West of Ireland Day of Fellowship

It was worth coming just to hear Mandy. The daughter of a Rwandan refugee, her beautiful smile and captivating testimony clearly demonstrated that God still makes a difference in young lives.

A member of Newmarket-on-Fergus Adventist Church, Mandy plans to study medicine when she leaves school this year. Her one problem: an important exam fell on Sabbath. She made a personal decision not to take that exam and stayed faithful to God even though it would break her away from the only career she had ever wanted.

God intervened, and while all other Irish students took the exam on Saturday, 1 March, Mandy travelled to Dublin the next day and was the only student in the whole of Ireland to take the exam on Sunday. ‘What a witness this was to my fellow students,’ she exclaimed to a marquee of enthusiastic church members who burst into spontaneous applause.

Mandy was not alone. During an afternoon testimony service at the West of Ireland Day of Fellowship, Seipo from Cork shared how he was now meeting up with friends from school, in particular helping one who had recently had a breakdown. Doreen talked of the church plant she has started in the Millstreet Refugee Centre where she lives.

More applause came as the Longford church welcomed a new Irish member who had been in attendance every week for the last month – simply because of the power of music. And 14-year-old Jared shared how he was able to witness to an elderly lady during the recent health expo in Dublin.

Galway, Longford and Newmarket pastor, Tony O’Rourke, felt really blessed by the stories he heard. ‘I am really encouraged to see how the youth in our churches are making a stand for their faith as was reflected in the powerful testimonies we heard.’

West of Ireland Adventists are made of stern stuff. Sabbath, 12 April was both cold and damp – and services were in a marquee at the Kilnasloagh Adventist campsite, Newmarket-on-Fergus. But it did not deter them from coming in numbers to fill the marquee, celebrate God with a vibrant variety of musical styles, enjoy a sumptuous feast of quality vegetarian cuisine, and listen to God’s Word presented by British Union Conference Communication and Media director, Pastor Victor Hubert.

As the day was focused on testimony, Victor took the opportunity in Sabbath School to share how God is using the media, particularly opportunities on Revelation TV and on YouTube, to share His message. Divine Service continued that theme as Victor’s sermon mixed storytelling and media skills with the important message of the Book of Romans to ‘not [be] ashamed of the Gospel of Christ’.

The local pastoral team believes that days like this are important. Cork pastor, Jeff Freeman, states, ‘Days of Fellowship are great opportunities for all members, particularly opportunities on Revelation TV and on YouTube, to share His message. Divine Service continued that theme as Victor’s sermon mixed storytelling and media skills with the important message of the Book of Romans to ‘not [be] ashamed of the Gospel of Christ’.

Tony concludes, ‘It’s days like this that one comes to realise the diversity of our churches, and how people from all walks of life can come together and reflect the love of Jesus to each other.’

A selection of photos from the day can be seen at: adventist.org.uk/news/gallery/gallery-ir/west-of-ireland-day-of-fellowship.

PHOTO: VICTOR HULBERT
Dr Ngwaba: Yes, they are more prevalent and are appearing at earlier stages in the lives of people. They are a symptom of our modern lives, demonstrating the fact that where wealth goes up, health goes down. Instead of waking as we used to, we now take the car. Instead of the simpler diets of the past we now have easy access to fatty, sugary and salty food. We have more leisure time so we can sit and watch TV for hours on end – and we allow the cars to ferry people to keep us busy, making us stressed at the same time. All of these factors contribute to poor health.

SPM: What is your expertise in it to get prompt intervention?

Dr Ngwaba: It is vital to get treatment as soon as possible. The sooner you start treatment, the sooner you can be free from the illness and prevent any further complications, which can often be irreversible. Ignoring symptoms is very much like avoiding the warning signs of a fire in your car. If you don't do something about it soon, you will face a worse problem later. This is why I also recommend annual lifestyle health check-ups in the same way that we do an MOT test for our cars.

SPM: Do you find cultural background or ethnicity playing any role in how you treat your patients respond to their medical conditions?

Dr Ngwaba: There is almost an epidemic of these diseases? and are appearing at earlier stages in the lives of people. They are a symptom of our modern lives, demonstrating the fact that where wealth goes up, health goes down. Instead of waking as we used to, we now take the car. Instead of the simpler diets of the past we now have easy access to fatty, sugary and salty food. We have more leisure time so we can sit and watch TV for hours on end – and we allow the cars to ferry people to keep us busy, making us stressed at the same time. All of these factors contribute to poor health.

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SPM: Do you find cultural background or ethnicity playing any role in how you treat your patients respond to their medical conditions?
Got a puncture. Love? Need any help changing it?

