Dear Member,

I have been privileged to visit many congregations across the British Isles, and at each I have been received with genuine warmth, love and hospitality. I suppose that my face is too well-known for me to travel and visit incognito; therefore I am never treated as a ‘normal’ visitor. On many of these visits, Jennifer, my wife, has been with me to enjoy this special experience. When she arrives at a church ‘on my arm’, everyone knows who she is. She is the president’s wife. Jennifer and I have talked about this warmth and hospitality — it’s great — but she doesn’t always experience it. There are times when she attends church on her own — unrecognised — and things are different.

This is not a complaint; merely a desire that every congregation treat all its ‘strangers’ to the same warmth, friendliness and hospitality that a president receives.

In fact, Jennifer and I have a simple wish for all our congregations this year: make the strangers welcome. Let them feel so at home that they will want to return.

Hebrews puts it like this: ‘Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.’ (Hebrews 13:2, NIV.)

Can you imagine a visiting angel returning home — to Heaven — with this message: Jesus, they’re very close-knit and loving down there — to each other, that is! — We are one big, exclusive family!

Fortunately, the angel won’t lose faith over a bit of unfriendliness. But what about the ‘prodigal’ who is back for the first time in decades? He has scraped up the courage to come back, but will he want to stay on?

Our prayer for all of us — the entire BUC — is that we will be eager and ready to make the strangers welcome this year!

With Christian love
Pastor Ian Sweeney, BUC president

‘Jesus, they’re very close-knit and loving down there — to each other, that is! — like one big, exclusive family!’
Medic News Today

Happy New Year

As I type, Christmas is still three weeks away, but by the time you’re reading this, it’ll be 2013. ‘Tis the season for indulging yourself, enjoying your family and friends and new year resolutions. Here’s to indulging your own resolutions in other projects.

Diabetes link with high-fructose corn syrup

The global epidemic of type 2 diabetes has come under scrutiny in recent years, with a high proportion of the population in many countries having diabetes or diabetes-related co-morbidities. This has led to increased focus on the role of dietary factors in the development of type 2 diabetes.

On assessing the study results, co-author Stanley Ulijaszek, director of the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Oxford, shares this insight: “Many people regard fructose as a healthy natural sugar from fruit, and that’s true. N atural fructose found in fruit is, for example, fine: the 10g or so of fructose in an apple is probably released slowly because of the fibre within the apple and because the fructose is inside the cells of the apple. I further explain, however, that ‘there is evidence that the body struggles to metabolise a large amount of fructose that does not come from fruit, and there is a risk for type 2 diabetes, because ‘fructose and sucrose are not metabolically equivalent.”

These findings led Ulijaszek to conclude: ‘This research suggests that high-fructose corn syrup can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, which is one of the most common causes of death in the world today.” As a result, these researchers are calling for better labelling of fructose and HFCS content in foods and beverages.

Good health!

Happy snapping!

Just remember to keep them ‘hi-res’.

Churches 2013.* This picture was submitted for Megapixels by John Peppard) in a 1980s television series called The A-Team. It was popularised by the fictional Portuguese accent!

Check His CV

But I was about to learn that God handles chaos like a pro. That’s how it actually thrives on chaotic situations. Do you remember how His CV starts?

‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now is the earth, for nothing was created in emptiness and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” Genesis 1:1, 2, NIV.

That’s right! The very first snapshot we have of God reveals Him turning chaos into creation. Bit by bit, during those 72 hours, He hovered over our chaos, gently guiding the shambles into shape.

The translation booths

Then on the Friday, the Hope Channel representative approached me in desperation — those who had promised to construct the translation booths . . . couldn’t handle the task! Could I do something to help?

I thought for a moment — then a name flashed into my mind. ‘But Lord, he lives 40-odd miles out of the city. How’s he going to do this on his own? And you know he can’t start till tomorrow night — after Sabbath!’

Sometimes, it is not so much what God seems to suggest that convinces me to do the improbable; it’s those long, pregnant silences that follow.

I phoned the member, who is a builder — a qualified electrician too. ‘I’ll be there after Sabbath, Pastor. Don’t worry, I’ll sort it out for you.’ He did, and on time.

