The world-renowned choir, the Aeolians, from Adventist Oakwood University in Alabama, USA, brought their talents to the UK to perform throughout the South England Conference (SEC) camp meeting, from 24 to 30 June.

Led by their director and pianist, Dr Wayne Buckner, and their conductor, Jason Max Ferdinand, the men who helped them to the title of Champions of the 2012 World Choir Games (Spiritual Category), the choir inspired both church members and visitors from the nearby Welsh community.

Jason Ferdinand described how the change of time zones had left them slightly sleep-deprived, but that the energy of being at camp meeting had kept them going. ‘Our inspiration is always just to share the love of Jesus through music, and we hope that we portray the messages as clearly and clearly as we possible can – the rest is just icing on the cake. We strive for perfection; we never make it, but just the art of striving is rewarding in itself. The Holy Spirit has kept us going!’

In conjunction with the SEC Youth department, the Aeolians gave a special concert for the public on Thursday, 27 June. They performed in the heart of Rhyl, at its town hall, and the show was attended by a variety of people from the community and the nearby SEC camp meeting, held at Pontins, in Prestatyn.

Steve Thomas, SEC Youth director and organiser of the concert, was excited about the impact the evening’s performance had made. ‘We tried to follow the week’s theme of “Making God Known” by going to the community and touching them with the skills of the choir. After hearing their performance, people from the community requested to come on-site at camp meeting on Sabbath to hear the Aeolians again!’

Those who watched the choir’s dynamic performance were thrilled at the experience and gave them a standing ovation. Some, like Rhyl resident, Peter Wall, were simply overwhelmed. ‘I only think, “wow”’, enthused Peter, who attended the concert after seeing an advert in his local paper. ‘I’ve not heard a choir like that in all my life! You watch those programmes on TV, like Songs of Praise, but I would never have guessed that was what it could sound like live; I have a feeling this means my wife will be taking me back to church soon!’

After a week of powerful solos and energetic group performances, the Aeolians mustered up the energy for a full concert on Saturday evening, 29 June, with SEC Music director, Paul Lee, as Master of Ceremonies. The choir sang animatedly, interspersed with other items, including a children’s choir, pianist Leslie Riskowitz and vocal group ‘Higher Ground’. They introduced the audience to lesser-known songs, like Charles Tindley’s ‘Beams of Heaven’, and performed unique renditions of well-known hymns such as ‘How Great Thou Art’. It all climaxed with a wonderful rendition of ‘Great Is Thy Faithfulness’, featuring Victor Acquah, and enjoyed by not only the thousands on-site, but at least 650 viewers watching live online.

(Photos by Darren Allen, Roland Zee & Katie Ramharacksingh)
Good health!

When smoke is inhaled, these chemicals enter the lungs and spread around the body.

When a smoker or nonsmoker gets the flu, he or she may have a fever. Another symptom of the flu is a cough. Some smokers who get the flu may cough up blood. This is called blood-torrent cough. If you cough up blood, you should see a doctor right away.

When you get a cold, you may have a runny nose, a sore throat, a fever, and coughing. Smoking makes colds worse. If you smoke, you should stop smoking.

When you smoke, you may have headaches or chronic bronchitis. You may also get shortness of breath or wheezing.

There are several ways to stop smoking. One is to go to a doctor. The doctor can help you quit smoking.

The governing bodies of Newbold Primary School in Binfield, Berkshire, Hyland House Primary School in London and Fleetwood Primary School in Plymouth wish to appoint three individuals to function as clerks to the governors of these schools, to begin in September 2013. There will be at least three sessions per year. If you wish to contribute to the success of the school by taking on this part-time stipendiary role and can offer the following:

- Good organisational skills
- Good secretarial skills
- Good communication skills
- Good grasp of constitutional and organisational procedures, although training will be given
- Willingness to update training
- Ability to keep confidential and follow protocol

Your rate of remuneration will be £100.00 per session, comprising £98.23 basic pay plus £1.77 holiday pay.

Please contact Jacqui Crawford for an application form or further information at: jcrawford@secadventist.org.uk or telephone 01923 656514.

Applicants are required to have the right to work in the UK, all necessary checks will be carried out.

Closing date for applications: Friday 30 August 2013.
**Are you a mighty man of valour?**

by Pastor Andrew Rashford-Hewitt

When you hear the term ‘low self-esteem’, which gender do you naturally think of? In most cases people will say women. For generally, low self-esteem is not seen as a man’s issue. Men are all too easily typified as ‘macho’, ‘assertive, self-conscious, or dominating.’ The fact is, however, that with the changing face of our fast-paced society, men, both younger and older, are subject to self-esteem issues perhaps just as much as women.

What is self-esteem? Well, the word ‘esteem’ comes from the Latin word aestimare, which means ‘to estimate’ or ‘to value’. So self-esteem is all about how one estimates or values oneself.

