Silent night!

Our editor reflects on a bizarre Christmas, December 1914, when the guns fell silent on the Western Front.

Having started on 28 July 1914, the Great War was just five months old when one of the strangest military events of all time took place along the twisting trench lines of those bloody battlefields.

In one of the truest acts of goodwill toward men, soldiers from both sides in the southern portion of the Ypres Salient set aside their weapons and hatred, if only temporarily, and met in No Man’s Land.

Christmas Eve

It started on Christmas Eve, on both sides, as the parcels arrived from home stuffed with festive goodies. Miniature Christmas trees began to appear along the German trenches. Candles were lit and hung from their branches.

Men began to sing along the narrow strip of No Man’s Land – just 60 or 100 yards apart. This is how one soldier saw things unfold:

They finished their carol and we thought that we ought to retaliate in some way; so we sang “The first Noël”, and when we finished . . . they all began clapping; and then they struck up another favourite of theirs, “O Tannenbaum”. And so it went on. First the Germans would sing one of their carols and then we would sing one of ours, until . . . we started up “O Come, All Ye Faithful”, and the Germans immediately joined in singing the same hymn to the Latin words “Adulce Fideles”. And I thought, well, this was really a most extraordinary thing, two nations both singing the same carol in the middle of a war!

Men began to emerge from the trenches on both sides. Cautiously at first, but with gathering confidence as “Fritz” and “Tommy” began to mingle and share their Christmas treats – “We ate their Sauerkraut and they [ate] our chocolate . . .”

Christmas Day

With their weapons and their hatred safely stored in the cold and muddy trenches, the soldiers continued their celebrations throughout Christmas Day. They ate together; joked together about life in the trenches; sang together and even posed together for photographs.

According to the diary entry of Kurt Zehmisch of the 134th Saxons:

“‘The English brought a soccer ball from the trenches, and pretty soon a lively game ensued.’ Another (British) source recorded that ‘in his sector the British played a game against the Germans opposite and were beaten 3-2!’

Sadly, this effervescence of ‘goodwill’ did not last. In the words of Captain J. C. Dunn, a medical officer in the Royal Welch Fusiliers:

‘At 8.30 I fired three shots in the air and put up a flag with “Merry Christmas” on it, and I climbed on the parapet. He [the German] put up a sheet with “Thank you” on it, and the German Captain appeared on the parapet. We both bowed and saluted and got down into our respective trenches, and he fired two shots in the air, and the war was on again.’

This Christmas

What about Christmas 2011? Are you willing to leave the ‘trenches’ of your conflict zone? Are you ready to let the spirit of goodwill, forgiveness and reconciliation loose on the ‘battlefield’ of your life?

Are you game for a ceasefire – a Christmas truce? Or, are you willing for an armistice – a full and final end to the conflict in your life?

‘How blessed are those who make peace, because it is they who will be called God’s children!’ Matthew 5:9, International Standard Version (2008).
Abstemiousness: how are you controlling it?

‘Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power – these are the true remedies.’ Ellen G. White, Ministry of Healing, page 127.

Abstemiousness is cited above as one of nature’s key remedies. Today we more frequently use the terms self-restraint or self-control instead of abstemiousness. But is there current scientific evidence that self-control can be health-enhancing?

A WebMD Health News article on 24 January 2011 carried the headline ‘Self-control in Children Brings Adult Success’. Author Brenda Goodman reviewed a thirty-two-year research study published in WebMD Health News

Where was Lara Croft?

What greeted us was a scene straight from Lara Croft: Tomb Raider. Slot-encrusted cobwebs hung heavily from every corner of the room! They transformed our simple light fitting into an ornate chandelier! They abseiled from the coving to the curtain rails! They were everywhere!

First we felt pure disbelief; then reality dawned, and we were embarrassed... for we now knew that we lived with spiders.

Now before you laugh too loudly at Messrs Hibbert and Pilmoor for keeping company with such sinister creatures, I challenge you to borrow an old paraffin heater and burn its Wick dry in your house. What will its black soot reveal about your home?

Why was I so embarrassed?

Our soddy spider webs were soon the talk of the campus, much to my embarrassment. Victor survived the event with his usual nonchalance, but it was a lot more difficult for me – for I was the Dean’s assistant!

I was a voice of authority in the residence. I was the one who did room inspections on a regular basis, I frequently told others to tidy up their rooms, wash their smelly laundry, and ‘make their mothers proud of them’!

