Is adult power being misused in your church?

asks Heather Haworth, Children’s Ministries director, BUC

Eighteen-month-old little Daniel sat in his pushchair. He had enjoyed a cup of juice and quiet activities during the service, and when the last hymn had been sung he became a centre of attraction. His eyes lit up as the older children bent over him and said their ‘hellos’ with a smile. His parents let him get out of the familiar, comfortable Sabbath chair, then walked to the back hall for him to enjoy running around with the older children before lunch was served.

How different a scene to the one I saw in another church. I was next to a mum with a child of a similar age. He sat uncomfortably on the adult-size hard bench. At the start of the service he noticed some children at the front of the church and, like lightning, he squirmed out of his perch, ran down the aisle and clambered onto the bench with the other children. His mother was just as quick in retrieving him, and a large slap on the legs accompanied his reinstatement on the bench beside me. I tried to wriggle on the seat in a holy manner, to keep my back from aching, while he endured a few more slaps for doing the same. Although my children are grown up, I always carry to church quiet ‘holy’ children’s items. With a smile the little lad hugged what I gave him and for a few minutes, as the adult service flowed on oblivious to his needs, he happily sat less fidgety.

Which parent will be the most likely to stop attending church? Which child will remember church-going as a painful experience? Who is at fault? Could it be:

- the role models the parents are copying?
- the lack of a Children’s or Family Ministries’ leader and team who could share positive pointers in child discipline?
- elders and church board not seeing children’s needs as Jesus did; ‘Feed my lambs’ and then, ‘Feed my sheep’ (John 21:15-17)?
- the pastor’s college not teaching their students how to have a child-inclusive church?

Or could it even be the adult members’, including leaders and pastoral workers, and parents’ misuse of power? ‘Hold on there,’ I can hear you retort. ‘That is going a bit far. Are you saying these people deliberately abuse their position of trust in the life of a child while he or she is attending church?’ No, what I am saying is, let us take a serious look at what is the most unchecked spiritual abuse happening in church. Pause for a moment. Is our failure to consider children’s needs in our worship a misuse of adult power? I believe it is not so much spiritual abuse but a lack of understanding by adults of what it means for young and old to worship. Consider the content and format of each of our services. Are they found in the Bible? Aspects of worship: holy songs, prayer, exhortation are mentioned in the Bible, but we interpret their use mainly through the influence of the Victorian Methodist, Catholic, Baptist and Anglican concepts. As I attend congregations in the BUC I also find the cultural influence is a reason for the style of worship, too. Some seem to do the second service worship in a strict Anglican-Catholic format with spoken or sung responses, no talking in church and the congregation ushered out after the final hymn. On the other hand, another congregation uses a more informal, evangelical approach to their service, with happy chatter in the place of worship in between and after the sermon.

Whichever one you think is correct is probably very different from the worship style of Jesus’ day and the early Church. Should we revert to first-century worship, or have we come to misunderstand what worship truly means? When Moses shares God’s message to the Israelites he encourages them to destroy...
British Steel shut down its works in 1980, describing the Northamptonshire council's approach as one of 'dig and dump', highlighting the period between 1983 and August 1997, where he concludes the council was 'extensively negligent' in its control and management of the sites. He stated that negligence and breach of the council's statutory duty led to contaminated mud and dust being spread around the town and homes in Corby. Assessing the 'statistically significant' cluster of birth defects between 1969 and 1999, the judge ruled that those contaminants could realistically have caused the types of birth defects suffered by the claimants.

Caution
Cadmium – a key pollutant in this case is classified as a ‘hormone disruptor’ and is found in cigarettes, rechargeable batteries, sewage sludge, fossil fuel and released from metal smelters and phosphate fertiliser production. 
- Avoid cigarettes and passive smoking
- Dispose of batteries safely
- Minimise car and energy use (burning fossil fuel)

Be vigilant!

It takes a lot to make me laugh first thing in the morning. But at 6.45 this morning I all but purloined. Now, at 7.45, sitting at my desk, I am wondering whether it was a laughing matter.

There was a news item about an atheist children’s camp in Somerset. Inevitably Propaganda was involved. There, of course, nothing funny about that. Indeed, my memory was crowded images of what a crowd of Aberdonian children look like first thing in the morning. I might not have found the sight of that small bunch of boys in Somerset funny at all. But there they were, sombre, brushed and polished, and proving impervious to the early-morning effusions of what looked like a dude who didn’t know how to ‘connect’. I struggled to hear his mantra and it sounded so much like Scrooge’s ‘Bah! Humbug! Bah! Humbug!’ that laughter possessed me, and I had to struggle to contain my porgy!

Evolutionary biologist and author of The God Delusion Richard Dawkins had, according to The Daily Telegraph, subsidised the camp. He, with Professor A. C. Grayling the philosopher, had, apparently, evolved an ‘alternative’ orthodoxy designed to challenge Christian societies and prepare the way for the next generation. The camp, he argued, should be a retreat for children aged 8-17 to rival the faith-based camps.

By imitating church-youth events, the atheists are confirming what I have long suspected. That their alternative orthodoxy is also faith-based, and should fall into the category of ‘religion’.

Atheism is a bleak religion to inflict on children. ‘Mum,’ writes Karen Leyley, ‘is the Cosmic Orphan. He is the only creature in the universe who asks ‘Why?’ Other animals have instincts to guide them, but man has to ask questions.’

Who am I? Where am I? Where am I going? Inquiring minds want to know. The government, you have to ask yourself, has any real answer. It is a disgrace.

The evolutionary credo has been standard to science classes – even in Catholic and Anglican schools – for decades. Talk to intelligent and educated people, and, as the crises of life come, is apt to feel very vulnerable. And, if they did, it would be a very scary one.

Delusion
A long-time atheist who has most recently returned to Christianity is A. N. Wilson. Wilson, who provided an account of his change of mind in the Easter 2009 issue of New Statesman, was a university contemporary of Richard Dawkins, and, at one time, exceeded him in his militantly atheistic pronouncements. If Wilson can abandon New Atheism for Christ it might pay you to keep an eye on Richard Dawkins. ... Stranger things have happened.

Mark McGee, for example, spotted a geyser of atheistic diatribes on a radio talk show in Florida. When the owner of the radio station introduced religious programming, McGee hated the fact that his position of operations manager required him to continue working there. Somehow he found himself interviewing Christian scholars. To stay ahead of their arguments McGee had to do a lot of thinking and a great deal of research. His research led him to the conclusion that atheists are less well-read, less well-informed and, over 1,000 years by forty-four authors, but that it all fitted around a common theme: God’s offer of salvation is being rejected.

He studied the remarkable evidence for the authenticity of the gospels, in particular, and for the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His atheism, being unsustainable, had to be abandoned.

Gratitude is the most momentous in the life of an atheist. He feels thankful, but he has no one to thank.

An atheist has no invisible means of support and, as the crises of life come, is apt to feel very vulnerable.

The point at which I stopped laughing at the TV this morning was not when I realised that the drone-like instructor was not, in fact, intoning ‘Bah! Humbug!’ It was when I caught the look on the boys’ faces. The look of reason – and the look of reason can be a very scary one.

A young man who wishes to remain a sound atheist cannot be too careful of his reading,’ wrote C. S. Lewis in Mere Christianity. ‘For if there is no God then man’s life becomes absurd.’

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The whole hog
Hindering the spread of the H1N1 virus
by Richard J. B. Willis MA MSc FRSPH

Zimbabwe is currently going through a complex humanitarian crisis which has resulted in a lot of people falling into the vulnerable group. Basic requirements such as clothes and medical care are out of reach to most people. Health institutions have deteriorated and equipment and no longer have the capacity to replace the medical staff has decreased. Ten out of the eleven clinics are in rural areas and are serving critical members of the community who are limited in resources.

Help for Zimbabwe from Zimbabwe-UK Fellowship and ADRA-UK

Zimbabwe has over 300 schools country-wide, and rural district councils are appealing to the Church to take over some of their schools due to limited resources for efficient running.

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Nottingham: The forefront of youth evangelism

Words and pictures: Shaun E. W. Douglas

The fact that the Word of God is like a ‘two-edged sword, rightly dividing the word of truth’ is certainly not lost on evangelist, Pastor Adam Ramdin. With Bible workers who had been based in the Nottingham area for the past six months, he prepared the members of the Nottingham Central and Bulwell churches to become instrumental in the success of providing a solid foundation for the seminars. Prophecies of Hope. Let us briefly review how this task has been accomplished.

