On a cold Valentine’s Day this year, nine students and two staff from Stanborough School met at Heathrow airport to begin an adventure that would create lasting memories and change their perspective on life.

After months of planning and preparing, the group of volunteers, who raised their own airfares through fundraising events at church and school, were on a flight to India. Their destination was Bangalore and then on to the Southern Asia Division headquarters in Hosur, Tamil Nadu, which would be their home for two weeks.

Their task was to paint a dormitory room where the children stayed. All the materials for the work were pre-ordered and delivered to the work site. The mission was to paint a large dormitory room where the children were kept, and to paint the walls and design a mural on one wall. The children were very pleased with the mural, which was a butterfly garden, and they all enjoyed helping to paint it.

The Stanborough School team arrived at the SDA campus after a two-hour drive from Bangalore airport and a ten-hour flight from London. After a refreshing shower and breakfast, they walked down to the Ashram to meet the children and inspect the work site. The mission was to paint a large dormitory room where the children were to stay. The mission was to paint the walls and design a mural on one wall.

The team arrived at the work site the next day at 8am to have morning worship with all the children. Four Year 10 and five Year 12 International Baccalaureate (IB) students, two staff and four supporters of STOP International (the sponsors of the project) began the work of sanding down walls, filling in cracks and repairing worn-out plaster. The boys who had never painted ceilings before learnt the technique in minutes and slapped the paint enthusiastically on the huge ceiling. It was a tiring, aching task but the motivation was high and the young lads completed two coats on the ceiling with a great sense of accomplishment.

Rachel Hussey, a Year 12 student, designed the mural that was to grace the dormitory. She and the girls began the work of painting a scene from the English countryside, with green grass, blue sky, sheep and cows, flying birds and cheerful flowers. The curious children were a pleasant interruption as well as a naughty distraction. The teenage volunteers spent their breaks slipping into the baby section to pick up and cuddle the babies. It was a complete contrast to the stereotypical image of an English teenager. Some of them wanted to adopt the babies, some to smuggle them into England, and some even to sponsor these abandoned orphans. Three of the IB students, whose aspiration is to join the medical profession, had to leave early to return to school.

Kish Poddar
Assistant Head Teacher
Some jobs are not quite what you expected them to be. Peter Fahy, Chief Constable of the Greater Manchester Police force, recently said on the Today Programme, BBC Radio 4, 23 March: ‘What the public and sometimes the politicians don’t understand is that a huge amount of policing is around what you might call social work, is actually dealing with troubled families, kids who keep on running away, very difficult domestic violence cases, violence within relationships and what seems like a growing issue around mental health. I certainly look at some of the things we deal with and think perhaps it might be better if I employed more mental health nurses than police officers, because a lot of the time police officers is spent on mental health issues and not doing it very well.’

I wonder if there is a general truth there – that many jobs involve things that were totally unexpected by the ones taking them? Do you find that the work you do has affected to it that you just weren’t prepared for? I saw a report some years ago that air traffic controllers found that the most stressful aspect of their work was not the responsibility of keeping a number of planes from colliding with each other, but the day-to-day hassles of working with colleagues. It can be like that at church. You start attending a church because you have a new experience with God. Your life has been changed dramatically for the better. You go to church because you want to worship this God to whom you have just given your life. You want to further your spirituality. What better place to do it than in church? – or so you think. You may be fortunate enough to find church helpful in this respect, but new Christians may find that some people in church are more interested in talking negatively about others than they are in talking positively about the God they are supposed to be worshipping!

Just as some jobs are not what you expect them to be, so some Christians are not what you expect. This has been the case since the very beginning of the Christian faith. Here’s an example: ‘Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly – mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?’ 1 Corinthians 3:1-3.

New Christians need to remember that even those who have been attending church for years will still be maturing spiritually. A realistic expectation of what church may be like can help to counter disappointment.

I’ve known Adventist Cons, Adventist Labs, Adventist Lib Dems, Adventist Greens and even an Adventist UKIP member. And I’ve never had a problem with any of them. I believe that it is part of our stewardship as citizens to vote in general elections. Since, in democracies, voting means choosing from among a number of political parties, choose we must. Though I’m enough of a purist to believe that I should know something about the man or woman against whose name I place my X, apart from his or her party label.

Of course there’s a lot about the party political game that gets on my nerves, as doubtless it does on yours. And there’s a part of me that fervently hopes that one day politicians of every stripe will, well, grow up! Perhaps that is the part of me which has been most deeply offended by the abuses that come to light from time to time.

Whoever takes it upon himself to represent me in Parliament is not on to a soft option. I reserve the right to inform him of my views. He or she had better not assume that I support all or even most of the party programme associated with their party label. Party spokespersons are at their most idiotic when they are posturing as if to say, ‘We’ve got all the answers.’ (That goes for us, too, by the way.) No political figure has my unclouded loyalty, and certainly no political party. My family was divided politically. My mother was Conservative, my father Labour, and one of my brothers – who aspired to be a ‘left’ – styled himself ‘furry’. My other brother maintained a critical detachment from all labels and applied the same questioning attitude to each. I was with him.