But now the rest of the residence had dramatic proof that I was guilty of imperfect housekeeping too!

Whitewashed tombs

Jesus had something to say about that of which I was guilty. In fact, his most scathing rebukes were dished out to those in authority, who were guilty of measuring others by standards they did not adhere to themselves.

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.’ Matthew 23:27, 28, NIV.

Hypocrisy is all too often the Achilles heel of authority. I felt like a ‘whitewashed tomb’!

But now the rest of the residence had dramatic proof that I was guilty of imperfect housekeeping too!
I. The must of tribulation

Acts 14:22. ‘...we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.’ (Emphasis supplied.)

No one is exempt. Pain and sorrow mar the lives of saints and sinners, losers and winners. There is an unquestionable certainty about suffering. Matthew 18:17, says, ‘Woe unto the world because of offences!’ for it must needs come! (Emphasis supplied.)

Two facts remain: death is inevitable and death is inexorable. Matthew 26:33. No wonder John Owen petitioned his book fully Human, Fully Alive, and wrote, ‘...we must travel home, enjoy the journey. Let happiness be double in the joyful company you have and in the eager anticipation of what will be.’

Next, there is the must of participation.

II. The must of salvation

Acts 10:43. ‘...the salvation of men.’

Salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Emphasis supplied.)

Our need is great. And our need is urgent. And our need is personal. John 20:9: ‘For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.’

Despite our present worries; John 9:4: ‘I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’

When the world goes, our lives must go. James 4:14, and wrote, ‘...for we know that it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.’

The LORD does not change (Malachi 3:6) – but maybe we do. Matthew 24:40: ‘...how when they see the cloud of smoke going up out of the holy city, let them flee thence speedily.’

What will it be like? I suppose that is the real question. Perhaps the author of Hebrews 11:14, and wrote, ‘...I was conscious that my mouth was wide open. I was humbled, I was confused, I exchanged all my books for that one hymn.’

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III. The must of innovation

Acts 14:22: ‘...we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.’ (Emphasis supplied.)

Most of the Starboard Press clubbed together recently to buy me an exceptional 60th birthday present – a parachute jump. It’s something I’ve wanted to do for the past thirty-plus years. Of course, the opportunity changed to jump on 2 November.

We were in the air by 10.45, and when they opened the hatch the reality of it hit me! Pete, my instructor, made us hear the hatch, and within seconds we were, freeralling through the air 10,000 feet up for about thirty seconds; then Pete pulled the ripcord, and we drifted to earth under his guidance for about four minutes.

What was it like? I suppose I could best tie it in with the Christian life.

My question was answered: ‘What was it like?’ I suppose that is the real question. Perhaps the author of Hebrews 11:14, and wrote, ‘...I was conscious that my mouth was wide open. I was humbled, I was confused, I exchanged all my books for that one hymn.’

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The first one was the editorial, that it contained two articles that really encouraged me.

Despite our present worries; John 9:4: ‘I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’

We will need to cry for our friends at the press. Thank you for an awesome experience!!

The last word must go to my Lord. He is the ultimate assurance of God’s Presence, to which no man can add (Matthew 1:21-23; Romans 3:21-27): Jesus Christ, Immanuel – God with us.

Thank God that we, today, don’t need a Temple building of wood or stone – we have the ultimate assurance of God’s Presence, to which no man can add (Matthew 1:21-23; Romans 3:21-27): Jesus Christ, Immanuel – God with us.

Stars and Stripes, and wrote, ‘...days are filled with sorrow and care, burdens are lifted at Calvary, Jesus is very near.’

IV. The must of celebration

Acts 14:22: ‘...we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.’ (Emphasis supplied.)

This is not about me; it is all about the Lord. John 20:9: ‘For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.’

On your way to our eternal home, enjoy the journey. Let happiness be double in the joyful company you have and in the eager anticipation of what will be.

Next, there is the must of participation.

III. The must of participation

Romans 8:29. ‘For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.’

Stars and Stripes, and wrote, ‘...days are filled with sorrow and care, burdens are lifted at Calvary, Jesus is very near.’

My Lord and mine, if you will have it, then you shall have it because of my love for you.’

Thank God! We today, don’t need a Temple building of wood or stone – we have the ultimate assurance of God’s Presence, to which no man can add (Matthew 1:21-23; Romans 3:21-27):

Jesus Christ, Immanuel – God with us.

