I should have noticed. The young woman was wearing jeans and a black winter jacket. It was only after I left the village of Risbang, in the western hill area of Nepal, that I realised she was different.

Just moments earlier I had heard her tell her story on camera while we were filming a project report. Reflecting on the interview, I suddenly began to comprehend the complexity of her life. In this rural part of Nepal, women normally wear traditional dress and enter into a traditional, arranged marriage at a young age. Nabina was not like any of the others, for she wore modern dress and was unmarried.

There is more to tell about her; but first, some important background. This is, without any doubt, the most stunning location of any ADRA project I have visited. From east to west, Nepal comprises three distinct geographical areas: the plains, the hills and the mountains, spanning a width of just 192 kilometres, but stretching the full length of the country. ADRA-UK is involved with a project that is operational in four districts in the hilly area of Nepal, a region that has, until now, escaped tourist attention. Rolpa is the most remote district in which this special project functions. The project is co-financed by the European Commission and ADRA-UK, and it works towards the social inclusion of children affected by the armed conflict that plagued this beautiful country from 1996 to 2006.

Risbang is a further ninety-minute climb on foot after one reaches the end of the road. From here to the Himalaya mountain range no cars can travel. In fact, the paved road ends some 50 miles back, giving over to gravel tracks that pass dangerously along the slopes of the hills, with steep inclines and hairpin curves. We had crawled along these tracks to this point in a hired four-by-four.

With picture-perfect traditional homes scattered around the stunningly terraced hills, and a very hospitable and friendly population, it is easy to forget that this region is still recovering from the effects of the recent armed conflict. Most people here found themselves caught between the Maoist revolutionaries and the Nepali armed forces. And, as so often happens, it was the children that were affected the most by these events.

Nabina is now 22 and single, and, according to her own words, 'lives every day without any happiness'. During the conflict years her mother died during childbirth when she was just 10 years old. At age 14 she was forced to work for two years as a sentry guard for the Maoist revolutionaries, and was thus caught up in the armed conflict that raged around her. The trauma of her experience during this armed service, where girls were often sexually exploited, has haunted her ever since. She could not manage to stay in school and has since dropped out to herd her family’s cows. She is not married and it seems that her past continues to affect her future.

Fortunately Nabina has just joined the ADRA literacy education training programme, and hopes to benefit from the vocational training that is offered as part of this integrated project and become a seamstress. But it is the psychological counselling, a key component of this project, that will probably benefit her the most. In hearing her story, as she reluctantly opened herself up to the video camera, it became clear that what she needs most is an opportunity to process the problems of her youth. If she can deal with the demons of her past, then she can finally focus on her future in a positive way.

Nabina is typical of thousands of young adults who have suffered from the effects of the civil conflict that has torn apart families and communities in this remote area of Nepal. The work of ADRA and its partners in this region is making a difference. For with this special project they are making it possible for thousands of youth to begin a new life as their self-confidence is restored. The provision of life-skills education, psychological support, and literacy and vocational training may just be the opportunity these youth are waiting for.

Your help with the Annual Appeal this year will benefit 4,000 youth like Nabina through this project. Thank you for showing them you care.
Pettifogging

While looking for a word to describe a certain approach to life that is to be the subject of this editorial, I came across a word that we seldom use – ‘pettifogger’ (noun). The term was used to describe a form of disputatious lawyer, but the broader usage is the one that suits my need today: ‘one who quibbles over trivia’ (www.Answers.com), or who likes to raise ‘annoying petty objections’ (www.Glossary.com).

The pettifogger is a specific type of critic, but not the kind who draws your attention to really big and important issues like declining positive perspectives like these will make us aware of real issues that need to be addressed. Furthermore, their powers of observation often go beyond the problem, to the provision of solutions. The pettifogger, by contrast, is the type of critic who appears to have no grasp of just how petty the issues are that he quibbles about. He majors in minors.

Two ‘pettifoggers’ I have known

The first of these characters was a short and dapper little man, who was well into his retirement when I became his pastor. I liked him, but he managed to upset most of the congregation by his insistence that women should wear hats to church! He had a booklet on the subject, which he circulated among the members with evangelistic fervour.