However, every family member exercised his or her vote. What, I think, we were all looking for were leaders of substance and integrity. We were sorry when others began to be dazzled by style and when ‘Does he look good on telly?’ seemed to become the ultimate criterion. We placed substance over style as, apparently, God did and does. (1 Samuel 16:7.)

Government is necessary because of the forces the Fall unleashed upon the world. We have (according to John Locke) numerous individuals given to us by God. No entity can withhold or remove them. We surrender a few of those freedoms to the collective society when we agree to adhere to the laws of government. Those laws must uphold the rights of individuals to speak and as long as those rights do not interfere with another’s. The function of government is to restrain the forces of evil and to work in the best interests of all the people.

In a democracy the individual has an opportunity to shape the character of the government through exercising his or her right to vote. Don’t waste that right. Indifference is the enemy of democracy. Tyrannies exist because of the indifference or gullibility of individuals.

Robert Peston has written a brilliant book entitled Who Runs Britain? Who’s Peston when he’s at home? I couldn’t say, but, at work, he’s the BBC’s Business Editor. Our economic woes seem to make sense when he’s explaining them.

The message of Peston’s book is rather unsettling. It begins to look as if, as a result of the economic naivety of governments and officials over the last thirty years, a monster has been created. A monster monstrous enough to be a threat to democracy. Peston questions whether our elected representatives have the courage to stand up to the powerful financial monsters responsible for our current mess.

Peston had hoped to live in a society in which the gap between the privileged and the deprived – as manifested in wealth and income – would narrow. Nevertheless, that gap had widened between 1979 and 1990. By contrast, between 1990 and 1997 there was a modest distribution of income to the poorest fifth of the population. In the period since 1997 the richest fifth of the population has seen the highest income rise. ‘The really striking social phenomenon’ of the last thirteen years has been the triumph of the super-rich,’ says Peston. In that period Britain has ‘nurtured a welcoming environment for billionaires of any nationality’. Government has gone out of its way to be ‘strikingly generous to the City’s new plutocrats’. Who are they? The owners of hedge funds and private equity firms. There had been ‘an extraordinary increase in the income of the top 1% of earners, an even bigger increase for the top 0.01% and a still bigger increase for the top 0.001%’.

‘It’s not healthy for democracy,’ insists Peston. Why? They are permitted to escape their fair share of the tax burden because governments have persuaded themselves that it is worth cultivating ‘the non-doms’ to retain their contribution through financial services (invisible earnings) to the UK Balance of Payments. However, the negative consequences of this have been:

• the collapse of the British private-sector pensions system that had been the envy of the world; • the financial crisis of the summer of 2007 and the resultant recession.

The liberalisation of global financial markets had bred complacency. ‘Trillions of dollars of financial products were created and then sold to banks and investors, many of whom did not understand the risks they were taking on.’ Hence ‘the mass panic’ that took hold in 2007.

Suddenly one thing became obvious: ‘The accumulation of vast wealth by a growing class of super-rich’ had benefited no state, and certainly not this one. As a result of the bailout of the banks, we were all subsidising the private equity companies owned by the super-rich. As a result there had been the greatest regressive shift in the distribution of wealth and power in Britain for centuries.

That is the key issue in the 2010 General Election. My – still floating – vote will go to the party that has a convincing programme to address it.

References:
• Robert Peston, Who Runs Britain? • and who’s to blame for the economic mess we’re in? (Unedder and Stoughton), pages 3-9. (Edel, pages 15, 16. ‘This is a small sample of the remainder of Peston’s book. ISBN 978-0-340-83944-7. We encourage you to read it and send in challenges to the Editor’s understanding of its message. Alternatively, challenge the distorting conclusions of the book!')
Protein and health

by Anette Muller* 

T he Greek word for protein is πρωτεινός, meaning ‘take precedence’ and us a clue to the importance of protein in the human diet. Most people link protein to muscle, but protein also plays a crucial role in many other essential functions in growth, repair and protection. Everything from our liver, heart, and enzymes (chemical messengers) in both our muscles and the brain (such as acetylcholine) that protects our bodies and promotes repair is made from proteins including white blood cells and natural killer cells (help to kill cells infected with viruses and tumour cells). Proteins also act as transporters for vitamins and minerals in the blood (such as albumin that transports zinc, vitamin B6). Most importantly, our genetic code (which contains our unique genetic material) is transcribed from proteins.

The study of proteins alone can bring to mind the feel: ‘I pray you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made, your works are wonderful, I know that well.’ Psalm 139:14, NKV

Protein is made up of a chain of small units called amino acids. There are 20 amino acids. Eleven of these can be made within the body and are known as non-essential or dispensable. The remaining 9 need to be obtained from food (protein), as they are essential or indispensable. There are scenarios in which non-essential amino acids can be taken into the body through the diet due to lack of nutrients or disease.