Cutting edge – in-reach and teach

In January, five Youth for Jesus Bible workers, sponsored by ASI-Europe, descended upon the area. They were Clarissa Lewis, Carina Stewart, Dione White, Indhra Job and Irene Jurgens. They employed a thirteen-week in-reach and teach programme called Bible Bowl Camp. As a consequence of this programme of training, many of the local youth successfully graduated from this first phase.

School of Evangelism

For Charlotte Bramble to gain aid with attending the ARISE programme, her sponsors, ASI, challenged her to co-ordinate something special at the close of her training. Hence, the School of Evangelism, where young people were given a fantastic programme of enrichment, engagement and empowerment. Among her team were the five Nottinghamshire-based ASI Youth for Jesus Bible workers, Andrea Crawford, Alexander Douglas, Rose Gomez with Pastors Alan Hush, Cyril Sweeney, Adam Ramdin, Michael Simpson and Dr Patrick Herbert.

For three whole weeks, running concurrently with the Prophecies of Hope campaign, these students were educated in various forms of evangelism through a classroom environment six mornings a week. In the afternoons they took to the streets to practice public witnessing, door-to-door witnessing and personal Bible studies. By evening, they supported the seminars, greeting their contacts who had responded to their invitations.

On Sunday 12 July, at the Nottingham Central Church, church officials such as president Pastor Ian Sweeney, NEC Youth director Alan Hush, ASI-UK president Audrey Balderstone, and ASI-Europe vice-president for Evangelism Karl Kreutzer, all commended with gradua-44154
tds, friends and families in a cer-emony reminiscent of a baptism. By filled the air as the president con-gratulated everyone as he dispersed Certificates of Merit to them. With new youth Bible workers for Jesus, youth lay evangelists, youth techni-
cians and multimedia savvy person-
nel becoming more prominent and proactive with their gifts and cut-
ing-edge capabilities, indeed, ‘the best is yet to come’!

Prophecies of Hope with Adam Ramdin

One of the aims of the ASI Youth for Jesus Bible workers was to hold a major evangelistic campaign to mark the close of their time in Nottingham. The students from the School of Evangelism (SoE) rallied to the call and came to assist in this venture. Endorsed by Pastor Hush, this phase focused the efforts and attention of the Conference Youth department upon the City of Nottingham.

In June, hot on the heels of Camp Meeting, there commenced a series of twenty-six thought-provoking instalments, designed to stimulate interest in both spiritual and educa-
tional knowledge of what the prophes-
cies of the Bible impact on contem-
porary world issues. Local advertis-
ing was spurred on through the efforts of Nigel Buxton, among oth-
ers. Posters and handbills designed by the Bible worker task force were distributed throughout local free newspapers, and radio spots highlighted the forthcoming event for the diaries of those listening.

The presentations did not follow the pattern of many previous campaigns. A fresh, ‘scaled-back approach was adopted wherein quizzes, grand prizes, endless announcements and endorsements were trimmed as fat from a filet of steak. Apart from the occasional special item, almost the entire evening was devoted to Pastor Ramdin’s clear, solely biblical dis-
courses on various prophecies and biblical principles. Through the use of study guides, PowerPoint presenta-
tions and an easy yet authoritative oratory, Pastor Ramdin related such stapes of the Adventist faith in a contemporary, comprehensive, yet succinct manner.

The meetings, hosted in the the-
atre of the Djangan City Academy, were regularly attended by no less than two hundred visitors, a signifi-
cant proportion of whom were new contacts to Christianity and the Adventist faith. On weekends, the 40-seat theatre was usually packed beyond capacity. Music was mainly provided by ASI Youth for Jesus Bible workers and students from the SoE, such as Rech with his marvellous guitar playing, with assistance and performances by Nottingham youth. Nigel Buxton headed the live broadcast team, while Devon Elliott and Mark Forrester headed the audiovisual team. Each evening ended with the provision of fresh watermelon, an abundance of other succulent fruits and a fountain of fruit juices.

Towards the end of the series of seminars, Adam Ramdin introduced appeals to Jesus. On each occasion, new visitors would answer the call positively, many seeking further study, including a Doctor of Theology, while others sought to join the Church through the waters of baptism.

The last of these meetings was held at the theatre on 11 July. It seemed to mark not the end of an era (which in some ways it was) but it heralded the dawning of a new, exciting and challenging opportuni-
ties for the members of the Conference churches in the district of Greater Nottingham. New prospective members, hungry for the Word of Life, established members renewing their vows to Jesus. It was perhaps a reassurance moment on the cutting edge of the gospel ministry into which you and I are called to share unto salvation.

Q. Would you like to explain what ASI-UK is all about please?

AB. ASI is an organisation of busi-
ness professionals and lay ministry people who are totally committed to the Adventist Church and its message, and we want to use all means possible to spread the Gospel of Christ.

Q. What did you get involved with in Youth for Jesus?

AB. When I was president of ASI-UK and ASI-Europe, we were aware that in America, at each ASI convention, there had been a Youth for Jesus programme, which had been running very successful campaigns for the last four or five years. The Czech Republic have run one or two.

Q. How did you start your career in Youth for Jesus?

AB. When I was president of ASI-UK and ASI-Europe, we were aware that in America, at each ASI convention, there had been a Youth for Jesus programme, which had been very successful. So it was suggested that, in Europe, we start off a Youth for Jesus project. The first country to take up the challenge was Spain, and they have been run-

ning very successful campaigns for the last four or five years. The Czech Republic have run one or two.

In 2006, Charlotte Bramble contacted me. She wanted to go to ARISE to train. We didn’t have any money in ASI-UK, but I spoke to the European president and they decided to sponsor her on one condition: that she would come back and run a campaign here in the UK, which she has run very successfully, or at least headed it up very professionally.

Q. Firstly, you mentioned funding. How is ASI funded? Is it diverted out of free-will offerings or what?

AB. No. Each ASI chapter charges its members a membership fee, and at its meetings they take up an offering for various projects. ASI-UK, unfortunately does not have any fund. So we try to fund at least one project a year. Some of the other chapters are very big and they have lots of projects. And then, every two to three years, depending on when the General Conference is, we have an ASI Convention, at which an offering is taken up to fund various projects which have been presented beforehand from the national chapters; and it’s out of that that projects like ASI Youth for Jesus are part-funded. But the local church, everybody has to be involved in the funding.

Q. So is partnership really that’s driving this forward?

AB. Yes.

Q. Can you give us an overview of what Charlotte Bramble’s been doing with her team, and I think it’s Nottingham’s been the focus of this?

AB. Well, Charlotte, in the beginning, Shaun Douglas interviews Audrey Balderstone, president of ASI-UK and former president of ASI-Europe

Pastors Ramdin, Cyril Sweeney and Alan Hush (NEC Youth director), the Youth for Jesus Bible workers, with much local support, including Devon Elliott, Youth leader (Nottingham Central), and Nigel Buxton, elder (Bulwell church), provided essential support.

Advance

Between 9 and 13 April this established team led out in the second of this seminar series of Enrichment Weeks, sited at the University of Nottingham Jubilee Campus. This course had a number of keynote speakers from the UK and the USA (including NEC president Pastor Ian Sweeney), with the theme, ‘Be Ye Ready’. Two hundred young people went to street witness in the very heart of the City of Nottingham, receiving 140 Bible study requests.

Pastor Hush commended truly, ‘Young people in the NEC are ready to answer God’s call.’
Hyland House graduation

On Thursday 16 July, not in Hyland House School but in the newly renovated Walthamlow Academy, students, teachers, family and friends came together to participate in the Graduation Ceremony of the Year 6 class of Hyland House School. Each of the different year groups contributed to the celebration with singing, acting and recitals. After the welcome by head teacher Mrs Gina Abbequaye, the classes from Nursery to Year 6 entered, marching into the auditorium by Kirk Franklin’s ‘Imagine me’ and passing for each class to perform their specially chosen item. There were some excellent displays of the children’s talent as we heard a group of saxophonists perform, saw a sketch entitled ‘Evolution Explained’ and witnessed the choir singing ‘Yes, You Can’, which was arranged by former pupil Kadeem Clarke. The key speaker for the evening was Pastor Olve De Silva, also a former student. He reminded the children to keep their eyes on the ball and never to lose focus. Later in the programme, two graduating students, Lachelle Ebanks and James Walkinshaw talked about the ‘amazing journey that has been Hyland House’. They ended their speech by commenting on how their generation has witnessed the emerging of the sixty-sixth president of the USA, and how that has instilled an attitude of aspiration in people. ‘As we travel throughout life’s journey, can we do it YES, WE CAN!’ The evening ended by awarding each of the children from Nursery upwards, with certificates for achievement, persistence, attitude and progress. A new award that had been established this year is the President’s Award and this was presented to Lachelle Ebanks for upholding the ethics of the school. The last thought of the ceremony was directed at the students, both graduating and remaining, Pastor De-Silva wisely said, ‘Success is not the end of a journey. It is not a result, it is a process.’