What were the implications of his eleven-hour availability? Hundreds of thousands across Africa heard Dr Pollard preach their message in their mother tongue. Didn’t I tell you that God is a Pro when it comes to chaos management?

The translator

The news that there would be no Portuguese translator was a serious blow to the programme. For throughout Angola and Mozambique, churches had invested in those large dishes and special decoders needed for the broadcasts. They had also bought screens and digital projectors. The advertising had reached their friends and neighbours, and many souls were now potentially at risk of missing our message. What an embarrassment for the Church.

Then, just one week before the series began, I noticed a new family in church. At the door the visitor introduced himself as Fausto da Silva, born and raised in Mozambique — with a pukka Portuguese accent!

I felt a tingle down my spine. The ‘Spirit of God was hovering’ over our chaos and something inside me reverently said: I love it when a plan comes together!

They were searching

Carol da Silva had grown up an Adventist. Now her husband wanted to know more too. He was always searching for truth — but he was a Roman Catholic. How could he solve our problem?

Believe it or not, he did! After I had visited with him and assessed the situation, I offered him the responsibility of translating the evangelistic series into his native language — each night for three weeks! He sat stunned for a while, then said: ‘I don’t have a Portuguese Bible — where can we get one?’

That was his way of saying ‘Yes!’ And so Fausto — an industrial pharmacist — became God’s voice to the eager ears of thousands in Angola and Mozambique. He didn’t have a day’s theological training to his credit, not even a baptismal certificate, but he became a successful part of our satellite outreach — and a Seventh-day Adventist! Witness proof that God is able to turn the direst circumstances to our advantage — if we are willing to trust Him.

Like Colonel ‘Hannibal’ Smith, God also loves it ‘when a plan comes together!’ So why not trust Him with your plans for 2013?

In memoriam . . .

Although it may not seem that way, I wrote this editorial with a heavy heart. For a few days earlier, on 23 November (2012), while on his way home to spend Sabbath with his family, Fausto was killed in a car accident. His wife Carol and their three sons now face the abhorrent reality of sudden and tragic death causes. Please remember them in your prayers.
This man had serious, long-standing problems, by a demon-possessed man from the town. While 2,000 years old, has a relevance that the hills he would cry out and cut himself with him. Night and day among the tombs and in cemetery his home. When they would not, he got into the boat and left.' (Luke 8:35-37, NIV.)

Application

Com munity response

The community’s response to this clearly troubled man was either drastic, or care was often withheld from him. Having sailed across a lake called Galilee. On disembarking from his boat, the story recounts that Jesus was met by a very troubled man: When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs (Luke 8:27, NIV) – and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.” (Mark 5:3-5, NIV)

The man’s problems

This man had serious, long-standing problems, as clearly evidenced by the following:

• He lived among the dead – he had made the cemetery his home.
• Even though he lived among the dead, he seemed to show them little respect by walking around naked all the time.
• The man was self-harming, as testified in his tortured screams that could be heard throughout his community.

Community response

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Reflections on UK Giving 2012

Our editor reflects on one of our great national qualities, and suggests that it could provide a positive and gentle way of engaging our communities.

Charitable involvement is a hallmark of British life, and our nation’s latest performance is spotlighted in UK Giving 2012.

According to this report there has been a slight decline in the number of adults giving to charitable causes, on a monthly basis, down from 58 to 55%. Despite this, the report stated that participation in charitable giving ‘remains relatively widespread with over half of adults giving in 2011/2012, equivalent to 28.4 million adults.’ This adult giving was responsible for raising £9.3 billion during the period. 2

Most popular causes

The report also provides an insight into the most popular causes to which people donate: ‘Medical research’, ‘hospitals and hospices’ and ‘children and young people’ continue to attract the highest proportion of donors. 3

Religious causes are by no means a lost cause in our day and age, and these are the report’s findings on this point: ‘Religious causes’ attracted the largest donations on average’ and made up 17% of the total referred to above. 4

Global giving

When analysed, global giving trends show the following as the top ten generous nations: the United States, Ireland (the EU leader), Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Canada, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Laos. The UK sits at fifth spot.