Whose idea was it for God to live with us? (Exodus 25)

What form was God’s first home with man to take? (Exodus 26)

Where does Paul say the Spirit of God lives in us? (1 Corinthians 3)

Which Old Testament prophet spoke about ‘Immanuel?’ (Isaiah 7:14)

Will we need a Temple in the New Jerusalem? (Revelation 21)
Beat the winter blues

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) or winter depression is experienced by one in fifteen people in the UK. While all well known for its time, winter depression is often associated with feelings of sadness, anxiety or worry, reduced motivation both at work and socially, a desire to sleep during the day and fatigue, and increased appetite, especially for carbohydrates. We do not fully understand why people experience winter depression, but most scientists believe it relates to lower levels of natural daylight. Some theories suggest that SAD sufferers vary in the way they release a hormone called melatonin. This hormone is produced in the evenings to help us feel sleepy and maintain sleep. It is co-ordinated by a master centre in the brain (suprachiasmatic nucleus) that produces a 24-hour circadian rhythm. Many studies suggest that SAD sufferers experience persistent exposure to very bright light during the long days of winter. A major influence on the effect of light on melatonin production is the strength of sunlight in the winter months, and there is less sunlight during the winter months. This leads researchers to look at vitamin-D deficiency in sufferers of SAD. Forty-four adults were split into three groups. Two groups were given vitamin D3 (400IU or 800IU) and the third group gave none for a period of five days during winter. Based on their own reports, groups that took vitamin D3 experienced a significant improvement in mood (Gandevia & Provost, 1998). Aside from holidaying to sunnier countries during winter, we can get vitamin D from the diet. One of the richest natural sources of vitamin D is fish. Egg yolk is another significant source. Total vegetarians can obtain vitamin D from fortified foods (for example, margarines) or supplements (guided by a nutritionist or doctor).

Deficiency in B-vitamins can be associated with depression. Vitamin B6 is needed for serotonin production. Low vitamin B6 and B12 levels are associated with a rise in inflammatory homocysteine, a chemical associated with depression and heart disease. Total vegetarians can only get B12 from fortified foods or supplementation, as it is not reliably available in plant foods (to be explained in a forthcoming article). Vitamin B12 is available in meat, fish, eggs and dairy products.

Omega-3 fatty acids are important for brain function. While no research has been carried out on the effects of omega-3 fats on SAD, much research has looked at omega 3 and depression. A large analysis of 241 articles concluded that one of the very long-chain fatty acids (eicosapentaenoic acid) was effective in treating depression (Martins, 2009). This fatty acid is available ready-to-use from fish or seaweed and it can also be made from dietary sources of flaxseed oil, flax or chia seeds, or walnuts.

For managing moods, blood sugar regulation is key. Cravings often occur when your level of blood sugar dips during the day. Eating breakfast helps to reduce cravings and regulate blood sugar. Healthy food combinations high in fibre, and low in sugar with good-quality proteins and healthy fats can help you manage your blood sugar. Combine protein and high-fibre foods for your lunch and evening meal. Good-quality protein can be found in brains and nuts, animal protein is eaten, healthier options include organic eggs, smaller wild fish or lean organic meat. High-quality fats are whole fats, such as can be found in ground nuts, avocados or organic extra virgin oils. Reduce your intake of refined carbohydrates such as white bread, pasta, cakes and biscuits, as these promote dips in blood-sugar levels resulting in cravings, lower energy and moodiness.

Exercise
Exercises have long been recommended for its anti-depressant effects. To increase its effect, exercise outdoors. Exercising outdoors in the daylight is thought to be helpful in reducing symptoms of SAD.

Light therapy
Lots of research supports the use of light therapy, which involves exposure to very bright light using a special lamp known as a light box. It is thought to be effective for 85% of diagnosed SAD sufferers when used for an average of one to two hours each day. People with eye problems, sensitivity to light or epilepsy, or who are on anti-depressants, should consult their GP first.

If you are experiencing depression, consult your GP. The information in this article is not a substitute for medical advice.

About the writer . . .
Angellette Muller, MSc, PGDip is a nutrition specialist who works within a team of medical doctors practicing integrated medicine. She has a passion for making nutritional science applicable and practical. Angellette works closely with Sharon Platt-McDonald (BUC Health director) to support the implementation of the nutrition strategy and cooking school.