How a man regards himself may be affected by the usual factors such as unemployment, the loss of a significant relationship, ill health, and so on. These are common causes that often lead to a lack of self-esteem. However, it is more likely that the real issues behind lack of male self-esteem go much deeper than the usual measuring sticks mentioned above.

In fact, a man’s self-esteem is directly affected by the way in which he believes his primary care giver/ view him. Sadly, the reality is that, for many men, the ghostly shadows of a low self-esteem often appear and reappear as the voices of the past, voices that make comments like these: ‘You are such a failure!’ ‘If only you looked more like . . .’. ‘Oh, why are you so clumsy? Why are you so slow, it’s a pity that you are so fat, you’re not so bright are you!’ ‘Huh, you’re just like your father’. ‘Why can’t you be more like your brother or your sister?’

In such cases the core of this male low self-esteem lies deep in the heart, the wounds of childhood, still fresh and hoping to be healed.

Today, there is hope and healing from the ancient, worn, but still relevant pages of the Old Testament in the story of Gideon (Judges 6). Take time to read this chapter: it is very powerful. Here you find a young man with some serious self-image issues, whose story teaches three points. Firstly, Gideon was from a poor family. He knew the humiliation of poverty, and the degradation of social esteem that it causes. Secondly, he was the youngest in his family, and thus not esteemed in the sibling pecking order. Thirdly, he was not greatly esteemed in the eyes of his parents, and likely had a low opinion of himself. Hence, it is not surprising that in chapter 6 Gideon questions the Lord seven times as to his fitness to do the job that God had called him to do. Basically Gideon’s view of himself had been shaped for so long by the views of others, by what they thought about him, and by his negative, unaffirming childhood experiences, that Gideon did not value himself enough to believe that the Great God of Heaven wanted to use him for a critically important task.

How did God first address him: ‘The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valour.’ (Verse 12, ESV) Notice, God did not say, ‘I am with you, O poor soul!’ God did not say, ‘I am with you, you sorry so and so! No! God addressed him as a ‘mighty man of valour’. He was, therefore, loved and valued in the eyes of God, someone whom God could use.

Today, whoever you are, hear these words: ‘The Lord is with you, yes you, O mighty man (or woman) of valour’. Let go of any vestige of the past that may have taught you to look down on yourself. Stop believing the lies about you that were told to you by others. Insead, hear and feel the power of God’s approval and His restorative love that says to you, ‘You are a mighty man in My sight, a man of courage, ability and power’. Know that God loves you and addresses you as a powerful person made in His image to be someone of great influence, an unconquerable force for good through the power of God’s Spirit at work in your life. Today, change your refrain and refame your self-esteem: realise and verbalise God’s word to you: ‘I am with you. O mighty man of valour!’

*dictionary.reference.com/browse/macho?s=t

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**Irish Mission of Seventh-day Adventists Triennial Session**

Notice is hereby given that a Triennial Session of the Irish Mission of Seventh-day Adventists will be held on 3 November 2013, at Belfast Seventh-day Adventist Church, Belfast, County Down.

Delegates should note that registration will commence at 9am on Saturday evening. The opening of the Session is scheduled for 7pm.

Delegates are required to have registered prior to the commencement in order to participate in choosing members of the Committee.

D. H. Neal, president
P. Larchan, executive secretary
Floral design par excellence

Based on contributions from Audrey Balderson, Bronwen Atkinson and June Coombs

A drey, wife of the late David Balderstone, is no stranger to the art of floral design. She organised her first flower festival at Stanborough Park Church in 1981 and has subsequently convened a further thirteen. All of them have been special, but one of the most memorable was held in the Beechen Grove church in 1999 to welcome the millennium – at the request of the churches of Watford.

In 2007 she staged a floral festival in Brentwood Cathedral on behalf of the Home Counties Area of the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies (NAFAS), of which she is currently the president.

Beyond the aesthetic Audrey loves flowers – and the God who gave them to us in such lavish and splendid abundance. But her festivals are designed to bring Him glory in another way: they raise funds for worthy causes too. So far, they have gathered in excess of £100,000 for charity!

But more important than this, her commitment to the art of floral design is a powerful witness. Many of her floral designs have an inescapable moral, spiritual or biblical theme to them. Through them, Audrey is right out there, on her own personal mission to keep an awareness of God and the beauty of His handiwork alive.

Let the flowers speak

Another way in which Audrey practises Soli Deo Gloria is through her unique floral ser-
mon. A recent example of which occurred in the Stanborough Park church on 8 June, when, after a brief sermon, the preacher turned the platform over to her for a visual representation of “how different people, in diverse ministries, can create something beautiful for God”.

