Pathfinder Bible Experience 2015 – UK winners

by Pastor Kevin Johns, SEC Pathfinder director

There was an air of excitement at Stanborough Park School as Pathfinders and the members of their supporting churches waited for the start of the Pathfinder Bible Experience UK finals. The SEC Drum Corps announced the start of the event as they led the Pathfinders into the packed hall and to their seats. Once everyone was settled and the opening exercises had been completed, Pastor Kevin Johns, SEC Pathfinder director, reminded everyone of the rules.

In the final the testing differs from that in the Area and Conference rounds because only the team that scores the highest points receives the prize – an expenses-paid trip to the US to compete against other Pathfinder clubs in the North American Division finals. Other first-place teams are eligible to attend, and are encouraged to do so, but at their own expense.

This year the highest-scoring team was Stanborough Park; other first-place teams were Croydon, Elephant & Castle and the Filipino International church, who all did exceptionally well.

One mother commented on how her child was now praying every day, even at school, finding a quiet place to do so. Another mother commented on how her son had committed eight chapters of the book of Matthew to memory and could recite them word for word.

This year the adjudicating panel came from the SEC Treasury department, namely, Earl Ramharacksingh, Giles Barham and Michael Ageyi-Asari. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience but found that judging was a lot harder than expected! The quiz master was Pastor Kevin Johns and the time keeper was Mrs Marcia John, the Area co-ordinator.

The Pathfinder Bible Experience is having a profound effect on the lives of our young people, and this is what they have to say:

‘It has helped me to develop a better understanding of Matthew, and see things that I had never really looked at or thought about before. It does take time to memorise and learn the passages well but it is worth it! This PBE competition has been a very enriching experience for me!’ – Paul Cooper.

‘My experience at PBE has helped me a lot by increasing my Bible knowledge and also making me more enthusiastic to read the Bible.’ – Tontho Ntata.

‘I liked learning the book of Matthew – it has taught me lots more about Jesus’ life. It has helped me to think of what God wants from me and to put God’s things above my own.’ – Joshua Ntata.

‘I have expanded my knowledge of the Bible even further and strengthened my relationship with the Lord! It has also helped me to make new friends and that makes it all the more enjoyable!’ – Matthew Lazzarin de Morais, Rangers class.

‘At first I thought it would significantly impact on my schoolwork, but I’ve only been improving!’ – Aarinola Ayo-Ipaye.

‘I also enjoyed learning with my fellow friends, teammates and supporters as we helped each other memorise different sections of the book and apply them to our daily lives, then told our friends what we had learnt in the Bible.’ – Anthony Moyo.

‘I will not deny that there were times when I felt I could not keep up, but every Sabbath, when I saw what the children had been able to achieve with those materials and the appreciation of their parents, I was reinvigorated.’ Yetunde Bright (coach).

In April Stanborough Park Pathfinders, Elephant & Castle Pathfinders and Croydon Pioneers will travel to Southwestern Adventist University, Keene, Texas, USA, to take part in the North American Division International Finals of the PBE programme. If you would like to provide some financial support for this, please send your contribution to the SEC Pathfinder department. Please keep our Pathfinders in your prayers as they go to represent the UK.
I am sure that most of us are fairly familiar with the concept of ‘sexism’, which is defined as any form of prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex.¹ You may even have been called ‘sexist’, or had something you’ve said described as an ‘exist comment’.

In fact, whether we like it or not, sexist attitudes are still deeply embedded in the way many of us think, and it is actually second nature for some of us to make remarks that are sexist — such as:

Male supervisor to female office colleague: ‘Don’t worry, I won’t expect you to understand how this all works — it’s very technical stuff’.

Parent to child: ‘Come on Johnny. Here, take a tissue and stop crying. You’re not a girl’.

Around the boardroom table: ‘She is pretty, well turned out and all that . . . but will she be able to manage her hormones?’

Sometimes our sexism is disclosed in a more subtle way: not by what we say, but by what we leave unsaid. For example, is the car salesman as thorough in his technical presentations when speaking to a woman alone, as he is when her husband accompanies her?

Ambivalent sexism

Have you ever heard of ‘ambivalent sexism’ before? For the past two decades it has been a growing theoretical framework, pioneered largely by two social psychologists, Peter Glick and Susan Fiske.²

Simply summarised, it postulates that sexism has two sub-components: ‘hostile sexism’ and ‘benevolent sexism’. The examples given above illustrate varying degrees of hostile sexism and each of them assumes that women are inferior to men in some way. This type of behaviour shows that women are generally perceived as ‘incapable, unintelligent, overly emotional, and sexually manipulative’.³

Having established this, let’s now try to get our heads around the more unusual of the two concepts: ‘benevolent sexism’. According to its proponents, this form of sexism ‘reflects evaluations of women that are seemingly positive’, such as ‘the reverence of women in war, mother, and child caretaker roles, the romanticising of women as objects of heterosexual affection, and the belief that men have a duty to protect women’.⁴

What’s the harm?

