Dublin gets hugged!

As the Dublin City of Hope outreach project gathers momentum, young people from the churches around Dublin recently descended on the city for a Youth Impact event with the theme: ‘You Are Not Alone’. They filled the next 48 hours with numerous fun, high-energy projects designed to ‘make God known, cheer up lives, and make friends’.

It started on Sabbath afternoon 19 April with a group of young adults visiting a nursing home in the north side of Dublin, where they sang Christian songs and hymns to the delight of the residents. As the young people departed they gave roses and small cards with Bible promises to the residents. Elda Leite, one of the impact co-ordinators, said, ‘We really enjoyed our time with them. The elderly residents were happy to have us and we’ll definitely visit them again.’

Later that day, around seventy young people enthusiastically descended on the centre of Dublin, wearing green and orange T-shirts boldly offering ‘Free Hugs’ and a message that ‘You Are Not Alone’. For more than two hours, the group opened their arms and warmly hugged hundreds of surprised and delighted Dubliners and even tourists. One hug recipient happily commented, ‘This is the best thing that happened to me today. Thank you very much.’ It was amazing to see how a simple hug could bring the most beautiful smile on people’s faces and send a message of hope that they are not alone.

The event also opened a wonderful opportunity to hand out hundreds of Celebrations magazines promoting healthy lifestyle, and You Are Not Alone flyers with the Adventist and City of Hope logos. Some people even expressed interest to join the Free Hugs event in the future. A girl living in Dublin sent a message on the event Facebook page, ‘Are you going to do more of this? I hope I’ll be able to make it next time.’

The weekend’s activities ended on Sunday afternoon 20 April with a group who went out distributing Neighbourhood Prayer Watch cards and more Celebrations magazines around the Ranelagh area. The beautifully designed prayer cards invited people from the community to ‘pray, relax, let go and let God take over’ with details on how to send their prayer requests and get a free Bible.

Pastor Ben Pontanar, who co-ordinated the activities, commented: ‘These events were meant to send a reassuring and comforting message to the people of Dublin: You Are Not Alone. The activities were simple and non-threatening. Nevertheless, we believe lives have been touched.’

The weekend is over, but Dublin is not resting. The churches are gearing up for the next big City of Hope event of the year: ten days of life-enhancing presentations in the Ballsbridge Hotel, led by Mark Finley, Michael Hasel, and three other evangelistic teams from the United States, starting on 17 May.

Dublin City of Hope Team
Fourteenth annual ASNA respite and training weekend

It’s the first time I have been able to have a break and to renew with such wonderful people. It’s good to meet people with similar experiences to mine – it’s wonderful. I cannot wait till next year . . . can it be longer?” So said one of the 96 delegates who attended the annual ASNA respite weekend (11 to 13 April) at the Pioneer Centre in Shropshire.

The theme ‘Celebrating God’s Love’ flowed through the weekend. Workshops provided by Pastors Paul Luhard (NEG Family Life director/ASNA padre) and Grace Walsh (NEG Disability co-ordinator) included lessons in how to love each other unconditionally and how to love ourselves as carers by managing stress. A first-time attendee, who is also a visitor to the local High Wycombe Church Disability Ministry support group, was amazed at how hard her 17-year-old son, who usually finds it hard to be around other people, was so calm and settled. ‘I can feel the love and care you have here; he seems so calm and happy,’ she expressed.

Activities for children included arts and crafts, music therapy, zip wire, big bounce, caving and an opportunity to express and use their talents during the annual all-inclusive celebration concert led by AGT 4. The words of an 8-year-old brought tears to many eyes as he expressed the love he had for his disabled sister. ‘I am so glad my sister came into this world.’

ASNA would like to thank all the volunteers who gave their time to support the adults and children with varying and challenging disabilities during the weekend, and for showing God’s love throughout to the families.

For more information about the work of ASNA, please visit www.asna.info or see them on Facebook or email info@asna.info.

SOPHIA NICHOLLS (ASNA TRUSTEE/DISABILITY MINISTRY DIRECTOR)

On the afternoon of 22 April this year I had a long-awaited hip replacement. That right – a skilled surgical team removed my battered arthritic hip joint and fitted me with an artificial one made of metal alloy – complete with its own serial number. This procedure put an immediate end to decades of gradually intensifying arthritic pain in my right hip – a stabilising sort of pain with the power to drag me out of my deepest sleep.