Witness at carnival

A really successful outreach took place at the Grantham carnival at the end of June. Both days were very busy. The display portrayed the word of ADRA, and the booth had free literature on Jesus, Creation, the Second Advent and health. The candle-dipping activity run by Katrina and Trevor Hammond was a great success, with a constant number of children, teenagers and adults making candles. The mums waiting while their children made candles were pleased to receive the books Secrets of Sanity for Stressed Women or God’s Little Book of Peace. Also very popular were balloons with the logo ‘Jesus is the Answer’ and wristbands with the words ‘Love Jesus – He loves you’. Teenage girls were bringing their friends to get the latest fashion accessory! Over the course of the weekend we gave away over 1,600 items. Even the heavy rain on Saturday proved to be a blessing as people came to shelter, giving opportunities to witness, and some gave a donation to ADRA as a thank you. All ages played their part from young children to octogenarians, pastors and lay members working together.

Preface to the abridged version of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:1, NIV) This is the ideal to which every member of the Church is enjoined to aspire. However, the evidence of reality over many centuries suggests that this ideal has proven to be somewhat elusive. Often we find that instead of the Church setting the agenda for the society, in many cases the lives of members reflect the society in which they live. Sadly, many of the atrocities that are prevalent in the society at large are sometimes found in the Church, two being sexual harassment and domestic violence. While the Church as an organisation is not in a position to order and monitor the day-to-day lives of members, it can state unequivocally what its position is on certain issues, and what steps are to be taken in addressing unacceptable conduct in the Church. The British Union has sought to do just that with respect to sexual harassment and domestic violence. In this issue of Messenger we share with the entire constituency a policy which has been developed to address these two issues. The policy, as it appears in this issue of Messenger, is an abridged version. Members are at liberty to write to the British Union Secretariat for the full version, which offers much more information. Alternatively, it can be viewed on the BUC website at www.adventist.org.uk.

In publishing this policy the Church is giving notice that it will not tolerate sexual abuse, or any abuse perpetuated by an employee or a member. Additionally, it is also providing assistance for those who have experienced sexual harassment and, at the same time, condemning such behaviour on the part of members. The one regret we have as church leaders regarding this policy is that it was not developed several years ago. If it had been, it would conceivably have provided victims with the confidence and information required to stand up to the perpetrators.

British Union Conference Policy on Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment

How to use this policy

This policy has been arranged to make it easy for you to use. You should begin by reading the introduction which explains why the policy is important, what is meant by some key words, and what it hopes to achieve. You can then go directly to the section that applies most closely to your own context to find out what to do if there is a domestic violence or sexual harassment complaint and where you can go to get help. The British Union Conference (BUC) has taken this approach in this policy to help you to apply the principles effectively in your local setting.

1. INTRODUCTION

Statement of Beliefs

The Seventh-day Adventist Church places great importance upon family life and affirms the dignity and worth of each human being. It declares all forms of physical, spiritual, economic, sexual, emotional and physical abuse, including domestic violence. Such behaviour is intimidating, hostile and/or offensive and undermines our biblical and moral values and destroys the trust between people in our community.

The BUC subscribes to the following statement issued by the General Conference on Family Violence:

“The Bible clearly indicates that the distinguishing mark of Christian believers is the quality of their human relationships in the church and in the family. It is in the spirit of Christ to love and accept, to seek to affirm and build others up, rather than to abuse or tear one another down. There is no room among Christ’s followers for tyrannical control and the abuse of power or authority. Motivated by their love for Christ, His disciples are called to show respect and concern for the welfare of others, to accept males and females as equals, and to acknowledge that every person has a right to respect and dignity. Failure to relate to others in this way violates their persons and devalues human beings created and redeemed by God.”

The church believes that such abusive behaviour is incompatible with Christianity and any profession of commitment to the Seventh-day...
Adventist faith. Therefore, it is inconceivable that individuals who, despite guidance and support, continue to practise such behaviour, should be allowed to continue to represent the church in any capacity.

Why Have a Policy?
The church seeks to create an environment where we can all feel safe from any form of abuse and will take steps to prevent incidents of abuse and harassment from occurring. We are all responsible for providing Christ-like support for those affected.

The British Union Conference (BUC) aims to stage reconciliation and restoration, including the adoption of positive behaviours, by providing loving, purposeful support and direction. However, this is no excuse for not handling the situation or for showing indifference to the consequences of such behaviour. When domestic violence and sexual harassment occur within the church it affects not just the families but also the congregation. Similarly, if it occurs in a Seventh-day Adventist workplace it can affect the wider work environment.

In support of the above, this policy focuses specifically on domestic violence and sexual harassment.

In recognition of the global extent of these problems and the serious long-term effects upon the abused, the abuser, and their families. Seventh-day Adventists must respond to domestic violence and sexual harassment within the home and the church and its places of employment.

Policy Scope
The BUC is specifically concerned whenever these actions are carried out in Seventh-day Adventist workplaces, churches, during community activities, in the home, or within the families of pastors, ministerial employees, Bible workers, elders, departmental leaders and members.

What is Sexual Harassment?
Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment also involves indirect remarks or comments about one’s appearance and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature affecting an individual’s employment status.

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

What is Domestic Violence?
Domestic violence is an assault of any kind committed by one or more persons against another within the home. This can be any incident of threatening behaviour between individuals within the home or between family members. The assault can be physical, emotional, spiritual, economic, social, or sexual, as well as active or passive neglect.

Whatever form it takes, domestic violence is rarely a one-off incident. More usually it is a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour through which the abuser(s) seeks power over their victim(s).

Dealing with Those Affected
Victims may be afraid to report incidents and so may suffer in silence. It is important that those engaging with the victim or abuser provide a confidential and supportive environment. The church wishes to help those affected to access the support available to them both within the church and beyond. This is so that they can address the situation and move on with their lives.

Likewise members or visitors who are aware of instances of abuse should also be able to raise such issues in a confidential and supportive environment. The purpose of this policy is to help all of those affected through restoration and reconciliation whilst maintaining the church’s principles and policies.

2. COMPLAINTS CONCERNING MEMBERS AND OFFICERS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

2.1 Introduction
The church is concerned that the way its members and officers behave reflects its beliefs as described in Section One of this policy. The church promotes harmonious, mutually respectful behaviours within family life and between individuals. The church, including the local church board, should not seek to replace, undermine or conflict with the legal processes that are in place for the resolution of complaints.

Complaints may come to the church board’s attention in many ways and may vary in nature and severity. Nonetheless all complaints should be managed in the same way regardless of who is placing the complaint or is being complained about. This is to ensure fairness and thoroughness.

The only exception to this is where the complaint concerns the actions of an employ-ee of the church. In such cases the immediate supervisor will need to be informed and the local church board should ensure that the incident is appropriately documented and for-warded to them. The employing organization i.e. the Conference, Mission or Union office, as appropriate, will then investigate and resolve the complaint according to the guide-lines for employees in this policy.

It is necessary so that the church can act as a responsible employer in accordance with employment law. If the local congrega-tion has employed someone directly, for example the church cleaner, and they are involved in a complaint then it will fall to the local church as their employer to progress the complaint using the guidelines for employees. The local church board can contact their Conference or Mission office for advice as needed.

Those affected are encouraged to partici-pate, as they are able, and with support if needed, in the first stage which seeks to make it clear to the perpetrator that the behaviour complained of is undesired.

2.2 Stage One – The Incident Domestic Violence
Where domestic violence has occurred for the first time, it is advisable for the family to openly discuss the situation, seek to identify causes without blame and with support as they are able, and with support if needed, in the first stage which seeks to make it clear to the perpetrator that the behaviour complained of is undesired.

2.3 Stage Two – The Complaint If the victim reports another incident or wishes for the initial incident to be progressed as a complaint by the church the following steps should be taken.