Protein is the dietary protein divided into two categories – animal and plant. Animal protein includes meat, fish, eggs and dairy. Plant protein is derived from beans and legumes. Plant protein is preferable if eaten by a vegetarian diet, gradually cutting down on portion size and frequency of meat can be

Healthier choices for meat/fish eaters:

• Lean meat is preferred to fatty meat.
• Wild is preferable to farmed.
• Unprocessed meats are preferable to processed meat.
• Lean fish is superior to non-organic.
• Smaller fish lower down the food chain are thought to have lower levels of pollutants so are better (such as trout and sardines rather than tuna).
• Wild fish is better than farmed or organic fish (which is also farmed).
• Meat or fish without breadcrumbs or batter coating is preferable.
• Smaller portions or less frequent consumption is preferable.

Some of the negative effects of meat can be accentuated by higher levels of saturated fat, cho- 

Protein and health

one amino acid pool containing essential amino acids that can be used over the short term. We need to replenish this pool through dietary intake of protein. Pure vegetarians need to eat regular visiting sources of plant protein, combining grains and legumes, to meet the needs of the body.

Plant protein differs in several ways from animal protein, one being the lower level of essential amino acids. John Sinacori (1959) highlights the benefits of this variation. The plant food essential amino acid profile is thought to provide suitable regulation of proteins. It is thought that this occurs by lowering overall levels of essential amino acids in each meal. Meat suggests benefits include decreases for risk diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer.

If we were to take the Adventist Health Study 1 as a guideline, more than 60% of Adventists are meat eaters. Studies comparing vegetarians with non-vegetarians show interesting results. Among Seventh-day Adventists, Fraser et al. (2003) reports that obesity rises with increased meat consumption. A 1.78 metre male wore one stone more on average than his vegetarian counterpart. Hypertension and diabetes were twice as high in non-vegetarians compared with vegetarians. The Oxford Vegetarian Study revealed that 50% of the vegetarians had lower blood lipids and an increase in life expectancy by 3.6 years. Fish, of course, is promoted due to the long chains of fatty acids (a unit of fat). These polyunsaturated fatty acids known as EPA and DHA have been found to have particular health benefits. The concern with fish consumption arises from environmental pollutants, namely mercury.

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The challenges of diversity in the British Union
A report on the Union president’s address at Newbold College by Helen Pearson

A multicultural society needs a multicultural church, British Union president, Pastor Don McFarlane, told an audience of about sixty church members, students and staff in his lecture at Newbold College on The Challenges of Diversity in the British Union.

Pastor McFarlane mapped out for his audience, themselves representing fifteen to twenty nationalities, the history of the Adventist Church in the UK during the thirty-two years of his ministry here. Beginning with the establishment of Caribbean churches, many of them gatherings of people from particular regions or even villages in the Caribbean, he traced the beginning of the growth of the Ghanaian immigration in the early 90s, followed in the last decade by what he called a demographic earthquake in the BUC, including Eastern Europeans, South Africans, Portuguese, Nigenians, Bulgarians, Romansians, Russians and Filipinos. Churches including various cultures are ideal in that they express the gospel commission to call all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples. It would have been ideal to have a church becoming multicultural, said Pastor McFarlane, ‘but that was easier said than done.’ In nearly all the churches there was a long-established pattern of worship and witness, and people expected newcomers to fall in with to me that Paul does not favour the use of different languages or tongues. (The phrase ‘it seems clear’ is usually seen as a commencement of the viewpoint unsupported by any form of firm, logical argument.) Although I do not have a good cross-section of commentaries on my computer, the phrase ‘it is probably a rhetorical sentence’ does not fit with any of the commentaries that I have, so ‘probably’ would be best replaced by ‘possibly’? In other words, a conclusion with the keyword of ‘moderation’ rather than ‘no’ would seem to fit far better with the tenor of the rest of his article. But then, my brain is more comfortable with the language of scientists than of theologians!

Lifestyle Centre development
Andrew Lawson, an osteopath by profession, has a vision for a Lifestyle Centre in the UK and is currently in the process of setting up a health clinic. He would therefore like to invite Adventist osteopaths, physiotherapists, doctors, medical herbalists, nurses, nutritionists, Christian counselors, massage therapists, clergy, social workers, administrators, businessmen and women who would be interested in being a part of such a clinic or centre to call him on 07484 279870.

Brother Donovan Chambers from Holloway church will be climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in September to raise money for the church building fund. To support him please email communications@myholloway.org or speak to him personally. Contributions towards the flight would be appreciated also.

Announcement
Netherfield, Nottingham, church changes address.
The rented church where the Netherfield congregation has met for the last few years has been sold.

From 3 April the Netherfield GDA church will meet in the Baptist Church, Kenrick Street, Netherfield, NG2 3LE.

Thinking be adults. (14.20)

This seems to be subtly out of kilter with the rest of the article. For a start it does not seem clear

Presence at St Patrick’s Day parade
by Stephen Wilson

The End It Now campaign against violence to women went public in Ireland on St Patrick’s Day, 17 March. Eighteen volunteers carried the End It Now banner in the Galway St Patrick’s Day parade – one of the largest parades in the country. Thousands of pledge cards were given out, and the message of ending violence against women was shared.

The reception was surprising. Although not a marching band oracrobat group, the banner was greeted with applause as we travelled through the narrow streets of the old city. Some people pressed forward to get a copy of the pledge card, and the politicians and business people in the VIP stand whispered ‘thank you’ as we passed by.

