary

**Involving children in your church**

by Karen Holford, associate director of Children’s Ministries, SEC

In recognition of 2009 being the Year of Evangelism and the fortieth anniversary of the International Year of the Child, Heather Haworth, the BUC Children’s Ministries director, has invited Karen Holford from the SEC to share some creative ways for involving children in your weekly church services.

Churches that take the time to involve children in their services grow the fastest.

Many children have already decided by the age of nine that they will leave the church as soon as they are old enough, because there is so little in the church services that they can understand or find relevant.

But the spiritual damage done years earlier as they sat through hundreds of church services that did not involve them, or consider their physical, spiritual and developmental needs.

Research is teaching us important information about growing a healthy church by nurturing the spiritual development of our children, and we know better now. Jesus already knew this, and taught us by his example to preach, using stories that children can understand, too.

**Ten ways to involve the children in the Scripture reading:**

1. A group of children could each learn one of the Bible verses in the passage, and then repeat their memorised verses in sequence to complete the Scripture reading.

2. Older children and teens could be invited to act out or mime the action in the Bible passage as it is being read.

3. Ask the children in your Sabbath Schools for Scripture reading and then find an interesting way to teach the verses to the children. Write each word on a different puzzle-maker site. Include the key words from a long Scripture passage, or all the words from a shorter reading. As the children search for the words during the service, the important message from the Scriptures will be seeping into their memory. Or create a coded text or Rebus version of the passage for the children to unscramble.

4. Invite a small group of children to act out or mime the action in the Bible passage as it is being read.

5. If the Bible passage is also a scripture song, a family or Sabbath School class could learn the song and sing it instead of reading the verses.

6. Choose a significant and repeated word in the Scripture passage and invite the children to perform a silent action each time the word is mentioned.

7. Older children could research the context for the passage and say a few words about the background to the verses before the Scripture reading.

8. Ask several artistic children to draw a series of pictures to illustrate the Scripture reading. Scan these into a PowerPoint presentation to show as the verses are being read.

9. Make a word-search puzzle using an Internet puzzle-maker site. Include the key words from a long Scripture passage, or all the words from a shorter reading. As the children search for the words during the service, the important message from the Scriptures will be seeping into their memory. Or create a coded text or Rebus version of the passage for the children to unscramble.

10. Be creative! Choose one or two verses for a Scripture reading and then find an interesting way to teach the verses to the children. Write each word on a different shape appropriate for the text, and hide the shapes around the church for the children to find and bring to the platform. Then stand the children in the correct order so that the verse can be read by the congregation. Give the children small gifts with the key text written on them, or design your own printable bookmarks.

Ask the children in your Sabbath Schools for their ideas about how they could take part in your Scripture readings. For a complete set of the ideas for involving children in your church, visit the Children’s Ministry Resources at www.secadventist.com.
THE BUC MISSIONARY BOOK OF THE YEAR ORDER FORM 2009

Church: ___________________________
Pastor: ___________________________
Church Address: ___________________

Quantity required: ____________________

Cost: 50p per copy plus p&p, depending on the number of copies ordered.

Amount enclosed: ____________________

OFFER

• Orders up to 50 copies will be 50p per book + postage and packing.
• Orders up to 100 copies will be 50p per book + a free copy for every copy you buy (buy one get one free) + postage and packing.
• Orders in excess of 100 copies will be 50p per copy + a free copy for every copy you buy (buy one get one free) + FREE POSTAGE AND PACKING.

‘Soul-winning is what we’re here for,’ concluded Pastor Murphy.

Send your order to the BUC Publishing Director, The Stanborough Press Ltd, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL. Please make cheques payable to ‘The Stanborough Press Ltd’.

For further information contact Pastor Curtis Murphy, cmurphy@adventist.org.uk.
Above: Adoration from London.
Left to right: Kezia, Roshena, Helena and Keren.
Right: Glorify from Camp Hill, Birmingham.
Left to right: Dionne B., Denise, Dionne C. and Linnette.

Twenty-seven years ago, Nerry John, the then AYS leader at Holloway church, dreamed of a choir to be created for an upcoming youth day. Little did he realise that it would lead to successful fundraising meetings, days offellowship, contemporary events, such as Covent Garden Summer Festival, attended by over 2,500 people.

Every time the choir sang they gave all they had, with the ethos that ‘they would sing as if it were their last song’, giving the choir a reputation for touching many lives. Never was a song sung without the prayer for God to bless the song, such was the desire to touch hearts.