1. The Bible recommends that if the first approach fails then two or three people from the church should meet with the alleged perpetrator to provide guidance and encouragement to change. In support of this the church recommends that the victim should approach trusted individuals such as their Pastor or Elders and discuss the matter with them. They will then look into the matter, with the assistance of the Designated Officer if needed, and counsel the individuals concerned. It is hoped that they may be able to work in a renewing of relationships with each other and Christ, including ending the undesired behaviour, then the matter will be laid to rest.

2. If the alleged perpetrator continues to behave in a way that is contrary to the standards required of the disciples of Christ, then the matter must be referred to the church board for action.

3. The complaint is false and there is reason to believe the board has been misled.

It is for the board to determine the most appropriate way to uphold the principles of the church whilst assisting those involved in understanding and embracing appropriate behaviours. Nonetheless, there may be occasions when the behaviour/incident is such that the membership or officer status of the individual may have to be reviewed. The church supports the right of all individuals to submit complaints. However, due to the seri-ous effect such an investigation and any resulting action may have on the life and faith of the individual, it is important that the Designated Officer (DO) follows a specific procedure.

For employment purposes the DO will seek to identify if the incident is the result of employment practice or policy, or an employment experience and so can only engage with the membership on generic issues of policy, but not on individual cases.

3.1 The Employing Organization’s Role

The church is concerned that the behaviours of its members, officers and employees reflect its beliefs as described in Section One of this policy. Therefore it promotes harmonious, mutually respectful behaviours within family life, and between individuals at church and at work.

However, as an employer, it also seeks to conform to employment legislation and best practice as this does not conflict with its beliefs. In no way does the church seek to replace, undermine or conflict with the legal processes that are in place for the resolution of complaints. Its role is to develop and implement policies and practices that ensure compliance within the employing organization. This includes complaints, support of those affected and when necessary to challenge failure to conform through policy review, educational measures and, on an individual level, the application of disciplinary processes. The involvement of the church board at local level is therefore a separate activity and under a different governance framework to that of the church as an employer.

Specifically, as a church it encourages members, officers, and employees to engage with the membership on generic issues of policy, but not on individual cases.

3.2 The Work Environment

The church is concerned that the way its members, officers and employees behave reflects its beliefs as described in Section One of this policy. Therefore, it is inconceivable that individuals who, despite guidance and support, continue to practise such behaviour, should be allowed to continue to represent the church in any capacity.

2.5 The Church Board’s Ruling
The board must communicate its decision and the reason for it to the complainant. Regardless of the decision made, the board must ensure the outcome is communicated promptly, sensitively and privately to those concerned. This may be done by the pastor or an elder provided neither is associated or implicated in the case in any way.

If the victim or perpetrator wishes to make further representation directly to the board, because they feel that they have been mis-represented or have something new to add, they should be offered a chance to do so. Alternatively, they may prefer to explain their concerns through the Designated Officer or in writing through her/him. Any additional repre-sentation must be heard and the board’s response communicated promptly.

As with any potential disciplinary church matter there are a number of possible outcomes. For example:

1. The complaint is valid and indicates a breach of the behaviours expected of church members.

2. The complaint is false and there is reason to believe the board has been misled.

It is for the board to determine the most appropriate way to uphold the principles of the church whilst assisting those involved in understanding and embracing appropriate behaviours. Nonetheless, there may be occasions when the behaviour/incident is such that the membership or officer status of the individual may have to be reviewed. The church supports the right of all individuals to submit complaints. However, due to the seri-ous effect such an investigation and any resulting action may have on the life and faith of the individual, it is important that the Designated Officer (DO) follows a specific procedure.

For employment purposes the DO will seek to identify if the incident is the result of employment practice or policy, or an employment experience and so can only engage with the membership on generic issues of policy, but not on individual cases.

COMPLAINTS CONCERNING EMPLOYEES OF THE CHURCH

3.1.1 The Employing Organization’s Role

The church is concerned that the behaviours of its members, officers and employees reflect its beliefs as described in Section One of this policy. Therefore it promotes harmonious, mutually respectful behaviours within family life, and between individuals at church and at work.

However, as an employer, it also seeks to conform to employment legislation and best practice as this does not conflict with its beliefs. In no way does the church seek to replace, undermine or conflict with the legal processes that are in place for the resolution of complaints. Its role is to develop and implement policies and practices that ensure compliance within the employing organization.

This includes the management of com-plaints, support of those affected and when necessary to challenge failure to conform through policy review, educational measures and, on an individual level, the application of disciplinary processes. The involvement of the church board at local level is therefore a separate activity and under a different governance framework to that of the church as an employer.

Specifically, as a church it encourages members, officers, and employees to engage with the membership on generic issues of policy, but not on individual cases.
employer to maintain a working environment that is free from abuse of any kind. All staff are entitled to a working environment which respects their personal dignity and which is free from abusive conduct. It will endeavour to achieve this by creating a culture of mutual respect and making known to employees that such behaviour will not be tolerated.

Specifically, the BUC is committed to safeguarding its members and others in the community from sexual harassment or domestic violence carried out by church employees regardless of their office. Such behaviour undermines the church’s beliefs, standing in the community, and legislation. Therefore breaches of this policy will be considered a disciplinary offence and incidents will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. The BUC encourages those who are aware of these instances to write to the Administration or Designated Officer at the Mission, Conference or Union level as appropriate, without fear of reprisal. Such complaints will be taken seriously.

3.3 Zero Tolerance

The BUC upholds a zero tolerance attitude towards domestic violence and sexual harassment among its employees, and will take immediate steps to guard against such behaviour. As stated in Section One of this policy, the church believes that such behaviour is incompatible with Christianity and any profession of commitment to the church. It is inconceivable that individuals who choose to practise such behaviour should be allowed to continue to represent the church in any capacity. Therefore employees who, following full investigation, are found to be guilty of domestic violence or sexual harassment in the workplace and any related ramifications thereby reducing the factors contributing towards domestic violence and sexual harassment. Ensure employees have access to the Harassment procedure.

3.4 Prevention

In order to prevent inappropriate conduct in the workplace and its churches, the BUC shall:

1. Seek to include adherence to the policy within its employment contracts;
2. Endeavour to maintain a working environment and local church setting free of harassment of any type;
3. Provide support for victims of domestic violence and sexual harassment in the form of counselling and litigation;
4. Challenge perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual harassment who seek to justify or cover up their behaviour;
5. Extend the opportunity for reconciliation to perpetrators who openly demonstrate changed attitudes and behaviour;
6. Provide workshops for paid and lay leaders on ‘Safeguarding Against Allegations’, in order to foster and maintain healthy relationships thereby reducing the factors contributing towards domestic violence and sexual harassment. Ensure employees have access to the Harassment procedure.

3.5 Identifying Incidents

In the context of this policy both explain the way in which employees may raise complaints. Employees may opt to use either and should be included to the BUC. If the Harassment Policy is not mentioned then all complaints from church employees regarding the conduct of other employees shall have the utmost importance of the BUC and the public will be treated as grievances under the Grievance Policy.

All complaints will be treated as confidential and must be made in writing. The Designated Officer will be appointed to conduct any investigation required and ongoing support should be made available.

3.6 Formal Complaints

The BUC views domestic violence and sexual harassment as very serious. Where a complaint under the grievance or harassment policies brings to light breaches of this policy, then the disciplinary policy of the employing organization will be applied. The following notes are supportive to the Disciplinary Policy and do not replace them in any way. The Harassment Policy and Disciplinary Policy changes then that document is superseded by that document. It should also be noted that, just as at local church level, the outcome may be varied. In severe or persistent cases the Disciplinary Committee may need to consider the implications for the membership status of the employee. In the case of those in spiritual leadership positions, this may include the possibility of the employee’s inability to continue to serve the church in their current capacity. In all cases the award issued by the Disciplinary Committee will take into account the severity of the incident and any current disciplinary awards for similar offences. The complainant, local church or workplace does not have a right to be notified of the outcome of the Disciplinary Committee’s hearing as this is personal to the employee. They will however be notified if their complaint was upheld or not.

3.7 Third Party Complaints (Whistle-Blowers)

If complaints are received through the local church, direct from the alleged victim, or from concerned third parties. All complaints must be in writing. Anyone who witnesses an incident of domestic violence or sexual harassment under the grievance or harassment policies can make a complaint to the BUC without fear of recrimination, in confidence and with all due precautions. The complainant must be clear whether they wish to have their case transferred to the Grievance Policy. If so they should put the complaint in writing in accordance with the Grievance Policy. They should then be investigated and managed such to resolve their complaint. If the complaint or a complaint made against them to move beyond this fact and be restored and reconciled.