I hear lots of you saying: ‘What’s the harm in all this? When did chivalry become a crime?’⁵

Here is their answer: ‘While benevolent sexism may not appear to be harmful to women on the surface, these beliefs are extremely caustic to gender equity and restrict women’s personal, professional, political, and social opportunities.’⁶

The most recent research into the effect of benevolent sexism appears to be the work of Jin Goh and Judith Hall of Northeastern University, USA.⁷ Their comments are likely to make you wince. According to Goh, ‘Unless sexism is understood as having both hostile and benevolent properties, the insidious nature of benevolent sexism will continue to be one of the driving forces behind gender inequality in our society.’ Hall doesn’t pull any punches either. She sees benevolent sexism as ‘a wolf in sheep’s clothing’ and its ‘supposed gestures of good faith’ as a way to perpetuate the status quo: men are stronger than women!

‘ Gestures of good faith’

What are these specific ‘gestures of good faith’ that men consciously employ to perpetuate the societal power bias in their favour? Smilingly offering a shivering lady your coat; holding the door open for her; carrying her heavy suitcase; offering her your seat on the bus; standing between her and a vicious dog; stepping aside to give her the last place in the only lifeboat?

Now I am all for the eradication of sexism, but I struggle to see how such ‘gestures of good faith’ could deman any woman or be an ‘insidious’ driving force ‘behind gender inequality in our society’. The vast majority of men would join me in doing the same for a child, an elderly war veteran or a teenage lad on crutches. What would that make us guilty of, other than being human?

The challenge

Friends, this is not the time to let others set the bar for our behaviour. If there is no harm intended by our ‘gestures of good faith’ then we should not feel any shame expressing them. Many of us feel moved to act at times in a manner that may be called chivalrous then so be it. It is surely our right to humbly follow such convictions — and it is certainly nowhere near too soon or too late to start!

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The ‘hand of God’

by Pastor Cyril Sweeney, BUC Family Life director

When I mention these three words – ‘hand of God’ – most of you will think immediately of an event that took place back in 1986 at the Estadio Azteca in Mexico City. They refer specifically to something that happened during the World Cup quarter-final match between England and Argentina.

At this stage of a World Cup any match is sure to be a tense one, but this particular showdown was haunted by Argentina’s humiliating defeat during the Falklands War, just four years earlier. Their team had a score to settle on behalf of the nation.

And so it was. During the first half, although Argentina had most of the possession, both teams missed chances to score. It was the second half, however, that went into the goal! Argentina won the match and this is how Maradona explained how the controversial goal was scored...’a little with the hand of Maradona and a little with the hand of God’. Since then it has gone down in footballing history as the ‘hand of God’ goal.

NASA

The second time I heard these three words – ‘hand of God’ – used in an unusual way, was while reading about NASA’s Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array (NuSTAR). It had been used to successfully image ‘the structure in high-energy X-rays for the first time’.

Now that may sound like hard-to-grasp scientific jargon, and so it is! Technically the celestial object that they nicknamed the ‘hand of God’ is ‘a polar wind nebula’ and it is ‘powered by the lowertemperature core of a star that blew up in a supernova explosion’.

Put plainly, it is the ‘corpus of a star – a cloud of material that was ejected in the star’s explosion. These particles are interacting with magnetic fields around the material, causing it to glow with X-rays’. In this case the result looked remarkably like a gigantic hand – which is impressive, indeed. (Judge for yourself from the photograph.)

David

Long before either Maradona or NASA, however, David the psalmist had identified the ‘hand of God’ and given it special spiritual significance.

‘Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You, Your right hand upholds me.’ (Psalm 63:7, 8, NJKV).

There are Bible commentators who believe that David wrote these words while he was in the wilderness of Judah, locked in a battle for sovereignty with his son, Absalom, who had conspired to dethrone him.

The story unfolded in 2 Samuel 15:16, telling how David facetiously for his life into the wilderness. Despite his desperate circumstances – with his life under threat from his own son – David seems to sense the comforting and sustaining nearness of the ‘hand of God’.

‘Things don’t look good for him at all, but he is still able to cry out, “Your right hand upholds me!”’

Life sucks

David had deeply disappointed God and his people. He had done things that brought shame upon both his household and his religion. His status and authority were being challenged, and not without cause. But despite this he could claim: ‘Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.’ (Psalm 63:3, NKJV).