The End It Now programme has already begun creating awareness within the Adventist community. Next, after this experience, the reality of going out to the public has been washed away. John McMamura, a local elder, said, ‘I just lost giving

Shocked to me that Paul does not favour the use of different languages or tongues. (The phrase ‘it seems clear’ is usually seen as a commencement of the viewpoint unsupported by any form of firm, logical argument.) Although I do not have a good cross-section of commentaries on my computer, the phrase ‘it is probably a rhetorical sentence’ does not fit with any of the commentaries that I have, so ‘probably’ would be best replaced by ‘possibly’?

Charismatics
Dear Editor
I have just been reading the three articles in the Messenger published this year about the charismatic movement (115.2, 116.1, 116.2).

I was interested in both the argument and conclusion of the article by Dr Verrechia. I was comfortable with his argument right up to the last one paragraph.

It seems clear that Paul does not favour the use of speaking ecstatic languages or tongues. ‘I speak in tongues more than all of you’ (14.18) is probably a rhetorical sentence, in which the apostle mocks the Carinthians. The conditions set for this gift in a church context are so demanding that Paul’s answer is to be understood as a gentle pastoral NO but still a NO. ‘Brosers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking, rather, be infants in evil, but in your thinking be adults.’

There was a long-established pattern for the future for our young people to follow (necklaces and baring the chest as much as possible)?

SHOCKED AND PAINED!
Dear Editor
I am astonished, shocked and pained by the photos you have published in the 5 March 2010 issue of the Messenger. It is with this pattern for the future for our young people to follow (necklaces and baring the chest as much as possible)?

SHOCKED!
Dear Editor
I have a non-Adventist teenage nephew who comes along to church with us. We were attending church where some of the ladies were wearing low-cut and tight clothes. He asked how they could be Christians. We have now started attending a church where young people dress more modestly. So you could imagine my shock and dismay when I saw the pictures that have been published on page 5 of the volume 115.5, 5 March 2010 Messenger, where a report about a banquet was accompanied by pictures of a couple (who won the best dressed award), with the girl wearing a dress revealing much of her breast. I was shocked.
Turning compassion to action
by Aris Vontzalidis, SEC Church Growth director

Imagine you were part of a group of friends who simply loved to be together. Further imagine that this group also prayed for each other and studied the Bible together. Now imagine that this group, moved by compassion, was actively engaged in serving the community.

Welcome to the life of Mustard Seed. Mustard Seed is one of two new small groups at Wimbleden International Seventh-Day Adventist church that is dedicated to growing closer to God, growing closer to each other and reaching out to the unchurched.

The group, which is made up of six lay members, meets on Wednesday evenings for sharing, Bible study and prayer. Then, on Friday nights/Sabbath mornings, they go out into the community to minister to those in need. The group, which has been in existence since October 2009, has ministered in a hospital, nursing home and to a women’s refuge. However, the majority of their missionary work has focused on ministering to the homeless. Late on Friday nights, the group can be found in central London serving hot soup and offering jumpers, jackets, sleeping bags, other essential items, a listening ear, hugs and prayer to the lonely people who have found themselves ministering to the streets. The group was particularly active during the big freeze over Christmas and the New Year when temperatures fell below zero. Having gone out with Mustard Seed a couple of times this year, I could see many of the homeless calling the group members by name and coming to the usual spot at the usual time to meet with them.

During one of their visits to the homeless, one of the members of the group felt deep compassion for one homeless man and, following the Spirit’s promptings, invited him to come and live with him in his rented room, and he has been living there for the last couple of months. Further on this member found a job for his new-found friend who is overwhelmed with the sincere love and care shown to him by the group. Now he sometimes joins Mustard Seed to visit and minister to other homeless children of God. The group also helped to get a young woman off the streets and into regular hostel accommodation.

T he two teams travelled on separate flights. The first arriving in Israel at about 7.30 pm, and were welcomed with a single rose by the representative of the tour company. The second team arrived later, in the early hours of Monday morning. We were based at the Ramat Rachel Kibbutz Hotel in Jerusalem. One unforgettable first memory was as the coach went past the En Harod Hotel and passed by the new Harbor Bridge built to carry the proposed tram light-rail way into Jerusalem. The bus driver started playing the very stirring song, ‘Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Lift up your gates and song, Hosanna in the highest . . . ’

During our first official meeting on Monday afternoon, Pastor Eifler, leader of the church in Israel, challenged the attendees with the inspiring tale of the first Sabbath-keeping Adventist missionary, Clorinde Minor, who, at her own expense, set out to take the Advent message to Jews living in the Holy Land in 1848-1849 from her home in Philadelphia, USA. Adventists have a unique mission in the light of the three angel’s messages to prepare a people for the Second Advent.” Pastor Eifler said.

T he members of the NEC were among those addressed at the NEC workers’ international conference of the Garden Tomb, which was preceeded by the kick-off meeting of the NEC Bible lands tour.

ambassadors to spread the good news of ‘a safe Jerusalem’. Pastor Ian Sweeney responding said, ‘This visit has given me a new perspective on Jerusalem. Thank you for welcoming us to our spiritual home.’