As she spoke she inserted Longiflorum lilies, representative of the pure life of Christ, down the centre of the arrangement. As she spoke, representatives from each of these ministries gave her a flower that she added to the greenery... saying a little about each as antithemums, stocks, roses, camellions and gerbers splashed their colours over her floral canvas. Then, last but not least, the children came forward with sprays of gypsophilla representing the joy and happiness they bring to life and worship. At that point, with the platform filled with people and flowers, Audrey stepped to one side, revealing a gap down the middle of the arrangement.

“We can make all the plans in the world, and people can work hard in all our ministries,” she said, “but unless Christ is at the centre; unless He is guiding and directing us; unless we are following His vision, our plans will come to nothing.” As she spoke she inserted Longiflorum lilies, representative of the pure life of Christ, down the centre of the arrangement. “Christ shed His blood for us,” she said as she wove blood-red roses through the centre of the design, “and unless we accept His gift of salvation and pray for the blessing of the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us, our efforts will be in vain.”

SDG: Soli Deo Gloria

A drey’s next flower festival, ‘Ode to Joy’, is scheduled for 12-15 September this year at the Stanborough Park church, where at least forty arrangers from churches in the Hertfordshire area will use spectacular flower displays to depict their favourite hymns. For the full programme, including thecreative evening, gala dinner, ‘river of roses’ event and ‘Hymns of Praise and Joy’ closing concert, contact Audrey Balderstone on 01923 260270, or visit the website at: http://www.keech.org.uk/get_involved/events/

SDG: Soli Deo Gloria

During the Reformation, Protestant theology was built on five important pillars known as Sola scriptura, Sola gratia, Sola fide, Solus Christus and Soli Deo Gloria. Simply translated from the Latin they suggest that our Christianity must be based on the Scriptures alone, grace alone, faith alone, and Christ alone, while giving glory to God alone.

ADRA-UK is called the Dry Zone. This is where our ADRA-UK project is working with people from fifteen villages of the Pakokku township. Located close to the ancient site of Bagan, people from these communities struggle to find livelihood opportunities that would provide an income for them and their families. In a region that is one of the most vulnerable within Myanmar, people are faced with drought, unavailability of land for farming, and the migration of many young people away from their villages to find work. As a result communities here struggle to survive.

ADRA is working here to help people overcome poverty through providing livelihood opportunities for the community. We are setting up food-processing industries and training people in small-scale business and entrepreneurship skills. In addition to setting up these small-scale industries, ADRA is also raising awareness of HIV/AIDS within the community and training people on practices that can reduce their vulnerability to natural disasters.

Some of the challenges these communities face were highlighted on one of our visits to a village where twenty men and women were undertaking an ADRA class in food processing. After travelling by car, canoe and finally an ox and cart, we were welcomed by children from the local school lining the path, who stopped forward to hand us flowers as we passed. The village suffers from extremely dry conditions, but when it does rain the whole village is flooded. Only a few years ago they had to relocate the whole village due to regular flooding, but the situation has worsened and the new location now receives regular flooding when it rains. To cope, the community build their homes on stilts and just wait for the waters to subside.

With few other livelihood alternatives, this training from ADRA is helping people set up businesses and generate a small profit. But this is only just the beginning: for the second and third years of the project, ADRA will help people form co-operatives and connect them with markets in the larger provincial towns, which will provide them with opportunities for a better life.

For more information and to support ADRA-UK’s mission please visit: http://www.adra.org.uk/about/projects/myanmar/

SDG: Soli Deo Gloria
A camp to remember

This year, the South England Conference camp meeting saw many firsts: the first performance of the Oakwood University choir, the Aeolians, at camp meeting; the first School of Evangelism graduation; and the first on-site US versus UK basketball match! At the beginning of the week, SEC president Pastor Sam Davis was enthusiastic about the variety of speakers and the atmosphere at camp meeting, which ran under the theme, ‘Making God Known’. ‘I think that God is really blessing us; members have said they feel we’ve excelled this year. I think there’s a standard that’s come to be expected at camp meeting, but I feel it’s important that there’s a spiritual atmosphere and that we’re all being blessed in some way or another.’

While the US versus UK basketball match didn’t quite go in the UK team’s favour, with the US men winning 11-9, the Pathfinder march around site and out into the nearby town was a display to be proud of. Pastor Maureen Rock was also inspiring, leading out in the morning devotional on Thursday 27 June. ‘Do not let anyone put out your fire,’ her pastor had said when baptising her 19 years ago. Today, Pastor Rock doesn’t believe in excuses – her advice is to not let anyone stop you making God known.

She reminded those gathered that the fellowship and excitement of camp meeting is not only its purpose: it is also where we learn how to do the work of the Lord back at home. Camp meeting shouldn’t stop at the sermons and workshops; the practical part needs to start when we go home, with no more excuses.