So they began to celebrate ‘Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – think about such things’ (Philippians 4:8, NIV). People with positive perspectives like these will not quibble over trivia. Unfortunately, the converse is also true!

More often, though, it is about misunderstandings. Paul had his finger on this one when he wrote: ‘Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – think about such things’ (Philippians 4:8, NIV).

The appropriate response to that grace had just begun. ‘So they began to celebrate “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – think about such things” (Philippians 4:8, NIV). People with positive perspectives like these will not quibble over trivia. Unfortunately, the converse is also true!

Jesus knew them too

Christ was exposed to pettifogging in his day. The Jewish leaders were the prime example of this. They hounded him daily with this form of criticism – even on the Sabbath. Do you remember how they questioned his right to forgive sins (Mark 2:1-12); ‘to pick some heads of grain’ on Sabbath (Mark 2:23-27, NIV); and to eat a meal without performing the ritual washing first (Luke 11:37-54)?

Even the masses that flocked around him, benefiting from his resurrecting, healing and ministry, forget how they questioned his right to forgive sins (Mark 2:1-12); ‘to pick some heads of grain’ on Sabbath (Mark 2:23-27, NIV); and to eat a meal without performing the ritual washing first (Luke 11:37-54).

What is the cause?

The obvious answer is ‘sin’, but that is a generalisation and of little help. So let me be more specific:

Sometimes this pettifogging is purely about personal inadequacy. We struggle to accept the success of others; their achievements make us feel inadequate, and our nitpicking criticism seems to be the only weapon left to tarnish their successes. For if they are seen to fail, then our misery has company, and in some perverse way we feel less inadequate or threatened by them!

At other times pettifogging seems to be the result of poor perspective. Paul had his finger on this one when he wrote: ‘Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – think about such things’ (Philippians 4:8, NIV). People with positive perspectives like these will not quibble over trivia. Unfortunately, the converse is also true!

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UK: Adventists convert to Islam? Why?

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By now you must be asking: How come the Adventist movement converts to Islam didn't find such identity as an Adventist? Why didn’t it take this popular identity of a new Muslim identity in the first place? Such a move was pronounced who were so still doing it today, particularly in places like the Almandhali. So when the young Adventist is challenged by a Muslim concerning his faith, and he begins to defend Christianity, he may find himself unable to do so successfully, he will point out the failures and inconsistences of historic, mainstream Christianity. He will expose it to the harshness and brutality with which it has opposed each other; the unconditional support that state churches have given to cruel and unconstitutional governments; and the manner in which conquered and colonised peoples have suffered in the name of Christ!

Inadequate identity

The question we must now ask is: What is the problem with his previous identity; that he wanted, or needed, to discover a new one? Those who have a mission to carry meaning in life, and a new and valued system that is not only spiritual and moral, but also interwoven with the culture of hospitality and care.

Adventists convert to Islam

Islam is not a religion that is far away from us anymore – it is a very much a part of European society. In fact, during the past few years we have had reports of some Adventist young people in the UK who have found a spiritual home in Islam. A few weeks ago, I was phoned by an Adventist who was concerned about his brother who has

related identities

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One Adventist church alone, three Adventist youth have become Muslims in the last couple of years!

One identity

So we can see that Islam is not only an attraction for Westerners generally, including Christians, but for Adventists as well. But why would Adventist youth find Islam attractive? I believe the answer is two-fold: a) those that find it attractive do so because their Christian framework no longer provides them with meaning in life; and b) their newfound identity seems to provide meaning in life, and a new and valued system that is not only spiritual and moral, but also interwoven with the culture of hospitality and care.

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It may not be widely known in all congregations, but The Stanborough Press Ltd holds regular book sales at churches all over the British Isles. According to Paul Poddar, Book department manager, his dedicated teams took a wide selection of books, Bibles, games, DVDs, and health foods to forty-six such sales during 2010. They took these products to almost every point of the compass, with sales being held in such places as Crieff, Southampton, Ipswich, and Dublin.