And so it was at a recent home-coming event at Holloway that a number of members past and present visited the church that day and, during the evening programme while conductor Tony Best was presenting the story of the Holloway church’s musical history, a plea for the choir to sing was made. Those in attendance met up and put a song together, just like old times. The anthem ‘Soon as I get home’ was the result. As this song was sung there was not a dry eye in the congregation. That coming together whole was the reunion and the choir has come back together to sing just one last time. This long-anticipated concert is on 2 May at the Coliseum, Watford. This will not only be a worship experience, but a walk down memory lane for all those who have heard the choir minister – truly an event not to be missed. It is the dream of the reunion choir to have its legacy continued in the form of a scholarship to aid up and coming music and arts ministries to develop in fulfilling their godly purpose.

‘One more night’

Twelve-seven years ago, Henry John, the then AYS leader at Holloway church, dreamed of a choir to be created for an upcoming youth day. Little did he realise that he was creating a legacy that would span twenty-two years of ministry. The choir, known to the church familiarly as the Holloway Gospel Choir (HGC), really came into its own when they entered the BBC Gospel Choir of the Year and won the award of ‘The Best Newcomers’. HGC has ministered through the years up and down this country, singing at numerous churches (SDA and others), evangelistic meetings, days of fellowship, contemporary events, such as Covent Garden Summer Festival, attended by over 2,500 people.

Every time the choir sang they gave all they had, with the ethos that ‘they would sing as if it were their last song’, giving the choir a reputation for an all-in-nothing ministry that touched many lives. Never was a song sung without the prayer for God to bless the song, such was the desire to touch hearts.

Camp Hill induction service: ‘Yes, we can’

On 31 January, Camp Hill church experienced its first induction service for its Pathfinder club. The service was led by its newly appointed club director, Trevor Davis, who emphasised the importance of this induction as a formal welcoming of new Pathfinders and counsellors. Pastor R. McIntosh (senior pastor) in his opening address welcomed the new director, pledged his support for the club and the staff team, and urged the church and parents to support the club. In his address, Trevor Davis shared his vision and the mission for the club in the year ahead and encouraged the Pathfinders to aim to be the standard-bearers in the North England Conference by following a ‘YES, WE CAN!’ philosophy. He also emphasised the need for working collaboratively both within and outside church.

It was great to see several newcomers to the club, in all, seven Pathfinders and five counsellors were inducted, namely, twins Ruramiso and Rumbidzo Muguta, Micah Woolley and Lawrence Hall (all of whom graduated from Adventurers), Darnelle Humes, Jeavani Robinson (Explorer), Micela Gonzales (Frontier Guide). The new counsellors were Shanda Reid, Camilla Bran (interim pastor’s wife), Keri-Ann Welch, Rochelle Sterling and Olayemi McIntyre (former Bible worker). Overall it was a ‘nervous but exciting’ occasion for everyone involved. The programme was well supported by the NEC with area co-ordinators Mavis Griffin and Joseph Spencer in attendance. There was a refreshment of interest in Pathfindering, as several young people joined up or expressed an interest in joining the club after the service!

Shanda Reid
Colchester: When the bank manager came calling

We get used to our routines, so something different captures our imagination. One particular Sabbath recently did just that. We were received with an enthusiastic welcome and an exceptionally uplifting thought for the day – God knows everything about us.

Prompt attendance can sometimes be a problem in Sabbath School, but not this day! We met in glorious sunshine and attendance was excellent. Why? The Primary Sabbath School were taking the morning service and their theme was discipleship.

Our mission was made very plain. Both Old and New Testament worthies were brought bang up to date and used as examples of the way we should reach others. A little child shall lead them was the thought that came to our minds throughout. Memory texts, poems, specially written songs (to familiar tunes), musical interludes from gift-ed youngsters – how inspiring it all was! Colchester church will continue in good hands if these little ones are trained up. We thank God for our dedicated teachers.

We have been fortunately recently as retired bank manager, Ray Horner, has been teaching us over a series of four weeks about Stewardship. He used graphs, pictures and, above all, texts from God’s Word to illustrate our duty to use our wealth – however small or large – and our God-given talents to the furtherance of God’s work. He emphasised how greatly we shall be blessed if we do so.