On Thursday night the weather changed to howling wind and rain. On Friday we travelled to Bethlehem to visit the Church of the Nativity and the sites there. The weather put an end to any other visit, and at sunset we shared with the family of David Shalom as they demonstrated how a Jewish family welcomes a guest. The Shaloms welcomed us with a ‘guest welcomes you into his home.’

Sabbath in Jerusalem was unfor-
The baptism of Keziah was a joy for her family as she had been wanting to be baptised for a while. Her mother and aunt read her favourite text, Psalm 23, her brother school. Pastor Emmanuel Osei, SEC Ministerial director, who has known Keziah from her childhood, was there to support.

Second baptism

There was great rejoicing at Southhall church on 14 November when the second baptism of the campaign took place. Family, friends and members packed the church to witness the baptism of Keziah Noel and Gerard Flary. Troy Joseph preached a moving sermon on Matthew chapter 3 where Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan River to be baptised by him. Heaven was pleased with what Jesus did! And every time someone gives their life to God, Heaven celebrates, along with families, the church family, and friends; but most of all Jesus is happy and rejoicing to see you walk in his footsteps.

Third baptism

Pastor Everett Picart was in the foyer and others watching through videoconferencing in the youth hall. Family and friends came from near, and as far as Birmingham and Antigua to witness this special day. Pastor Garth Anthony, a retired missionary, will be the main speaker. The children will have a whole morning of ‘Kids’ Church’. The address of the Allendale Community Centre is: 1110 Hanham Road, Wimborne BH21 1AS

Our delegation interviewed many of the leaders and the lay people as to the reasons for their success, and we came up with the following findings:

1. Conference and Union leaders know their people • Many know how to give Bible studies and lead someone to Christ.
2. Division has well defined goals which are shared and filter down to the territory and types of people in the UK are more secular minded and harder to reach with the Gospel. However, there was much to think about and take on board!
3. Objectives are the same although methodology may differ. • Strong small-group ministry resulting in baptisms. • Evangelism intentional, in that the objective is always to help a person make a decision for Christ.
4. Successful in evangelism. The delegation comprised Terry Messenger, Personal Ministries director at the SEC, and his wife Lynette, Aris Personal Ministries director at the Caribbean Union who thought it would be beneficial for us to observe their field.

The church is growing well in this Division, with 1,800,000 baptisms in the past five years alone. On the Sabbath there were simultaneous baptisms from the various unions linked to us via satellite at the Intercontinental Hotel in Panama where our meetings were held. Seventy thousand people were baptised on this day alone! The Mexico Unions reported 4,000 baptisms in the past two months, and in Haiti, recently devastated by a major earthquake, there had already been 2,000 baptisms in the same time period.

Visit to Panama for Festival of the Laity

A conjunction with the British Union and South England Conference Personal Ministries departments, a delegation of nine people went on a fact-finding mission to Panama to find out why this part of the world is so successful in evangelism. The delegation comprised Terry Messenger, Personal Ministries director at the SEC, and his wife Lynette, Aris Personal Ministries director at the Caribbean Union who thought it would be beneficial for us to observe their field.

London Adventist Chorale at Wimborne Minster

You are invited to a day of fellowship at Wimborne Minster on 24 April 2010. The event will feature the London Adventist Chorale. Renowned for their beautiful worship and praise music, they have sung on BBC ‘Songs of Praise’. The Chorale concert will start at 2pm in Wimborne Minster, although they will also be singing during the morning worship held in the Allendale Community Centre where Pastor Garth Anthony, a retired missionary, will be the main speaker. The children will have a whole morning of ‘Kids’ Church’.

The address of the Allendale Community Centre is: Hamnah Road, Wimborne BH21 1AS

The Chorale concert will be in the Minster itself starting at 2pm. Please be seated by 1.50pm to ensure prompt start.

For further details contact: 01258 438332 OR DR JOHN MATHENGE KAYIHARI
Adventists on Premier Radio

Angela Hunter is on a mission. As the new Communication leader for Tottenham West Green church she wants the church to make an impact on her community. One of her initiatives was to approach Premier Christian Radio with a suggestion that they have a programme to explore Adventist beliefs. Justin Brietley took up the challenge, resulting in two Adventist pastors joining him and Doug Harris of the Reachout trust in a programme that will be aired just after Easter. Angela’s pastor, David Burnett, took a lead role in the presentation. As a local pastor he was also able to share his strong belief in the centrality of the Bible, the power of Jesus in a believer’s life and the hope that Adventists have in the promise of Jesus’ return. He was joined by BUC Communication director, Victor Hubert, who covered some of the historical sections of the debate as well as joining in on the theological issues, particularly on the Sabbath.

A programme such as ‘Unbelievable’ is not the place for an in-depth Bible study, and many questions were only skimmed over, but the lively interaction of the participants will hopefully give listeners a positive insight into the heart of Seventh-day Adventist belief.

The programme will air on Sabbath 10 April starting at 2.30pm and will subsequently be available as a podcast on the Premier Radio website: www.premier.org.uk/unbelievable.