Issues
Europe’s Christian exodus and Adventism

by Elliott A. Williams, Phd

A recent BBC report by Robert Pigott about the state of Christianity in Europe suggests that there is a modern ‘exodus’ from Christian churches, led to a large extent by secular values and philosophies. Both Catholics and Protestants are losing faith in basic biblical teachings such as salvation. Even the Catholic Church, with its long heritage and impressive rituals, is unable to keep its members faith in the faith. In Germany more than 180,000 Catholics left the Church last year, and it is estimated that in the past fifty years the Protestant churches have lost half of their membership.

Some challenges facing the Adventist Church

Should Seventh-day Adventists follow this trend, abandoning beliefs once considered essential in order to stem the ‘exodus’ from our Church? Should we try to reinvent Adventism in order to make it relevant to secular culture?

Challenges facing Christianity

Europeans continue to be disturbed over the apparent hypocrisy and impotence of the Church. It teaches peace and love, but has for centuries sided its hands with blood. People are alarmed and indignant over clergy sex abuses and cover-ups. They are also alarmed by the stem approach to homosexuality maintained by conservative evangelicals. Consequently, the clergy are no longer held in high esteem. Confidence in God and his representatives is in decline, and a growing number of people contend that an institutionalised Church should not be allowed to determine one’s beliefs and relationship with God. So far, mainstream Christianity has not learnt from its past errors and fallacies. Watering down or mixing invarious philosophies and beliefs with the religion produces the life-changing power of the Bible ineffective.

Many modern Christians identify more readily with the experience and beliefs of unbaptised unbelievers than they do with the experiences of the apostles and the early Christians. This is primarily because the Church has not been able to teach believers how to live ‘in the world and yet be distinct and separate from the world. In Matthew 28 and Revelation 14, our commission is to make disciples of our 16.3 million members and the rest of the world’s 7 billion Christians, Muslims, sinners, non-religious, agnostics, atheists, and others. This mimmick task is impossible without the Lord Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, and our willingness to do things strictly his way.

Looking forward
We must demonstrate that the principle of God’s Kingdom, the Gospel, can radically change human lives and societies for the better; we must show that Christ offers an ethical, meaningful and fulfilling life which involves people taking responsibility for their own lives and the welfare of others.

We must show people how to enter the ‘strait gate’ and narrow way of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 7:13, 14, KJV) – a Kingdom the laws, customs and culture of which are superior to any romanticism of this world. Each disciple must be a part of Christ’s Kingdom and reflect his importance and make a real alternative to the world. But, as Christ told Nicodemus, unless we are born again the Kingdom will be beyond our reach (John 3:3.)

If the Church is to fulfil its commission, it must focus its creative energies on providing services and programmes which will lead people into a love relationship with God and others, much research has shown that when disciples who love each other enables them to live harmoniously – irrespective of ethnicity, race, culture or ability. While Christians learn how to live as citizens of God’s Kingdom now, there will be an ‘exodus’ from the world into the Church, not out of it.


Elliott A. Williams holds a PhD in Systematic Theology from the London School of Theology and currently serves as pastor of the Dagomanton Presbyterian church in Namib Community Fellowship.
The PEACE initiative

The Messenger editor recently visited the Yardley church, current training venue of the PEACE initiative, to find out more about this programme. Here are his findings in the form of an interview with Pastor Adam Ramdin.

Editor: Adam, what’s happening here today? Isn’t PEACE just a replica of the Amazing Facts programme in the USA?

Adam: Yes and no! We do work closely with Amazing Facts, but I guess what we have here is more an adaptation than a replica. We have had to adapt certain things for the local context. Although the core soul-winning concepts don’t change, we have added a few classes that they don’t have in the US.

Editor: What is the significance of the name PEACE, Adam?

Adam: Actually Julian, PEACE is an acronym for Practical Evangelism and Adventist Christian Education. It was important for us to put the word ‘practical’ into our name, because so much of our traditional evangelism training is purely academic. It is done in a classroom, and there is very little practical work that takes place.

Editor: Who are the people you want to attract to the PEACE programme?

Adam: Julian, before I do that, let me explain what courses we offer. At present we have three different courses.

We have one-week intensive courses on personal evangelism, how to preach and give Bible studies, and so on. We also take them out into the community, providing an introduction to being a personal evangelist, and this course format appeals more to the mature and senior church member.