In the middle of March we were blessed with the death of Ruth Marshall. Family came from far and wide – there was a strong Welsh contingent – as our beloved Pastor Sam took tiny Ruth in his arms and knelt to put her life into God’s great care and keeping. We were all reminded that although Elizabeth and Stephen are her parents, we each have a duty to support both them and God. Our hearts were stirred as the Primary School boys sang a specially worded song, Welcome, Ruth. It was beautiful. Morning has broken was played by our fractious Nicole, and Ruth’s dad rendered a magnificent saxophone solo.

EDITED, based on information supplied by Mrs Jean Kelly

Elders ordained at Leicester Central

During the divine service of Sabbath 28 February, the Leicester Central church celebrated the ordination of three elders. The ordinands, Denise Williams, Thomas Chimwala and Daniel Fleming-Danquah, received a wealth of Bible-based, practical counsel that was concisely conveyed by Pastor George Kumi with touches of good humour and wise Christian analogies.

He reminded the ordinands that they were called to be both stewards and shepherds, looking after the spiritual welfare of the church community. They were admonished to ask for God’s strength to extend love and consideration to all, always exercising humility in their work. Service for others and ministering to the needs of others unselfishly was another central point, and they were reminded that God will give a crown of glory to those who are willing to be follow-ers of Christ in serving the needs of others. There was also a note of caution. The ordinands were asked to be vigilant in resisting the devil and to remain steadfast in faith, in order to be overcomers who will be rewarded in the Kingdom of Heaven. Pastor Kumi was ably supported in this service by elders Roy Jembe, Sylvia Ham-Ying and Eustace Charles, who laid hands on the newly appointed elders.

In the middle of March we were shining on a happy bunch of Adventists who gathered at Halifax church to worship and thank God for the way he has brought us through all these years.

As the delicious three-course meal, created by local chef Henroy Brown, is being served, a music group from the New Testament Church of God sings inspiring and beautiful songs of divine and human love. Richard and Maxine invite couples to share how they came to know Jesus and how in God’s great care and keeping. We were all reminded that although Elizabeth and Stephen are her parents, we each have a duty to support both them and God. Our hearts were stirred as the Primary School boys sang a specially worded song, Welcome, Ruth. It was beautiful. Morning has broken was played by our fractious Nicole, and Ruth’s dad rendered a magnificent saxophone solo.

First outreach event for Kings Lynn group

It was cold, it was grey, but the Kings Lynn members rallied in force to staff their first ever community outreach event in the town’s Tuesday market-place. Magnificently led by Ellie Staple and her husband, we set up under a gazebo shelters to deliver free health checks, including blood sugar and cholesterol level testing.

The response was enthusiastic, with the volunteers working to capac-ity the whole day, conducting a total of 205 tests. The Kings Lynn group has a high proportion of NHS workers in its membership, and so has set out to use its health issues as a primary line of work for the tapestry. This event made many friends for the new church group in the town, and has laid a good foundation for follow-up activities.

Doreen Jones at 90

On Sabbath 21 February the sun was shining on a happy bunch of Adventists who gathered at Halifax church to worship and thank God for the way he has brought us through all these years.

Exegia Moses was our speaker and she spoke on Heaven. We look forward to the time when we all get to Heaven to be united with Jesus and all our friends and relations.

This was also a celebration of Doreen’s birthday, and after the service there were presentations and a few speeches, much appreciated by Doreen. A special meal was enjoyed by all. We were delighted that our brothers and sisters came from Bradford and Huddersfield to join us, bringing some of their children with them.

When the cake arrived, Doreen was surprised that we had made such an effort for her, but we just wanted to tell her what a lovely person she has always been. She, however, took three goes to blow the candles out amid loud applause.

In the middle of March we were shining on a happy bunch of Adventists who gathered at Halifax church to worship and thank God for the way he has brought us through all these years.

As the delicious three-course meal, created by local chef Henroy Brown, is being served, a music group from the New Testament Church of God sings inspiring and beautiful songs of divine and human love. Richard and Maxine invite couples to share how they came to know Jesus and how in God’s great care and keeping. We were all reminded that although Elizabeth and Stephen are her parents, we each have a duty to support both them and God. Our hearts were stirred as the Primary School boys sang a specially worded song, Welcome, Ruth. It was beautiful. Morning has broken was played by our fractious Nicole, and Ruth’s dad rendered a magnificent saxophone solo.

First outreach event for Kings Lynn group

It was cold, it was grey, but the Kings Lynn members rallied in force to staff their first ever community outreach event in the town’s Tuesday market-place. Magnificently led by Ellie Staple and her husband, we set up under a gazebo shelters to deliver free health checks, including blood sugar and cholesterol level testing.