Singles event

I am one of three representatives on the NEC Singles Advisory Committee for the West Midlands. Ursula Jeffers (representing Preston) and I had begun communicating about arranging a social before the end of 2009. As the other area reps and I were local to Birmingham and Ursula was in Preston, we agreed it would be sensible to try to do something in Stoke-on-Trent near the M6 motorway, after discussion and some prayer, I hit on the idea of meeting in a hotel lounge and socialising.

On our way

On Saturday 12 December two church brothers and I had arrived together from Wolverhampton and arrived just after the agreed time of 7 o’clock at the hotel near the M6 near Stoke. As brothers, we had some interesting discussions on the way, talking about qualities we looked for in women we’d like to marry and sharing our past dating experiences.

On arrival

Once in the hotel lobby and while trying to get our bearings, among the people circling I noticed one attractive young woman who appeared to be a hotel guest coming towards us. We eventually moved to the lounge area, and this lady soon joined us as part of the group, to my surprise. Apparently, when deciding to come she had booked to stay overnight in the hotel to save herself the hassle of driving back home that night.

Social mix

When everybody arrived, we rearranged the seating (with permission) to accommodate all eleven group members. It was a pleasant and relaxing environment where we could be safe, together and communicate freely. Once together, there were no specific game plans beyond having conversations. We improvised and mingled. Each of us agreed to spend time talking to different people we hadn’t met before in the relaxed, easy atmosphere and environment of the hotel lounge. It was rewarding to see that we didn’t necessarily need games or entertainment to socialise together. I don’t know what each person expected before they arrived, but it wasn’t intended to be a match-making or speed-dating event (though whoever knows what may be the eventual result – by God’s grace?). By 11pm and with only one drink each, our bellies may have been empty but our hearts were full and very happy with the progression of the evening.

Act of faith

It was all an act of faith, because by Thursday 10 December Ursula and I were not sure who, if anyone, would come. From the time I had the initial idea, I had been praying for success. When things looked doubtful and I was uncertain of how I, the organiser, would get to the venue, I prayed and committed myself to going even if I thought no one else from the Midlands would come and I would have to make my own way there on public transport. I was determined to get there by any means necessary.

The Lord (in his goodness) came through in a perfect way. It was just as well I didn’t get ‘cold feet’ and cancel, fearing lack of numbers. That sister who had paid for a room overnight would have been doubly disappointed.

Just the start

We were all really, really blessed by the experience, thankful to God and hoping it’s just the start of better things to come.

Ordination service

An ordination service was held by the Burgenraine church, Sheffield, during the fiding hours of the first Sabbath of the New Year. Two brothers, Mandla Ndlovu and Victor Chitando, were ordained into the sacred office of deacon.

A procession of deacons and deaconesses escorted the candidates and candidates’ wives to the front of the congregation where they were formally introduced by resident licensed minister, Pastor Victor Marshall. Following the introduction, they were led to their places on the platform to hear God’s message in sermon and to be charged with the solemn obligations of deacon.

The candidates, escorted by their wives, pastors and elders, were ordained by Pastor Trevor Thomas, NEC Pathfinder director.

Fun Day for children at Newport

david Rancio

When it comes to joy and happiness, nothing compares to children’s smiles. That was why Sunday 28 February was so special for members and friends of the Newport church. It was a Children’s Fun Day and the youth hall was filled with smiles, laughter, happy children and youth.

The idea came about when the church board realised that they needed to do something special for the large number of children and youth now attending the Newport church. It was planned that Children’s Fun Days should be part of the long-term strategy of the church, but that the first one—a trial run—should be organised just for the children and youth of the Newport church. Of course they brought their friends anyway and at the end there were almost thirty children and youth playing in the youth hall, with the regular attendees explaining to their friends what was going on.

So how was it going? For the first time in their lives, parents and children saw a bouncy castle actually inside the church building!'After recovering from the shock they made good use of it – parents and children alike. Another activity was face painting, with Efion Paul from the Swansea church working solidly for about four hours and doing a great job for the children. Some of the youth brought a Wii console and, together with a projector and large screen in the church foyer, it provided several hours of entertainment for the older young people. Other activities included table hockey and table football, the latter being used so enthusiastically that it required period maintenance to keep it in working order.

Special thanks go to Sara and Chris Shepherd who helped us to find the right bouncy castle and also worked very hard in the kitchen. Also, big thanks go to the parents who accepted the idea and were happy to help with food and scheduling their duties and responsibilities so that there could be more children playing together. Other members of the church helped with donations or came later to help with the cleaning and tidying up of the hall.

Everybody was happy on Sunday 28 February in the Newport church and there is general agreement that this should now be pursued as a significant part of the church’s outreach programme. There are lots of children living near to the church and this would provide a great opportunity to reach them.

More than a hundred photos from the day can be seen in the gallery section of the Welsh Mission Website at www.adventisttheatres.org.

Women lead at SWAAF Malawi Fellowship Day

dr Theophilos Gokah

Malawian Adventists from all over the UK converged on the South Wales African Adventist Fellowship on Sabbath 27 February to worship and fellowship with the African congregation in Cardiff. The day which was set aside as Malawian Day of Fellowship aimed at bringing back other Malawian Adventist and non-Adventist Christians in Cardiff who for some reason are not in church.