Editor: So Adam, besides these members who return to their churches and provide good support there, what are the other outcomes you expect from PEACE?

Adam: Yes Julian, one of the obvious outcomes we want is for those who are PEACE-trained to return to their churches and become really active lay members. Their value is two-fold: firstly, they know how to do personal evangelism themselves; and secondly, they know how to train and mentor others to do the same.

Another important outcome relates to the church growth initiative of the NEC. The North England Conference Task Force* programme uses volunteer Bible workers to do pioneering work in places where there is no church, or where there is a struggling church.

PEACE is an ideal resource for such volunteers who are trained and able to go into such areas. Obviously we won’t be able to place everyone who attends the PEACE course, because the Task Force programme doesn’t have that capacity, but four to six can be absorbed from each year’s intake.

Editor: Whose brainchild is PEACE? Yours?

Adam: Pastor Alan Hush, Pastor Mike Simpson and myself were all working within the NEC, and we saw a need for it. We noticed that a fair number of our young people were flying over the pond each year to pick up these skills. And we felt that a viable training programme, tailored to the local needs, worked out considerably cheaper than going to the US, would work.

Editor: Have you launched these shorter night courses already?

Adam: Yes. So far we have done one in the South and one in the North, and these are really pitched for working people. We run them in a local church, and they give those who attend a good overview of the four-month programme.

These night schools include a few courses on personal evangelism, how to preach and give Bible studies, and so on. We also take them out into the community for practical work. They get a good introduction to being a personal evangelist, and this course format appeals more to the mature and senior church member.

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Editor: How do you compare your programme with that of Amazing Facts?

Adam: Easily comparable — definitely on a par! In fact, besides the cost factor — which I’ve already mentioned — our course has the advantage of already being adapted to the local context. They get a good introduction to being a personal evangelist, and this course format appeals more to the mature and senior church member.

Editor: How successful is your door-to-door survey approach? Surely that must be very difficult in the UK.

Adam: One would expect that, but last year we did 635 surveys in 48 hours, from which we signed up 200 people for Bible studies. Of those 200, we eventually ended up with a core group of eighty who persisted with the studies. Of that eighty, forty-nine were indigenous whites, seventeen were of Asian origin and the rest were black.

A really interesting fact, which I must add, is that this was achieved with a group of five whites and fifteen from African and Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. This points to the fact that our techniques are proving successful within the indigenous population — even where we have black students visiting white homes!

It seems that this year’s stats will be pretty much in line with those of last year — but with a larger number of surveys conducted, around 800.

Editor: Adam, from what you’ve mentioned already, it is clear that your approach works effectively across race groups. Now, what about the ability of your team to reach different classes?

Adam: Last year we worked upper-working class and lower-middle class areas, and we received a varied response — obtaining studies among people with both lower and higher incomes. The same is true for our work across the age spectrum.

For example, last year our youth made contact with a 50-plus Christadelphian believer, who subsequently resigned from his church, was baptised as an Adventist, and is now a faithful member of my Yardley church.

Editor: So what you’re telling me, Adam, is that with this simple door-to-door survey approach our members are able to enter working and middle-class homes, across the full spectrum of UK race and age, and obtain positive results. That is great news, and we look forward to further reports on the PEACE initiative.

*In a forthcoming issue of Messenger we will report on the Task Force initiative run under the guidance of the NEC.

Pastor Adam Ramdin
Adam has an excellent background for the work that he is doing under the PEACE initiative. Not only has he had extensive experiences as a lay evangelist in countries like Swaziland, Tonga and India, but he has also had practical training at the Amazing Facts College of Evangelism in the USA. After three years of soul-winning work in the USA, he decided to return to the UK in 2008. Since then he has been working for the North England Conference, where he now pastors the Yardley church and helps direct the PEACE initiative.

Stephen Bohr will be the speaker. Our main offering is the four-month PEACE programme. Last year we had twenty attendees, equally divided between men and women. There were eleven from the NEC, five from the SEC, and four from Europe — and they were young people between 17 and 33 years of age. Not that we pitched the course at young people — it just happened that way.

What we noticed, however, was that there were some who could not attend the four-month programme for educational or career reasons. The course was just too long for them to attend. It was then that we decided to run a three-week night school.

Editor: Have you launched these shorter night courses already?