How did this problem arise? Well, sometime between four and eight years of age, I went through a period of severe unexplained joint pain. I can still remember vividly tying my knees and confidentially announcing to my parents that it was ‘just a passing phase’ – something I called ‘growing pains’. Statistically, one in every 1,000 little boys will experience those ominous pains that announce the onset of Perthes’ disease.1

Not a lot is known about the disease, but it causes the femoral head to lose part of its blood supply, then ‘the bone cells in the affected area die, the bone softens’, after which ‘it can fracture or become distorted’.2 The blood supply to the joint area will naturally be restored in the course of time, but in my case the damage was already done before that happened.2

After the op

My mother had a hip replacement in 1967 and she came home with her leg in a cast. It took her several months to recover.Had she had the hips I have today, she might have been able to get up and walk the next morning taking her weight on her leg. A hip replacement today is a lot different than it was three years ago. It has been possible to replace the joint area with materials that have withstood the stress, and there are no more metal components in the body.

Don’t get me wrong – being hyper vigilant about what you eat and constantly worrying whether you’ve exceeded your calorie intake for the day gets exhausting and isn’t sustainable in the long term.

Don’t worry if you do go over. When it comes to your diet, naturopath Min Belm says, ‘Just develop a few simple rules that you know you can follow and stick to.’

Recent research demonstrates why diets fail, and advocates instead the importance of making healthier food choices along with an active lifestyle.

Healthy food habits

In the last three ‘Enhancing Health’ articles we looked at the impact of exercise on well-being. Now we turn our attention to healthy food habits that enhance well-being and take another look at ‘Ten Health Interventions’ by Tina Gomes from bodyandmood.co.uk. In her article, titled ‘Ten Health Resolutions to Make in 2014’, food featured four times. Here are some of her suggestions:

Give up dieting

‘Being hyper vigilant about what you eat and constantly worrying whether you’ve exceeded your calorie intake for the day gets exhausting and isn’t sustainable in the long term.’

Do more cooking at home

Avoid takeaways, processed foods and junk foods. Aim to do more home cooking for the rest of 2014.

Always have healthy food options on hand

‘Don’t compromise. For example by indulging in sugary treats. This can worsen stress by increasing blood glucose levels, which can give rise to insulin resistance and negatively impacts steroid (stress) hormones.’

Anticipation

Anyone who has undergone such surgery will know that there is another form of pain – the fear of pain. Especially in the early stages of the recovery process you find yourself anticipating pain. Your fear when your leg is lifted in and out of bed. You instinctively hold your breath when sitting down or standing up.

Good health!

‘The blood supply to the joint area will naturally be restored in the course of time, but in my case the damage was already done before that happened.’

Thank you, Stephen!

Under these circumstances one easily becomes intensely self-aware, self-preoccupied. Your world shrinks.

Then suddenly …

Then suddenly, a single BBC news item has your full attention! No! It has nothing to do with the Boko Haram abductions in Nigeria, the dreadful mine disaster in Turkey, or the fact that Oscar Pistorius has been sent for a psychiatric evaluation midway through his trial. It has to do with a British teenager, Stephen Sutton, who was able to introduce himself and his circumstances like this on his fundraising page:

‘Hi! My name’s Stephen and I’m pretty much like your average teenager – except for the last three years now I’ve been battling cancer. The current opinion voiced by my doctors is that my disease is incurable, and as a result I want to spend as much time as possible raising funds for a charity very close to my heart.’

Wow! Stephen, a brave teenager tottering precariously at the edge of life; just nineteen years old; decides to devote the rest of his life – no matter how brief it will be – to fund-raise for the Teen Cancer Trust. He wants to help people he will never meet, and ease the suffering of teenagers who will never get to thank him for his painful efforts.

Initially he set himself a wish list (commonly known as a ‘bucketlist’) of 46 things he wanted to do before dying – ‘a mix of the weird and wonderful’ things that included: skydiving for charity, going bushking, writing a book, getting tattooed, meeting Jimmy Carr; attending another music festival; meeting someone with more surgical scars than he had; appearing as an extra in a film or music video; and having his portrait drawn. Later, however, as his condition deteriorated, Stephen lost interest in everything on his list besides the fundraising for others.

At first he wanted to raise £10,000 for TCT, but that figure was soon revised as donations have soared to a staggering £3,930,743.98, made possible by the kindness and generosity of 169,950 donors – each one touched by this man’s amazing attitude to life.

Thank you, Stephen!

Sadly, but not unexpectedly, Stephen Sutton passed away on 14 May, just three weeks ago. His dynamic, optimistic and positive personality is no more – his infectious smile is gone and his voice is silent.

‘Under these circumstances one easily becomes intensely self-aware, self-preoccupied. Your world shrinks.’

Stephen!

Thank you, Stephen!"
The events on which my thoughts are based are familiar to most of us. It was Passover time once again and Jesus had warned His disciples that His earthly ministry was about to end – abruptly, with His crucifixion.

Notice how Matthew records the unfolding drama in chapter 26: “When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, ‘Get ready, for the Son of Man is going to be handed over to be crucified.’”