All age groups were catered for throughout the week. From the Youth programme Relate, where they discussed how males and females perceive each other to the Teens programme, where SEC Teens director Dejan Stojkovic, and Pastor Paul King-Brown challenged the young people about how they convey their beliefs to others. The juniors happily kept active with specially designed fitness classes and devotions, while the younger groups got creative with arts and crafts and learnt about Bible stories through exciting activities.

As well as the popular daily health talks from Dr Chidi Ngwaba, who admitted to having had a Dunkin’ Donut weakness, there was an interesting mix of workshops available in the adults’ section.

SEC treasurer, Earl Ramharackingsh, was pleased to see each programme had its own designated area. ‘Having been here for twenty-one years, I can honestly say each year gets better and better. This year was special because, after a ten-year period, we have finally been able to have the rooms in the main building for all of our Teens, Juniors, Primary and Toddlers sections. We are blessed to have these facilities indoors as they provide a better environment for our young people.’

The speaker for the adults’ Communion Service on Friday was Pastor Simon Martin. He described how Christ’s disciples had suffered from ‘misplaced greatness’ as they clamoured to be the person who would take over the reins from Him.

To explain his point, he told this story about the boxer Muhammad Ali: ‘I am the greatest; do you remember me? – Ali’ asked Pastor Martin. ‘He was on a plane one day and the hostess told him to buckle his seatbelt, otherwise they wouldn’t take off. Stubbornly, Ali said to the woman, “Superman don’t need no belt”, to which she replied, “Superman don’t need no plane!” – misplaced greatness. He reminded the audience that, on the Cross, Jesus took every sin we ever had committed, and that we need to strive to be a community that is a witness of that every day.

As the week drew to an end, President Sam Davis announced that speakers for the 2014 camp meeting would include Pastor Steve Riley and Dr Ranko Stefanovic. In closing, the commitment speaker, Pastor Lawrence Dorsey Sr, reminded the congregation of their mission. He commented that their choir may not be able to sing like the Aeolians and that their praise teams might not be as good; however, ‘We all know that the same God that is in the midst of us here, at camp, is in the midst of our life when we go home, to allow us to do what He has given us to do: to make God known.’

The first graduands of the South England Conference (SEC) School of Evangelism were decked out in elegant caps and gowns for their graduation ceremony, held at the SEC camp meeting, on Saturday, 29 June.

T he first course, advertised at the camp meeting in 2012, ran from September 2012 until June 2013 as an initiative led by the SEC Personal Ministries and Sabbath School departments. There were six different courses available, each a strand of evangelism in its own right: Women to Women; Church Growth; Lay Preachers; Lay Bible Workers; Lay Bible Instructors; and Health and Community.

Pastor Thomas spoke of how he had looked forward to this graduation, not because it was the end of the school year, but because it marks the progress made by course tutors and graduands alike. ‘I’m excited; this is historic and we’re having this graduation after a great first year. All the students have laboured hard for this year and we’re graduating 101 students across six courses: they’re excited too! We started at camp meeting last year, launched and advertised in 2012, and so today is also about promoting the School of Evangelism and showing that, yes, it does make sense!’

Many of the graduands explained that they had enrolled in the School of Evangelism to improve their skills in presenting God to their audiences around them, whichever course they had taken. One man who was graduating as a Lay Bible Worker said that he had frequently asked himself, ‘How am I relevant to those around me?’ and that it was this question that drove him to complete the course.

As a student of the School of Evangelism, and also of Queen Mary, University of London, Krista Vecvagare spoke on behalf of the entire graduating class. She gave special thanks to God, and to Pastor Kirk Thomas, for creating an opportunity for each of the graduates to grow personally and spiritually.

She later expressed how positive the experience was of completing the course. ‘It was really a good doing the course. I had no idea it would be so interesting,’ enthused Krista. ‘We went into so many different modules, like Emotional Intelligence, Disability and Bible Preaching. We even did a practical and had to prepare a 10-minute sermonette. I was slightly nervous, but we were in a small room preaching to each other . . . and, by God’s grace, I got good feedback at the end!’

Krista explained that she pursued the course because, a few years ago, an elder at her church in Greenwich had approached her about preaching. Although she had preached a couple of times previously, she knew she needed to improve her pulpit skills, something she knew she could accomplish through the Lay Preaching course.

Kirsta will have graduated twice this year, once with the School of Evangelism and then again with a Bachelor’s degree in English Language and Linguistics from Queen Mary, University of London, and she is keen to put her newly learnt skills into practice.

The rest of the graduating class were also enthusiastic about applying what they’d learnt in their churches, or even by starting new church-plants.

The graduation ceremony highlighted this drive to do God’s work across the SEC. Course directors Pastor Ani Vontzalidis, SEC Church Growth director; Malka Bediako, SEC Women’s Ministries director; and Elize Steyn, SEC Health and Community Ministries director, each expressed how hard the students had worked throughout the year.