The response was enthusiastic, with the volunteers working to capac-ity the whole day, conducting a total of 205 tests. The Kings Lynn group has a high proportion of NHS workers in its membership, and so has set out to use its health issues as a primary line of work for the tapestry. This event made many friends for the new church group in the town, and has laid a good foundation for follow-up activities.

Doreen Jones at 90

On Sabbath 21 February the sun was shining on a happy bunch of Adventists who gathered at Halifax church to worship and thank God for the way he has brought us through all these years.

Exegia Moses was our speaker and she spoke on Heaven. We look forward to the time when we all get to Heaven to be united with Jesus and all our friends and relations.

This was also a celebration of Doreen’s birthday, and after the service there were presentations and a few speeches, much appreciated by Doreen. A special meal was enjoyed by all. We were delighted that our brothers and sisters came from Bradford and Huddersfield to join us, bringing some of their children with them.

When the cake arrived, Doreen was surprised that we had made such an effort for her, but we just wanted to tell her what a lovely person she has always been. She, however, took three goes to blow the candles out amid loud applause.

Left to right: Pastor George Kumi, Daniel Fleming-Danquah, Denise Williams and Thomas Chimwala.

Elders ordained at Leicester Central
Members faithful despite recession
by Victor Hubert, Communication director, BUC

Adventists are known as people of hope. Such hope can be seen as reality in 2009 with increased church attendance and tithe returns, even while the media reports doom and gloom. Pastors are reporting increased attendance on Sabbath mornings, and the latest BUC title figures shared with the executive committee on Thursday 12 March showed an overall monthly average increase of 4% during the past year. ‘Our members are more than faithful.’ BUC treasurer, Victor Plimpson, reported to the committee. He also quoted GC Stewardship director, Dr Erika F. Puns, as noting that ‘giving is greater during the credit crunch worldwide than before’. Many factors may be responsible for this trend, including the promises of Malachi 3:10 and the realisation of Jesus’ injunction ‘to store up treasures in heaven’.

(Matthew 6:20.)

Membership growth is also up for the twelve months ending 31 December 2008. Official membership now stands at 29,050, a net growth of 1,940 over the previous year, although it was noted that the actual number of baptisms was down on 2007. A very positive emphasis on 2009 as the Year of Evangelism is expected to help turn this trend around.

Finance and membership can be seen as dry statistics, but in his devotional, Trans-European Division president, Bertil Wiklander, focused on the idea that business must not be as usual. Quoting Matthew 6:31–34, he noted ‘you are different from the pagans’. In his missional he emphasised that there is no room for compromise. ‘We must be different, and they will be attracted by the difference.’

Concluding his remarks, he said that a child of God does not seek the material things. ‘We are defined by what we seek first,’ he insisted and encouraged us ‘to put God first.’

BUC financial reports are also available online on the treasury pages of the BUC website: www.adventist.org.uk.

Youth accessions at Stanborough Park

Stanborough Park church in recent months. First were Jake DelBuge and Colin Donaldson, both of whom have families at the church. Then came Kirsty Hatten, who first came to the church through making friends at the Friday night youth services.

Pastor Paul Tompkins, the TED Youth director, baptised Zoë Marshall, who came to the service dressed in her Pathfinder uniform.

Aaron Ramharacksingh was accepted into fellowship, having previously been baptised at the SEC’s camp in Chapel Porth. Zoë Marshall was accepted into fellowship, having previously been baptised in connection with the Extreme Teencamp at the NEC’s Aberdaron back in the summer.

Zoë Marshall was accepted into fellowship, having previously been baptised at the SEC’s camp in Chapel Porth.

Pastor Paul Tompkins, the TED Youth director, baptised Zayne Mueller, Kirsty Hatten, who first came to the church through making friends at the Friday night youth services.

Sowing, reaping: Bethel is bringing in the sheaves by Clarisse Elysée

The joyful and uplifting ceremony of baptism ended, with the youth choir, including the young people baptised, performing a vibrant ‘Oh, happy day’. As the song that was sung as the introit indicated, everyone was in high spirits as we celebrated this unique event and to accompany the baptismal candidates, through songs, dedicated Bible verses and exhortations.

