Welsh Mission Session report, Sunday 21 November 2010

Newly baptised make an impact at Welsh Session

Timothy Nathanial Hope is special. As a delegate at the Welsh Mission Session he represented nine per cent of the membership in the Welsh Mission. Along with forty-two others, he was baptised during the last three years and helped to boost the recorded membership in Wales to 523. Timothy gave his testimony during the Health Ministries report. He told of how he had been invited to a CHIP programme by a school caretaker, how he had discovered Sabbath worship when the CHIP programme moved to the Newport church, and how he had not missed a Sabbath since. While Mission sessions are, as Pastor John Surridge pointed out in his welcome, important but not exciting, Timothy’s joy was clear to see. He was delighted to be among the seventy-six delegates who had registered and were ready for worship at 9:30 am on Sunday morning.

Morning worship began with a love story. The BUC president, Pastor Don McFarlane, used his own experience of being ‘Grandma’s favourite’, while his outdoor, sporting cousin was ‘Grandpa’s favourite’, to illustrate the story of Jacob and Esau. Looking at the two brothers’ reconciliation in Genesis 32, he noted that Jacob became the man he was because, prior to the reconciliation, he had spent time alone with God, had wrestled with God, had demanded much more than a token blessing from God and, as the sun rose, had seen God face-to-face. In today’s world, Pastor McFarlane told an attentive congregation, ‘we see God face-to-face in the life of Jesus, both through prayer and as we take time to read his words.’ He then added, ‘When we see God face-to-face, we cannot be the same again.’

Concluding his devotional he emphasised that, while all of us may be good people, it is not enough to be good on our journey to Heaven. ‘We need an unforgettable experience with God — an encounter where God deposits his grace within us,’ he said, adding, ‘I pledge today that I will take time to wrestle with God each day, that I will look into his face.’

As worship moved to business under the General Conference theme, ‘Tell the world: Proclaiming God’s grace’, Pastor Surridge used a raft of photographs to demonstrate how amply grace is being shared in the Welsh Mission. Photos of evangelism with Jeff Youlden, the establishment of the
Thinking of home

Introducing the Hibberts

Ernest and Alice Hibbert are the parents of Julian, Elize, Neil and Janet. They will be meeting with as many of our pastors and members in the UK and Ireland as possible in the course of the coming year. Pastor Hibbert will be editing an Advanced Counselling Certificate

and a BA Hons from the University of South Africa, as well as a BA Hons from the University of South Korea. They have a son, Neil, who is a nurse and currently working in the UK, and a daughter, Jeanè, who is employed as a social worker in the UK.

The man I met by the river had apparently been let down by everyone: mother, father, siblings, wife, children, friends. 'Home' was an illusion, he maintained. And 'life', he said, was what happened while you were making the illusion happen.

Julian's father was born in 1974. In the last thirty-six years he has worked as a church pastor, departmental director, editor of the Times and a member of Sarkozy’s commission, investigated the relationship between happiness and prosperity. He states: 'We are seeing happiness in the national household surveys. In addition to existing questions in the household surveys, we should also take into account the way people define happiness. The GDP is not the ideal measure of wellbeing.'

As a child, Alice’s family was living in the UK. In their early years, they were deeply religious and had a strong commitment to the church. However, her Adventist roots go back to her parents serving as missionaries.

David Marshall, Editor 2011-

On 15 November a Guardian Online report carried the following headline:

"Guardian Online"

"Enhancing Health"

"Mental wellness – the prosperity factor"

"I tell you the truth, before the cock crows you will disown Me three times. From that moment on, I will go to the hills to wait for you. But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go to Galilee before you, and you will come to Me. I tell you the truth, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

"So where were you? In the father’s garden, you knew there were roses flowering there. I was sound asleep, not aware of the sunset.//MOTHER GOOSE’S COLLECTED WORKS"
**An ‘unlikely story’**

**Ellen G. White without giving the reference’. We don’t quote the Bible without stating from which book, chapter and verse we are quoting.**

We often consider the work of Ellen G. White and her influence on the Adventist Church. Her writings and teachings have been an important resource for many believers. However, it is worth noting that she did not always quote the Bible directly, and her works are not always accompanied by specific references. This approach is consistent with the Adventist tradition of interpretation and application of Scripture.