Consider the priorities of those who were the closest to Jesus, and imagine being as beautiful in Matthew 26:6-13 (NIV): “While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table. When the disciples saw this, they were indignant: ‘Why this waste?’ they asked. ‘This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.’ Aware of this, Jesus said to them, ‘Why are you bothering this woman? Do you have something beautiful to do? The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever you go, whenever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

For Mary, her priority was clear and simple. She wanted to show her love and her last opportunity to do something for Jesus whom she loved so much. I think we can assume that she was fully aware of what Jesus had meant about His imminent death, and that her gift to Him was a very expensive oil infused with perfume, possibly from India, worth a year’s wages. She poured it on His head and feet, and was obviously very emotional. Why? Luke’s account indicates that she was deeply grateful that Jesus had so generously forgiven her many sins.

But unfortunately the story seems to show the disciples were easily distracted from such priorities. When Mary poured that very expensive perfumed oil over Jesus, His disciples’ priority was to be critical. Didn’t Matthew record that they were “indignant” at what they considered to be a waste of money? You can imagine the scene: the whispering, nudging each other, pulling faces and saying how much better it would have been if the oil had been sold and the proceeds given to the poor. How virtuous they appeared, but was this an appropriate priority under the circumstances?

In John’s Gospel (chapter 12) Judas is portrayed as the one objecting to Mary’s lavish and wasteful gift. Perhaps he was the most outspoken – perhaps he stirred up the matter in the first place.

Judas’s comments expose Judas’s priorities. Apparently he didn’t actually care for the poor, but was a thief, who stole from the money box that had been entrusted to him. One of Judas’s priorities seems to have been the acquisition of wealth for himself. John records this story of the woman at the feet, and Jesus’s defence of her generosity, as being the last straw for Judas.

The next we hear about him is him going to the chief priests and telling them he is ready to deliver Jesus up to them – for a price. And so he acquires some more personal wealth – 30 pieces of silver – and his personal priority is clear.

Now the Jewish religious leaders had their priorities too. Jesus was a threat in their flesh. He had challenged the people rebuke him. They showed him how his thinking and attitudes should be changed, and He always matched their traps with questions they could not answer without making themselves look foolish. And He wasn’t afraid of them or intimidated by them. Their priority was to eliminate Him. Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him.”

And what of Jesus’s priorities? He knew His betrayal and unjust death were imminent. But He continued to demonstrate compassion and forgiveness, offering grace and understanding to all who would accept it, even to the very end. He continued to challenge the thinking and behaviour of those He was with. He continued to teach and pray for His disciples and for all those who would follow him, and, committed to God’s plan, He submitted to crucifixion.

So what of our priorities? There are some things we can do any time, and there are some things we can do only once. If we miss that one opportunity, we have missed it forever. If at the time of Simon’s feast Mary had had other priorities and decided to keep the jar of oil and perfume for another occasion, or she had felt too embarrassed or fearful, she could have lost her only opportunity to anoint Jesus’ head and feet and the story would never have been recorded. But her story is recorded in all the Gospels, and, as Jesus predicted, wherever the Gospel is preached, what she did has been told as a memorial to her.

If Judas had had different priorities – if he had surrendered himself to Christ, rather than whatever he was doing – the story could have been told in a different way. If the Jewish leaders had been openly supportive of Jesus, . . . Well, there are a lot of ifs, and maybe some if onlys. For those of us who are by nature procrastinators – that is, we do not always get our priorities right – here is a great lesson. For we need to grasp the moment, pray for and take opportunities as they are presented to us, because we may never get another chance. If you haven’t yet decided whether you should commit to Christ, then I urge you to make a decision. And define your priorities. Are you going to allow yourself to be in the position of sacrificing “only” when Christ speaks to your heart? Don’t allow yourself to be in the position of sacrificing “only” when Christ speaks to your heart.

By Karen Shelbourn, a recently retired research nurse (still working part-time)
By Pastor Islwyn Rees

Headship Theology in the Adventist Church

The editor made an invitation (2 May 2014) for contributions to the discussion on the ordination of women in the Church following Josephine Vine's submission on the subject which appeared in the same issue. The GC chose 108 people to re-study the theology of ordination and the place of women in ministry. I have read four articles on the subject. The first one is by John McGoldrick. It is a lot of material to go through if you have the inclination! I don’t think the articles I have read need elaboration.

Additional to delving into the ‘ordination archive’ I read (free online), A Short History of the Adventist Church by Gerry Chudleigh (Communications secretary of the Pacific Union Conference). I would say this should be required reading for anyone wanting to participate in the discussion.