You are His personal concern

by Sarah Jarvis

The LORD is near to all who call on him; . . . (Psalm 145:18, ESV)

The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.’ (Deuteronomy 31:8, NIV)

I could go on and on. Yes, we know the texts, but isn’t wonderful when we have the tangible evidence that they’re true? They’re not piecemeal promises; they’re cash-in-guaranteed ones.

So whatever problems you face, you can be certain that He who has promised is faithful.

Matthew, one of God’s ‘disciples’, had been sent to remind me of that cold January day when I had a puncture. God is God, in everything, no matter how small and insignificant. He cares about it because it concerns you and because He loves you.

I noticed a little cemetery just outside the last village I came through. Don’t really know why, but I thought I’d stop for five minutes and take a look.

I felt a shiver down my spine. ‘I know why,’ I responded. ‘The Lord knew I would be coming along and He knew I’d need help, so He prompted you to stop so you’d be passing just at the right time.’

He smiled again. ‘You move your car onto the road – I need a flat surface. Then I’ll put my van behind you to protect you in case any vehicles come along.’

That brought another text to mind – Psalm 121:

The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand . . . The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. (vss. 5-6, KJV)

Matthew got down in the dirt – and with all this rain we’d been having, there was an awful lot of it – and uncomplainingly changed my tyre. I offered to pay him, but he refused to take anything. He even waited to make sure I was OK driving off.

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In this article I suggest that we can classify all prophetic messages into five categories. In my view there are certain warnings about apocalypse; possible attacks from neighbouring countries, families and peoples; and the dangers of the exile experienced by the people. These prophetic warnings were usually unambiguous, but they left no scope for a change of heart, a renewed obedience and mercy to be shown to the contrite heart. The prophet spoke as a preacher and many OT prophetic themes have been used as warnings against sin, sinners and apostates throughout Christian history.

Prophecies about the first coming of Jesus Christ This is the OT theme of the prophetic messages foretelling the birth, life, ministry, suffering and death of Christ, as well as the resurrection and ascension of His first coming, with some made up to 1,000 years before He was born. The prophetic foretold, among other things, that a virgin would give birth to a boy named Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14), in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Also that He would be the Root to the nation (Isaiah 11:1-2) and the King of Israel (Daniel 2:44) and His High Priest, and latterly the High Priest to the whole world (Daniel 9:25-27). Even the dates of His earthly ministry and death are written into prophecy.

The second coming of Jesus Christ This is the OT theme of the prophetic messages foretelling the coming of the Messiah in glory, to judge the world and to reign on earth. The Psalms (2:8-9) and Daniel (2:44-45) are prophetic texts which clearly describe the nature of the Messiah. Daniel (7, 8) prophesied of how the Son of Man would come with power and great glory, to rule over all the nations, and to judge all the dead (Daniel 7:14). As a result of the events around AD 83 the Roman emperor renamed himself as the Messiah and recognized it as the dominating power for 1,269 years (Daniel 7:25, Revelation 13:6). As a result of the foretold end-time prophecies in the religious and political world empire and the end-time world mission began to bloom.

End times, the Day of Judge, the Second Coming and the end-time prophecies In this article I suggest that we can classify all prophetic messages into five categories. In my view there are certain warnings about apocalypse; possible attacks from neighbouring countries, families and peoples; and the dangers of the exile experienced by the people. These prophetic warnings were usually unambiguous, but they left no scope for a change of heart, a renewed obedience and mercy to be shown to the contrite heart. The prophet spoke as a preacher and many OT prophetic themes have been used as warnings against sin, sinners and apostates throughout Christian history.
**Wolverhampton city-wide baptism**

On Sabbath 22 February, the Adventist churches of Wolverhampton held a special baptismal service at Wolverhampton Central Church. The day began with a celebration of the Lord’s supper in the morning, and closed with a baptism service in the afternoon.

Pastor Colin Woodford conducted the baptism. Those who have just been baptised are being encouraged to continue attending Bible study classes, to help them as they grow in their spiritual experience.

**Dramatic decisions for Christ**

The members of the Bedford Central church had their lively youth week of prayer and with some dramatic decisions for Christ on Sabbath, 22 March. Ten people committed their lives to Christ after guest speaker Greg Clay Davis, South Ghana Conference, Enugu, enthused them with personal examples of how Christ can make a difference to one’s life, even when it seems to be at breaking point.

Emma Fuller and Nastasja Gugleta, aged 9 and 10 respectively, during the service, did not expect to make a decision for Christ; however, she was moved by the sermons and responded to the appeal. So did teenager Thembile, who boldly stepped forwards on Tuesday, and Naomi, whose decision was both personal and a gift for her loving parents.