The ladies took a significant role in the day – a role that is no longer contested in the Adventist Church. Women in Adventist churches play leading roles in extending philanthropic activities and community services to people in need. Formerly known as the Dercas Society, Adventist Women’s societies are remembered for their physical, spiritual and mutual benefit initiatives. Women’s Ministries have shown over the years that they can make a significant difference in the lives of less privileged people in society. As the Christian community stands, Malawian Adventist women can play formidable roles in caring for their own and the communities in which they belong.

With the support of Malawian men, the congregation raised £240 towards an evangelistic campaign in Ntchisi District of Central Malawi, with the money raised going directly to the church in Ntchisi.

Various singing groups added joy to the day. One of the most moving was a Sabbath day worth remembering as they expressed their desire to visit again.

Pastor Thangalimodzi’s interactive and poignant sermon on ‘Pregnant Question’ brought the congregation to reflect on how Christians perceive others vis-à-vis Jesus’ own question: Who do people say I am? The afternoon sermonette by Pastor Newton Kawiza placed the earlier sermon into perspective and cautioned that meeting the Saviour of our world, Jesus Christ, is dependent on what people do today as the world stands on the shares of eternity.

More than 150 photos from the day can be seen in our gallery section of the SWAAF website at www.swaaf.org.uk.
Joint letter to pastors and church elders

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Ministry

Re: Women in Ministry

From the desk of the Union president

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Ministry:

The role of women in ministry is one of the many subjects that the Church has considered. We have spent a considerable amount of time on this issue. Let me share with you some of our developments in our Church regarding women in ministry over the years that, hopefully, will prove informative.

As early as 1981 the General Conference Session resolved that "females possessing the necessary qualifications and talents may occupy positions of leadership in your Church." The General Conference in session adopt provisions on ordination as outlined below: 'The General Conference vests in each division the right to authorize the ordination of individuals to the work of the Christian ministry.'

Since 1995, unions that have employed women in ministerial or pastoral functions have used the policy on Commissioning, issuing commissioned minister's licenses. The General Conference Session later that year affirmed 'our purpose to bring qualified women into a broader participation in church leadership and into responsible implementation of church programs. Between 1977 and 1984 various study commissions were convened, one result of which was provision for the election and consecration of women into positions of leadership in local church elders. The 1985 General Conference Session reviewed the ordination of women and concluded that more be done.

The 1990 General Conference Session voted that women should be given wide participation in all church activities, including soul winning and pastoral duties, but that 'in view of the possible risk of disunity, division, and diversification from the mission of the Church' the Session approved the Annual Council's recommendation that ordination of women to the gospel ministry should not be authorized. The 1995 General Conference Session in Utrecht considered and rejected a request from the North American Division 'that the General Conference in session adopt provisions on ordination as outlined below: 'The General Conference vests in each division the right to authorize the ordination of individuals to the work of the Christian ministry.'

Following the resolution, the matter was referred to the three-member General Conference Committee. There is no record of further action that can be identified. If there had been, the Church most likely would not be discussing it today.

The 1975 Spring Meeting of the General Conference made provision for the ordination of deaconesses and women elders 'where the division found it applicable, or possible, or profitable in their situation.' The General Conference Session later that year reaffirmed 'our purpose to bring qualified women into a broader participation in church leadership and into responsible implementation of church programs.'

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In 1977 he was called to Rusangu Secondary School in Zambia as principal and business manager. A year later a call came from Burundi. With the fall of the Communist Government there was a willingness to return to Burundi. After three years he negotiated the return of the properties but was to see the construction of twenty-two new churches before he retired.

It was in Zimbabwe that Rex became acquainted with the work of REACH International, a non-profit, charitable organisation, solely dedicated to helping children in needy countries of the world. They took on an orphanage in Bulawayo, and since his retirement in the UK, REACH has been continuously supported by Rex and Elvira, particularly in the orphanages in Romania and Latvia.

Rex's contribution cannot be summed up in just a few words. He was a man who always answered the call and he believed that when a person was called by the Church it was the call of God. He feared no opposition and he believed that when God calls a person to work for him, God will be there waiting! He endeared himself to many in Africa because he treated every person alike, whatever the colour of their skin. At the family home all were welcome at the front door and to sit down with the family at the table for food. How many languages and dialects he spoke at all times and in many places his knowledge of what was being said helped to pave the way out of difficult situations.

In 1995 he came to live near his family in Gloucestershire. Up until just before his death, for more than fifteen years, almost every Sabbath Rex and Elvira would travel to preaching appointments in the South and in the Brecon area. Rex became acquainted with the work of REACH International, a non-profit, charitable organisation, solely dedicated to helping children in needy countries of the world.

During the last few months of last year Rex was confined to hospital in several towns and cities but fell asleep at the hospital in Cheltenham. In spite of the inclement weather, the funeral service was held at the Adventist church on 7 January by the local pastor, assisted by Pastor Dorothy and Turley, where tributes were given by a former student, Victor Pilmoor, and Elvira, Rex's wife. Afterwards at the Gloucster Crematorium a tribute from Rex's son Michael was read by his daughter Valentine Blake and son-in-law Steve. Grandchildren Richard, Neil, and Jennifer Le Mire and her husband Ian, Rex's son Michael and daughter-in-law Carie in the US and their children Cery and Bruce.