Apart from reading the TED contribution to the study by Dr Bertil Wiklander I found two documents that analyse the opposing views most helpful. The first is John McGoldrick’s New Testament scholar who gave us the Galatians in the last quarter of 2011, and professor of biblical studies at Walla Walla University, and the other is by Angel Manuel Rodriguez (church theologian and director of the Biblical Research Institute).

Both Coseart and Rodriguez seem to address and analyse all the different texts, including those addressed by Josephine Vine. They concur with each other in their analysis, except that the latter is more critical. From the section, ‘Headship and the Head’, from page 9, I see the redefinition of the Godhead doctrine, bringing us closer to polythemia. In her article, Josephine Vine illustrates for us the problem with both the Coseart and Rodriguez’s addresses on 1 Corinthians 11:3. She says, Jesus Himself does not ask his leaders who have not been elected and promoted ‘Headship Theology’ in the church, but also been invited to take part in the biblical studies on the subject of ordination.

Listening to TED president, Dr Bertil Wiklander, sharing his presentation to the study at Newbold College, one had the feeling of Wiklander being stirred by his findings, as well as feeling passionate about them, which suggested that his research began with an open mind. However, Chudleigh leaves the reader wondering if the Headship Theology proponents could be at all impartial and independent of the subject? But, reading Coseart and Rodriguez, one gets the feeling of urgency that those analysing the contributions to the study will contribute to an ‘honest-to-Scripture’ outcome. Having read Chudleigh’s work, I find somewhat troubling, one must hope that it will also be given critical attention so that we, the constituents, will feel all angles in and around the subject have been comprehensively addressed.

A ‘noble’ tradesman

I was an interesting article; however, I have a problem with the premise on which this conclusion was reached. The Bible clearly states that man is the head of his household (Ephesians 5:22-25) and Ellen White agrees that he should be ‘in one sense the priest of his household’ (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 547). Where in the Bible do we read that man should be, or is, the head of the church? Are we right when we speak of women’s ordination in the organisation for the home church?

The Bible states that Christ is the Head of His church, and that the church constitutes His body (Ephesians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, 27). Does the church have one head? If so, and who is that head? One classic example of some Christians that church is the invisible head and that we as a church do not have a head or that churches are the visible heads? Here is the Roman Catholic view of the invisible ordained ministry, especially of bishops and priests, the presence of Christ as head of the church. The presence of Christ as head of the church is made visible in the midst of the community of believers’ (G. Chapman, Catechism of the Catholic Church, p. 347, 1999). What do we read in the Bible – who were the ‘priests’ in the Apostolic Church? ‘As priest of his home the duty of the father, the man, is to gather his household for worship. When they are away from home for several days, or he leaves home very early, he should provide for his children. When children are still sleeping, should his wife take his place and do their work or shall they go without it because the head of the household? No, it means that his wife has usurped his place if she organises the family worship, or should she abandon it lest she may be interpreted that she is by that act declaring herself the ‘priestess’ of the household.

According to the Bible what is the duty of an elder in the church? Is it to be the head of his household or is it a spiritual gift of teaching and administration (1 Corinthians 12:29; Ephesians 4:11) given to him, by which he should serve the body of Christ – His Church? Speaking of spiritual gifts, are some gifts reserved for men only and others for women only, and if they are, which ones do they have that special relation with Christ and His Church?

Are there states that the elder must be ‘the husband of one wife’, and that he must have ‘children who are well-born’ (1 Timothy 3:2, 4; Titus 1:6, KJV). This text is frequently quoted when discussing the ordination of women. Are we really speaking of a different position? Is it, how does the Bible identify them and on what grounds do they have that special relation with Christ and His Church?

Dealing with the question that affects the doctrine of the atonement. On page 11 he says, ‘If the Son had been begotten for a biblical answer so that we can come to the right conclusions when ordination is in question.

All these questions are begging for a biblical answer so that we can come to the right conclusions when ordination is in question.
admiration for their work. Saturday night left me full of respect for the street pastors’ ministry is well-known in Cheltenham. Many girls get tired of their high heels after an evening. Over the course of the evening, many revellers came to the street pastors for help. It was quite a night for me, but not a particularly unusual one. London SDA Male Voice Choir This well-known Adventist choir is looking for new voices – especially youthful ones. If you would like to audition please call Roy Smith on 07815908199 or write to: The London SDA Male Voice Choir, 381 Holloway Road, London N4.
### Carmarthen baptism

An extra-joyful Sabbath was experienced by those present at Carmarthen Church on Sabbath 26 April. After many months of church attendance Rachel Evans finally decided for Jesus and was baptised during a special afternoon service. Relatives, friends and church members filled the sanctuary for the event.

The baptismity was beautifully decorated for the event with an assortment of flowers and branches provided by Angela Colledge.