Intrigued by all this activity, the Messenger editor and his wife, Elize, decided to join one of these teams on their 30 January sale at the John Loughborough school in London, and this is what they found …

An early start
Under normal circumstances the team leaves our Grantham premises at around 5.30am on a Sunday morning in order to reach the sale location by 8am. (Visits to Ireland and Scotland usually start on a Thursday or Friday because of the extra distances and ferry crossings involved. On these trips they also try to serve more than one church: one on Thursday, one on Saturday night and another one on Sunday morning.)

A smart system
Upon arrival at the location, which is usually a church or school hall, the team speedily unpack their palletised load, then open each pallet in a specific, predetermined order [photo 1]; first the collapsible display stands, which are placed in rows [photo 2] ready for the product trays [photo 3], which are all pre-priced and grouped according to categories [photo 4]; then the tables, till and baskets [photo 5].

All the product prices are already programmed into the tills, making it easy to scan each item in the customer’s basket and get the right total each time! But what really ‘blew my mind’ was the fact that these ‘intelligent’ tills are able to provide the Book department with a post-sale report that actually analyses the day’s sale. For instance, for the sale that day we were able to extract the following interesting information:

- There were 227 transactions – and probably as many customers – who averaged 7.48 items each.
- The sales were split between books (1,251 items at £4.69s. 84.2f) and food (448 items at £800. 15.8s).
- The key sales categories were: forty-one Bibles (£705); thirty-eight hymnals (£298), 177 children’s books (£221.4), 149 Sabbath School study guides (£738) and 239 Spirit of Prophecy titles (£507).

Encouraging trends
These figures indicate that the members who attend such sales spend the bulk of their money on literature, not food. They also show that a large proportion of that spend goes to items that directly nurture spirituality, such as Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books and Sabbath School study guides.

My personal observations, gained as I moved among the shoppers that Sunday, gave me a strong impression that many of our members intentionally equip themselves with literature for witnessing. For example, a number of them approached me with questions and comments like these:
- ‘What kind of Bible can I recommend for my friend – she doesn’t know anything about Christianity?’
- ‘Do you have more of these cheaper Steps to Christ? I give them out at work.’
- ‘What book can you suggest for someone who believes in evolution?’

This type of response from our members makes the early morning rise, boring motorway miles and pallet packing and unpacking worthwhile for the team.

Interesting people
A book sale would be a non-event without its shoppers – those interesting people who come in to browse, chat and buy. This is probably the part of the event that I enjoyed the most – meeting the members!

I met a mother who brought her young daughter with her, allowing the child to roam her way through the children’s material – touching books that she was too young to read, holding a Bible that might one day be hers, and eventually going proudly home with a colouring book or a Bible puzzle in her own plastic bag. I think that Jesus was proud too – if a mother who knows that children also need good books to nurture their spiritual growth [photo 6].

Then there was that young woman who arrived at the till weighed down with packets of dried vegetable protein. ‘What are you doing with all of that food?’ I asked. ‘Taking it to Jamaica!’ she replied, with by far the broadest smile I had seen the whole chilly day [photo 7]!

These shoppers turned the sale into a fellowship as they rekindled old acquaintances, caught up on the latest bits of inter-congregational ‘did-you-know’, and shared their testimonies with each other.

One of the highlights of my day was meeting one of our London members who had recently been introduced to preaching. She was taking this call to the pulpit ministry very seriously – so seriously that she had come in to buy her own set of the SD Bible Commentary [photo 8]!

They try to help
These book sale teams are not able to bring along every book that The Stanborough Press Ltd has in stock – that would be a tall order! They are, however, willing to bring specific stock items that you might need, as long as you give them advance warning.

Unfortunately, there is one item that they have not yet been able to source, and for which there is a definite demand – an item that would be a top seller, especially among our older members: the large-print pocket Bible! They have promised to keep looking though!

Why do they do it?
Paul Poddar and his teams are out there week after week, taking the products to the people. Why? Why do they get up early, drive those distances, unload, unpack, repack and reload up to two metric tonnes of literature on a Sunday? Stuart Sly gives us the reason: ‘Why do we volunteer? Because it is more than a job – it’s our mission to spread the Gospel through Christian literature … to meet our members’ literature needs. That provides a lot of satisfaction at the end of a long day!’