We all face times during which the best we can say about life is that it sucks! It is good to know, however, that the ‘hand of God’ is always there, whether we can see it or not – whether we feel we deserve it or not! Why not reach out and take hold of it?


{http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/15-17/stories/15-17_maradona.html}
Jesus could no more openly enter into the city. . . . The man talked too much and now Jesus had to abandon his decision to enter the Cities (MTTC) initiative and flee to the countryside! The man talked too much and put a stop to Jesus’ ministry.

Exposition: Mark’s account tells us that when Jesus met the leper, He was moved with compassion for the desperate, suffering man. This man who, through his illness, had been shunned and ostracised by his family, friends and community, was desperate for healing and he knew that Jesus could restore more than just his health to him. Jesus, looking at this broken, twisted shape of humanity, was moved with a deep emotion to do something for him, and immediately healed him with the words: ‘I will be thou clean.’ (Mark 1:41, KJV)

But Jesus, having responded to him in compassion with those tender words, then immediately changed his tone and ‘straitly charged him’ to keep his mouth shut and go find a priest. ‘The Greek verb enkomiai, used here, originally meant ‘to snort with anger’ or ‘to snort like a horse.’ This is the verb Jesus used when He warned the man not to ‘shut up’ but to ‘go’! Jesus spoke to him in such a stern, direct manner because He knew that the man would disobey Him! ‘Jesus told the man to stop snorting and that he should shut up! Keep your mouth shut and go, and find a priest!’

According to the Mosaic law the priests who served as public health officers diagnosed leprosy and leprosy-like illnesses. Those who recovered from their disease were then subjected to re-examination, purification rites, and certification from the priest. (Leviticus 14)

But the man talked too much and listened too little, as Mark records: ‘But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter . . .’ (Mark 1:45, KJV)

Consequences of talking too much: 1. Curtailed MTTC By acting contrary to his human nature and talking too much about what Jesus had done for him, he caused serious consequences.

Mark tells us, because this man talked too much, he hindered Jesus’ ministry (1:45).

...some of us talk too much and listen too little.

Introduction: You can talk too much! In fact, when I drove my father-in-law to meet him, I had to warn him that my father takes a lot, but his response was something I will never forget: ‘I learn more by listening than talking!’

I try to be in that school too. . . . but there are times when I also talk too much. I have been told of one famous preacher, who shall remain nameless, who spoke non-stop on a trans-continental flight across the United States, a journey of some five hours. It was reported that he did not even take breath, so his companion couldn’t get a word in edgeways!

Yes, I declare that some of us talk too much and listen too little. When the congregation is asked: ‘Has anybody got a testimony?’ some of us are always ready to ‘jump in the water’ and answer it. Why? Because we talk too much and about the wrong subject! Here is something to buck that up: ‘Your mind is too much centred upon yourself. You talk too much of yourself, of your infirmities of body.’ (Mind, Character, and Personality, volume 1, page 275.)

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Why Stanborough Secondary is a top choice for your child

by Lorraine, Wanda and Kayon (Stanborough Secondary)

D id you know that, on average, students at Stanborough Secondary School outperform the national averages? Did you know that Pastors Paul Lockham (BUC executive secretary), John Summidge (Welsh Mission president), David Neal (Irish Mission president) and Kevin Johns (SEC Pathfinder director), and Victor Plimmer (BUC treasurer), are all past students of Stanborough Secondary?

Well, now you do!

For generations, Stanborough Secondary School has been producing leaders – equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need to become successful citizens of this world and the one to come.

Why is your child not here?

Do you want your child to be well rounded while also meeting and even exceeding academic targets? Then bring him or her to us. Our well-trained and highly qualified staff are ready and waiting to work closely with you to ensure that your child fulfils his/her God-given potential.

How many schools can boast that they take students with a mixed range of abilities, and do their best to ensure that no child is left behind?

There is a myth that other schools are academically better than Stanborough. Knock down that myth! Stanborough Secondary is on par with other secondary schools. We do acknowledge that England is home to some of the best schools in the world, and we are not suggesting that 100% of our students achieve A*-C. However, we are non-selective and our qualified staff meet our students where they are and take them to where they need to be. Consequently, when our students leave, their progress, compared to their starting point, is good to outstanding.

Here are the cold, hard facts:

• Stanborough GCSE results are consistently above the national average.
• Last year the national GCSE average percentage of pupils obtaining five or more GCSEs at A*-C level was 63% for all pupils: 57% for boys and 70% for girls.
• Stanborough’s average was higher than this – 85% of all students scored five or more A*-C GCSE grades: 70% of our boys and 100% of our girls.

• For the last five years, national GCSE averages have been 72% for all students – 72% for boys and 81% for girls – while our GCSE average has been 80% overall! 76% of our boys and 84% of our girls scored five or more A*-C GCSE grades.