Rachel’s grandmother was invited to pray and encouraged the young people to follow Rachel in committing their lives to the Lord. Some of Rachel’s favourite hymns were sung and poems read — one written specially for the occasion.

When she was once again in dry clothes hugs and embraces were in abundance as Rachel was welcomed by those present to her new life in Jesus and to church membership.

We wish her every blessing and, though not coming to church at present, trust and pray that her children, led by her example, will follow in committing their lives to Christ in the not-too-distant future.

### Middlesbrough

Middlesbrough Church celebrated two baptisms on the afternoon of 15 February under the ministry of Pastor Colin Woodford.

Bonani Maphosa’s baptismal service was very moving. When the time came for him to be baptised he asked his wife, Thembile, to read his favourite Scripture passage. His son, Zayne (5), stunned the congregation when he recited his favourite passage from the Bible — Psalm 23:1-6. When asked why he decided to be baptised, Bonani responded: ‘I was raised as a Christian and my parents’ faith was my crutch for a long time. Then I realised that my parents’ faith would not suffice. I began to want to know God for myself. I decided to give my life to Christ and let the world know that I have chosen to follow Him … and it is awesome!’

The second baptismal candidate was Mae Machan. This is her testimony: ‘It started as a “Saturday ritual” for me as I was not an Adventist by birth. However, my husband is and the children wanted to have both parents attend church together. Somehow the Lord pushed me through the messages I heard, and finally I was rocked to the very core. I knew then that I wanted to follow Jesus and have Him in my life.’

The church also accepted by the right hand of fellowship Agatha Chengeta, Lori-Jane Mendoza, Robert and Majeketa Chikusa, Josephat, Petty and Tatenita Hapazari and Senzoni Jacob.

### Langley rejoices

On 26 April the Langley congregation rejoiced over the dedication of Nicole and Sophia Masih by Pastor S. M. Gill. They are pictured below, along with their parents, Peter and Sakina, and others.

The church also baptised six new members at the Ladywood church.

On Sabbath 26 March, the Community of Hope (Winson Green, Birmingham) and Breath of Life (Smethwick, Birmingham) congregations joined forces to baptise six new members at the Ladywood church.

### Six new members

On Sabbath 22 March, the Community of Hope (Winson Green, Birmingham) and Breath of Life (Smethwick, Birmingham) congregations joined forces to baptise six new members at the Ladywood church.

### Eight baptised at Manchester South

On 19 April the Manchester South church baptised eight new members, each one with a special story.

Tinotenda, a 20-year-old student from Manchester University, comes from a Methodist background, and was introduced to the Adventist Church by a friend. He claims that the first day he came to the church, it was packed, and that everything that was preached or taught was from the Bible. This impressed him to do some research into the Seventh-day Adventists, but many Internet sites branded us as a cult. Tinotenda felt, however, that if everyone is attacking the Adventists they must be doing something right. This encouraged him to study the Bible to seek the truth for himself. This later led to studies with Bible instructor Rose Gomez and his decision for baptism.

Angel Fitzroy Vanriel was born to Adventist parents and brought up in an ‘non-believing’ background and has been an Adventist by birth. However, my husband is and the children wanted to have both parents attend church together. Somehow the Lord pushed me through the messages I heard, and finally I was rocked to the very core. I knew then that I wanted to follow Jesus and have Him in my life.’

The second baptismal candidate was Mae Machan. This is her testimony: ‘It started as a “Saturday ritual” for me as I was not an Adventist by birth. However, my husband is and the children wanted to have both parents attend church together. Somehow the Lord pushed me through the messages I heard, and finally I was rocked to the very core. I knew then that I wanted to follow Jesus and have Him in my life.’

### Eight baptised at Manchester South

On 19 April the Manchester South church baptised eight new members, each one with a special story.

Tinotenda, a 20-year-old student from Manchester University, comes from a Methodist background, and was introduced to the Adventist Church by a friend. He claims that the first day he came to the church, it was packed, and that everything that was preached or taught was from the Bible. This impressed him to do some research into the Seventh-day Adventists, but many Internet sites branded us as a cult. Tinotenda felt, however, that if everyone is attacking the Adventists they must be doing something right. This encouraged him to study the Bible to seek the truth for himself. This later led to studies with Bible instructor Rose Gomez and his decision for baptism.

Angel Fitzroy Vanriel was born to Adventist parents and brought up in an ‘non-believing’ background and has been an Adventist by birth. However, my husband is and the children wanted to have both parents attend church together. Somehow the Lord pushed me through the messages I heard, and finally I was rocked to the very core. I knew then that I wanted to follow Jesus and have Him in my life.’