It was a long day
It was a long day, but worth it over and over again . . . if just one of those forty-one Bibles leads a soul to Christ, or one of those 177 children’s books keeps one of our lambs in the fold!

So you would like a book sale too?
If you would like to find out whether a book sale can be held at or near your church, please contact Stuart Sly at ssl@stanboroughpress.co.uk for more details. He has also given us the following guidelines to consider in this regard:

1. You need an official invitation from your church board.
2. You need a location at ground level, with adjacent parking, which is suitable for us to wheel our pallets in on trolley jacks. (Even if you think your facilities are unsuitable, please contact us so we can discuss alternatives.)
3. You need to consider if there is a suitable level of support from the participating congregations. Although our book sales are a service to the BUC we still need to cover our basic costs (fuel, and so on) so we can make profits.
4. If you are interested in particular types of literature, please notify us well ahead of the sale and we will do what we can to meet your needs.
5. You don’t have to wait for a book sale before you buy one of our books – why not place your order with us by phoning us on 01472 540890, or email abcbooks@stanboroughpress.com?

Our sales department is open from Monday to Thursday from 8am to 12.30pm and 1.15pm to 5.30pm.

P.S. Want to know when the next book sale is being held in your area? Send Stuart Sly your email details (ssl@stanboroughpress.co.uk) and he will ensure you are kept up to date on the busy book sale programme. Details of the coming month’s book sales can also be found on the back of every issue of Messenger.
Hello Christian Stars!

We all like receiving a present. Did you know, Jesus promised that after he went back to Heaven he would send us a special gift? Find out what it is called by looking at the letters in the gift box. You can read about this promise in John 14:26.

Jesus knows we need the third Member of the God family because we naturally do wrong things. When we want to be like Jesus, and do what is good, then all we have to do is pray. Jesus keeps his promises. He will send us the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

One of the difficult truths we learn in the Bible is that one God exists as three People: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each One is fully God, but they are not three gods. Someone once used the illustration of an egg to help me understand it... The shell alone is not an egg, nor does the white or yolk alone make an egg. It takes all three parts to make an egg. In that same way, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit together are one God.

Crack the code:

Crack the code:  

Symbols of the Holy Spirit:

When we read the Bible, we find different descriptions that help us to recognise the characteristics of the Holy Spirit.

Look up the texts and draw a line to match the symbol to the text. Think about why the symbol was used and what it means.

Wordsearch

Find the words in the grid. When you are done, the unused letters in the grid will spell out a hidden message. Pick them out from left to right, top line to bottom line. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions.

Sixty-second puzzle:

Add 'er' to the following four words to find out some of the roles of the Holy Spirit:

Now design a stained-glass window depicting these roles.

Feedback from children who visit Christian Stars Children’s pages – or from their parents – is welcome. The email address is children@adventist.org.uk.

Heather Haworth, Children’s Ministries director, BUC
initiative inbox

‘Every church – a community health centre; every church member – a medical missionary!’ by Neil Blest, BUC Volunteer Health Expo co-ordinator, lifestyle consultant

The title of this article is the theme chosen by the Health Ministries department of the General Conference for the 2010-2015 quinquennium. It echoes a call made many years earlier – ‘We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work.’

If achieved, this would undoubtedly aid in meeting one of the greatest challenges of western medicine: to educate and motivate people to live a healthier lifestyle. For far more significant is that it would be meeting one of the greatest needs of modern civilisation, and one of the greatest longings of our Lord and Saviour – ‘the manifestation of Himself in His church.’

For this to be realised here in the UK, a strategy for training practical Gospel medical missionaries is necessary. To this end the BUC Health Ministries department has elected to form an Institute of Wellness. This organisation will help to foster the expansion of health evangelism throughout the BUC by training medical missionaries here in the UK. This will be the first BUC-derived institute of its kind in the UK, and will specialise in taking health education to the community. Training provided by the Wellness Institute will prepare lay and professional volunteers to communicate the essential message of wellness to their neighbours through the employment of a range of exciting face-to-face health improvement programs (wellness events). Wellness events will provide a wonderful opportunity to help break down prejudice and enrich the public image of the Church.