What made this ceremony so special and emotionally intense was the number of young candidates who had accepted Christ as their personal Saviour. This was the result of the work started with Pastor Cedric Vine, former pastor of Bethel church, now lecturer of Theology at Newbold College. As Pastor Selburn Fray, the new pastor of Bethel, rightly said, ‘We sowed and I reap’d! And we, and the church also, praise the Lord for this wonderful reaping. I pray that God will continue to guide these new-born members as their spiritual journey starts. I pray also that the church will keep on encouraging and supporting them.’

After a couple of hours, the ceremony of baptism ended, with the youth choir, including the young people baptised, performing a vibrant ‘Oh, happy day’. For the fifteen new members of Bethel church it was indeed a happy, happy day, that, surely, they’ll cherish in their memory until the Lord comes.

Blessings at Wednesfield church

They say that good things come in threes and while this is not a truth confirmed by Christianity, three good things certainly came to Wednesfield church!

There was truly a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place on Sabbath 14 March. As the song that was sung as the introit indicated, everyone was in high spirits as we celebrated Visitors’ Day, a special presentation from AYA and a first visit from the BUC president.

With over forty guests, regular members were hard-pressed to find a seat for the main service. There were older faces and young faces, new faces and faces we had not seen in many years, but all faces were smiling. One visitor remembered about his childhood with a particular member who he had not seen in many years. Pastor Moses Msimanga, the local pastor, greeted all, members and visitors alike, at the entrance to the car park early in the morning. He later invited regular members to escort their visitors to the front to be personally greeted, but many of the guests felt so at home they came to the front unescorted and gathered for a group photo with our guest speaker.

AYA, Advent Youth Aid Society, have been raising funds for charity for a number of years. Set up by a small group of Pathfinders and supported by the North England Conference, their aim is not only to spread the Gospel but to evangelise in practical, realistic and fun ways. With planned events such as stallholders, wheelathons and packathons, they cater to the participation of both young and old. Representing AYA, Trevor Davis, chairperson, and Cislyn Morgan, treasurer, made a special presentation for the money raised by Wednesfield church. Christel Thompson, aged 79, was presented with an award for being the oldest member to take part in and complete the stallathon 2008. Young Ben Hibbins also took part, raising a significant amount in sponsorship, and Pastors Msimanga and McFarlane were presented with honorary AYA T-shirts. Finally, a cheque for over £210 was presented to the church as part of a Club Reward Scheme, whereby a church or a group registered as such prior to the start of the event receives a percentage of what their members collect in sponsorship.
A very small child had always wondered why there were no family members in his life. He used to stand and stare whenever a parent of another child came into view at 31 Christopher’s, ‘the children’s home where I was raised between the ages of four and eleven. I found myself in several situations asking the matron, “Why have I not got a mummy and daddy?” The matron told me that my mother was only a child when she had me, so consequently could not look after me. I seemed to accept this answer and put it out of my mind. At least for the few years that I grew up at 31 Christopher’s I appreciated the emotional stability and security that gave me the continuity that I needed at the time.

Our church was the Church of England, and we (all the children) would be taken there on Sundays for the morning and afternoon services, and the evening mass. Even though we regularly went to church, I never really understood or felt any connection with God.

Years afterwards I blindly stumbled through life. The more psychological and cultural shock that I experienced, the more I lost my faith in the idea that there was a God. I would present myself to friends and colleagues as a humorous, funny and intelligent person, but all the time I was screaming inside, longing for secure attachments and for something or someone to believe in. I thought then that as long as I complied with the world around me my emotional world would be safe.

In the year 2005 I had been to London for the Post-Adoption Care Project Centre to receive records from my life in the Church of England’s care since birth. The more I was told about my history, the more I was-made to understand that I had been deprived of all the love and attention that I so desperately needed. I felt so angry with her that I had always felt that her decision to give me up was inexcusable. Earlier on I had said that I had lost my faith in God and yet I found myself saying to Mum that God must have had a hand in our reunion and must have been watching over us for all those years and decided that it was now time for us to be reunited.

The most precious moment in my life

Mum cooked us a meal, and we spent the rest of the day exchanging our life stories. I feel so proud to have her as my mum as she came across as such a positive person; she is also a much-loved person in her town. From my very first meeting with my mum, I became aware of what a good-natured person she is, while I always knew whatever is thrown at her without judgement or criticism. She has the most beautiful nature that I had ever seen.

From BUC Secretariat: ‘We do not have any record of a Miss Guntrip who is mentioned in the almost 1300 names of ex-workers we have on the computer. Either no record was made of her or the conference she worked for did not send her record to the BUC when she left.’