Adam: Yes. So far we have done one in the South and one in the North, and these are really pitched for working people. We run them in a local church, and they give those who attend a good overview of the four-month programme.

These night schools include a few courses on personal evangelism, how to preach and give Bible studies, and so on. We also take them out into the community for practical work. They get a good introduction to being a personal evangelist, and this course format appeals more to the mature and senior church member.

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Craig Gooden (Outreach co-ordinator)
One of the trainers is Craig Gooden of Birmingham, whose academic background is in computing (digital media for the screen). He was baptised in 2000, and when an opportunity opened for him to assist in the PEACE initiative he was delighted to take it — rescuing from an excellent and secure job in the process!

According to Craig, even those homes that don’t want Bible studies receive a DVD with some very relevant material on it. During the August door-to-door outreach this year the PEACE students made 900 visits during just ninety hours of work. This eventually filtered down to about fifty-five people who took regular in-house Bible studies. Ultimately, about fifteen of those Bible students attended the evangelistic series that was conducted in the Birmingham area, and ten of those students attended church on the last two Sabbaths of the evangelistic meetings. Praise God!

Take the ‘gap’ and do some good!
According to Adam Ramdin, there is a critical period in the life of the average Adventist youth when they are susceptible to deeper involvement in the life of the Church. This is the period through their late teens and twenties when they are often uncommitted to serious relationships or demanding careers, and immediately before or after they engage in the higher education of their choice.

This is the ideal opportunity to let them acquire those PEACE skills that will stand them in good stead as future leaders within the Church. It is the time to harness their natural passion, zeal and spirit of adventure in the service of Christ.

If you are such a youth, looking for a gap year, why not make it a ‘gap for Jesus’ and do one of the PEACE courses during 2012? If you are settled in your career and blessed with enough to live well, you may want to consider sponsoring a young person to attend the next PEACE course.

http://peacecentre.eu/aboutus.html
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Baptisms

Baptistries across the UK have been even busier than usual these last few weeks, ‘immersing’ Messenger staff with reports of people young and old choosing Christ as their Saviour – a remarkable Christmas gift!

Birth of five

The blessings keep on coming for Middlesbrough Church, which on Sabbath 8 October saw its first baptism, of five lovely young girls aged 11-15: Wignii Mtopo, Isabel Dirahu, Fari Chickengezha, Charity Jacob and Chipo.

The girls each received a bundle of books to help guide them through their new path.

A Romanian baptism in Dublin

The Dublin Romanian Seventh-day Adventist church welcomed twelve new persons into their family on Sabbath, 1 October – eleven through baptism, and one by profession of faith.

‘Baptism was the greatest joy . . . Jesus loved us before we even met him. . . . We wish to dedicate our lives to Christ, our Creator’, said Mirea and Crina. Cornelia, also a new member, said, ‘The day, to me, was a gift. It reminds me that there is still grace.’

It was Pastor Olariu’s second baptism since becoming a member of the Dublin pastoral team. Pastor David Neal, president of the Irish Mission, welcomed the new members by saying: ‘We are ... to be “the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13), “the fragrance of life” (2 Cor. 2:16) and “a letter from Christ” (2 Cor. 3:3).’

NEGOSANU CLAUDIU, COMUNICATION DIRECTOR

Two baptisms become four at Holcombe Road

At the start of Holcombe Road’s baptism on 29 October there were two precious souls for baptism: Syvella Kirwan and Josiah Mathew-Bernard. As the candidates were about to take their vows, however, two other candidates came forward. Sister Neletsha Hitchman had been visiting the church for some time, and made a decision for baptism as the pool was opened. Alistair Bernard came to see his 9-year-old grandson Josiah baptised, but felt so impressed by Josiah’s stand that he joined him in the baptistry!

CAROL YOUNG

Holloway’s baptism

Sabbath 21 October was special for Holloway Church as Jerry Bramble, Jennifer, Marvina Michaels and Delro Thomas joined the family through baptism.

Pastor Matthew Her reminded the congregation of God’s everlasting love and forgiveness towards each of us.

All candidates had their favourite Bible texts read to them, and Pastor Holder reminded them that all things are possible with God. Let us remember them in prayer.

ANESHA WEST

Heaven rejoices for seven!

Heaven rejoices when one is found for the Kingdom of God: it was all celebration on 5 November when Coventry Central and St. John’s welcomed seven new members through baptism. Pastor Liburd conducted the service and gave a powerful message on forgiveness.