All those who hold the eight fundamental health principles articulated in the Wellness Acronym, and who will serve to motivate individuals to adopt a healthier lifestyle. The Wellness Acronym communicates the practical side of health improvement as follows: Water, Exercise, Lifestyle, Love, Nutrition, Environment, Sunshine and Sleep.

Isaiah’s description of the ‘true fast’ challenges us to consider the practical nature of true religion. ‘Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the naked cloth to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?’ This passage reminds me of the Good Samaritan, and even our Saviour, of whom we read: ‘As He relieved their sufferings, the truth He taught was associated with His acts of mercy, and were thus invoked in the memory.’

We have been supplied with the records of Christ’s methods which ‘alone will give true success in reaching the people’ and ultimately cause our light to ‘break forth as the morning.’ ‘The church’s reparers of the breach’ are none other than end-Time Sabbath reformers who appear to be connected with an emergent ‘social vision’ equipped with the most practical side of the religious life and prepared to minister in Christ’s steps. Let us equip ourselves with men as he did, with a manifest desire to see their good, show his sympathy for them, minister to their needs, win their confidence and then bid them follow Him.

The Wellness Institute initiatives will debut at the upcoming International Wellness Summit this summer, at the Staverton Park Hotel in Northamptonshire, 21-26 June. For further information regarding the Wellness Institute, please contact me at neil@wellness-events.com; 07810470402; or Sharon Platt-McDonald, BUC Health Ministries director, at splattmcdonald@adventist.org.uk; 01923 672251.


Sandra Ayres, Yarrow Church

I’m so very grateful to the lady who walked me home

Dear Editor

Recently my mother told me about a letter in our local newspaper, The Star. She asked me if I referred to my friend at church, Velvet. I read: ‘So on Saturday, 18 December, and I couldn’t get a cab. Despite the terrible snowfall, a very kind lady offered to walk all the way home with me. She insisted on seeing me home. We chatted on the way but I know of the trip to Framingham Heart Study. And that she lives near the old swimming pool. I told her that I would be OK, but she insisted on seeing me home. It was a long walk and the weather was very bad, and I am so grateful to her for her kindness.’

Mick Smart

news

Visionary leadership

A Church headquarters must be more than a building. It is a place where visions are formed and dreams can become a reality. That was certainly the case on Wednesday 16 February, when two intensive seminars on ‘Becoming a Visionary Leader’ were held at the BUC in Salford. Ministers from far as away as North Wales travelled to the very heart of the denominational organisation, the morning session, where Danilo Coppi shared his experience in running an international business and his involvement in the ‘canteen church’ in Copenhagen. His seminar was repeated in the evening for local church elders and has been made available online.

This was a very practical presentation, drawing on his real experiences in a changing church situation. ‘It’s very easy to remain in the clouds when talking about visionary leadership,’ stated Wimbledor pastor, Sam Henning. ‘But I do have enough to ask the difficult questions.’ Sam may be reviewing the online version again as he says, it will take a couple of weeks to digest the workshop and integrate some of it into my ministry.’

Pastor Richard Jackson from the West Midlands felt that the initiative was so important for his ministry that he intends to attend every subcommittee seminar. ‘Every minister and elder needs to hear this, he stated.

Dando emphasised the fact that there is pain in change. Using the apostle Paul as an example, he showed how leaders have to be prepared for adversity. Victor Hulbert, the BUC health director, said that he was ‘particularly impressed with the biblical framework for visionary leadership, the more so with its application by lay people ministering with passion and skill at the heart of one of Europe’s most secular cities.’

‘Becoming a Visionary Leader’ is just the first of a series of monthly seminars and workshops planned for this year. ‘We want this new Union office to be about more than vision, not just the big picture. ADRA president, Pastor Don McFarlane told attendees at the leadership seminars arose from a desire among directors and the administration to help facilitate training particularly for local pastors and elders.’

The seminar was organised by the BUC Ministerial Resources and pictures from the week’s seminar are available on the BUC website at: http://www.adventistpictures.org.uk/gallery/2011/visionaryleader/index.php

Many Adventists?