Already anticipating the enrolment in the School of Evangelism for 2013, Pastor Kirk Thomas was encouraged anyone who has a passion for evangelism, whatever form it takes, and is interested in learning new skills, to get in touch with the SEC Sabbath School and Personal Ministries departments.

Runners show off their skills in the ‘Evangelist relay, the SEC School of Evangelism Graduation.

BUC President Ian Sweeney presents Krista with her certificate.


Graduates standing for the SEC School of Evangelism Graduation at SEC camp meeting 2014

Happy graduate


Graduates standing for the SEC School of Evangelism Graduation at SEC camp meeting 2014

Happy graduate

Miles smiling at the camera.


Graduates standing for the SEC School of Evangelism Graduation at SEC camp meeting 2014

Happy graduate

Miles smiling at the camera.


Graduates standing for the SEC School of Evangelism Graduation at SEC camp meeting 2014

Happy graduate

Miles smiling at the camera.
Camp Meeting

“You are in this for eternity”

Westminster. He is currently working on his MA in Theology through Newblood College. He is married to Marcia and is pastor of the Bedford Central and Milton Keynes International churches.

“He is very skilled in communication and, as ministry is about positive communication, Sam Davies is a good pastor,” said Pastor Perry. “It was good to have a younger man with more energy to work with and he was a good person in visiting; the church saw the results of his hard work in the growth of the church-plant in Stonebridge.”

“I think, in a way, the seriousness of the occasion made it dawn on me that I have a commitment to the vision I have had since I was young,” admitted Pastor Sam Davies. “In many ways it is with a sense of trepidation that I take on this serious charge, and on the other side I also feel like thanking God for the confirmation of a road I’ve taken from the age of 12. A good number of my friends and family watched online in Spain, Iceland, Ghana and the UK! As well as their support, I have my wife, who is just as excited about this step in our lives, and we are looking forward to picking up this challenge together.”

Pastor Osei’s wife, Laura, focused on the families supporting the ordinands. She spoke to Marcia and Olivia with a similar mix of humour and serious advice.

“Comfort your husband, but your are also the one to give him a wake-up call,” said Laura Osei. “You are together, like the song “Stand By Your Man,” but don’t only stand by your man: kneel down in prayer for him.”

“I really appreciated what Laura said to us,” commented Olivia Smith. “She’s just such a funny person and was able to get her point across and make us laugh at the same time. I wasn’t nervous about any of it and as the ordination was happening I just felt happler and happier! I didn’t feel like I was in the spotlight, there was a kindness in the air and in everyone’s gaze.”

The service concluded with ministerial colleagues laying hands on the newly ordained pastors while Pastor Ian Sweeney, British Union Conference president, prayed for them, their families and their walk with God.

Baptism

Baptism is always a special time, not only for the baptismal candidates, but also for the churches they become a part of. There was no exception to this at the South England Conference camp meeting, where six individuals were baptised by Pastors Petras Bahadur and Kwadwo Kwarteng-Ampong, on Saturday 29 June.

A former Muslim family of four were baptised into the Adventist Church alongside Aisha Palmer, from Horley Gileath Church, and Pamela Joseph, of the Ipswich church. “It was a lovely service,” commented Andrew Davis, intern pastor at Ipswich Church. “It was moving and the testimonies given from each of the candidates were really encouraging.”

Those gathered for the baptism were told the amazing story of how the previously Muslim family had come to accept Jesus in their lives. SEC president, Sam Davies, was present throughout the service and expressed how he was especially proud to witness the baptism. It was wonderful to hear how these candidates have come to the Lord and how our churches have welcomed them. Listening to the story about the family that were baptised together today is truly inspiring and I look forward to telling their story across the Conference – God can make a way, even when we as humans can’t see it.

The path to baptism for the family of four had begun with the son of the family, who found himself walking into the South West London Ghana Adventist church during their evangelistic campaign, in March 2013, which was presented by Pastor Kirk Thomas, Personal Ministries and Sabbath School director at the SEC. The son was thrilled with what he heard about the beliefs he shared – our health message – specifically regarding the eating of clean foods as outlined in Leviticus. He then brought his father, then his mother, and eventually his younger sister to attend the South West London Ghana church.

“I really felt the Spirit of the Lord moving during the baptism,” commented Pastor Kwarteng-Ampong, pastor of his church. “It just shows that God can always find His own way of guiding those who need Him to His Church.”

Living in a predominantly Muslim area, the family encountered conflict between the community they had previously been a part of and their new-found Christian beliefs. They found that moving from the area allowed them to celebrate their beliefs openly.

It was from their new location that they were able to take Bible studies with Pastor Petras Bahadur, director of Adventist-Muslim Relations in the UK. They used different ways of doing this, including the phone, Skype and other internet applications. After several months of study, father, mother, son and daughter decided to be baptised together at camp meeting – what a way to make God known!