LOVEMORE MASIANE

Baptism at Leicester Central

On 12 November, three young people at Leicester Central were baptised by Pastor George Kumi and began a new life with God. Joanne Dube, Wayne Hazel and Yolanda Shoko. Mayabu hapengwa, a Leicester Central Pathfinder, had been baptised in Rome earlier this year during the Pathfinder Camporee. All were warmly welcomed into the church family.

A Nigerian baptism in Cefn Lea

From 24 to 30 October the hills of Cefn Lea, South Wales came alive with preaching as 170 Adventists gathered at the conference and holiday park for a ‘retreat’ at which amazing advances were made! Elder Dwayne Lemon challenged all present to live through the power of Christ, Pastor Chornes encouraged members to study the Scriptures, and Elder Mason called us to join God’s team to finish the work.

Many hearts were touched by powerful appeals to prepare for Christ’s coming, and twenty-two decided to be baptised.

Supporting this camp meeting were Jack and Joy Rayne of Ministry Helps, who recorded the sessions and have produced DVDs available at: www.ministryhelpsuk.com.

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NATASHA WALKER

Dundee baptism

Dundee members were thrilled to witness the baptism of Roberta Magama on Sabbath 24 September. This was a special day for her husband Frank and little daughter Tino. Roberta and Frank now share not only their lives together, but also their commitment to God and his Church.

PHOTO BY JOHN C. WALTER

Two baptisms become four at Holcombe Road

At the start of Holcombe Road’s baptism on 29 October there were two precious souls for baptism: Syvella Kirwan and Josiah Mathew-Bernard. As the candidates were about to take their vows, however, two other candidates came forward. Sister Neletsha Hitchman had been visiting the church for some time, and made a decision for baptism as the pool was opened. Alistair Bernard came to see his 9-year-old grandson Josiah baptised, but felt so impressed by Josiah’s stand that he joined him in the baptistry!

CAROL YOUNG

Holloway’s baptism

Sabbath 21 October was special for Holloway Church as Jerry Bramble, Jennifer, Marvina Michaels and Delro Thomas joined the family through baptism.

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NATASHA WALKER
news

Stanborough’s ‘soupers’ volunteers get new minibus

Members of Stanborough Park Church have been providing the homeless of London with a weekly meal, drinks, clothing, toiletries and personal items continuously for twenty-five years. Started by Pat Walton, who still acts as co-ordinator, the service has worn out two vehicles and Pat had to set about fundraising for a third.

Thanks to her regular church sales, donations from churches and church members and, unusually, an insurance pay-out, this became a reality last August when a 6-year-old Ford minibus appeared in the church’s car park.

After a minor modification to allow the necessary tables, food, clothing and so on to be carried, as well as passengers, the new minibus has been in regular service since September. Pat is ‘absolutely thrilled’ with her recent acquisition!

In a strange twist of fate, the old minibus was stolen from the church car park within days of the new one arriving and was used in a crime, thus ending its days in a police compound – this shows just how good God’s timing is, as the new minibus arrived just in time!

JANE COOMBES
STANBOROUGH PARK CHURCH

Welsh Mission youth camp

From 25 to 29 August the first Welsh Mission youth camp in a few years involved fifty young people in worship, activities and fellowship at the Islwyn Scout Parc near Blackwood, South Wales.

The worship theme was ‘Jesus in My Heart’, and Pastors Jeremy Tremeer, David Rancic and Des Boldeau were speakers. Des also invested four Pathfinders during the Sabbath service: Joshua (x Friend) and his parents, Mr and Mrs David, along with their friend Pauline (each given the Pathfinder Leadership Award), accompanied by Newport Pathfinders on the Pathfinder drum. There has been a revival of interest in Pathfinders in the Welsh Mission, and members look forward to more clubs starting up in the near future.

It is fantastic to see young people come and bring their friends to celebrate the love of Jesus, and learn more about the Jesus that loves them.

JEREMY TREMEER

Miracle baby dedicated

On Sabbath 5 November little Samuel McComb was dedicated at Hemel Hempstead. Samuel is a miracle baby. He was born on 9 June: four months too early! Some babies have been aborted at this period in the womb. He needed a lot of care, and had lots of problems – in hospital he needed three life-saving operations. He eventually came home on 10 October, and still needs our prayers.