The cryptic title, ‘Many Adventists?’ caused about sixty people to leave the comfort of their armchairs on Tuesday evening, 15 March for Newbould’s first Diversity Lecture of 2011. Dr David Trimm, a founder member of Newbould’s Diversity planning team and a former student and teacher at the college, is a keen student of Adventist history. From the outset of his lecture he stressed the importance of discussing the question of diversity and unity in a Seventh-day Adventist context is not new. From their earliest days, Adventists have always argued vigorously. Currently, different members are discussing matters like inspiration, sexuality, creation and ordination – issues that have a significant capacity to divide us.

The early part of the lecture was devoted to a discussion of the biblical model of unity. Dr Trimm asserted the importance of unity, described in the prayer of Christ and exemplified in the tiny Church; unity that was crucial to its growth. He moved on to describe the way that Adventists, led by Ellen White, ‘deliberately rejected an authoritarian, hierarchical structure of organisation and governance. Instead, they adopted a flexible structure that devised much responsibility and authority to local and regional levels.’ All this was an expression of their commitment ‘to avoid Babylon.

Traditionally, Dr Trimm’s historical journey brought him to the present day. He suggested that the terms ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’ are no longer very useful, that we should always cordially agree to disagree.

Dr Trimm concluded by suggesting that there are far too many people keen to assume the prophetic mantle and tell their brothers and sisters that they are wrong. Instead he urged the importance of unity among Adventists and the need to engage in positive dialogue, bearing and forbearing as we continue to search together for present truth.

Helen Pearson

All letters published in Messenger reflect the opinions of our readers, and not necessarily those of either the editorial staff or the BUC.

The editor feels that this response from Pastor Sam Davis needs prominent exposure as an encouragement to all our members, in the letter he mentions a number of exciting initiatives that we undertake to investigate and feature in Messenger.

Dear Editor

I write in response to Alan Kissack’s recent letter [4 February]. Much of what he says is true. His ‘guarantees’ of achievement are members in the British Isles out of a membership of 30,000 is probably accurate – you can see the full list on the website.) For the last quarter Casana then received a cheque of £39 for ADRA, and there is already another £57 for the current quarter. Larger churches would see even greater returns, and ADRA would receive thousands of pounds in the process.

Why not collect from your workplace, local schools and offices, and send them to recycle4charity.co.uk.

C. P. SANTOS

Support ADRA for free!

Dear Editor

Many companies recycle old ink-jet cartridges and phones, but not many recycle laser toner car-...
Irish face future in difficult times

Irish Mission Communication department

The Irish Mission is having to face up to the reality of a growing Church in a time of limited resources: with a £65,000 financial deficit! The Mission executive committee met on Sunday, 23 January to address the problem. The executive committee had based the employment of pastors on an ever-increasing the return and the need to provide pastoral care for a growing number of worshipers. ‘The crash came and like the rest of the world we’ve had to make adjustments’, said Irish Mission president, Pastor David Neal. ‘Members in both Ireland and Northern Ireland have lost jobs and faced pay cuts, and some have migrated.’ This has had a real effect on time returns, but ‘our members are a faithful people who are committed to the work of the Church.

With a projected tithe return for 2011 of £522,000, a balanced budget was presented. The Irish Mission expects to benefit from the implementation of Tax Revenue Relief for all monies contributed in the Republic of Ireland. However, adjustment in the North was achieved by currency depreciation, while in the South the only possibility for a tied currency was a salary adjustment.

Another hard decision for the committee was the closure of Grianach House School in Galway. Despite a dedicated and committed teaching staff, and small class sizes that led to greater individual attention and tutoring of students, the school was only viable due to substantial sponsorship by the Emerald Health and Education Foundation of Loma Linda, California, USA. The school is currently running, with a deficit of £22,000, and the hard decision has now had to be taken to close the school at the end of the academic year.

On the more positive side, from mid-February every member in the Irish Mission will receive a copy of Mark Finley’s book, Revive Us Again, as a tool to help raise the spiritual temperature of each member. Between mid-February and Easter, pastors in the Irish Mission will share and study the themes of Finley’s book in the pulpit, in prayer meetings and in small groups.

The Mission has also begun its two-year leadership training course for Irish Mission elders, using the Elder’s Handbook as their text. David Neal concluded, ‘I am convinced that our churches will be able to go forward with skilled, gifted and committed elders.’