The youth were challenged by Pastor Davis to keep inviting their friends and by Friday Malorie, one of the youth, invited a friend, Grace, who had never been to an Adventist church before. After the evening’s appeal, Grace stepped forwards confidently to accept Christ and be baptised the following day. On the Sabbath before her baptism she said that she had been searching for a long time for something that would satisfy her quest for the truth. Then after hearing the speaker expand so convincingly on the Sabbath that Friday, she knew she could no longer continue without the Lord in her life.

Pastor Greg’s message struck a responsive chord within her, because both came from a Catholic background. Her newfound love with Christ was expressed with a punch in the air as she came out of the pool, accompanied by spontaneous applause from the congregation. Equally dramatic was the decision by Shaiza, the wife of one of the candidates.

Shaiza says that she had wrestled the whole week with the question of whether or not to be baptised, and was increasingly restless after the morning sermon. As she sat with the resident pastor’s wife, Marcia Davis, she gently asked her, ‘How will you know if the time is right for your baptism?’ Marcia responded by saying, ‘If that becomes the only thing occupying your thoughts.’ That, she said, confirmed it for her. She rushed to knock on the church pastor’s office door where the rest of the candidates were receiving some final words before the baptism. Suddenly it was all joy in the room, with special smiles on the newly baptised’s face.

The newly baptised thus included two couples – husband and wife – and a mother and daughter.

**Luton baptisms**

The church was packed to capacity as family and friends from all around the UK, the Netherlands, Jamaica and Luton gathered at Luton Central Church to celebrate the event.

Beverley Haynes, who came to Luton three years ago as a student at the University of Bedfordshire, was the first to be baptised. Bethany John, Joan Powell, Diane Bloomfield, Taridzo Mazenenga, Frank and Iris Fortune and Aayizat Odunlami followed. Each chose a favourite text to share with the congregation – with four of them using ‘I know the plans I have for you . . . plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. . . .’ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:11-13, NIV)

For husband and wife, Frank and Iris Fortune, it was the culmination of a long and difficult journey. In January 2013 Frank suffered a serious brain haemorrhage. Consequently, the months leading up to their baptism were marked by many physical, emotional and spiritual challenges, but these ultimately drew both Iris and Frank closer to Christ. Like Charles Spurgeon, they can also say, ‘The worst days I have ever had have turned out to be my best days. For their family and friends it is an answer to prayer.

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**An affirmation of faith**

Sabbath 8 March was a day to remember for two young ladies from Leamington Spa Mission, Emma Fuller and Anastasia Gaugleta, aged 9 and 10 respectively. During the service they were each presented with a ‘Certificate of Affirmation of Faith’ in recognition of their commitment to complete Bible studies and be baptised in the future – a decision deeply respected by all who were present.

**Kasai finds Jesus**

(On 22 March the Darlington church witnessed the baptism of Kasai Pokoiozwe, who came from Poland to study in England. Here she also found the truth about the plan of salvation and gave her life to Jesus. It was a moving service conducted by Pastor Colin Woodford on his last day as the pastor for Darlington. Many of her friends from Queen Elizabeth College poured in to see the event, which served as a very good witness. Please include her spiritual growth in your prayers.)

**Reporting from Darlington**

IAN SABADIN, COMMUNICATIONS

The church was overflowing as the candidates all had one thing in common – a great sense of joy and happiness as they committed their lives to God.

Although from a wide age range, the candidates, mostly young people, gave their lives to the Lord. Besides members from all the Bristol churches – and visitors also from Nottingham, Swindon, Cornwall, and London – there were also a number of curious community members present.

“Taking great delight in baptising Dale from Wolverhampton Central; Shirley Lawrence from Wednesfield; Kobe and Latifi Butler (twins) from Bliston; Ashley Campbell from Pendeford; and Wilma Maxwell from Great Bricknell Church, Pastor McIntosh spoke on Luke 15, highlighting that the lost son was more valuable than the sheep and coin. Pastor R. Jackson offered the prayer of consecration while Pastors Appiah and McIntosh conducted the baptism.”

LORRAINE GLINTON

Kasia finds Jesus

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I know you love the Adventist Church,
partnership. Byron is a fifth-generation Adventist but when we met he was not attending church. I was a Baptist who ... years ago we decided to be baptised together as Adventists and it's one of the best decisions we have ever made.

degree and struggling with the statistics, he was the one who coached me through it. He is dependable and reliable; even when I am working into the early hours he will be there offering help, or just to be there with me.

When I was studying for my Master's different: 'Beside every successful woman there is a strong, successful man.' Byron and I work as equal partners. We are a team, supporting each other in work, study or ministry, giving encouragement as necessary.