Ellen G. White was a key figure in the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Her influence can be seen in the growth and spread of the movement, as well as in the development of the Church’s doctrines and practices.

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**What being a Seventh-day Adventist means to me**

I love belonging to a Church whose mouth isn’t somewhere else.

When I was courting my wife I was not going to join her Church. I was baptised again into the Seventh-day Adventist Church after we got married so that one could claim experience for baptismism were altered. That was over ten years ago. These are my reasons.

There was one aspect of my Christian walk that the Seventh-day Adventist Church fully supports. That is daily Bible study. It doesn’t have to be promoted to members. It is a key feature of the Church’s Sabbath School. It is not something only done by the devoted few.

Ten aspects of theology I always questioned and answered by the Church.

Why do most Christians not worship on the same day as Christ did? I now know that the Bible says we should keep the Sabbath as Christ.

People should be warned that judgement can come at any moment, for we cannot predict when we will die. Though I have doubts about the imminence of Christ’s return, the preaching about it keeps us alert. I have no doubt that either second of life could be the last one God has set for us. When I die, then I will see Christ coming. For death is a timeless sleep until the Resurrection.

Three things impressed me about the Church.

Doctrines that contradict the fact that ‘God is love’ are not taught. That isn’t just because of doctrinal decisions, but because the Bible shows these doctrines to be false. The devil are not taken away from Heaven helplessly as their heirs go wrong. No — the dead are a sleep and know nothing. Those that do not make it to Heaven will not go to a hell where the fire burns but does not consume. Unlike the crematorium fire, there is no more room in Heaven for those who completely burn.

The health message shows that God is interested in our whole being. It is not taught to make us holy. It is preached because God cares for us, and so must His Church.

The evangelical mission of the Church is constantly at the forefront of the denominational administration, and not the burden of fringe ministries. The Church’s media outreach is central to its operations.

There are few things I am disappointed about:

Sabbath School teachers do not always use the resources provided by the General Conference by going through the week’s lesson day by day.

Some Adventists quote Ellen G. White as if she were as important as the Bible. I have seen these challenges by insisting on quotation rules, such as: ‘You cannot quote Ellen G. White without giving the reference’. We don’t quote the Bible without stating from which book, chapter and verse we are quoting.

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**Terms of endearment**

Dear Editor,

If your correspondent (1 October 2010, page 5) is worried about the decreasing use of Brother or Sister as a way of referring to a church member, I myself have found it a bit of culture shock after being made an elder, finding myself having to get used to being called “Elder.” It was addressed to me something that I had never heard at any of the churches. I do realise, however, that our African members are used to it where they come from, and that it stems from their tribal background.

We have other terms of endearment: such as, for example, when a child in the congregation adopts you as “Uncle” or “Auntie.” And, of course, the ultimate in terms of endearment is to be addressed by your first name and surname.

The King James Version

Dear Editor

I was both excited and very interested to read your article in Messenger 15

October, regarding the anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible next year. Not only is it the Bible that many of us were brought up with, but it was also a staging post — alongside the works of Shakespeare and Grammarian’s Prayer Book — in the development of the English language.

Just as important was its contribution to one of the pillars of the Protestant Church: that all we should be able to read the Bible for ourselves in our own language.

For all these reasons, the 400th anniversary of its publication is an event to celebrate, and celebrate with great enthusiasm. I intend to explore what we can do in our local church to mark the occasion.

Standard of preaching

Dear Editor

Since returning to the Adventist church after an eighteen-year absence, I have been dismayed by the general standard of preaching in our churches. In no way is this entirely the fault of lay preachers. There has been a ‘dumbing down’. What I am hearing are shallow, ill-prepared pseudo-sermons.