Your views of camp meeting

Georgina Francis on Youth programme, iRelate: “I felt comfortable at first, but then everybody started opening up and I realised many other people my age feel the same way I do. One girl was saying that he has more respect for girls that respect themselves, and I think that was important for lots of the girls to hear.”

Peter Martin on Friday’s devotional speaker, Dr Charles Wesley Knight: “I think the term ‘spiritual amnesia’ is spot on. Sometimes great things happen to us and we are full of praise to God, and then, just like Nebuchadnezzar, the next moment we completely, 100% forget what God has just brought us through!”

10-year-old Shannon, on the Juniors programme, by joint speakers Andrew Davis and Anthony Faller: “They were trying to show us what it’s like to be loyal to God. It was so funny when they made three of us act like Daniel and his friends from the Bible; they had to walk against us in a crowd coming from the other way. It looked so hard! They had to fight their way through all the crowd until they were safe.”

Dr Chidi Nwabia on Dr Chidi Nwabia’s morning health talks about milk: “The market inside the South England Conference camp meeting has gone bust because of me. The shops assistants told me that nobody had been buying milk from the shop since I exposed its dangers!”

SEC executive secretary, Pastor Terry Messenger, on Sherry Grace’s morning Prayer & Praise sessions: “One thing I observed was that the quality of speakers was excellent, right the way through from the morning speakers to the evening speakers. I did a lot of running around during the week, but one thing that I thought was really beneficial was the morning Prayer & Praise service, with Sherry Grace, simply because she was very real when talking about her own experience.”

by Pastor Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist and Katie Ramharacksingh

Pastors Gerald Smith, left above, and Sam Davies, right above, were ordained at the South England Conference camp meeting, in Wales, on Saturday, 29 June. Hundreds of people witnessed the service where the two ordinands officially transitioned from licensed ministers to ordained ministers.

Sometimes these things can come across as a basic formality, but for me it was a spiritual blessing,” endorsed Pastor Jerry Smith. “I’m still reflecting upon it and its implications in my churches. As I have young children, I would probably use simple terms to explain it to them, maybe saying that the people of the church are happy with what Daddy is doing and they want him to continue working hard for Jesus!”

“You are in this for eternity,” charged Pastor Emmanuel Osei, director of the Ministerial Association at the SEC. His address during the ordination, a service that officially affirms pastors to the ministry, skillfully balanced humour with the serious elements of being a pastor.

Pastor Aris Vontzalidis, SEC Church Growth director, introduced Jerry Smith as “an excellent preacher and teacher” who felt a call to ministry shortly after being baptised in his early 20s: a call that scared him to death. He now holds an MDiv from Andrews University, Michigan, and has pastored in the SEC for five and a half years. He is married to Olivia and currently pastors the Chatham and Riverway churches.

Jerry loves to dig deep into the Word of God and give it to the people,” continued Pastor Vontzalidis. “Possessing a mission-heart for the community, he evangelises by planting churches. Jerry is continually training his members to reach into the community.”

Pastor Cecil Perry, former president of both the British Union Conference and the South England Conference, described Sam Davies as a good Christian and a serious young man. Pastor Davies felt the call of the ministry from the age of 12 and now holds a BA in Theology and an MA in Journalism, from the University of
Coldfield churches brought Erdington members together for a prayer conference from Friday 26 to Saturday 27 April, together with prayer coordinators Maude Murray and Frederica Reid.

Pastor Steve Palmer of the Erdington, Ladywood and the Sutton
Erdington prayer conference

we believe that Heaven’s choirs were singing with us as we rejoiced last year, which culminated in her baptism. Diane’s two daughters, Kayleigh and Nicole, and their children, as well as Diane’s dear friend, Carol, witnessed the baptism.

About eighteen months ago, Diane just walked into the church hall the baptism of Diane Morton by Pastor Paul Haworth.

Each participant received a pack with the book

Church presence at Peace Festival

Balloons, face painting, prayer requests and Bible study were enjoyed at the Leamington Spa church stall at the local annual Peace Festival, on 15 and 16 June.

For the fourth year running the Personal Ministries team and members of the Leamington Spa church gave away free balloons with the church name, logo, address and website printed on. The free face painting and a craft activity for the children provided opportunities to engage with parents and other passers-by and to offer free literature and DVDs.

Some people wanted to know more about the church and what it stands for. Three people requested prayers, one of which took place on the spot, and Antonia Castellino had a conversation about Jesus’ second coming with a member of the Bahá’í faith, continuing the next day as a mini Bible study!

We pray that God will speak to the people through the literature and personal contacts.