My take to that would be a bit

is very close to my heart. For the past twenty years-plus I have given voluntarily one week of my holiday to help out at Aberdaron Special Needs Camp. It is one date in my diary that is immovable.

Yes, quite a few, but there is one that

community initiatives?

tell us about how we could be more caring and compassionate within our local communities?

island, but I was excited at the prospect of new experiences and opportunities. The transition was made easier because I was travelling with my mother and sister to join my dad and brothers. And my best school friend was an Adventist and I became interested in Adventist teachings through her. I actually did several Voice of Prophecy courses and wanted to be baptised into the Adventist Church but I was too young and I had to approach my parents because of them being Baptist. I knew my mother would say I was only 'following fashion' because of my friend, so I decided to be baptised into the Baptist Church.

What was it like to leave the warm and sunny Caribbean to settle here? Haven't you ever longed to go back, permanently?

Eseata: I was raised in a Christian home, my parents being third-generation Baptists. We attended Sunday School and church weekly. I accepted Jesus into my life in my early teens and wanted to be baptised. My best school friend was an Adventist and I became interested in Adventist teachings through her. I actually did several Voice of Prophecy courses and wanted to be baptised into the Adventist Church but I was too young and I had to approach my parents because of them being Baptist. I knew my mother would say I was only 'following fashion' because of my friend, so I decided to be baptised into the Baptist Church.

Editor: Was what it like to leave the warm and sunny Caribbean to settle here? Haven’t you ever longed to go back, permanently?

Eseata: I was sad to leave the beautiful

During this time I also acquired a postgraduate diploma in Management.

Editor: Eseata, you thank for being willing to share your passion for the disadvantaged with us, please tell us a little about your formative years.

In this issue of MESSENGER we take the opportunity to talk to Eseata Steele, a member of the Great Bricklin Street church, who has shown a relentless commitment to the improvement of living conditions for the aged within black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.

Editor: Eseata, thank you for being willing to share your passion for the disadvantaged with us, please tell us a little about your formative years.

Eseata: Well, Pastor Julian, I grew up in a small community in Seafield District, Hanover, Jamaica. I first attended Pondside School, then Montego Bay Technical Institute for a year, after which I enrolled for O-level studies.

I was fortunate in that my dad had his

moved by the plight of our elders I

Eseata: It was a new experience for me when I was trained as a health visitor. I worked for several years, training and supervising student health visitors.

Then an opportunity arose for me to utilise my nursing while developing my teaching skills, so I left the NHS and went into education as a lecturer at a college of technology. There I taught Health Studies for several years, and obtained a Master’s degree in Education at the University of Birmingham. After fourteen years in education I became excited by the changes in the NHS and I returned to work in a Primary Care Trust. This propelled me into a senior management position, managing several teams of community nurses, health visitors, school nurses, nursery nurses and others. I also served in the areas of development, project management and professional development.

Newbold College of Higher Education is the

Editor: Eseata, I must to that there would be a bit different: ‘Beside every successful woman there is a strong, successful man.’ Byron and I work as equal partners. We are a team, supporting each other in work, study or ministry, giving encouragement as necessary.

When I was studying for my Master’s degree and struggling with the statistics, he was the one who coached me through it. He is dependable and reliable; even when I am working into the early hours he will be there offering help, or just to be there with me.

Our lives have also been a spiritual partnership. Byron is a fifth-generation Adventist but when we met he was not attending church. I was a Baptist who had once hankered to be an Adventist. Thirty-four years ago we decided to be baptised together as Adventists and it’s one of the best decisions we have ever made.

Editor: Sometimes we jokingly say, ‘Behind every successful man there is a woman telling him what to do!’ About what? About what role has your husband, Byron, played in your life?

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Editor: I know you love the Adventist Church, but is there something brief that you want to tell us about how we could be more caring and compassionate within our local communities?

Eseata: Always practice the ‘Jesus method’. He cared for the needs of people first, and met them where they were. It is high time we stop ‘playing church’ and get out into the communities where real work is needed.

Editor: Are you involved in any other community initiatives?

Eseata: Yes, quite a few, but there is one that is very close to my heart. For the past twenty years-plus I have given voluntarily one week of my holiday to help out at Aberdaron Special Needs Camp. It is one date in my diary that is immovable.

Editor: Eseata, thankyou again for sharing with us. I feel enriched by your responses and I am sure that our readers will too.
by Jacqui Stone

When Noah set sail, seven days after God’s hand shut the door of the ark, those on board were his family – a wife, three sons and their wives – and a whacking boat full of animals!