Yours sincerely,

Don W. McFarlane
President

Pastor Rex Gordon Pearson

(1920-2009) d. 22 December

P astor Rex Gordon Pearson was born in Durban, South Africa, in 1920 of British parents and died in Cheltenham, England. He was home to them in Izinyauro (Zimbabwe), Malamulo, Tekerera and Lwazi (Maliow) and Mwani (Zambia). Much of his work was in our colleges in East Africa. Thirteen years at Kagambo, eight years at Malamulo, six years as principal of Bethel College in the Transkei, South Africa. When he was principal of Bethel College in the Transkei the school was awarded a cup for the highest number of points in the Afrikaans language competition.

In 1971 he was called to Bundu General Secondary School in Zambia as principal and business manager before being called to Helderebob College as dean of men in 1971. It was during his two years as principal and business manager of Busanga Secondary School in Zambia that Rex's faith was tested when his son Bruce was killed in a road accident, together with Bruce's fiancée and another passenger. In a fine sermon at Ystrad Mynach following the death of Peggy Mason, Rex spoke of the soul events he had experienced in life. His son's death was one event, as was the time when, as Inspector of Schools in Zimbabwe, he had visited the scene of the murdered teachers Don and Ann Lale. As he spoke we became aware of his faith and the hope of seeing his loved ones once again.

Following his retirement from Helderebob, South Africa, he went north to Bulawayo where he worked for the next twelve years. Sadly, his wife died in February 1997 and at the end of that year he married Elvira who was teaching at Solusi. Rex tried to retire but the Lord had other plans. The treasurer of the Union at Lubumbashi in the Congo resigned, and Rex was sent to a situation that required the services of an experienced treasurer. A year later a call came from Burundi. With the fall of the Communist Government there was a willingness to return to Burundi. After three years he negotiated the return of the properties but was to see the construction of twenty-two new churches before he retired.

In 1995 he came to live near his family in Gloucestershire. Up until just before his death, for more than fifteen years, almost every Sabbath Rex and Elvira would travel to preaching appointments in the South and in the Brecon area. Rex became acquainted with the work of REACH International, a non-profit, charitable organisation, solely dedicated to helping children in needy countries of the world. They took on an orphanage in Bulawayo, and since his retirement in the UK, REACH has been continuously supported by Rex and Elvira, particularly in the orphanages in Romania and Latvia.

Rex's contribution cannot be summed up in just a few words. He was a man who always answered the call and he believed that when a person was called by the Church it was the call of God. He feared no opposition and he believed that when God calls a person to work for him, God will be there waiting! He endeared himself to many in Africa because he treated every person alike, whatever the colour of their skin. At the family home all were welcome at the front door and to sit down with the family at the table for food. How many languages and dialects he spoke at all times and in many places his knowledge of what was being said helped to pave the way out of difficult situations.
Children from the BESSO orphanage enjoyed a day at the zoo with the Ananth Ashram children. This enchanting privilege of attending an Indian wedding was especially blessed because eleven children from The Way to Life orphanage committed their lives to Christ through baptism. Most of these children have sponsors from Stanborough School. It was a truly memorable day.

After the first profitable week of work, the Sabbath School programme which they did admirably. It brought its rich blessings. As visitors to the local Hosur Hospital to which the orphanage is attached for a whole day. The sightseeing covered the wonderful privilege of shadowing doctors in the hospital. They showed us all in good health, for a safe return and for the opportunity this is mission accomplished. We praise God for keeping us all in good health, for a safe return and for the opportunity this is mission accomplished. We praise God for keeping

Among the many experiences, the volunteers had the privilege of attending an Indian wedding. This was a very rewarding experience for these would-be doctors. It was an emotional journey but a worthwhile one, one that I will remember for the rest of my life. The experience has also motivated me to find ways of raising money to donate to the local hospitals so that further developments can be made to give the children a better life. The experience has also motivated me to find ways of raising money to donate to the local hospitals so that further developments can be made to give the children a better life.

The purpose of organising a trip such as this is to teach our students the Christ-like principle of serving others and to get a true perspective on life. Nine students from Stanborough School, this February, understood and appreciated the principle and have had a life-changing experience. For the administration of Stanborough School, this February, understood and appreciated the principle and have had a life-changing experience. For the administration of Stanborough School, this February, understood and appreciated the principle and have had a life-changing experience.

In the second week the work proceeded so well that the painting task was completed one day ahead of schedule. With one day spare, the final Friday, the team took the older orphans for a picnic to a lion and tiger reserve. The tiny children had such a delightful day that on the way back they fell asleep on our laps, exhausted.

Early the next day the team took a short break from work travelling to Mysore by train. The sightseeing covered the world-famous Brindavan Gardens, the Mysore Palace, a delightful bird sanctuary and a visit to the Maharajah’s Palace. This was a delightful day that made all the volunteer team proud of themselves and the organizations we are supporting. The tour ended with a delicious potluck lunch for the orphans and the team that followed, the local Adventist community organised a baptism for eleven children from The Way to Life orphanage. It was a very rewarding experience for these would-be doctors.

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