Helping the homeless

For twenty-five years London’s homeless have looked forward to a Friday evening meal, courtesy of the Stanborough Park church volunteers. The ‘Soup Run’ started in December 1985 as the church’s Youth committee, then under the leadership of Pat Walton, started to involve young people in practical Christianity, rather than just attending church and taking part in discussions. Helping the homeless seemed an obvious option.

Youth Pastor Jonathan Barrett started by contacting the Salvation Army and investigated their hostels and ‘Soup Runs’. He concluded that the latter, which would involve taking warm soup and food for the homeless, seemed possible. The first recorded trip was Friday, 13 December, 1985:

Initially the volunteers left each Friday night with soup, hot drinks and food in a borrowed van to provide help for the homeless sleeping rough around Waterloo Station and the South Bank. Over the years, however, this ministry has expanded. Pat continues to co-ordinate the project and feels blessed by the generous donations of money, time, food and clothing. The volunteers now take hot water to provide hot chocolate, tea, coffee and instant soup, squash, food, clothing, toiletries, and useful articles such as blankets and sleeping bags. Small household items are also included for the recently housed.

Rosemary Duffus, a regular volunteer for twenty years, says, ‘We treat everyone who comes to us the same, regardless of any problems they may have, and there is always a crowd waiting for the van when it gets to the stop.’

Leeds Central investiture

The Leeds Central church held its Pathfinder investiture on Sabbath 27 November 2010. Among twenty-five Adventurers and Pathfinders present, some were invested with a variety of honours.

The club has provided a guard of honour for the deputy mayor, marched around the Beeston area, raised funds for ADRA and knocked on 1,001 doors, as well as participating in School of the Prophets 10.

Sunday service? Yes please!

When Jesus told us to make disciples of all nations, did he mean only on a Sabbath morning or at every given opportunity?

On Thursday 27 January, in Middlesbrough, Pastor Colin Woodford headed for the studios of BBC Radio Tees to begin recording.

Pastor Colin had grasped the opportunity to take the ‘10-Minute Service’ for the Sunday Morning programme, and gave a wonderful sermon on the Second Coming of Christ.

Pastor Colin was also asked to give his thoughts on the ‘hot topic’ of the week, ASBOs. He went on to say that if we all followed the Ten Commandments there would be no need for ASBOs, as the first four commandments direct our relationship with the Lord, and the other six guide our relationship with other people.

This invitation gave him the chance to reach thousands of listeners in the North-East of England. Will he accept another opportunity to ‘teach all nations?’ Most certainly!

Helping the homeless

Volunteers help with the distribution of much-needed supplies to the homeless around West Heath. Below: the now very old minibus, in need of replacement, but only with your help!

New church in Clacton-on-Sea

Pastor Cecil Perry, the former BUC president, officiated at the dedication of a new Adventist church in Clacton-on-Sea at the start of this year, in a service that marked the return of Adventist worship to the town. Following Thursday night prayer meetings, a local truth-seeker, Miriam Heath, offered one of her properties (66 Wellesley Road) as a venue in which the group could meet – an answer to prayer for all the churches of East Anglia!

Stanborough School has NEW START

A new start for the year 2010. On Thursday 27 January, Stanborough Secondary School held a health week based on NEW START (Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, Temperature, Air, Rest, and Trust in God) principles. Pastor Nathan Stockland (the SEC Pathfinder director), Pastor Terry Messanger (the SEC Personal Ministries director), Sharon Platt-McDonald (the BUC Health and Disability Ministries director) and Pastor Eddie Hypolite (the SEC Teens/Chaplaincy director) all took part, as well as the staff. The school’s chaplain, Tome Nasvok, co-ordinated the week.

On Sunday 3 January, Pat Walton of the Stanborough Park church held a sale to raise funds for a minibus to aid the church’s weekly soup run to feed the homeless. An amazing sum of £1,300 was raised, and Richard Harrington MP attended with his wife, Jessic. Pat always welcomes donations: men’s clothes, toiletries, blankets, sleeping bags and money. If anyone feels moved to contribute towards the cost of buying and running the minibus, cheque donations should be made payable to ‘Stanborough Park Church’ and sent to Pat Walton at 5 Orchard Avenue, Watford, WD25 7JG.