3.8 Witnesses

The Designated Officer can also interview any witnesses as directed by the complainant or person accused. The individual’s fear of recrimination must be addressed; however, the confidentiality of these interviews can only be accepted if they are provided in writing.

However, the complainant and witnesses should be made aware that if the complaint is followed through to the Disciplinary Hearing and Tribunal Stage then it is possible that the person complained of may see the complaint. This is also true of any interview notes made. It is necessary that the alleged perpetrator can understand and answer any allegations against them and is considered an essential element of a fair legal process.

3.9 The Investigation

In view of the special nature of these complaints the employing organization will identify designated persons, who will investigate the complaint and provide a report to the line manager. The investigation should be prompt and discreet. The alleged perpetrator can be suspended or moved to other duties whilst the investigation is continued. Such measures will both the victim and the person accused should be arranged by the Designated Officer. If the police are involved in the complaint then the police will assist in writing the Administration and will be the liaison point. Any information or advice received from the police will form part of their report unless immediate action by the employing organization is required. In these cases the Designated Officer must alert the Executive Secretary to this immediately.

When using information received from whistle-blowers, witnesses, the complainant or alleged perpetrator the Designated Officer concerned must be guided by the facts only and not perceptions or suppositions.

If there are insufficient or no grounds, the accused and the complainant will be informed that this is the case by the line manager. In these cases the line manager will put in place an ongoing supportive ministry for those involved, if required, as the work of the Designated Officer is now complete. This ministry will continue until both the employee and the person making the complaint and those having a complaint made against them to move beyond this fact and be restored and reconciled.

In these situations, if it is necessary because of the situation, the line manager will work with the employee to develop a plan to ensure that the local church or work environment is not negatively affected by this incident and any learning points are assimilated.

3.10 The Disciplinary Committee

The content of the investigation report will determine whether there are sufficient grounds for a disciplinary hearing. This judge will be made by a member of the Administration. If there are grounds, a Disciplinary Committee will be called and the employee will receive a written invitation to attend. They will be asked to accept or be appointed as stated in the Disciplinary Policy and will also be given a copy of the complaint. In all disciplinary cases, a right of appeal exists. It should also be noted that, just as at local church level, the outcome may be varied. In severe or persistent cases the Disciplinary Committee may need to consider the implications for the membership status of the employee. In the case of those in spiritual leadership positions, this may include the possibility of the employee’s inability to continue to serve the church in their current capacity. In all cases the award issued by the Disciplinary Committee will take into account the severity of the incident and any current disciplinary awards for similar offences. The complainant, local church or workplace does not have a right to be notified of the outcome of the Disciplinary Committee’s hearing as this is personal to the employee. They will however be notified if their complaint was upheld or not.

In all cases where continued employment is recommended, the Disciplinary Committee will consider how to assist the individual grow beyond the behaviour and attitudes complained of as part of their judgement. If the nature of the incident indicates dismissal then this responsibility will fall to the Ministerial Director who will be able to support the employee spiritually after they have left the organization while they become settled in a local church.

Where employees are retained, the records of this incident should be kept for the time indicated. The types of behaviour for which a retention may be called to the employee the seriousness of the situation and the importance of them addressing their behaviour and attitudes.

Any employee who fails to comply with the requirements of the church and is conse-
Useful Resources

Where to find help

• Contact your Council or Local pastor. Tony O’Rourke, Local pastor, Tony O’Rourke, Kilnasoolagh, Newmarket-on-Fergus, County Clare.

• Victoria Street cleaner - the house was too beautiful to be left untidy. The task was not finished by Friday evening worship forty plus campers were on site. This grew to well over one hundred on the Sabbath, though the spirit of worship and singing made it seem much larger. More miraculously, despite the forecast, the sun came out for a glorious day of worship, fellowship, an outdoor baptism and, by late evening, a bonfire. ‘This place is a little miracle in the West of Ireland,’ Joan Birch confessed. ‘Just the start of something great.’

• The guest speakers turned up to the rain-drenched site, the job was still not finished. Undeterred, the ladies picked up paint brushes, while the men tackled laying a wooden floor in the marquee and making safe the muddy entrance.

• The kitchen and meeting room extension.

• The Dyn Wales/Dyn Cymru Helpline 0808 801 0800 or

• Welsh Language Counselling Services, Gower House, 23 Risca Road, Newport, NP10 8JW

• Freda Holford, Karen, Domestic Abuse Helpline 0845 672 2254

• The Award has expired and the employee fulfilled the requirements placed upon them then the documentation relating to the complaint, investigation and hearing should usually be removed from their file. If another incident occurs it should be treated as the first incidence was and the investigation, line manager and disciplinary hearing should not be biased by or made privy to their previous behaviour. This is because if they had responded positively to the outcome of the disciplinary process, changing their behaviour and attitudes as requested, they should be given a fair chance and not be judged on the basis of “repeated of and forgiven for” actions.

• In the case of minor initial misconduct, where the employee's action could be held to have amounted to gross misconduct, disciplinary action (dismissal) may be taken. This would generally be expected if the employee cooperated with the employer and their agents in the investigation and disciplinary process. In this case, the employee's final conduct and ability to work in the workplace would have been shown to be unsatisfactory.

• If the time period that the disciplinary award stated has expired and the employee fulfilled the requirements placed upon them then the documentation relating to the complaint, investigation and hearing should usually be removed from their file. If another incident occurs it should be treated as the first incidence was and the investigation, line manager and disciplinary hearing should not be biased by or made privy to their previous behaviour. This is because if they had responded positively to the outcome of the disciplinary process, changing their behaviour and attitudes as requested, they should be given a fair chance and not be judged on the basis of “repeated of and forgiven for” actions.
eternity can be boring. After listening to these stories I see it as a massivestorytelling festival of God’s amazing grace,’ she even took the Mondaymorning challenge of ‘Joy in the misery’. How do you find joy when things go wrong?

The second featured speaker was Dr Cindy Tutsch from the Ellen White Estate at the General Conference. Cindy has a joy and a passion in showing how an understanding of Ellen White’s writings can help Christians in their understanding of the assurance of salvation, as well as developing positive character and leadership skills. She also told the human story of Ellen White, surpris-ing members with the pioneer’s compassion, humour and hospitality. Her storytelling skills also endured her to the children during their speci-fic time of worship. ‘I just loved the presentations – very practical and thought-provoking, not just theological rhetoric but real stuff,’ stated Edith from Dublin church. Sabbath and Sunday evening worships were led by Pastor Victor Hulbert, BUC Communication direc-tor. He took a storytelling approach to evening worship, using his travel experiences, always illustrated with stunning photographs. To encourage campers to rejoice in their salvation, to develop a fuller and richer picture of their God, and to take that picture out and share it with the world. ‘God gave us everything from his heart – it came straight to our hearts,’ testi-fied Ellen from Newmarket. Mary Lynam added that she ‘had a great blessing from all the speakers’. She expressed a hope that this first camp meeting would be repeated every year. An unexpectedly large number of children enjoyed the ministry of Jeff Freeman and his team, both with Sabbath worship and with Sunday activities. All were forayed for an excellent trio of cooks led by Jennifer Gaffara, talented and harmonious worship leaders Edith Samambwa and Belinda Mappa, and pastors and lay people who worked together to provide audiovisual services, maintenance and, most importantly, good fellowship. ‘Just a taste of what Heaven will be like,’ stated Suelyn Sibanda.

This was Ireland’s first camp meeting, Will it happen again? ‘Almost certainly,’ says Irish Mission president, David Neal. He is reflect-ing the views of all who came. ‘It was wonderful!’ enthused Angela Nillow from Cork. ‘I hope we will have something like this next year’. Justin from the Cork church summed up the whole weekend. ‘First camp meeting in Ireland will remain in my mind for many years to come, fresh and with lots of wonder-ful messages and friendly people.’ Campers went home on Monday afternoon with a song in their hearts, with new friendships and with a message to share to with their Irish neighbours.

Photographic memories of the weekend can be seen on the Irish Mission website at http://irish.adventistchurch.org.uk.

Busy last day for Scottish president

Sabbath 11 July was an action-packed day for the outgoing president of the Scottish Mission and pastor of the Crieff church, Pastor Llew Edwards. The children’s Sabbath School lesson, a baby dedication, a final sermon, a communion service, fellowship meal, a baptism and a farewell party were all packed into a single ‘day of rest’!