The second baptismal candidate was Mae Machan. This is her testimony: ‘It started as a “Saturday ritual” for me as I was not an Adventist by birth. However, my husband is and the children wanted to have both parents attend church together. Somehow the Lord pushed me through the messages I heard, and finally I was rocked to the very core. I knew then that I wanted to follow Jesus and have Him in my life.’

The church also accepted by the right hand of fellowship Agatha Chengeta, Lori-Jane Mendoza, Robert and Majeketa Chikusa, Josephat, Petty and Tatenita Hapazari and Senzoni Jacob.

### Eight baptised at Manchester South

On 19 April the Manchester South church baptised eight new members, each one with a special story.

Tinotenda, a 20-year-old student from Manchester University, comes from a Methodist background, and was introduced to the Adventist Church by a friend. He claims that the first day he came to the church, it was packed, and that everything that was preached or taught was from the Bible. This impressed him to do some research into the Seventh-day Adventists, but many Internet sites branded us as a cult. Tinotenda felt, however, that if everyone is attacking the Adventists they must be doing something right. This encouraged him to study the Bible to seek the truth for himself. This later led to studies with Bible instructor Rose Gomez and his decision for baptism.

Angel Fitzroy Vanriel was born to Adventist parents and brought up in an ‘non-believing’ background and has been an Adventist by birth. However, my husband is and the children wanted to have both parents attend church together. Somehow the Lord pushed me through the messages I heard, and finally I was rocked to the very core. I knew then that I wanted to follow Jesus and have Him in my life.’

The second baptismal candidate was Mae Machan. This is her testimony: ‘It started as a “Saturday ritual” for me as I was not an Adventist by birth. However, my husband is and the children wanted to have both parents attend church together. Somehow the Lord pushed me through the messages I heard, and finally I was rocked to the very core. I knew then that I wanted to follow Jesus and have Him in my life.’
Bristol's first joint evangelism day

On 19 April the four churches in Bristol – Lodge Causeway, Bristol Central, North Bristol and South Bristol Church – worshipped together as a precursor to the launch of the School of Evangelism in Area 2.

The well-attended service was organized by the Bristol Joint Evangelism Committee (BJEC) – a Bristol-wide church committee whose purpose is to promote, co-ordinate and support evangelism projects across the city.

Working closely with the SEC Sabbath School and Personal Ministries departments, BJEC seeks to make a success of the Bristol Mission to the Cities (MTC) project in 2015.

Pastor Eglan Brooks, BJEC Personal Ministries director, provided the day’s focus by reinforcing the importance of evangelism as each person’s responsibility, stressing that we need a ‘passion for mission’.

With the promotion of the School of Evangelism for the following day the service continued in the afternoon with a concert, followed by a rousing message of discipleship by Pastor Mbiu of Balam Church.

The day was not just a service of celebration – it was the beginning of something exciting for the city of Bristol.

Residential care homes ministry

This year Manchester Southern Asia Church plans to reach out to nursing and care homes in its community, by singing and praying for the elderly. One such place is Hibiscus Court in Whalley Range, where we were invited to sing for them during a function for the residents.

After a good song service and prayer for all the residents, the members then contributed twelve ribbons and a number of books like Steps to Christ, When God Said Remember and The Great Controversy, along with tracts about the Sabbath, to both residents and staff of the care home. It was a blessed experience.

A similar programme was recently run at the Chorton Place care home, where the residents joined in the singing with great enthusiasm, not wanting the songs to cease even after it was time to close. One of those who really enjoyed the event was a retired Methodist woman pastor.

Appreciation day for Pastor Woodford

On 29 March Area 1 of the North England Conference held an appreciation service for Pastor Colin Woodford, who has faithfully served in the Middlesbrough, Sheffield and Darlington area since 2004. He was baptised in 1995 by Pastor L. Edwards and gradually felt drawn to ministry.

He first held the position of a Bible instructor for both the Sheffield and Middlesbrough districts (2004-2008), then became the licensed minister of the Middlesbrough district from 2009 to 2013, later becoming a commissioned minister. During this time he has been heavily involved in evangelistic work. He now intends to return to full-time Bible work and start a small group in Guisborough. He has a significant impact on many families in this district.

Special water at Welsh well

We don’t hear very much about wells these days but, believe me, they are still about. Nicholsonston House, near Swansea, was the ‘well’ visited by Welsh Women’s Ministries from 4 to 6 April. It was originally an old sea captain’s house that overlooks Owchyn Bay, and the heavenly scenery has to be seen to be believed.

Sharon Platt-McDonald, Women’s Ministries director for the BUC, shared two powerful presentations on restoration and resilience, and Paulette Marceny from London blessed the group with her singing.

The group prayed, listened, shared meals, walked up and down hills, collected treasure from the beach, sang songs of praise, supported each other, took time out to be private and quiet, enjoyed exercise and fresh air, told stories, laughed, cried tears of joy and were uplifted to a higher place as the Holy Spirit touched their hearts.