What is being measured here is the direct giving, to causes of their choice, by each country’s population. The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) surveys are not measuring the giving power of governments to international causes, either directly or through donor organisations.

It is interesting to see what emerges when one looks at the extent to which each country’s population (all ages) is involved in charitable giving (not necessarily each month though).

‘In terms of percentage of population, Thailand was the most generous, with 83% of Thai making regular charitable contributions. The UK was the second most generous, with 79% regularly giving to charity. The fact that we have 79% of our nation making regular charitable contributions’ should say something about our national ethics – especially when you hold this fact up against the sombre clouds of austerity that brood over us today. Despite all the adjectives used above of our national failings, you can’t deny the facts – we are a charitable lot!

Something else of significance is the fact that 28% of our population ‘volunteer time’ each month for charitable causes. It would seem, then, that a large number of us are willing to go beyond giving money – we want to serve as well!

Does this suggest something? Do these facts about our nation’s charitable ‘giving’ and ‘serving’ suggest anything to you? Is it possible that part of the common ground between the community and our Church could be charitable support? We can’t get friends and neighbours to attend our regular services, read our literature or discuss the Bible, perhaps we can get them to enjoy working with us on well-chosen charitable projects.

Surely our co-operation on such projects can help wear down prejudice, build warm friendships, and arouse a healthy curiosity about our faith. In fact, from reports we receive, it seems that some of our congregations are already using this strategy with success. Why not give it a try in your community – and don’t forget to let our readers know how it works out!

A charitable nation

Breakfast raises £1,000

The Banbridge church is still in a haze of amazement over the runaway success of a fundraising breakfast that brought in over £1,000 for the charity CDH UK.

When Michelle and Peter Milton attended the church hall just before 9.30am on Sunday morning 25 November 2012, they had no idea that more than 120 people were going to arrive in support of a charity that seeks to raise awareness of the condition that claimed the life of their new-born son, James Peter, a few months earlier.

According to Orla Reynolds, Michelle’s sister, Congenital diaphragmatic hernia is a condition that occurs (once in 2,000 to 5,000 births) when there is a malformation of the baby’s diaphragm early in its development. This poses a serious threat to the life and well-being of the newborn child. The consequences are almost always devastating to the families concerned. This condition is not as well-known, but in actual fact it occurs just as much as spina bifida and cystic fibrosis. When Michelle’s friend, Mary, told her about a community breakfast running in the local Adventist church, an idea was planted that this would be an ideal place to host a fundraising breakfast.

‘There was just no way in which we could ignore this opportunity to support the Milton Family,’ was the response of Pastor Weiers Coetser, the local minister. ‘This is what we are about. And what a pleasure to help!’

The volunteers that host these monthly Sunday breakfasts immediately began to plan. Advertisements were placed and the word was spread that this would be an extra-special meal. The free community breakfast usually attracts around thirty people. It is a relaxed event where children get to do crafts while parents sit back, enjoy a hearty meal and chat.

This time round we knew that more people were coming and we wondered if our facilities and resources would cope,’ said Patrinne Irvine, one of the organisers. ‘On the morning of the event I woke up with a bunch that I should phone around to see if it could get a few more donations. Before the morning I had donations of bread from two bakeries, ten-dozen eggs from a farm in Hamilton’s bawn, milk and yoghurts from the local dairy, various vouchers from local supermarkets and small shops, and even a kilogram of filter coffee from a local coffee shop. When I tried to call a mushroom farmer in Rathfriland, he told me that he was no longer in the business, but he donated £50 to the breakfast. It turned out that we didn’t need that £50 for the breakfast and so we gave the money to the CDH UK charity. The support was overwhelming!’

On the morning of the event, everything went smoothly. People walked out of the cool morning weather into a cozy hall filled with the smell of a hearty Irish breakfast. Colourful balloons decorated the hall. A face-painting corner had a queue of children waiting to become moving works of art. The Milton family set up tables at the bottom end of the hall where they did a brisk trade in cupcakes, a variety of sweets, framed photographs, children’s clothes and other bric-a-brac. Visitors came in their droves. ‘Our eating area had seats for sixty people. We filled the area up more than twice as the morning continued,’ said Pastor Weiers Coetser.