ANTONIA CASTELLINO

Sabbath School Week of Study

Seven days, seven speakers, seven lessons and one theme: ‘Behold the Word’

The North England Conference Sabbath School Week of Study (18-25 May) was the longest Sabbath School ever held in the NEC, maybe even the BUC. The class lasted seven days and was led by seven teachers: Pastors Gary Swanson, Clifford Goldstein, Michael Hamilton, Lorance Johnson and Victor Marshall, assisted by Alexander Douglas and Craig Gooden.

The purpose of the Sabbath School Week of Study was to encourage members to read and study the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy more regularly, in compliance with one of the strategic goals within the NEC four-year plan. The subjects covered were intended to re-kindle interest in the pillars of our faith, teach members to recognise the importance of Sabbath School, and show how learning can be integrated with interactive methods.

The ‘cone of learning’ was used to illustrate how we learn, and that our relationships with God and with those to whom we witness are much more important than tempting distractions.

In the afternoon speaker Pastor Pujic described the changing culture in which we live: for example, although people are able to assimilate information much faster than they were a century ago, their attention span is much less – about 7 minutes on average. This contrasts sharply with the length of a typical Adventist sermon! Similarities, GPS navigation systems illustrate the way that people are used to having many different choices in their lives. If you miss one turning, it’s no problem because you’ll be rerouted down another one. Again, this is in contrast to the Adventist message – with just one road and a narrow one at that!

While affirming the teachings of the Adventist Church, Pastor Pujic insisted that we must become more skilled at presenting them. ‘We say that we have the truth, but this comes across as exclusive, complacent and arrogant. We say that we are the fastest-growing church, but the truth is that we are not very good at keeping people in the church. We say that we have the best knowledge of the Bible, but we don’t know how to put it across to people. We have to be much more creative than facts.’

In concluding, Pastor Pujic said that if we are to meet the postmodern challenge today we need to ‘tell the story of Jesus like lovers and artists, not like lawyers and salespersons’.

For more information see: www.ministrytopostmoderns.com.

PASTOR JOHN SUPPES

Erdington prayer conference

Pastor Steve Palmer of the Erdington, Ladywood and the Sutton

Coldfield churches brought Erdington members together for a prayer conference from Friday 26 to Saturday 27 April, together with prayer co-ordinators Muide Murray and Frederica Reid. The day was a blessed blend of prayer, praise and worship, where the Lord’s presence was sought in prayer sessions led by Shiloh Harmitt and Pastors Cecily Perry, Victori Dranca, Ian Sleeman and Berte de Nysschen. Many were blessed by an attendee’s testimony of miraculous healing.

Pastor Terry Messenger, SEC executive secretary, focused on Mark 1:40-45 in his devotional, outlining that God is more than willing to restore us. Dr Christopher Levy, emergency physician and lifestyle doctor, provided a thought-provoking presentation on the ‘body-mind connection’. Janet Hamilton, MOHAP founder and director, discussed how God can work through medical science. Dr Colin Gordon examined the causes of stress and included a short stress test.

Pastor Emmanuel Geere, SEC Ministerial and Prayer Ministries director, offered the prayer of consecration for the participating pastors. Each pastor also passed pastoral prayer and brief one-to-one counselling for those requesting it.

For more information see: www.mohap.org, or phone 07407 692 256.

JANET HAMILTON

Mohap day retreat

Bright spring sunshine welcomed attendees to the MOHAP day retreat, hosted at Newbold Church, Blinfold, on Sunday, 26 May 2013, as did soothing piano music.

The day was a blessed blend of prayer, praise and worship, where the Lord’s presence was sought in prayer sessions led by Shiloh Harmitt and Pastors Cecily Perry, Victori Dranca, Ian Sleeman and Berte de Nysschen. Many were blessed by an attendee’s testimony of miraculous healing.

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JANET HAMILTON

Sabbath School Week of Study

Seven days, seven speakers, seven lessons and one theme: ‘Behold the Word’

The North England Conference Sabbath School Week of Study (18-25 May) was the longest Sabbath School ever held in the NEC, maybe even the BUC. The class lasted seven days and was led by seven teachers: Pastors Gary Swanson, Clifford Goldstein, Michael Hamilton, Lorance Johnson and Victor Marshall, assisted by Alexander Douglas and Craig Gooden.

The purpose of the Sabbath School Week of Study was to encourage members to read and study the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy more regularly, in compliance with one of the strategic goals within the NEC four-year plan. The subjects covered were intended to re-kindle interest in the pillars of our faith, teach members to recognise the importance of Sabbath School, and show how learning can be integrated with interactive methods.

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IN THE BEGINNING

Where did we come from?

What are we doing here?

These are big and important questions. But can we even answer to them?

Science is a great tool for helping us to understand our world and our universe.

Is it possible for religion and science to be in harmony? How should we interpret the Genesis account which talks about Creation? Can science lend credible support for a belief in a Creator God? Does Creation provide a rational explanation for the natural world as we know it?