Mum Wilna, dad Hamish, sister Blanca and granny Christine (all the way from South Africa) were all present as Pastor Jacques Venter conducted the service.

JOHN BUTTERS

Colossal Christianity discussed at Beach lecture

Theologian and award-winning Channel 4 broadcaster Dr Robert Beckford gave the 2011 Beach lecture on Tuesday 11 October as part of Newbold College’s Black History Week. The ninety-strong audience included Dr Bert and Mrs Eliane Beach, sponsors of the Beach lecture.

The core of Dr Bedford’s lecture was the reading of a chapter from his upcoming book which examines the history of slavery and the colonial Anglican Church. Beckford claimed that Christian missionaries sought a ‘pragmatic compromise’ with the slave owners and the island’s governments, and ‘zombiﬁed the slaves whom they baptized with discourse about obedience to hierarchy, failing to teach Christian slaves that all men have equal rights. Those Christians who were not in favour of slavery – Quakers and Methodistists – were made less welcome in the colonies.

Beckford, a Christian himself, drew the attention of his hearers to the book of Revelation, which ‘warns the Church against demonic powers’ that can inﬂuence any organisation not led by the Holy Spirit: as our Adventist understanding of prophecy shows.

HELEN PEACOCK

Prayer line ministry available

Hear the Pan Ministry is currently running a prayer line for broken homes, praying for deliverance, restoration, and healing the pain. This is an ongoing prayer line that will be available every Sunday between 8 and 11.30pm.

The prayer line number is 08440 900 390 (calls cost 2p a minute on a BT line, and will require the pin number 02 1962). Alternatively, email: heartheapman@live.co.uk, or attend in person at the church, 43 Roman Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8AH (every Thursday between 6 and 7.30pm).

Corrigendum: the ‘Rekindling the flame’ article in Mississauga 28 October should have referred to the Tottenham church.
Connecting in Montenegro

Mann Smith

Day delegate (Sabbath) = conference, lunch – bed & breakfast, lunch, dinner, bed & breakfast, lunch – £63.50

Enid Palmer (1932-2011) d. 15 August.

Dundie’s diverse heritage

On 22 October the ethnically diverse church in Dundee celebrated its heritage with a Scripture reading in Scots Gaelic, a prayer in Gujarati, a Sikh gurdwara, a Hindu temple, a Korean church, a Muslim mosque, a Salvation Army, an African church, a Russian church, a Chinese church, and an anglican church – all representing the nations from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas that make up the Dundee church. Congregants were also reminded that there are still 2 billion people on our planet who have never heard the Gospel.

Rhiyl harvest festival

The Rhiyl Church harvest festival on 8 October 2011 helped to support a local charity, Conwy Food Share – a saving grace for the temporarily unemployed who have not yet been able to claim state benefits. The generously donated tins, jars, and packets of food and other basic essentials were gratefully received by the charity’s chairman, Chris Bailey.

Martin Bell (1943-2011) d. 15 October.

The Maidenhead harvest festival

On Saturday 8 October the Maidenhead Church harvest festival was held at Hotel Speke in Faringdon, Oxfordshire – planning consent has finally been given for redevelopment of the church property! The Maidenhead church was established in 1974 and spent the next thirty-five years meeting in hired premises. In June 2009 the congregation purchased the Burghley Gospel Hall in St Mark’s Road, a 90-year-old converted iron building in the town. They lack the facilities needed to serve in the twenty-first century. New church members thank God that they can update their building!

Sutton-in-Ashfield festival and classes

The Sutton-in-Ashfield Church has its harvest festival on 17 September, and passed on the food to contacts of the church in need, and the Salvation Army, with whom the church works closely in humanitarian work.

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Newbook of the week

The Prophet and the Presidents
Gilbert M. Valentine, PhD
Robert Olsen, former director of the Ellen G. White estate, calls this ‘a virtual trip into Ellen White’s life . . . truly a monumental study.’ Both comprehensive and engaging, this fascinating tome is a real must for anyone seriously interested in our Church’s history.

Contact ABC Sales on 01476 539900 to purchase your copy at £16.45 plus p&p.

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Just scan the barcode below with a compatible smartphone to donate £5 to the ADRA Horn of Africa Appeal.

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Get involved and join the Forestry Commission’s tree-planting efforts.

Susan Tymm

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