Preachers have a duty to feed their congregations. If we are not inspired by a decent sermon from time to time, then it becomes difficult to survive spiritually and, frankly, not easy to find reasons to attend.

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**Overmanagement**

Dear Editor

I most heartily agree with Alan Kissack’s letter regarding the over-management of the Church in the British Isles (Messenger, issue 2324). A number of people I have talked to are of the same opinion and feel that we only need a British Union Conference. As an Adventist of 57 years I am wondering how much more of our hard-earned money is going to be wasted on duplications. Surely now in this era of austerity it is time that we took a long hard look at the ‘management set-up’ and did something about it as a matter of urgency.

A. L. SPURR
The Nominating committee reported back to the delegates just minutes before lunch. Pastor McFarlane quipped that this would give people something to chew over during their meal. However, since the delegates were generally happy with the good work that sponsors had done over the previous three years, there were few changes.

A healthy lunch in the spacious, renovated hall was followed by the afternoon session. Irving and Lil Saunders reported on the success of the CHIP programme in Wales, as well as the health fairs. They are currently contacting GPs to enlist support for CHIP.

In the Youth report Jeremy Tremeer stated that he was impressed by the active involvement of teens, youth and young adults in church life. He stated that there are a lot of pressures on young people today, and some of the Welsh youth are quite isolated. Therefore this programme will provide fellowship and social activities, and build up the youth community. A discussion ensued on how to balance fun and spirituality. Pastor Tremeer said that, although there had been a decline in total tithe giving during the three-year period, this had been due to those who had contributed tithes from the Welsh Diaspora. Com plaining from those in Wales had actually increased. Part of the discussion focused around the need for encouraging responsibil ity in returning tithes and the development of more stewardship programmes.

Questions were also asked about why the high level of evangelistic activity in Wales had not translated into more baptisms. It was suggested that maybe some new methods needed to be explored and that, in some places, soulwinning was more difficult than in others. Commenting on the positive attitude of the Welsh leadership towards evangelism, Pastor Tremeer stated that it would be great to see more results, while emphasising that evangelistic responsibility comes to each of us as individual members.

Pastor Clyde Moore presented the Family and Children’s Ministries report, noting that he and his wife Annette had recently qualified as certified Family Life educators. Included in the debate over children’s issues was the need to train people to tell children’s stories, the need to share more information, and the need for more family worship.

Clyde Moore remaining; the others had retired, relocated elsewhere or, in the case of the much-loved Mike Lagan, passed away until the joy of the Resurrection. However, the Mission also welcomed new life in the youth and talent of Pastors Jovan Adamovic and David Rancic. Several retired pastors also continue to give stalwart voluntary service.

Pastor Surridge also noted how the CHIP and Health Fair programmes had really taken off in Wales, building real bridges into the community.

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The Nominating committee report consisted of a discussion about the continuing work of the Nominating committee.

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Wonderful Christian Stars!
When the weather is cold and it gets dark early, we begin to plan to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
You may have a baby in your family. You would have been excited to see the baby for the first time and enjoyed the special meal after the baby’s dedication service. The baby would have been at the centre of everything your family would do – like shopping for clothes, feeding in the day and night, and making sure the baby would always be safe. There is a big difference between your baby and baby Jesus. Jesus is God as well as human. He came as a baby to understand what it is like to be like you. This meant Jesus would know the best way to rescue you from Satan’s wicked plan. This is why we sing praise songs and carols at this time of the year. You could write a carol about how special Jesus is to you or draw a praise picture. Put your name at the top of the paper and draw a picture of yourself. Draw a big circle in the centre and write the name Jesus. On your hands, feet, hair, mouth and so on, write a sentence to praise God. Every day of the year Jesus can become the centre of your praise.