‘We all felt overwhelmed when Michelle and Peter counted the money raised and it topped more than £1,000. It has been the most successful single fundraising event that we have had in a long time,’ was Pastor Coetser’s comment.

‘These Banbridge breakfasts are open to any members of the community. The meal is offered free as the church’s investment in supporting friendship and community spirit in the Banbridge area.’

The fundraising breakfast was a success. It would be an ideal place to host a fundraising breakfast.

1 | 2 | 3 | 4

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1 | 2 | 3 | 4

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2. http://www.bbc.co.uk
3. http://www.guardian.co.uk
4. www.respect-your-leader.co.uk/
Hi Bright Shining Christian Stars!

If someone were to ask me if there was one thing I enjoyed about the Olympic stadium, I would answer, ‘The lights that twinkled around the venue.’ During the opening and closing Olympic and Paralympic ceremonies, the night sky glowed with the vast array of their colours and shapes.

The Bible story this week is about a teenager whose very name means ‘shining star’. Find the names and places in the wordsearch that feature in her story.

Esther 1:9-22 tells how the partying king and queen quarrelled and then divorced.

Use the words from Esther 2:2-4 and 14-18 (NIV) to fill in these blank spaces.

Then let the _______ who pleases the _______ be queen instead of _______. Esther humbly asked the king to call her by her _______. Her unselfishness and beauty _______ him. So he set a _______ on her head and made her _______.

The king’s edict granted her Jewish people the right to _______ themselves. Esther 8:11

What is the festival the Jews celebrate today because of Esther’s bravery? _______. Esther 9:26-28

Put in the star shapes the ways Christian boys and girls can ‘shine’ for Jesus.

Esther lived up to her name ‘star’ when she prayerfully decided to risk her life to save her people.

Fill in the blanks to find out how this happened.

Gallow, Hadassah, Haman, Mordecai, Persia, Susa, Vashti, Xerxes

After her parents’ death, her uncle, Mordecai, renamed her Esther, which means ‘shining star’. Another life-changing event took place too. Work out what this was by blanking out the squares.

Like Esther, you can be God’s shining stars by praying and trusting in Him. Put your name on the Olympic torch if you want to be a shining star for Jesus.

Feedback from children who visit Christian Stars Children’s pages – or from their parents – is welcome. The address is children@adventist.org.uk. Heather Haworth, Children’s Ministries director, BUC

Dawn Thompson

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Gallows
Hadassah
Haman
Mordecai
Persia
Susa
Vashti
Xerxes

H X G L A S V I
A M G S N W A A
S K U E A O S C
S S F X M L H E
A V R R A L T D
D W L E H A I R
A T K X H G Z O
H P E R S I A M

If you have not guessed who it is, then find the name of the Old Testament book after Nehemiah. Clue – look up the answer in the contents page at the beginning of the Bible. Unscramble these letters to find her Persian name:

A A A H S S D

A A A H S S D

Put in the star shapes the ways Christian boys and girls can ‘shine’ for Jesus.

greedy • caring • patient • honest • selfish • untruthful • proud • love God • happy

What is the festival the Jews celebrate today because of Esther’s bravery? _______. Esther 9:26-28

Fill in the blanks to find out how this happened.

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Dawn Thompson
**news**

Adventists attend ‘shul’*

by Katie Ramharacksingh

A synagogue in East London is to become the new Ilford Seventh-day Adventist church. After it was acquired in October 2012, members of the current Ilford church, as well as people from the surrounding community, were invited to visit the synagogue on Sunday, 18 November.

It was discovered by Alan Rodney, a member of Ilford Church, and is four times as large as the current church. It has a 500-seat sanctuary, a hall and over a dozen smaller rooms.

‘There is so much space!’ enthused Shirley Austin, Ilford Church member. ‘There’s no crowding or cramming; there’s space for everything. I have always thought that when we needed a bigger church God would send us one. At the moment a ceiling separates our congregation, with people in the sanctuary downstairs and in the hall upstairs. I think the new building will bring us closer as a congregation, with everyone able to see each other while worshipping together.’