The weekend focus was ‘Body, Mind & Spirit’. On Friday the participants awoke feeling tired and thirsty, but by Sunday they were refreshed, renewed and reinvigorated – able to return home knowing that a new world had opened up for them because – like the woman at the well – they had drunk from the Living Water, Jesus Christ.

Mother’s Day brunch

Good food and fine company were on the menu when Stanborough Park members celebrated Mother’s Day on Sunday 23 March.

The Family Life department organised a ‘brunch’ for the mothers of the church and those invited from the local community. This novel event was held one week early so as not to interfere with any Mother’s Day family celebrations. It was also designed as a form of outreach in which each church member was given two invitations, one for herself and one for a mother from the local community. As a result, many community mothers attended the church for the very first time.

The hall and tables were well-decorated with pink and white tablecloths with floral centrepieces, and as the eighty mothers entered they were welcomed and made to feel special. The day’s agenda included a warm welcome from the Pastors, a visit to the resident goats and sheeps, a special tea and a talk on ‘Mum and the Bible’ by one of the church’s young people.

This well-attended event featured live music from a group of young people from the church, who delighted the mothers with their singing and sometimes made their mothers laugh. There were also two special presentations, one of which was a brilliantly performed rendition of the song ‘This Is The Day’.

The families were serenaded by men on the piano, accordion and flute, and in this relaxed atmosphere they talked, laughed and met new friends. A video with messages from children was shown and many were surprised and happy to hear what their children said.

Appreciation of a great hero

The entertainment was followed by a lovely Easter tea and plans for our next visit are already taking place.

A close shave for ADRA

Diane Morton, 2014 ADRA agent for Sutton-in-Ashfield, decided to go one step further to raise funds for ADRA by having all her hair shaved off. Church members, family and friends sponsored her to the tune of £405.50, which took the church’s ADRA total to £1,055.50 for the year! Well done.

Plaistow’s week of revival

A youth-led revival ended successfully on Sabbath, 22 March 2014, at Plaistow Church, under the theme, ‘Revive to serve the Lord’. This week-long series coincided with the Global Youth Week, and was well received by all sections of the congregation.

On one of the evenings children up to the age of 13 played the game in the form of a live competition. The knowledgeable winner became the proud recipient of an iPod Touch (4th generation)! Two more competitions are forthcoming.

The weekend focus was ‘Body, Mind & Spirit’. On Friday the group prayed, listened, shared meals, walked up and down hills, collected treasure from the beach, sang songs of praise, supported each other, took time out to be private and quiet, enjoyed exercise and fresh air, told stories, laughed, cried tears of joy and were uplifted to a higher place as the Holy Spirit touched their hearts.

The series has had real appeal among the younger generation. According to Dan, ‘We have been encouraging our regular church young people to bring their friends. On one of the evenings children up to the age of 13 played the game in the form of a live competition. The knowledgeable winner became the proud recipient of an iPod Touch (4th generation)! Two more competitions are forthcoming.

Despite the competitive element in the Heroes series, Dan believes that ‘The true prize is learning more about the Bible, who we are, and who God is.’ When he asked the young people what they had learned from the Bible heroes they came up with the following suggestions: Adam and Eve tell us where we come from and how we got here; Noah believed God in spite of ridicule; “Esther was the queen of courage.”

The entertainment was followed by a lovely Easter tea and plans for our next visit are already taking place.

On the final Sabbath her topic was: ‘What is so annoying about grace?” and she made use of Genesis 34:5-7 and Matthew 20:1-16 to share new insights about God’s grace. She invited her hearers to accept the extraordinary gift of God through Jesus Christ, even if it sometimes confounds the human mind. One invited guest wanted nothing but ‘a Bible to read’, and her beaming smile when she received one just said it all! E. A. A. and A. J. E.
SARA FRANCIS

Irish Mission women's health weekend

The second Irish Mission women's health weekend attracted women from across the mission to the picturesque Kippure Estate in Blessington, County Wicklow – the garden of Ireland.

The weekend of the 15th to 18th March the participants were encouraged to pursue wisdom, create and manage their wealth, and have wellness in all areas of their lives.

The guest speakers were Winsome Brown-Baajdes and Leigh-Ann Serb, who also found the time to run separate workshops for the younger women.

On Saturday evening Alvern Bullard, Busi Mshipa, and Nomsa Maphango led the group in an exploration of entrepreneurial skills through various group challenges. At the end of the evening the women admitted that, though they were probably not ready for Dragon’s Den, they had certainly learned something about 'return on investment', what makes some children more expensive than others, and how to get out of the 'rat race'.