What was God thinking of? They were in a strange environment floating on hostile waters! Where was God taking them? Noah didn’t know. How long would they be in the ark? Noah had no idea. How did God expect them to survive/to manage? Noah hadn’t a clue.

What he did comprehend, however, was that they were in the hands of God.

So, in 2012 we entered our ‘ark’ in Rivenhall, Essex – a sleepy village of around 750 people, just off the A12. Blink and you’ll miss it . . . but not God! He . . . looks out for us and gets us noticed. We were so well received and effortlessly made a home in the village

It was a strange environment and the door closed for us. Where were we going? We didn’t know. How long would we be here? We hadn’t a clue. How did God expect us to manage? We hadn’t a clue.

And this is precisely what we have aimed at in Rivenhall. It hasn’t been rocket science; it hasn’t required a psychology degree or even necessitated attending a stream of workshops – just a willingness to go, like Noah, and listen to God on the way.

Hence, at 2pm on Sabbath afternoons, our banner goes up, our doors are opened. All are welcome and accepted, no matter what age or background. We dress appropriately for the community who come through our doors – so jeans/t-shirts and our Ark T-shirts are our attire.

There’s Daphnee, probably our most loyal and longest-attending family member. She initially lived in the village. Due to ill health she was wheelchair-bound when outside, but that didn’t prevent us from collecting her weekly, to enjoy the company. Otherwise, it was a lonely week for her with no visitors except her carers. Because of dementia Daphnee now resides in a care home. She is still picked up and delivered home by one of us every Sabbath afternoon. She says it’s the best time of her week.

Daphnee (centre) has been attending The Ark for nearly two years now and enjoys the opportunity to have time out from her care home.

We knew we had support in the village, but it was not what we imagined. We were anxious. Where was God taking us? We didn’t know. How long would we be here? We hadn’t a clue. How did God expect us to manage? We hadn’t a clue.

Our Sabbath mornings have been spent – until recently – nurturing our own ‘ark’ family, with lessons study and worship. Our afternoons have been dedicated to building our new, extended family – and that is exactly how we see our friends from the Rivenhall community – family!

Firm in their beliefs. They discuss, show respect, and offer support wherever necessary.

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There’s Daphnee, probably our most loyal and longest-attending family member. She initially lived in the village. Due to ill health she was wheelchair-bound when outside, but that didn’t prevent us from collecting her weekly, to enjoy the company. Otherwise, it was a lonely week for her with no visitors except her carers. Because of dementia Daphnee now resides in a care home. She is still picked up and delivered home by one of us every Sabbath afternoon. She says it’s the best time of her week.

There’s Malcolm. He lives right next door to the hall. He is a retired man with memory and mobility problems who didn’t want anything to do with us at first because he believed we would be ‘Bible bashers’. One week, however, he gave us ‘a go’! And not only does he now come every Saturday; he is one of our strongest supporters, and is in the process of becoming a helper on our team. He wears his Ark T-shirt with pride. Malcolm was contemplating suicide before he found friendship with us. He is now a changed man.

Viv is his wife. I think she was pretty sceptical of us too at first . . . thought we were just a place Malcolm would go to each Saturday afternoon. She is now a . . . , well, I don’t know what to call her . . . person . . . passionate about our work.

A relaxed family atmosphere is experienced by all at The Ark.

We celebrate their birthdays with presents and exquisite homemade birthday cakes. We love the opportunity to have time out from our cares, yet still to enjoy the community we have built.

Enjoying painting and being creative.

A mixed family atmosphere is experienced by all at The Ark.

We knew we had support in the village, but it was not what we imagined. We were anxious. Where was God taking us? We didn’t know. How long would we be here? We hadn’t a clue. How did God expect us to manage? We hadn’t a clue.

Our Sabbath mornings have been spent – until recently – nurturing our own ‘ark’ family, with lessons study and worship. Our afternoons have been dedicated to building our new, extended family – and that is exactly how we see our friends from the Rivenhall community – family!

Firm in their beliefs. They discuss, show respect, and offer support wherever necessary.

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Where are we with "women's ordination"?

T he issue of women's ordination is currently the subject of intense study at the highest level within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. There have been many discussions among our members, all around the world.

In harmony ... and male roles is biblical. If it is ... fine, follow it. But if it isn't, then it must be rejected.

"To the law and to the testimony they speak not according to this word, because there is nothing like it in them." (KJV 4:20)

In the Bible God has delineated the structure that He wants our families to have. I'm sure many harassed parents would be very happy if their children were leading them in prayer and praise. With such a structure, children are to follow in obedience 'in the Lord'.

"The wife is to respect and ... of the household" (James 4:11).