Both the Ilford and East Ham churches will benefit from this move because the East Ham members have, in turn, purchased Ilford’s current building which will better suit their needs.

*The word ‘shul’ is derived from the German word schule, meaning school, and highlights the synagogue as a place of study.*

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**You name it – she does it!**

Barbara Hankin accepted the Lord Jesus as her personal Saviour at the age of 15, while attending a Billy Graham crusade at the Birmingham town hall. Shortly thereafter, a Voice of Prophecy card was posted through her door, and she began studying our Bible lessons. Being a young Christian, and thirsty for the Word, she excelled in her studies and was encouraged by the excellent marks she received.

Despite the total opposition of her parents, Barbara accepted the Sabbath and made her decision to follow her Lord irrespective of their views. She gained much courage from her assigned Bible worker, Betty Hanna, and was baptised by Pastor Past West in June 1950 in the Handsworth church in Birmingham.

Her mother and her auntie attended the service, but her father remained opposed to her decision. Leaving the congregational church where all her family held leading positions was a very difficult decision for Barbara to make, but she knew that she ought to ‘obey God rather than man’.

She felt called to enter the nursing profession, and came to Watford to do her general training, qualifying in 1955 as a State Registered Nurse. This was followed by approximately forty-eight years of service at the Watford General hospital.

Most of us would have felt justified in having a quiet retirement, but not Barbara. For more than a decade since retirement she has been a lollipop lady for at least three days a week, ensuring that children cross the street in safety.

Barbara is also fully committed to ministry in her local Stanborough Park church where she has served as deaconess for over twenty years. She also does community singing for senior citizens on Sabbath afternoons, runs a small group on Mondays, and never misses a prayer meeting! But as if this isn’t enough, Barbara joined the Hanwell Prison Ministry team fifteen years ago. This means an early start for her on some Sundays too!

When asked, ‘What is it that keeps you going?’ she quickly answers, ‘Well, it’s the love of the Lord, of course!’ What else could it be?

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**Marilyn Baker visits Greenwich Church**

Marilyn Baker and Tracy Williamson from MBM ministries supported ASNA on 15 September for the Greenwich Seventh-day Adventist Church Disability Awareness training day. Marilyn, a well-known international Gospel singer and song-writer who is also blind, gave her personal testimony and provided practical suggestions for ministry to people who are blind. Tracey Williamson, who is deaf, gave her testimony and provided insight into the needs of members who have difficulty hearing.

Marilyn’s key message was for the church to know that people with disabilities have something to offer. They don’t want to be made to feel they are constantly in need of help. ‘People with disabilities,’ she said, ‘have a ministry and are only too glad to be seen to work alongside others, and not brought in later as an afterthought.’

Tracy spoke of feeling isolated at church. Her practical advice included the following:

- **Churches must ensure that PowerPoint presentations are easy to read from a distance.**
- **There must be good contrast between the words and screen backgrounds of all slides.**
- **People who are deaf should be seated close to the front to allow for lip-reading.**
- **Churches should recognise and accommodate the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing worshippers.**

Both speakers expressed how much they enjoyed being in the Greenwich church. Marilyn, being a musician, especially enjoyed the song service. ‘The atmosphere here is electric, warm and very friendly,’ she said.

ASNA works in partnership with other Christian organisations to provide resources and information to support the ministry to people living with disabilities and special needs.

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**YouTube leads to baptism**

God is using new ways of reaching people in this country – how’s this for an example?

Zbignew Grzesiuk, who was baptised at Swindon Church on 17 November 2012 by Pastor Rod Puksas, grew up in Poland and moved to the UK eight years ago. Zbignew found work in the building trade... 

While looking for information about baptism, he came across the YouTube videos of Dr Walter Welth and Roger Monneau in 2011. His interest was captivated by the many new ideas he heard about health, the Sabbath and the life of Jesus. During their lectures these speakers kept mentioning the Adventist Church, so Zbignew decided to look up the church in Swindon.

Since then he has faithfully attended every Sabbath, and was using his practical skills to decorate the church even before he was baptised! May God bless Zbignew as he faces the many challenges of his new life.