After more than eight years of much appreciated service in Scotland, Llew and his wife Karin will be transferring to Cairo in September to assume leadership of the Egyptian field.

The highlight of the day was the baptism of Scott and Arlene Bruce and Arlene’s 14-year-old daughter, Amber. Each of them had experi-enced a miracle of grace in their lives. Their link with the church began when Scott and his brother Mark (who was baptised at Crieff several months ago) initially discov-ered an Adventist website and then tuned in to some satellite broad-casts. Members were thrilled as these two young men in the prime of life walked into the local church and immediately became part of the family. They had a million and one questions which Pastor Edwards and others have tried to answer. Scott then encouraged his partner Arlene and her daughter Amber to attend various meetings. Two weeks prior to their baptism, Scott and Arlene had a delightful wedding service and reception in the Crieff church – and the end result is that the church family has had four wonderful additions.

During the evening send-off ceremony some moving tributes were extended by young and old to Llew and Karin, who will no doubt prove to be a blessing to the community of faith in Egypt.

Leamington baptism

A baptism took place at the Mission Community church, Leamington Spa, on Sabbath 4 July. The large cross sunk into the floor of the chapel once again became the focal point of the divine service. Filled to the brim and framed by beautiful flowers, it provided the setting for two young sisters to be immersed. Talisha and Rosané Müller, 13 and 11, had been studying to prepare for this moment. Their proud and thankful parents and grandparents, as well as the congregation, guests and visitors, joyfully witnessed the occasion. Pastor Milan Gugleta, Leamington Spa’s pastor, who has seen them grow both physically and spiritually and who has also had a hand in preparing them for the baptismal bath, stepped into the water with them and conducted a most moving and dignified baptism. A family friend, Pastor Jacques Verter, delivered a very appropriate sermon for the occasion.

Olivia looks to bag a new church

Seven-year-old Olivia Middleditch loves church buildings, especially ones with big steeples. But most of all she would like a church building for her home church of Loughborough to worship in and welcome members of the local community to. So recently, one wet Sabbath afternoon, she quietly sat cutting and sticking. ‘A bag,’ she thought, ‘that is what we need. What if we all give a little and this is what we can collect to buy our church building but her determination and faith have inspired the congregation to make a start.

JOHN AND GUDRUN MIDDLEDITCH

Leamington pastor, Tim O’Rourke, conducts an outdoor baptism

Cindy Tutsch of the Ellen White Estate

Olivia shows off her special collecting bag.

Olivia, you go girl!

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Reading: 63 baptised in Hope4Reading campaign

The largest Seventh-day Adventist evangelistic campaign ever held in Reading concluded on 20 May with sixty-three baptisms, the highest number of people to be baptised in a single district evangelistic campaign. Dr Steve Thomas collaborated with the Reading district of churches – Angola, Ghana, Whitley and Reading Central – to create the Hope4Reading campaign, launched on 2 May. He drew support from pastors George Dadey, Samuel Ngii and Lewis Quaye to put together a campaign team to set in motion his vision of a joint evangelistic series, which took place at the Wesley Methodist Church, Queens Road, Reading. Departmental leaders, church planting partners and four churches rallied together to plan, advertise and execute the impressive project. The campaign was linked to healthy living and debt management. Broadcasters at BBC Radio Berkshire heard about the talks and invited Pastor Lewis Quaye to tell listeners about the campaign on the Clare Carlyle Sunday morning programme.

More than 120 children enjoyed the various versions of the evangelistic series through the Kidz for Jesus children’s ministries programme led by FarmHouse Farm and a team of helpers. The success of Kidz for Jesus caught the attention of the Wesley Methodist Church. They were so impressed that they planned to meet with the team to talk about introducing a similar programme in each of their churches. The campaign was preceded and rounded off by a Health Expo, which took place on 26 April and 31 May. A total of 293 members of the public came for health checks and advice. Many said the Health Expo, organ- ized by the 6D Prayer Coordinator, was a way to help people in the community. But they also said we should do it more often.

Pastor Smith concluded the series with deep soul-searching questions on the last day before making a final appeal for people to accept Jesus as their hope for the future. Twenty-three people decided to join the forty candidates waiting to be baptised, bringing the total number to sixty-three. Pastor Quaye, said “It was a fantastic campaign, a powerful proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus. For me, however, the greatest thrill was seeing my daughter immersed in the waters of baptism.”

Pastor Thomas said: “We have invited other fellow churches to follow suit and invite the sixty-three newly baptised members of the Reading district of churches.” He continued, “God has rewarded his servants, and at the same time reconfirmed that they have been called to a point of commitment. To God be the glory, for the blessedness of preaching, great things were accomplished in Reading. Yes, evangelism is alive in Reading.

Curt Gifford

SEC: Conference-wide evangelism emphasis

by Dr Richard DeLisser, Communication director

This year has been designated by the General Conference as the Year of Evangelism, as the world faces the loss of the Seventh-day Adventist Church entering into new territories, spreading new ground, preaching and reaching hundreds of thousands of people with the single determination to build up the Kingdom of God. Here in the South England Conference we share this goal and our vision ‘Building Up and Reaching Out’.

District GD in West London stretches from Heathrow in the west to Wembley and Fulham closer to the centre of London. Sixteen churches and groups are spread over the boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillington and Hounslow. There are two educational institutions within the district. Andrews Memorial Nursery sits within Willeston church and Eden High in Northolt.

The first Fuller Coronary Health Improvement Programme (CHIP) was successfully completed by the GD health team under the leadership of GD health director Mike Williams. It was held at Ealing Town Hall and featured a guest cooking class by Adventist chef Ben Asamane from West Kensington’s Veggigian restaurant. Centenary celebrations for Peredur Choir were hand- vended certificates by Sharon Platt-McDonald and Gene Koi from the BIC. Mike Williams went to the US to report to the general service and to the founder Dr Hans Diehl. The GD health team are gearing up to run a second CHIP programme in Christmas. In addition, members of the GD Health Team supported Elsie Staple at the very popular health screening at the Vitality Show held at Earl’s Court in March.

A spin-off of all this health activity is the district badminton club with runs every Sunday at Feltham Community College. Friendship evangelism is the underlying goal and a number of non-baptised members and spouses of members attend regularly.

The youth department has been extremely active in the last six months under the leadership of Shaun Picart. A GD youth chair has been formed called Joint Pracie led by Richard Gifford to co-ordinate new evangelistic outreach has started, aimed at the unchurched, especially at Ealing’s Thames Valley University, called IGILE. Led by the GD music director Joel Duntin, the programme has already had a deep spiritual impact on the youth who were challenged not to come without a non-church friend. The main venue will be at the Waterton’s Theatre on the banks of the Thames. Youth preachers have also had the opportunity to hone their preaching skills, having been given a slot at the Hanworth church for the first Sabbath of every month. There have been a number of youth-run evangelistic events, including the very dynamic Friday night youth church at Willeston.

The Willeston church also became a temporary homeless shelter over nights during the winter.

Community Services leader Bea Jackson has created a central store that some less fortunate in their community. Footsteps Ministry is the systematic door-to-door endeavour adopted by the Fulham church, where each Sunday volunteer will do their end-to-end-distributed DVDs and give out other SDA literature with a view to seeking out Bible Study students.

The Romanian church in the Jubilee Clock area has had homeless shelter over nights during the last winter. Community Services leader Bea Jackson organised the youth to serve the homeless in the 6D Prayer coordinator Jeanetta Nash organising an average three half- or full-night prayer sessions a year.

Hanhwater Community Fellowship have impacted the community in a different way. The church has been involved in food parcels for the elderly and providing support for those who have been bereaved.

The district has been heavily involved in the General Day of Fellowship was a success with VOP cards. Last year they did a health screening for the members of the Anglican church in Sandown. This year they have been allowed to have a health-screening tent at the Bembridge Festival in the main street.

Area 8 another successful health screening programme. The church was invited guests and friends of the nineteen candidates, ten of whom were the youth of Ilford church, poured into the church, completely packing the church hall, half Until, and spilled out of the doores of the church to witness this. The church has been involved in the at the end of each month was accompanied by ‘Covenant’ and this went down very well with the prisoners. It fact, it went so well that the chaplain has now asked the church to arrange something for Black History Month in October – they are planning on a visit from the London Adventist Charitable and possibly the General Gospel Choir Pastor Walker is also studying each week with a prisoner who has now requested baptism.

At Newbold six people have been baptised so far this year, while Harringay celebrated two baptisms.