Wordmaker:
How many words can you make from the letters in this Christmas message from Luke 2:14? Start with one-letter words, then two-letter words and so on. What is the longest word you can make?
GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

Jesus in the manger
Make a Christmas card sharing the news of the Saviour’s birth.

You will need:
A sheet of card folded in half, one star shape, one large brown paper rectangle and two small brown paper rectangles to make the crib, one large semicircle for the baby’s body and a smaller semicircle for the baby’s head, and lots of yellow paper strips for the straw.

How to make it:
Glue the large brown rectangle half-way down the card. Glue the two small rectangles below it to make the crib legs. Glue the yellow strips at the top of the crib; you can bend some over to give it a 3D effect. Then glue the semicircles on the straw to make it look like a baby lying in the crib. You can draw hair, eyes and a nose and mouth on the small semicircle. Glue the star in the top corner of the card. Write a special message or Bible verse inside the card. Give the card to a neighbour in your street who seems lonely.

Help the wise men to find Jesus in the stable

Find the special memory text on the Christmas tree.

Shine brightly Christian stars! Just as the star led the wise men and shepherds to Jesus, may your light lead your friends to Jesus too. The Good News is that Jesus came for all!

Feedback from children who visit Christian Stars Children’s pages – or from their parents – is welcome. The address is www.adventistinfo.org.uk/departments/childrensministries.php.

Heather Haworth, Children’s Ministries director, BUC

Anne Pilmoor & Heather Haworth
Lea Valley: Thirteen baptised in ‘Encounter With Jesus’ revival

A service was held and led by Pastor Matthew Bediako of the GHAGA Church, Lea Valley, on Saturday, 30 October. Pastor Bediako declared that while the emphasis of the service was on baptising, he urged members of the congregation to turn away from sin and seek God’s forgiveness. He further encouraged people to join the church and find true joy in their lives.

SEC Drilling and Drumming Day

The SEC Drilling and Drumming Day held on Saturday, 30 October, was a wet but fresh autumnal day when the Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs gathered at the Lea Valley Ghana church. Among the drills, the instructors separated the young people into groups according to their drilling ability: Beginners and Advanced. The young people rehearsed their manoeuvres, guided by the commanding tones of their drummers to facilitate learning.

Winter night shelter

The service was attended by the visiting dignitaries and the Pathfinders club, including the 1475 Air Squadron Band, who practiced their pieces. In a true spirit of camaraderie, the clubs who owned the shelter were invited to participate in the service. The service started with a devotion and it was a wet but fresh autumnal day when the Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs gathered at the Lea Valley Ghana church. Among the drills, the instructors separated the young people into groups according to their drilling ability: Beginners and Advanced. The young people rehearsed their manoeuvres, guided by the commanding tones of their drummers to facilitate learning.

Lewisham: an act of remembrance

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Lewisham Pathfinders: too many to mention individually

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How God answers prayers in Dublin

by Gavin Anthony, Dublin pastor

Two years ago, there were a group of approximately 200 people in the church. A few more had left the church, and we had lost some young people through marriage. Our attendance had dropped lately, and we were wondering if we would have any growth. Now, after two years of prayer and work, we have more than doubled our numbers, and many more people have come to know Jesus. The church building is full, and everyone is very happy at the church. Everything seems to be going well.

One week later at our local church, a lovely floral bouquet was present-ed to the pastor and his wife, to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. They had been married for 50 years, and we were privileged to celebrate with them. The church building continued to bulge at the seams. While so many people have been a wonderful blessing, such overcrowding has meant that it is very difficult to invite visitors. I have often prayed for many years without apparent answers, but God often seems to answer when we are least expecting it. It is a wonderful feeling to be able to see the church grow and develop.