We hope to welcome you to some of our programmes as we explore what happened in the beginning.

2 August, 7.30pm

EVIDENCE FOR THE FLOOD AND NOAH’S ARK

Dr Farid Abou-Rahme, Author, Lecturer

Light refreshments will be served

Stanborough Park Church, 609 St Albans Road, Watford, WD2 5JL

www.chanceordesign.com

Obituary

Henry Brian Oliver (1933-2013)

On 10 June, family, friends and church members gathered at the Hall Crematorium Chapel to bid goodbye, for now, to Henry Oliver Brian, as he was commonly known, who was born on Christmas Eve 1933, only child of Andrew and Jessie Oliver, on a farm in Goshill Marsh, Lincolnshire, weighing only 3lb 12oz (about 800g). He survived that winter smothered in cotton wool and olive oil, being fed jersey milk through a fortnight ’en – and with no incubator! He grew up through the war years and attended Hall Church every Sabbath, crossing the Humber on the ferry from New Holland. He was baptised by Pastor McCrow in 1947 and after school Brian took a theological course at Newfield College, although he always wanted to be a steam engine driver, a dream he never realised. He did become a platelayer, having done two years ’ national service as a hospital orderly.

Brian met Joan Watling through church when he was 21 years old, and they were married on 25 March 1957. The couple were blessed with two daughters, Maris and Joy. The girls always remembered their dad for his gift of storytelling, particularly about ‘Little Red Engine’ – their very own Rev. Andrew! This close-knit family continued to take the ferry to church each Sabbath until they moved to Hall in 1973.

Brian served the Lord and his church all his life through lay preaching, leading the Sabbath School department, youth ministry, deaconship and as Communication secretary (not all at the same time though). And, of course, he was a great children’s story-teller.

Brian took delight in his grandchildren, and he and Joan often looked after them whilst Maris and Joy were at work. Brian loved playing games with them and taking them to the park. He also loved slapstick comedy and would laugh loud and long at Laurel and Hardy and Norman Wisdom.

He did have health problems, exacerbated by diabetes in his later years. But two things were always foundational to his heart – his family and his church. His faith helped him to bear the difficulties of life, none greater than the loss of his beloved Joan in December 2003. And even in his own twilight days when his mind was often confused, one subject he frequently mentioned was his longing for his Lord’s return.

Brian was described by his loved ones as an old-fashioned gentleman – quiet and unassuming, reliable, honest, humble and modest. We will miss him, and, as he did, look forward to Jesus’ return when we can be reunited.

Pastor Solon Kyriacou
**Community Ministries Federation Day**

On Sunday 28 May, the Community Ministries Federation held their annual meeting at the Welling church, introduced by the Plumstead Pathfinder Drum Corps. Pastor Barrett reinforced the importance of community services, and Sister Bernard from Baham gave a testimony encouraging all to stay focused on Calvary, whatever the cost. Community Ministries director, Liz Simpson, also spoke on common challenges and thanked everyone for their hard work.

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**Stanborough student wins silver**

On Monday 17 June, Stanborough School athletes Angel, Esther, India, Marvin and Shalom participated in the ISA National Athletics finals as champions for the London North region at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham. Special congratulations go to Angel, who won a silver medal (at national level) in the Year 8/9 girls 100m race.

Exercise is integral to Stanborough’s holistic development of its students.

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**Power of 35,000**

- **28th September 2013**
- **Union Wide Literature Distribution**

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**Stanborough Secondary School**

Are you interested in sending your child to Stanborough Secondary School? Are you worried about transport? CKG Quality Childcare offers a school run transportation service and is currently serving the St Albans, Luton and Woburn areas. If there is sufficient demand they would be happy to expand their capacity and route coverage to accommodate your requirements. Please contact them directly at info@ckgltd.co.uk or text 07956 502 465.

Stanborough Secondary School serves as a conveyor of information only in this matter, therefore please make every effort to ensure the service is suitable for your purposes.

Stanborough Secondary School offers a high standard of Seventh-day Adventist education where 79% of students achieved five A*-C passes in the June 2012 GCSE examinations, with many subjects achieving 100% pass rates. In addition, our students learn in a happy, beautiful and safe environment.

Places are still available in Years 7-10, including boarding. Please contact the school at the address below.

**Stanborough Secondary School**

Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts, WD25 9JT

Tel: 01923 673268, email: spoddar@spsch.org.uk or jdavis@spsch.org.uk

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**Exercise is integral to Stanborough’s holistic development of its students.**

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**Vanessa 11A – St. August 2013**

**Editor: J. G. Hibbert**

**Design: David Bell**

**Proof reading: Andrew Puckering**

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**Valda Taylor, Plumstead Community Ministries**

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**VANESA PIZZUTO**

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