Dena Sylvia Mullings (1933-2014) died on 16 June, 1961 and received into the fellowship of the Camp Hill Seventh-day Adventist church. She served the church in various ways and sang alto in the church choir for many years. More recently she had a pioneering influence in Kings Heath Branch Sabbath School, where her leadership abilities emerged to good effect.

Dena Mullings was laid to rest at the Kings Heath cemetery and is awaiting the call of the Lifegiver. She is survived by her husband and children, three brothers and a sister, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends. ‘Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord’ . . . that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.’ Revelation 14:13, KJV.

Norman Way (1922-1944) died on 18 March, Norman Way was fondly known as Brother Norman, particularly in Chelmsford Church.

Dena was born on 27 December 1922 and became an Adventist in 1968 at Chelmsford Church, where he is regarded as one of its pioneers. He moved to Stanborough Park in 1974 and returned to Chelmsford in 1983.

Obituaries

Cheltenham ‘Teens’ and ‘Tweens’ day

We all know what teens are – or, at least, we think we do. But what about ‘tweens’? Who are they and how do we recognise them? Well, they are those in that ‘in-between’ stage between being a child and a teen (somewhere after 8 and before 13).

The second Irish Mission women’s health weekend attracted many to the picturesque Kippure Estate in Blessington, County Wicklow – the garden of Ireland.

Friendships were formed with visitors from Stanborough Park, Stoke-on-Trent, Hereford, Loughborough, Coventry, Weston-super-Mare, Telford and the London church. The creative tweens used threads and ropes with knots and plaits, along with cat’s cradle. The tweens illustrated the tangible aspects of friendship, while the teens spontaneously performed a friendship sketch. Then after a breezy walk along the heights of Cleeve Hill, with great views of Cheltenham and the distant Malvern Hills, we got back for some warm soup and rolls. This was followed by a wasters during which all were reminded that the greatest friend of all is Jesus. We pray we shall meet again in Heaven.
Stanborough Park Church runs an outreach programme catering for pensioners living in the local area. Over a hundred people, about a third of them church members, regularly attend the fortnightly meetings at the church and the group has a waiting list.

Currently under the leadership of Mrs Romy Barham, the Seniors Club has built up a reputation over the years for the quality of its speakers at meetings. One of these was Zena Skinner, former BBC TV cook, who returned in mid-March to entertain the members with amusing anecdotes from her days in front of the television cameras; a time when she became a household name.

Now heading towards her tenth decade, Miss Skinner spends her time raising funds for charity. She says that she ‘likes to make people laugh’ and donates the money she obtains from her public speaking engagements to British medical charities. So far a total of £127,000 has been raised this way and she has no plans to stop the good work!

Earlier in March, the group enjoyed an informative talk and slideshow on King Richard III and the Wars of the Roses by church member Dr Colin Allen. Colin grew up on the Park and served as a missionary doctor at Kwahu Hospital in Ghana before becoming a consultant surgeon at Pontefract Hospital.

After retiring he decided to develop his love of history and settled on investigating the story behind Richard III, who had strong links with the area where he lives, and attempts to separate fact from fiction surrounding the monarch. Having done much research and visited many sites associated with the king and the War of the Roses, he has found himself in demand to speak on a subject so close to his heart.

New principal for Newbold College

Newbold’s board of governors appointed Dr John Baildam to the position of principal at its spring meeting on Sunday, 11 May 2014. Dr Baildam will commence in this role on Tuesday, 17 June 2014.

Dr Baildam has served the College for over 30 years in a variety of capacities, including as director of the School of English and director of admissions and records. Since 1997 he has served as part of the college’s senior management team as director of academic affairs and more recently as deputy principal. He also has experience of secondary education, having served as boy’s dean and teacher at Stanborough School (1975-82), and as chair of governors for Garth Hill College, Bracknell, since 1999.

Through his involvement with many professional committees and associations, Dr Baildam has comprehensive knowledge of the UK higher education system and a wide network of contacts.

Dr Baildam comes with solid Adventist as well as academic credentials. He is a pastor’s son and his wife, Lynda, who serves at the college as associate librarian, is a pastor’s daughter.

Dr Baildam feels ‘excited by the task ahead as all of us at the college – students and staff – work together to give increasing numbers of young people the opportunity to enjoy the high quality of spiritual, social and academic life at Newbold’. He is already working to significantly increase enrolment with a stronger and more permanent student body by September 2015.

His message to parents and potential students alike is, ‘Too many are missing out on the life-changing, faith-affirming experience to be found at Newbold’.

Dr Baildam replaces Dr Philip Brown, who is returning to Australia following a three-year stint at Newbold. College development under his leadership included campus refurbishment, student life initiatives, the introduction of a certificate in health and wellness, and joining the Adventist Colleges Abroad consortium.