This is a beautiful example of how God can work miracles through prayer and faith. We should never lose hope, no matter how difficult the situation may seem. God is always there to help us, and we should never be afraid to ask for His help. Amen.
**Woodford Green church: organised and revived**

_by O. P. Chackocheon_

The Woodford Green church was born out of the vision of Pastor Isaac Williams for establishing new churches. Born as a church plant of the Leytonstone church, the first Sabbath worship of the church was on 12th August 2000 at Eridge Hall. Pastor Isaac Williams and his wife Lois, Raymond Marius and his wife Charlene, David Shepherd, Janet Small and Emra Bellot were present at that inaugural meeting. On 29th November 2002 the group was organised into a company under the leadership of Pastor O. P. Chackocheon. Several have been baptised and added to the church since then.

From 9th to 23rd October, Pastor Maywald Leadbeater, the ministerial director of the Middle Eastern department, conducted a series of revival meetings by powerfully and rightly dividing the word of God. People were challenged and blessed.

On 6th November, Monica Dowden, Brian McFarlane and Khama Moyo were ordained elders of the church by Pastor O. P. Chackocheon. Members less than a year later, the company was organised into a church with thirty members under the leadership of Pastor O. P. Chackocheon. Several have been baptised and added to the church since then.

**Baptism in Huddersfield**

The Huddersfield church was packed with family and friends to witness the baptism of Joshua Robinson and Angel Adjenghure on the afternoon of Sabbath 2nd October. Pastor Eric Lowe, the BUC executive secretary, preached in the morning and Pastor Richard Jackson spelt the baptism.

The first candidate was Angel Adjenghure. Her family moved into Huddersfield, early in 2005. The family had arrived in the UK from Nigeria a few years ago and her father Bernard pursued a degree in Law at Leeds University. Since then move to Huddersfield God’s will has become clear, as they have been a great blessing to the church in Wakefield. Bernard prays and teaches, and his wife Mabel is the children’s Sabbath School leader. Angel, a school pupil, has already let her light shine by inviting friends from school to church.

The second candidate was Joshua Robinson. He came to the UK with his brother Joel and sister Jamave, regularly attends the Abingdon Youth camps. After returning from the camp this summer, Joshua had made his decision to become a Christian. Joshua is the son of Elder Courtney and Sister Mavelay Robinson. Many family members were present for his baptism, including his uncle Wayne Robinson, who had flown in from Jamaica. Joshua was baptised at the Woodford Green church. The candidates were immersed by the local minister, Pastor Barry Stokes. The platform party and elders from Wakefield and Huddersfield welcomed Angel and Joshua into membership of their churches.

**Girls with a mission**

Just one year ago, 14-year-olds Jennie Logan and Amber Fairlie of the Crieff church were given a challenge. Would they like to raise £100 each and take a trip to Romania? They jumped at the challenge! Their summer holidays from school were going to be too busy with the Pathfinder camporee in Fife and other activities, so the adventure to Romania was scheduled for October 2010. The aim was to spend the £200 in Romania on equipment for two very poor village schools. Parents agreed to pay travelling expenses.

In the meantime the girls raised their £200, and, in addition, helped first with a two-week charity shop in Crieff, and then with a one-day collection at the local supermarket. Family and friends donated money during the year, their school second-hand money for them, and some great-great-great-auntie Ruth Farrer, who challenged them in the first place, raised the bank account she keeps for charity purposes. All told, £8,500 was scraped together for this big adventure with God. Did they need so much money to just buy some school equipment?

As it happens, yes, they did. Just before the girls (now 15 years old) left Britain on 12th October with the intention of buying some new windows and doors, as well as teaching aids, they were told that the local mayor had a huge money and planned to do the major renovation work on the school building. The girls were asked if they could pay for windows, doors and plastering materials. We could not promise anything, because we did not know how much money our fundraising would bring in until the very last minute before departure. However, almost enough money was raised to pay for plastering, new windows, new doors, a new ceiling and floor, and electrical work in the tiny village school in Chesau. A total of £2,000 was given towards this work and, although the mayor would have liked more money from us, he did not get it! We had promised to buy some equipment and we were going to keep that promise. In actual fact, though, because the renovation work was not completed in time, we could not buy all we wanted – but the money is being kept in hand until the school has settled down again and their need has been reassessed. Another project for next summer?