In the district the 6A Balkan church has fifty members and approximately twenty visitors. Their mission is to reach the Bulgarians living in London who find it hard to integrate in the local society.

So far this year they have conducted several events, including a free 13-week English language course from February to May, run by church members, which was attended by about 100 Bulgarians. The members have also teamed up with two other groups to request information to events run by our church. The church members also ran a free taxi advice service, which was received by three new Bulgarians, who expressed interest in our future events.

With the arrival of the spring sun, the church arranged two outdoor events in Holland Park, during which friendships among whom we already knew from the English course started developing, leading to the ADCS course in English on the streets of London and also through the letterboxes.

Ilford celebrates new life

Whenever Ilford church has baptisms, we praise the Lord for the one or two who decide to make that all-important life-change. This year, however, nine new members affirmed their decision for baptism at Ilford church, a celebration in order. It was this ‘Celebration of a New Life’ on Sabbath 6 June that brought out the best in the Ilford church congregation. The normal church service routine was put on one side and the church invited guests and friends of the nineteen candidates, ten of whom were the youth of Ilford church, poured into the church, completely packing the church hall, half until, and spilled out of the doores of the church to witness this. The church has been involved in the at the end of each month was accompanied by ‘Covenant’ and this went down very well with the prisoners. It fact, it went so well that the chaplain has now asked the church to arrange something for Black History Month in October – they are planning on a visit from the London Adventist Charitable and possibly the General Gospel Choir Pastor Walker is also studying each week with a prisoner who has now requested baptism.

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Whenever Ilford church has baptisms, we praise the Lord for the one or two who decide to make that all-important life-change. This year, however, nine new members affirmed their decision for baptism at Ilford church, a celebration in order. It was this ‘Celebration of a New Life’ on Sabbath 6 June that brought out the best in the Ilford church congregation. The normal church service routine was put on one side and the church invited guests and friends of the nineteen candidates, ten of whom were the youth of Ilford church, poured into the church, completely packing the church hall, half until, and spilled out of the doores of the church to witness this. The church has been involved in the at the end of each month was accompanied by ‘Covenant’ and this went down very well with the prisoners. It fact, it went so well that the chaplain has now asked the church to arrange something for Black History Month in October – they are planning on a visit from the London Adventist Charitable and possibly the General Gospel Choir Pastor Walker is also studying each week with a prisoner who has now requested baptism.

At Newbold six people have been baptised so far this year, while Harringay celebrated two baptisms.

In the district the 6A Balkan church has fifty members and approximately twenty visitors. Their mission is to reach the Bulgarians living in London who find it hard to integrate in the local society.

So far this year they have conducted several events, including a free 13-week English language course from February to May, run by church members, which was attended by about 100 Bulgarians. The members have also teamed up with two other groups to request information to events run by our church. The church members also ran a free taxi advice service, which was received by three new Bulgarians, who expressed interest in our future events.

With the arrival of the spring sun, the church arranged two outdoor events in Holland Park, during which friendships among whom we already knew from the English course started developing, leading to the ADCS course in English on the streets of London and also through the letterboxes.
The tongue as the weapon

The apostle James reminds us that the tongue is also a weapon that can be used to unleash friend-ly fire. He says: “And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is set among our mem- bers that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.” (James 3:6.)

The Church as a safe haven

In his keynote address Pastor Jan Paulsen, president of the GC, urged the Church to be responsive to the needs of the community. He stated: “An individualistic, inward-looking conception of faith is self-defeating. It is a lie about God. It undermines the Church’s ability to be an agent of change in the world.” He praised the work and impact of the Church’s 600+ hospitals, clinics and dispensaries.

There were the young lady who came to me not so long ago, and my-age-in-law-who is going through a tough time because of her husband’s illness. She came to me and said, “I have no one to talk to.”

I came home from work not so long ago and announced to my wife that I had bad news. A family friend from our time in Africa had passed away. My wife asked, “What can we do?”

One of the most popular oxymorons in modern usage today is the term ‘friendly fire’. I recall hearing it in the news years ago when British troops went to war in Iraq and they were killed in mouth to mouth-to-mouth attacks among the Americans. I couldn’t understand why they called it ‘friendly fire’. It was anything but.

The thing about friendly fire is that it is still as potent, still as accurate as enemy fire and may be even more lethal. You see, enemy fire is expected. That’s why soldiers dig in, wear body armour and take aim when the enemy is approaching. All that goes to make them as safe as humanly possible from enemy fire.

However, you can afford to relax around friends, take off the body armour, come out of the trenches, lower your weapon, because ‘friends’ are who are approaching. That’s why friendly fire is even more deadly than fire from the enemy. You are at least prepared for enemy fire. But friendly fire is potentially just as lethal, the consequence just as deadly, but the source, totally unexpected. … Friends!”

Things to come

The Scottish Mission’s Family Camp for 2009 had the best weather for years. We had rain for just about two hours for the whole week. The rest of the week, from 3 to 10 July, offered glorious warm sunshine. Having lots of open skies, of course, brought a beautiful, different sunset over the Isles of Jura and Islay every evening. Lots of warmth, sun and little wind were welcomed by the hikers from the Auchterarder, the innocent victims of friendly fire.

A clergyman who suffered from friendly fire was the suffering tongue of a member! Itavowed that the now repentant member to come up into the steeple of the church. He had offended all the people that he had wronged told that the pas-tor was a drunk because she saw him fall down the steps of the pub. When they reached the belly he took out a pillow and cut it open, releasing the feathers into the breeze, and they watched as the feathers floated all around the town. He then looked at the offending member and said, “I’d like you to go and retrieve all those feathers, and don’t fail to bring back every single one of them.”

It’s not possible,” responded the lady. “I could never retrieve every last feather.” “That’s right,” said the pastor. “Those feathers are just like the gossip you released into our community. You can try to take some of the false accusations back, but there will always be some doubt, some false thoughts floating around out there because of gossip.”

Conclusion

So many people have had their reputations ruined, trodden in the ground, falsified by the assassin’s bullet. No, it wasn’t the assassin’s bullet. The shot came from someone they knew, trusted, looked up to. It was so-called ‘friendly fire’, it yet was ever so deadly. Some are weak in the faith and they never recover. Others do recover but to pretend themselves move away. Others never leave but the scars are visible.

May God help us not just tofbeare but to live the Gospel of Matthew 18. ‘If a brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you as a heathen and a tax-chamber.’

It’s simple, yet profound, and has stood the test of over 2,000 years. It takes courage to do, but those who follow this advice are lifesavers. They keep alive a member’s person and reputation, moral and emotional, and, ultimately, their spiritual well-being. They say, “Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me.”

Try asking the victims of friendly fire things together with other churches. These two features will definitely be on the regular agenda of every camp from now on.

Fellowship is also most impor-tant at our camps. The Sabbath potluck lunch which begs for more of the same, the joint vegetarian bar-becue with homemade ‘CIP’- approved burgers and veggie hot-dogs organised by David and Janice Halt, the praise evening where everyone contributed, and Sabbath vespers all brought an atmosphere of togetherness second to none.

Much can be said about family camp, but having campers who are new to church camp come back the next year, as well as seeing regulars returning every year, has to be a positive sign that being at the Scottish Mission Church Camp highlights any year in Scotland. I am not sure what it is that brings people back to Kilberry every year. Maybe it’s the tranquility. Maybe it’s the safety of the camp-site that allows our children to play in a safe environment. Maybe it’s the sunsets and the views. Maybe it’s the ‘Christian atmosphere. Perhaps it’s the making and meeting of friends. Or perhaps it’s the togetherness and the experiencing of a family spirit. Maybe it’s the activi-ties this year – which included the spiritual focus, the fellowship, the games, the show or the internation-ally famous movie ‘The God’s Must Be Crazy’, or famous fish and chips at Inveraray and Tarbert, or maybe being close to seals, or experiencing the almost world-famous Shelly Beach (a beach filled entirely with shells), or maybe the food at camp. I am still not sure, but this I know, the Scottish Mission Church Camp offers something for everyone.
Walthamstow Health Expo

The Health and Temperance team presented the Walthamstow Health Expo in Walthamstow town square. The Health Expo was centred around eight laws of health – Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, Temperance, Air, Rest and Trust, better known as NEWSSTAY. The team consisted of dedicated church members, including a number of health professionals such as a consultant, qualified nurses, a pharmacist, teachers and an IT specialist.