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Newtown organised as a company

After the retirement of Pastor Maurice Musgrave, the BUC office was moved to the new building in Stanborough Park. In attendance were Pastor Maurice Musgrave, Annie Musgrave’s husband, two years later, and Nan was married. Four years later the young Musgrave family went as missionaries to Africa, on an adventure lasting over thirty years. The family later moved to Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, South Africa and finally to Rhodesia – today’s Zimbabwe. Nan’s two sons, Keith and Nigel, and her daughter, Jill, remained in the UK.

Tekla, Andrew and Milford

The fifteen ‘action units’ which were established by the Sabbath School Department in 2010 at the London Ghana church have proved to be a success with Sabbath School. Baring the names of Adventist pioneers as their titles, 3-year-old Andrea Asare and 6-year-old Wilfred Asare (brother and sister) recited a whole quarter’s worth of memory texts, and the inter-unit quiz helped recent convert Ms Baffour-Awuah to ‘cross over’ from the other side of the fence, and learn more about the Bible. London Ghana’s Sabbath School Department is excited about the action units’ future, and the seedling potential.

‘E-mangelisation’: going after the men

Research in the United States reveals that 93% of families follow a father into becoming Christians, while only 7% follow a mother. This was a telling statistic shared by Faith Johnson Crumblly with the members of the Leytonstone and Beckenham Hope Communities at their day of fellowship, on 15 February in the Lion Road Community Centre, Eltham Green.

Faith, who led out in the service, quoted Sid Woodruff, a men’s ministry specialist. ‘To reach men you have to enter their world.’

Winfred Wilhelmina Turner (1915 – 2009) was born in 1915, in Molden, the third child and only daughter of William and Winfred Anderson. Her middle name honoured her older sister, William, who had tragically died just a few months before her birth. Winfred’s own life hinged in the balance of her infancy. Yet she did more than just survive, and lived a hale and hearty life for many of the next ninety-five years. Young Winfred grew up in a home that was only nominally Christian. Remarkably, she had always wondered about the Sabbath. Her questions were answered when, on the dance floor, she met Allan Turner. He had been asked an Adventist and had fallen away from the Church. When he took her home to meet his mother, the first convert in Molden, Winfred was given all the insight she ever wanted into questions about Sabbath. She and Allan were married in 1944, yet neither had made any commitment to the Church. However, in 1950 Pastor Lamos Mendic held evangelistic meetings in the Molden church. From then on, until the summer of 1952 Winfred had decided to become a member. Allan was unable to get Saturday work until 1956, when the couple moved to Farmworker and Allan got a job with an Adventist businessman, Bill Wiltum, and was baptised. They attended the Gosford church.

The obituary of Annie Musgrave, who died on 28 January in 2002, was conducted by Pastor Paul Clee at the Stanborough Park church. In attendance was Pastor Maurice Musgrave, Annie Musgrave’s husband of over sixty years, their sons, Keith and Nigel, and their sister Doris, and other family, friends and local church members.

God uses Facebook to call youth to Bible study!

Youth from all over the NEC, who responded to a Facebook call to join Pastor Geoffrey Rosario and Alan Hush, along with NEC Sabbath School director Rebekah Plunkett, for a Bible study retreat at the Wolverhampton Central church over 11-12 February. During the retreat, titled ‘By Every Word’, Pastor Rosario outlined the ‘Pyramid Method’ of Bible study. Pastor Hush, the NEC Youth director, plans to hold more weekend events at churches in the future.
Make a difference team (MAD) visits India

2010 wound for Puni, India, for eighteen days of missionary work that would create lasting memories and change their perspectives on life.

Many of the volunteers had raised their own airfares in a variety of ways. The final destination of the MAD group was the Roger English School near Puni. Five hours by road from Mumbai.

The group divided its stays up among a variety of projects at the school and the surrounding slums.

At the school, a considerable effort was made to set up a functional IT department, but there was also spiritual work, a prayer ministry and a strong health and medical outreach.

...and change their perspectives on life.