Two delighted teachers, one from Chesau and the other (an Adventist) from the village of Campania, also received art-and-craft materials, and again Amber and Jennie taught by Ruth Farrer.

**Leicester West: Shoebox appeal**

The Leicester West congregation has a membership of 23 but, faced with a challenge, they can always be counted on. Once again Wendy Snow came out of retirement to give of her time to the Shoebox appeal. Through weekly encouragement we gathered the largest number of boxes ever this year. It is our prayer that the children of the recipient families will be blessed.
What else is there?
Katie Ramharack Singh
Media and PR officer, Newbold College

Newbold Church and College’s Festival of Faith concluded with the baptism of three young people on Sabbath 13 November. Alexandra Horvath, Peter Liebhardt and Lila Simon each chose to be baptised at the culmination of the week of prayer which speaker Japhet De Oliveira titled ‘Jesus. All. What Else Is There?’

Peter Liebhardt shared his testimony about how he had worked so actively in the Church that he felt he was losing his connection with God. After being approached by Pastor Kirsten Øster Lundqvist, he started Bible studies and found he was able to rediscover God in his life. Many similar responses were given by those who had either watched online or attended the programmes at the Newbold church; several people came during the week for Bible studies, and many more discovered a new commitment to service.

The Festival of Faith succeeded in reaching out to hundreds through the help of around forty-five volunteers. Throughout the week, there were around 6,500 visits to the Newbold Media website, with an average of 100 viewers online each day of the week. The power of advertising on Facebook was highlighted by the fact that 75% of online viewers were directed to the website from Facebook links and adverts posted by the team and supporters of the programme.

Those contributing throughout the week included the media team, worship leaders, and musicians. Vili Costescu, a member of the Newbold church and a student of the college, had decided to stream the services live to spread the message even further than the church seats. He was able to gather equipment and help to implement this effective method of reaching people outside Newbold’s doors. At the week’s high point, forty-seven people were involved in the online chat, all of whom were discussing the programme and topics. Involving viewers in a live chat was one of the new elements introduced in this year’s Festival of Faith: the aim was for the online viewers to play an active part in the programme, and, as we had people joining us and commenting from every continent, we can say that this is something we will be using again! In fact, the Newbold Church has decided to use this from 7pm to 8pm on 4 December at its monthly Moor Close talks, when Pastor Patrick Johnson will answer the question, ‘Why Is Jesus the Only Way?’

Pastor Kirsten Øster Lundqvist explained the importance of connecting with those that live outside the campus: ‘Some of the students that live further away aren’t always able to stay involved with these programmes, but, because of the technology involved in this year’s Festival of Faith, we were able to reach even larger numbers than the eighty-one that came to the church service.’ Japhet De Oliveira, who is the director of the Centre for Youth Evangelism and the chaplain for Missions at Andrews University, left listeners inspired and refreshed, ready to be followers of Jesus.

The week’s videos are still online at www.newboldmedia.org (flash player 10 or higher required).

Andreas Lamberth: Eco Hero

Andreas Lamberth, the manager of the grounds for Newbold College, was given the Eco Hero Award at Bracknell Pride Ceremony on Thursday 4 November. He won this award because of the way he blends the line between inside and outside classroom activity for his students. Newbold College believes that he truly deserves the Pride of Bracknell Eco Hero Award because he is able to teach conscientiousness in work and pride in presentation through his enthusiasm and vision. Although Newbold College confers degrees up to doctorate level, Andreas’ efforts as the manager of the grounds inspire the highest ‘degree’ of work ethic. The college has Level II Historic Moor Close gardens which Andreas constantly studies to maintain their historical context. Both public visitors and Newbold College members are able to appreciate the work that is carried out and taught by Andreas. The appearance he gives to nearly 90 acres of college property has become well known across Bracknell and beyond. During his five years of service, we believe that this tall Swede has become a figure that could rival any found in the classroom!