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**Action at Angaza**

The Reading Ananga church has been trying to win the hearts of the Hesham community for years – unsuccessfully thought! During the 2012 Black History Month, however, things changed dramatically.

The church tried to provide music and prayer during one of the main events: ‘Your church choir sings really nice, you know!’

Then came this amazing concession from the main organiser: ‘We have decided that we are not going to interrupt your church services around 3pm in order that you can take part.

‘We have decided that we are not going to interrupt your church services around 3pm in order that you can take part. Please let us know of anything that is not permissible to your church!'
Pastor Daniel Jackson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, gave her annual report, pointing out Stanborough’s excellent academic results at KS3+ and GCSE, with 79% of the students achieving five or more A*-C grades (84% A*-C including English and Mathematics). National average for 2006: 58.5%. She also commended the spiritual development of the students and their active participation in local and international charities such as STOP international.

President Jackson motivates students

On Thursday 25 October last year, Stanborough School held a memorable speech night to celebrate the students’ achievements of 2011-2012. Pastor Daniel Jackson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America, was the guest of honour. His inspirational speech focused on how ‘your attitude determines your altitude’. He encouraged the students to be authentic and aim high.

Middlesbrough

In spite of these demands, the school was ‘a place of escape’ where she found peace. She found Jesus there too, and was baptised at the age of 13 at the New Gallery church. After finishing school, Sarah obtained a diploma in Social Work and Higher Education (Loton University) and has spent the last fifteen years in social work. She is currently working for Harlinge Social Services, supporting families subject to immigration control. The headmistress, Mrs Lorraine Dixon, gave her annual report, pointing out Stanborough’s excellent academic results at KS3+ and GCSE, with 79% of the students achieving five or more A*-C grades (84% A*-C including English and Mathematics). National average for 2006: 58.5%. She also commended the spiritual development of the students and their active participation in local and international charities such as STOP international.

according to master guide Doris Lack, the most senior Worcester Church member, this was the first investiture or induction in Worcester Church since she became a member in 1968, and possibly the first the club has organised since the church was founded in 1910.

Pathfinder induction service

Erdington Community Pathfindering Club held its second Pathfinder induction service on 9 September 2012. Pathfinders Rebecca and Melissa Smith, Khanyi and Khysy Koa, Allenah Lawrence-Hamilton and Kamari Riley and four counsellors (Karleen Andali, Kenrick Fagan, Mandisa Melbourne and Jean Simmonds) were given the hand of friendship by existing members and welcomed into the membership by the club director, Trevor Davis.

Adventurer induction service

On 22 September 2012, Erdington Community Pathfindering Club held their Adventurer induction service. Adventurers Nathan and James Johnson, Adonijah Stewart, Shayanne Thompson (Helping Hand), Logan (Builder), Tyrique Fagan, Calvin Morgan, Kimberley Philips, Candice Riley (Glider), Aghron Hutchingson (Eager Beaver) and one counsellor (Aghron Hutchingson) were formally inducted into the club in the presence of their families, friends, club and church members.

According to the director: ‘The majority of our club members experienced the induction service for the first time last year, and it is now a permanent feature on the club calendar. It allows new members to demonstrate their acceptance of the Pathfindering principles that underpin the club’s ideals.’

Worcester Pathfinders light the way

Eleven members of the Pathfinder and Adventurer Club and eleven staff members lit candles during the induction ceremony at Worcester Church in the West Midlands on 3 November, 2012. Edwin and Selia Vargas were also invested as Master Guides.

Pathfinder induction service

Erdington Community Pathfindering Club held its second Pathfinder induction service on 9 September 2012. Pathfinders Rebecca and Melissa Smith, Khanyi and Khysy Koa, Allenah Lawrence-Hamilton and Kamari Riley and four counsellors (Karleen Andali, Kenrick Fagan, Mandisa Melbourne and Jean Simmonds) were given the hand of friendship by existing members and welcomed into the membership by the club director, Trevor Davis.