From Jack Malton: ‘Miss E. Guntrip was definitely a Bible worker in the UK – I believe in the Bristol area. Noted for her adherence to Victorian dress, she must surely have retired before World War Two broke out. I will try to pick up her trail in the Newbold library.’

From Dennis Porter: ‘I remember her slightly. I think it was in Bristol. I think that she had retired from the Bible work by the 1950s. It may well be that she had retired before World War Two broke out. DEH Hubbard could start his enquiries by writing to the local Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, asking for the date of her death and where she was buried. I seem to connect [Miss Guntrip] with Mrs Watson and her sister Beatrice. Perhaps Mrs Doris Clarke could help, too.’

Dear Editor

During my years in the army I received a great deal of encouragement from letters I received from Bible worker Miss E. Guntrip. Can you find out what happened to her?

From BUC Secretariat: ‘We do not have any record of a Miss Guntrip who is mentioned in the almost 1300 names of ex-workers we have on the computer. Either no record was made of her or the conference she worked for did not send her record to the BUC when she left.’

From Jack Malton: ‘Miss E. Guntrip was definitely a Bible worker in the UK – I believe in the Bristol area. Noted for her adherence to Victorian dress, she must surely have retired before World War Two broke out. I will try to pick up her trail in the Newbold library.’

From Dennis Porter: ‘I remember her slightly. I think it was in Bristol. I think that she had retired from the Bible work by the 1950s. It may well be that she had retired before World War Two broke out. DEH Hubbard could start his enquiries by writing to the local Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, asking for the date of her death and where she was buried. I seem to connect [Miss Guntrip] with Mrs Watson and her sister Beatrice. Perhaps Mrs Doris Clarke could help, too.’

Toxic attitudes

Dear Editor

I have read recent articles in the MESSENGER with interest. Adventists do equate physical health with spiritual health. The fact that we are not particularly good at winning souls for Christ is related to our attitudes towards people who are going wrong in some way or another. The ‘kind and pitiful’ attitude that Ellen White mentioned is not evident in our attitudes to both people inside our church and in the communities around our church. We seem to be very keen on defending ‘Adventism’ but not asking what Christ would have us do in particular situations. This I feel has made us judgemental and very tolerant of the views of other people. We need to spend more time looking at how we can help people in our communities and thereby offer others a picture of Christ. We should also notice that there are very few churches that regularly interact with their local communities. Why don’t many of our churches have an explicit and intentional discipleship pathway?

Dear Editor

I felt emotionally strong enough to do one last search for my mum and any siblings. I joined Genes Reunited and started my search, not really think-
In the footsteps of Jesus

a Palestinian who heard of the message through an Adventist network and was converted. He has made contact with him but is not allowed to meet him because of the political situation.

Dr Mwansa presented two topics on Monday, the first of which dealt with the burdens in ministry. He showed that the challenges of ministry are both internal and external and these could have a crippling effect on any ministry, citing Moses’ example in Numbers 11:10. He admonished ministers to adopt two principles: to learn to find strength from the Lord and his promises and to find a friend to open one’s heart to, finding strength in the Lord.

Later, after presentations from Pastor Aris Vontzalidis on ‘The Year of Evangelism’ and Pastor Bernie and Karen Holford on ministering to our children, Dr Mwansa ended the day with the topic ‘The Minister and Finance’. He demonstrated that anything that disturbs the life of a minister impacts the effectiveness of his ministry. ‘Ministers’, he said, ‘are not immune from what is common to all, that is, financial hardship, death, and so on. It believes the minister to learn how to manage his or her finances well by taking appropriate measures to ensure prudence and faithfulness in matters pertaining to his finance.’

Dr Leslie Pollard was the devotional speaker both on Wednesday and Friday. Focusing on the life of Joseph, Dr Pollard emphasised that wherever we are, as leaders, was seen to have all of these attributes, and ministers were, likewise, admonished to adopt these qualities.

It would have been impossible to visit the land where Jesus walked without taking time to view some of the many historic sites. Day tours were organised on ... of the sea by boat. The Sea of Galilee, which feeds into the River Jordan, is known for its sudden storms. The group was not disappointed on the day, as we experienced a heavy downpour, accompanied by a stormy crossing.

The absolute highlight for many was taking part in a communion service at the site of the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem on Sabbath. Pastors Pollard and Sam Davis both led out in a moving service where each one was reminded of the price that Jesus paid for our sins. This occasion was referred to as a highlight by Pastor Sam Neves who was also responsible for capturing photographic and video evidence of the entire trip.