In both the Bible and the official process through which our church plant is the most amazing, thrilling and blessed venture we have ever done in our spiritual journeys. Every Sabbath is a joy, and brings further revelations that God is ever present in Rivenhall. Where are we with "women's ordination"?

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Women’s World Day of Prayer

Women’s World Day of Prayer services for 2014 took place around the world on 7 March, using material prepared by the Christian women of Egypt. The theme adopted was ‘Streams in the Desert’. The Bournemouth church held their service a day later on Sabbath 8 March, during which the whole programme was colourfully interpreted by some of the congregation’s women.

Pastor Richard Vine and Victoria Wragg assumed the roles of Jesus and the woman at the well, and the assembled members were treated to some beautiful singing by the choir, ably supported by Dara Selby on the piano, along with the Vine Family Band (Douglas, Lucy and Jack Vine).

The speaker for the day was Mrs Emma Lowe, who presented a fresh, interesting and highly motivating insight into the story of the woman at the well.

After the service the men of Bournemouth Church drew on their hidden culinary skills to serve a delicious fellowship lunch to round off a wonderful Sabbath, enjoyed by all.

JOY ELLIOTT

Scottish Mission checks Renfrewshire community’s health age

More than thirty charities and community groups recently came together in Paisley’s Leisure Lagoon Centre to celebrate the launch of ‘Feel Good Renfrewshire’. A prominent church banner soon attracted a queue of those interested in mini-health checks. Among the seventy or so visitors who checked their ‘health age’ was Councillor Ian Mcmillan, convenor of Renfrewshire’s Community Health & Well-being Board.

According to John Wilby, Mission Community Services sponsor, ‘Extending Christ’s healing ministry to our communities in this way encourages changes in lifestyle. It also creates an impact at a time, of the existence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is what Ellen White called “the right arm of its message”.

Health expos, church health clubs and competitive sporting events are all part of the Scottish Mission’s Commonhealth and Well-being project, which is planned to coincide with the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. It recently gained More Than Gold 2014 membership and Legacy status, largely as a result of the SEC’s contribution to the London Olympics and of the long-term community benefits.

JOHN WILBY

Community Cooking Hub update

Most people have healthy eating as a goal. But the gap between wanting to make healthier choices and the reality of transforming your diet can be quite a big leap. People are often confused by the different messages about what is ‘healthy’ versus ‘unhealthy’, and they just give up and eat whatever they prefer. Research shows that the most effective and lasting type of health education is that which is tailored to the audience and as practical as possible.

The Community Cooking Hub is a two-day training course aimed at helping health ministry leaders learn more about healthy eating and how to run effective cooking demonstrations. This BUC-led initiative is part of the union’s nutrition strategy, and through it close to forty members have already been trained.

In April, at Manchester South Church, a team of dedicated helpers led by Smira Powar hosted the first of the Community Cooking Hubs planned for the NEC. This event was partially co-ordinated by Lorraine Questel, Manchester’s Mission to the Cities co-ordinator.

Those who participated in the course gave positive feedback, and here are a few of their comments:

‘The course was well above my expectations. I thoroughly enjoyed the two days. ... The food demonstrations on day 1 ... were excellent and the recipes from participants and the food-tasting sessions on both days were exquisite. It really made healthy eating and vegetarian cookery come alive for me.’ – Veronika (she plans to ‘run a community “healthy cook and eat” programme in a couple of months ... funded by the council’).

‘I was fascinated by the depth of knowledge shared on the course and feel inspired to learn more, which will in turn benefit all the family. ... I have already started sharing my experience of the course with work colleagues and church members.’ – Cheryl.

Course participants were required to demonstrate their own skills and recipes during the event. For instance, Monnette gave a lively role-play demonstration of how to make a simple salad: something that could be used at a Vacation Bible School when the parents are also present. Wislon gave a cooking demonstration aimed at fellow university students, showing how to make a cheap and easy wholegrain and bean dish. He plans to do some vegetarian cooking demonstrations at his university. Lesley, all the way from the Isle of Man, made a delicious ‘Mojito sauce’ with sweet peppers, cashew nuts and a combination of spices. Juliette made two examples of green smoothies, and was able to share her testimony of improved health – which was very motivating.

Three more two-day basic training Community Cooking Hub sessions are planned for 2014. The confirmed locations are Brixton in London, and Dundee in Scotland. It is hoped to run a hub in the West Country (Bristol).

Future plans for these Community Cooking Hubs involve the creation of specialist modules so that those who have attended the basic training can extend their knowledge further. Areas of specialism will include healthy eating for children, and how to run children’s cooking workshops as part of the BUC’s nutrition strategy.

For information about the courses please email: createanutrition@gmail.com.