Adventurer induction service

On 22 September 2012, Erdington Community Pathfindering Club held their Adventurer induction service. Adventurers Nathan and James Johnson, Adonijah Stewart, Shayanne Thompson (Helping Hand), Logan (Builder), Tyrique Fagan, Calvin Morgan, Kimberley Philips, Candice Riley (Glider), Aghron Hutchingson (Eager Beaver) and one counsellor (Aghron Hutchingson) were formally inducted into the club in the presence of their families, friends, club and church members.

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obituary

Vera Icilda Jackson (1926-2012) d. 21 May, 2012. She was born Vera Icilda Gray on 27 June 1926, in the district of May River, Saint Mary, a parish located in the northeast of Jamaica.

Vera was the first of many siblings, born to William Lee Gray and Aquilla Castella Roberts; she leaves siblings: Renna, Eugene, Essie, Denzil, Selcieta, Ceville, Lillian, Steve, Callie, Pearls, Ivo, Madge, Joy and Olive.

Vera met her husband-to-be, Ira Jackson, when she was 12 years old; a meeting that eventually led to sixty-two years of marriage. She later worked as a dressmaker, and sold the clothing she made at the local Fort Stewart market, which was where she met her first Adventist friend.

Vera married Ira in 1950 and became Mrs Vera Jackson. A few years after they were married Vera and Ira were baptised into the Seventh-day Adventist Faith. When Vera was 28 her father left for England, and a few years later she decided to follow to pursue a better life. Her husband Ira followed her with their eldest son in 1960.

In the mid-sixties Vera gave up dressmaking to obtain a more secure role in nursing, firstly at the Birmingham Eye Infirmary, then at Yardley Green Hospital, and finally by qualifying as a psychiatric nurse. After qualification, Vera got a job at Rubery Hospital. Later on she worked at a number of care homes in Birmingham.

She often told us of how, when they were looking for an Adventist church in England, one night she had a dream showing her the church at Camp Hill. Vera believed God had led her to this church and she would not be leaving it until she died.

Vera played an active role during her time at both the ‘old’ and ‘new’ Camp Hill churches.

Camp Hill was blessed by her many years of service.

Till death do us part – in sickness and in health – this was the blessed testimony of Vera Icilda Jackson. She kept looking after her husband, who developed Alzheimer’s, despite the obvious pain caused by the cancer which eventually got the better of her.

In addition to the support her beloved husband Ira could give her, Vera also had the care, assistance and love from family and close friends who will miss her sadly.

She is survived by her husband, children and grandchildren. Along with her siblings, cousins, nieces, nephews and grand-nieces and nephews, we all look forward to the day when Vera will rise at the trumpet sound in the First Resurrection. We look forward, if we remain faithful, to meeting her again in Heaven.

We don’t reflect the culture, we affect the culture!

by Katie Ramharacksingh

The Teens Prayer and Bible Conference was held from 29 October to 2 November last year, at Stanborough Secondary School.

The conference, with the theme ‘We Don’t Reflect the Culture, We Affect the Culture’, opened soulfully with more than 180 teens in the auditorium on Monday night singing the hymn, ‘Marching to Zion’.

The week held a packed schedule of programmes, workshops, worship and even spare moments for free time. Workshops ranged from ‘how to deal with anger’, to ‘looking at relationships’, to Bible studies with Pastor Kirk Thomas, SEC Personal Ministries director. ‘I felt as if this Prayer and Bible Conference was for me,’ said Derrick Mensah, from Southend. ‘I personally got a lot of answers to questions I’ve had for some time. It was just amazing how I could connect with other youths like myself and pray for one another. I thought nothing could top the last one but I was wrong.’

The speaker for the week was Pastor Wade Forde of the Southeastern California Conference, who focused on ‘Living Life’.

One of the leaders spoke about how a young boy, who wasn’t an Adventist, approached him and asked about how he could start attending church. ‘This was so positive, this is what it is all about’ enthused the leader.

By the end of the week, twenty teens had decided to be baptised!

If you missed out on this Prayer and Bible Conference, or if you want to come back for the experience, the Teens Prayer and Faith Conference, 2013, is now open for bookings! Go to www.secyouth.co.uk for more information.