Recognising the potential for evangelism and the benefits of health awareness for both the church and the community, Karen Jordan-Nicholls, the Health and Temperance leader, invited Neil Blixt, BUC Health Expo trainer, to train team members to deliver the Health Expo. These individuals of various ages studied their areas with enthusiasm as everyone had an important role to deliver.

First investiture for Wednesfield Pathfinders

Four Adventurers and nine Pathfinders prepared week in and week out for the biggest event in their club history, the first investiture. The club, founded in 2004, has accomplished much over the years, but the pending investiture would be the biggest accomplishment yet, and all children, staff, parents and church looked forward to the day eagerly. March 28 saw all club members arriving at church particularly early to set up and go over their memorised lines one last time.

While our guest speaker Pastor T. Thomas, NEC Pathfinder director, and several of the Area co-ordinators met in the vestry, Pathfinders and Adventurers lined up in the youth hall ready to march into the sanctuary carrying with pride the British, Pathfinder and Adventurer flags. The Adventurers were then awarded their scarves, chips and certificates, while the Pathfinders received badges and certificates in honours such as braiding and pottery. A short drill demonstration was presented by the children and used the theme from last year's children's day: 'I am a lamb – feed me!' The children were dressed in black and white with lamb masks; it was part acted out and part narrated and was well received and enjoyed by all present.

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The service was interspersed with lively congregational music as well as items performed by the children and used the theme from last year's children's day: 'I am a lamb – feed me!' The children were dressed in black and white with lamb masks; it was part acted out and part narrated and was well received and enjoyed by all present.

The successful candidate will work as part of a small team at the BUC Media Centre based at Stanborough Park, Watford, Hertfordshire, and will liaise with other Adventist production units in the UK and beyond.

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate courtesy and professionalism at all times, have a true passion for the use of media in proclaiming the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and be an effective timekeeper and excellent organiser.

The successful candidate will have the right to work within the UK.

Due to anticipated significant expansion of HOPE TV into the UK market, the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is seeking to appoint a HOPE Channel Scheduler/Administrator.

This full-time position is an exciting opportunity to be able to lead the Church into the next phase of TV Media Ministry in the British Isles.

The successful candidate will be responsible for scheduling programmes, as an example for detail, a working knowledge of media and an understanding of and sympathy towards the ethos and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Oversight of all administrative aspects of the Hope Channel UK network, including liaison with Hope Channel International, Ofcom and UK broadcasters.

Primary organisation of programme schedule.

Ensuring compliance in all aspects of programming and copyright with Ofcom and programme makers.

Overseeing contracts.

Taking a lead role in commissioning programming with other UK partners in consultation with the BUC Communication director and Hope Channel producers.

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Working relationships:

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- This role presents a great opportunity to develop a career within a media oriented Christian working environment.

- Salary will be in line with the denominational pay scale. £30-34k per annum.

- Must have the right to work within the UK.

Arthur James Roderick (1829-2009) d. 9 June

Arthur was born on 10 October 1829 into the same Baptist family in Griffiths town near Pontypool, South Wales. His father had been a minor but, as it was affecting his health, he became a school caretaker. Arthur worked on a farm at the age of 14 but developed severe large earthworms. Not a great deal is known about Arthur’s early days, but he was a champion bowler and won several cups. He wanted to join the army but failed the medical due to flat feet. Arthur travelled to New Zealand under the 43 assisted passage scheme operating from Britain at the time and settled for a while in Auckland. He raised large amounts of money for AID by collecting newspapers for recycling around the district, and he and his wife would often handle one around and a half tons a day. Arthur also had the opportunity to work on a caravan club and, according to Pastor John Arthur, he worked as a sales rep for a pharmaceutical company, and never doubt from here God was leading him for his work, as he would eventually become a prominent figure in the church. About eighteen months after the birth of their son Les they decided to visit Arthur’s family in Wales, but while they were still en route, Arthur’s mother was tragically killed in an accident with a train. Arthur married and was never to meet Arthur’s new bride or his grandson. As times went by, they never returned to New Zealand but settled in Cardiff, where they opened a corner sweet shop. After a time Arthur decided to turn it over to selling and repairing washing machines. This shop provided the late Pastor Dalbert Elias with employment in order to pay college fees. Arthur also played a big part in the 5-day plan to quit smoking in Britain, and also launched the Dual-A-prayer programme.

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Is adult power being misused in your church?

Pagan practices and instead ‘Worship the Lord your God.’ (Exodus 23:25.) It is interesting to note the word worship can also be translated serve. Worship is more than what we do at a particular place, as Jesus explained to the woman at the well. (John 4:21–26.) True worship is where adults’ and children’s hearts are so intimate with God that we want to serve and live for him.

It is not just something that happens in a building. It happens every day and with every heartbeat. That is why Paul said we should ‘pray without ceasing.’ (1 Thessalonians 5:17.) The way we serve/worship varies. It is influenced by our culture, learning style, mode and age. Is there no right or wrong way? The constructive answer here is that if we must accept the need for adults to worship in a style that suits them, then we must not overlook the children’s need to find what works on in church helpful in enabling them to praise and serve God, too. If the adults’ use of authority in church hinders the little ones from coming to church to praise and learn of Jesus, then we are as thoughtless as the disciples. Jesus’ response to them was, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’ (Matthew 19:13–15.)

Recently someone thoughtfully asked me, ‘Who are more important—the adults or children in church?’ All I could do was to reply with another question, ‘Did Jesus come to save children as well as adults?’ Church is for all those who enter its doors, the old and the young. I would be equally upset if my needs as an adult were not included in the services. Church worship can include language and activities for children and not be necessarily childish for adults. Where child-inclusive services are the norm, these are the fastest-growing churches.

Other denominations in Britain are ‘losing’ 1,000 children a week from church. The SDAG Church in the British Isles is losing up to 80% of its children. That is why the BUC and Conference Children’s and Family Ministries’ teams are on ‘mission’ to save our children. It is no accident that in 2009 there have been

• a series of articles in Messenger on how to include our children in worship;
• the ‘Christian Stars’ pages as the centre spread in Messenger;
• the publishing of an intricate/outreach Children’s Ministries evangelism manual, ‘I’m a Child, I’m the World’;
• colourful Promises for our Children posters and Bible study/sermon packs;
• Core SKILLS—a new training course for parents, church leaders and all those involved with children in church;
• Celebrating Children in Church leader’s guide, leaflets: Children First and Parenting for Faith;
• discs—who you may change? GC songs on DVD for children and adults on sharing their faith.

All these resources are available from your Children’s and Family Ministries’ leaders or Conference, Mission and Union directors.

Once a year, the world Church has a focus on preventing abuse and alerting us how to help heal those who are hurting. This year it is to be held on Sabbath 5 September. The material for this day is already on the Conference and BUC Women’s Ministries website, www.adventist.org.uk. This year you should focus on lifting the ignorance that, inadvertently, results in the spiritual abuse. Let your church grow a child-inclusive service by:

A focus on the family.

During the regular church service:

• sit as families
• include something for all ages
• parent involvement
• assign and showcase family projects

Family centred sermons.

Occasionally plan a sermon that will:

• provide information about parenting
• detail the childhood and adolescence of Jesus
• give affirmation and encouragement for families
• celebrate an outstanding parent figure

Kids In Discipleship Ministry

• attend the training
• involve the families and all the church in this ongoing ministry that focuses on the family and centres on the children.

Positive attitudes towards children

To encourage children to attend church they need:

• to know they are welcome: They are greeted genuinely by name and they are encouraged to greet all others in the learning community
• to see that their place is ready: The meeting place is comfortable and attractively prepared and there are things to do from the moment they arrive.
• to be safe: There are no hazards in the room and any ‘community rules’ are known and understood by all.
• to have your attention: Everything is prepared, the running order is planned, and the children are also the focus of the time you have together.
• to experience skills: You have practised your method and the whole team is fully briefed.
• to have quality resources: The church budget covers children’s ministry and enables you to offer the best in all aspects of your programme.
• to have your prayers: Leaders spend time praying regularly about children and know their situations.
• to have your interest: You remember previous conversations, you listen; you observe.
• to be encouraged: Time is given for thought when questions are posed, and answers are appropriately affirmed.
• to know the boundaries: It is clear what is expected of them, because a consistent approach is offered.
• to be engaged: Activities are designed with their abilities in mind, and a variety of approaches are used to ensure that all can participate.
• to know, by your attitude, God’s love: You see them as precious and understand that it is your privilege to be with them.
• to be included in all aspects of church life: Every programme has content for children or they have their own meeting.