ANGELETTE MUELLER
Reaching out in Derby

This is the objective of the Derby Bethel church: ‘Finding new avenues to build strong relationships with the community and reaching out for people in material and spiritual need.’

But being the light in the local community is sometimes easier said than done. There’s the fear of rejection; the risk of cramming too much information into the first event or encounter; the hunt for quick results... then discouragement. Most of us have been there and done that, haven’t we?

This time, however, Derby Bethel took a different route, that of ‘compassionate outreach’. It happened like this. Last year a church member proposed the idea of reaching out to the community by providing live essentials to those in need of them: clothing, food and so on. At this Christmas this took the form of a ‘gifts giveaway’ aimed at the children from the community. The idea was simple: church members donated brand-new items (clothing, toys, books, and so on) or good-quality second-hand items (a good way to clear space for new boys). Then the community was invited for a relaxed ‘gifts giveaway’ afternoon – away from the hustle and bustle of Christmas shopping. Many attended and said how they loved the idea and were delighted by the wide choice of gifts available for their children. The following evening they were invited back for a free supper. (Christmas is indeed a good occasion and reason to initiate or re-ignite relationships.)

Encouraged by the success of these first two events, a dedicated and enthusiastic team organised a set of Mother’s Day events for the community based on the same model: a ‘gifts giveaway’ and free evening meal (with a food bank available to all). With an increase of 20% in the attendance, this event was another success. Again, thanks to the generous donations and great support from Bethel members and their prayers and planning, this second set of events was very positively received – with 100% of respondents rating the event as ‘excellent’. This new ministry, branded as ‘With Love From Bethel’, is now on Facebook to share its mission, its updates and its events, and to stay connected with its target audience. According to Clarisse Eysely, events organiser, ‘This encouraging feedback gives a new spring to our steps. We praise God for this success. We know He is doing something in our hearts and in the community. Our vision is to be reconnect with people from our community and show them that we genuinely care. We want to be Jesus’ hands and feet wherever He places us.”

The church catering manager, Lavern Haslam, was thrilled to be a part of such outreach activity: “I am so blessed to be part of it. God is using my talents to the fullest. I thoroughly enjoy doing His work: managing the catering team and having a nice conversation with our guests during and after the events. This brings me great joy.’

These were Derby Bethel’s first steps to establish a positive and sustainable relationship with their local community. There is more to follow – just watch this space!

CLARISSE EYSLEY

House of Praise: 2014

On the evening of 22 February, well over 500 people gathered at the Newbold church in Bracknell to enjoy an exquisite range and variety of live music. Among those who performed was well-known saxophonist, Mark Bunney, and the members of the Reading West Youth Choir. The latter’s lively performance had the audience on their feet in appreciation.

They were not the only ones to wow the listeners that evening. Other talented performers that evening included the Oxford Trio, Higher Ground, Themy and Sylvester, Rebelo, Carli, Afri Ingredi and Total Praise. There were other choirs too, including RCGC, Slough Choir and Bracknell Choir. Newbold Skit also presented a drama based on the story of Joseph and his multi-coloured coat, bringing life to a creative and fun reminder of the importance of forgiveness. George Budjoe engaged the crowd with his powerful poem about the Son, the One called Jesus. The evening’s brilliant praise team did their bit too, having the audience on their feet singing their hearts out on several occasions.

Thames Valley Youth Federation (TVYF) hosted the event to commemorate its annual ‘House of Praise’, 2014 being its eighth anniversary. They use the event to raise funds for a number of their initiatives.

This year’s co-ordinator, Mani Cudjoe, was delighted with the turnout. ‘This year’s turnout was fantastic, and the joyful atmosphere was a reminder to all who were present that in His presence there is indeed fullness of joy.’

The newly appointed TVYF leader, Cheryl Singo, was extremely pleased with the evening, and said, “Each year these events just keep getting better, and that itself is a testimony to how beautiful our praise and worship are to the One for whom they are intended.”

For more information on the annual House of Praise events, or if you would like to perform in the future, please contact Thames Valley Youth Federation at info@tvyf.org.

W G DACRES

Leicester Central’s first investiture

During an all-morning children’s church service at Leicester Central Church on 22 February a special investiture of three Master Guides was held.

This children’s service was conducted in the church basement while the normal family service was being run upstairs. The children and youth enjoyed every moment of the exciting event.

But just before the children’s sermon their director, Ivy Nsingo, led them upstairs to witness their peers, Dionne Roberts, Akiel Dublin and Jenessi Brown, being invested as Master Guides during the family service.

The trio’s achievement marked months of diligent hard work, and they were commended by local Pathfinder director, Pauline Matturi, and Area co-ordinator, Daniel Fannings-Danquah, for their efforts.