Former head girl ‘cleans up’ at award ceremony

by Katie Ramharacksingh

Latiqua Barthley, head girl at John Loughborough School during the 2011-2012 academic year, took home six awards at the school’s speech night on Monday evening, 19 November: the highest achiever in her year group, leaving Year 11 with six ‘A’ and five ‘A*’ GCSE grades. Latiqua, now studying for the International Baccalaureate, said: ‘God has been so good . . . it makes me want to do more, be better, be greater in the future.’

Awards presented throughout the evening included: the ‘TED Award’; given to Latiqua for the highest average point score; the ‘Brown Eagle Award’, won by Stephen Hibbert as the highest achiever in Year 7; ‘Artist of the Year’, presented to Toyin Harwood; and the ‘Music Award’, given to Dwight Johns for outstanding achievement.

The evening, held at the nearby Gradeshott Community School, was linked to the theme of their 2012 graduation ceremony. ‘Nobody Greater than God’, Dr Roach, MD, BSc, spoke about his own experiences of being discouraged at a young age, and encouraged the young people. The programme highlighted the fact that every child matters.

Never give up – an evening of inspirational praise and worship

by Katie Ramharacksingh

The unique community events management company, Backstage Projects, was established to help create, plan and transform ideas into exceptional successful events. They focus on planning and promoting community-based events that uplift, inspire and reflect the diversity of talent that exists in our communities today.

Recently they ran a very successful event on Saturday, 3 November, at the ‘Rock Tower’, in Warrington.

The evening overflowed with talent, showcasing singers, poets and musicians throughout. Groups such as 4Christ, Inspired Praise and the Soloettes performed several songs each.

There were also soloists and musicians, including Elisabeth Kristiansen, Joshua Hall; Natalie Phillips, Samuel Acquah, Paul West and Chaliloby the Poet.

‘I was amazed at the talent I saw on the night,’ enthused Sheryl Renshaw from the audience. ‘I wasn’t sure what I had gone in expecting, but I know that when I walked out at the end . . . well, I didn’t want to walk out! I can only say that the individuals had more than talent; they were blessed by God.’

Backstage Projects are looking for people of all ages to take part in their next community event. Vocalist, instrumentalist, speaker, dancer, poet, actor or comedian; whatever your talent is, it’s time to share it! For more info, go to www.backstageprojects.com.
Hemel Hempstead Church Camp

Nothing frightens the resilient members of Hemel Hempstead! Not even the prospect of torrential rain during their weekend at Stewardstone Camp. It was a case of ‘Hemel are coming; we hope you are ready for us!’ on 21 September, last year.

Some slept in lovely little wooden cabins while others braved the elements and slept in their tents. Fortunately, God answered their many prayers and the rain held off until the camp was over on Sunday.

Daniel Thompson was the weekend speaker (with a little impromptu help from Karen Plaatjes on the Friday night), but there were lots of other great activities, including a huge bonfire – and the food was great!

JOHN BUTTERS

BOOKSALES

The staff at the Adventist Book Centre would like to wish all their customers and friends a very happy new year for 2013!

ABC Shops

Marford, Wrexham, Monday-Thurs - 12:30-5pm, Friday - 10am-2pm.

Abergavenny, Abergavenny, Monday - 11am-5pm, Tuesday - 10am-1pm, Thursday - 11am-5pm.

Advert Centre, Mondays & Wednesdays - 11am-8:30pm.

Cardiff, Monday-Saturday - 11am-8:30pm.

Aberystwyth, Monday & Friday - 11am-5pm, Thursday - 11am-4pm.

www.adventistbookcentre.co.uk

One-Sabbath friends prove to be forever friends!

While visiting Weymouth in Dorset recently, I decided to worship at the Weymouth Seventh-day Adventist church. It is a very small church but the people there have big hearts of love and kindness.

The first part of their love and kindness was the sharing of their meal with me, a total stranger! Then we went for a walk and got to a high peak from where we could see Bournemouth, Poole, Portland and Weymouth itself. It was a spectacular view! We had a picnic near the beach. The second part of their love was sending back my bag which I had left behind on the last day of my holiday.

Many thanks to Pastor Thompson, Laurie, and all the members for their love and kindness. You will always be forever friends!

FREDERICK BANDA (LEICESTER CENTRAL)