CLARISSE ELYSÉE

No worries’ for Torquay cenotaph

When someone turns 100 you would expect them to have few friends left. However, that is clearly not the case for Torquay member, Doreen Clement. On Sunday, 9 March, friends, relatives and well-wishers gathered excitedly at the Livermead hotel, Torquay, to celebrate with her. Doreen is a lady of few words with a warm and ready smile who is obviously much-loved by many. Besides her church friends there was a whole club of ladies from the local Methodist church. Mrs Lurmana Shulz was there from Germany, ‘detemined not to miss this occasion even though it was a long and tiring journey’. A nephew, David from Minnesota, USA, was there to share his boyhood memories of her.

South England Conference treasurer, Earl Ramharacksingh, and his wife, was there to honour Doreen. He delivered a short goodwill speech and a signed card from all the presidents of the Seventh-day Adventist Church within the British Isles, including Pastor Bertil Wikander (Trans-European Division).

When asked what single quality characterised her long life she responded with ease: she does not worry. She certainly had no worries as she celebrated, surrounded by friends, enjoying afternoon tea, and reliving memories of a remarkable life.

District pastor, Ian Loref, then concluded the day with a wonderful prayer for Doreen.
Day of Togetherness: Newmarket, Suffolk

Although it was unlike a traditional Sabbath here in Newmarket, it was still a very blessed day, as Cambridge elder, Henry Makuyana, reminded everyone: “This is an historic moment and will be recorded in the books of Heaven. It was historic because it was the first ever presence of Adventists at this level in Newmarket. There is nothing more exciting than having church right on your own turf, with the full strength of the whole district behind you – Cambridge, Haverhill, Bury St Edmunds and Lakenheath.

The highlights of the day included a powerful testimony from our friend Mdaka and his wife. He witnessed the hand of God upon his life after he had been placed in hospice to die following a serious illness. But he is now back at home, walking unaided, smiling and even attending prayer meetings. This happened after Pastor Stewart and the church elders went to his bedside to anoint him. God heard their prayers.

This was followed by a message from our own district pastor, Colin Stewart, delivered with great enthusiasm and earnestness. During his call four young people stepped forwards to prepare for future baptism. The joyous spirit was not confined to the beautiful Memorial Hall building where the meeting was held, but extended to the town centre as both youth and the young at heart participated in the Global Youth Day. After lunch, almost everyone joined the youth for street witnessing at the market square. The public were entertained by good gospel songs and many joined in the fun we were having, with some even singing along as they passed by.

Some members were talking to those who stopped, offering them the opportunity to give us their prayer requests for us to pray. The reception was fantastic and it was amazing to see how many people living among us are in need of prayer. We gave out a lot of business cards for people to get in touch should they wish to and we had thirteen people from the community give their prayer requests to us.

In the afternoon we had the presentation of future plans by each church, along with more praise, singing and special musical items. The public response to the event was very positive and the members are determined to do it again soon.

HENRY MAKUYANA AND CAMBRIDGE COMMUNICATION

Exciting news: one of our SEC choirs has been invited to represent the UK at next year’s General Conference session in Texas, USA. To be able to make it across the Atlantic the Croydon Seventh-day Adventist Gospel Choir needs the church family’s support, which is why they’ve planned a series of concerts across the UK this summer...
Lest we forget...
Small group, big adventure

Plymouth Church is growing! For years we haven’t had the need for a youth class, but now that is all changing. Over the last year the youth Sabbath School class has grown and now frequently has as many as seven attending every Sabbath.

Last weekend (13-15 March) six of us had the opportunity to head down into Cornwall to stay in Shoelace Cottage in Tywardreath near Par. Our primary objective was to study the Week of Prayer readings on the Kingdom of God, something our busy work, school and university schedules generally made difficult.

Over the weekend we visited Par, Charlestown, Mevagissy and Looe, and walked the cliffs at Carlyon Bay. We had lovely weather and even got to paddle in the sea at Par.

On the Sabbath we joined LIVE! St Austell in their Sabbath service. It was great to interact with another youth group and to see how they are running their project and bringing others in the community closer to God. We greatly enjoyed their worship, with fresh new songs to learn. We met up with the St Austell team again on the Sunday to join in with a local project from Keep Britain Tidy. Together we spent a joyful hour picking up rubbish from the Porthpean beach and surrounding shrubbery. We collected nine bags of rubbish that included a Pepsi can from the ‘80s and a Panda Pops bottle from the ‘70s!

Overall we had a great weekend and grew closer as a group. It was important to us to get to know each other better in a relaxed environment.

JENNIE HALL