Some schools focus mainly on the academic. However, at Stanborough Secondary, we seek to develop the whole person. As such, we have academic clubs and enrichment clubs as well as extra-curricular activities every day. Our school is vibrant, interesting, and fun!

At lunchtime you can stop by homework club to get help or complete assignments, or you can visit the badminton or lawn tennis club. Not into sports? We have something for you too! Exercise your mind – visit the chess club – and these are just a sample of a wide range of enrichment activities on offer here!

There are some who will say that as Christian schools are the same so your child can attend any of these. That is not true! Each Christian school will encourage their students to internalise the values and doctrines of their governing denomination. As a Seventh-day Adven
dist, do you want your child to internalise the values of another denomination or faith group? What will you do when these values conflict with the values in your home?

Do you want your child to build his/her character while strengthening his/her analytical thought processes?

You will be glad you did!
**Baptism at Bournemouth**

On Sabbath, 28 February, Miss Loreto Palopalo, originally from Botswana, was baptised at the Bournemouth church, where she has been attending regularly. At her request, Loreto was baptised by Pastor Stanley Texeira, who, early in 2014, relocated with his family to Bournemouth from Brazil. Pastor Stanley has been responsible for teaching Loreto about Jesus Christ and the Bible. It was an emotional day for both parties – for Loreto, who gave her life to Jesus Christ – and for Pastor Texeira, who performed his first baptism since arriving in the UK.

**Plymouth Church pampers mothers**

The Plymouth youth are busy raising funds for a mission trip to Romania! After seeking how enthusiastic my cousin, Gamma, and I were about our recent trip to Albania (with the Adventist Volunteer Service) our youth group decided to go on a mission trip. A visiting preacher suggested we go to Adventist Press in Romania and the plans began to form from there.

Our small group of about nine young people and our pastor, Clifford Herman, plan to visit Romania from 21 to 31 August to help with an ongoing project: to assist with the renovation of an old school building for approximately 80 children. We are ready and willing to give our time to this good cause and share our faith with the people we will meet. We will also visit a number of churches while in Romania to share love and encouragement from our UK members with them.

We started raising funds with a “Popdog’s” night (hotdogs, popcorn and a film), then went on to our second event, which was also a big success. This past Mothering Sunday the girls put together a good spread of scones and cakes with hot drinks and provided the mums of our church with a pamper afternoon. For the small donation of £4 they were offered manicures, hand and foot massages and a foot spa while being served hot drinks and cake. We also set up a small stall with handmade gifts for sale.

The event helped raise £165 towards our mission trip, but we still have a long way to go to reach our goal of over £6,000.

**Baptism at Yardley**

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**Bradford soup kitchen aids in outreach**

Since 6 August 2014, Bradford Central Church has opened its doors to the community every Wednesday, from 10 am to 2 pm, for freshly home-made soup of various recipes. The soup kitchen was led by Mavis Durant (then an elder), and was for the benefit of less-advantaged members of the community.

On the first week there were more church members helping out than people who were expected to come and enjoy the soup. (In addition to the soup we also distribute cold sandwiches.) The attendance started on a high as the word went around in the community. In the first week of December there were 23 people, then 32, and by the third week we served 46 people, who were so thankful for this ministry. It was amazing to see the smiles of the people at some of the things that we took for granted would not be taken.

On Wednesday, 24 December, there was a Christmas dinner – a lovely vegetarian meal, which was presented in Bradford Central Church. Timothy, a church member, brought his friend, Steph, who didn’t come empty-handed either, but brought gifts to present to the people. This day was a very special day for our community, because the Christmas meal came with all the trimmings – cake, soft drinks, and so on. There was singing and laughter. It was a joyful day and we served 55 people! Just reaching out to the community and serving their needs gives us great joy – knowing we are doing God’s work. As you pray for other churches, please remember Bradford Church in your prayers. We are grateful for all the support of Bradford members and their prayers and planning, who have made this ministry successful to date.

Then we faced a challenge: the leader of the soup kitchen had been wanting to move house – but this was the wrong time – just as the soup kitchen was starting to pick up! The Lord blessed us, however, with Sister Veronica, who took over the commitment to lead out in the soup kitchen ministry.

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**Winson Green baptism**

During a recent baptism at Winson Green Church, three candidates from the Breath of Life and Smithwick churches were baptised. They are Amaan Wilson and Papa Yentumi (Breath of Life) and Georgia Simms (Smithwick).

Here they are pictured along with Pastor Nichols (left) and Pastor Eric Lawrence, who cares for all three churches (Winson Green, Breath of Life and Smithwick), together with elders from the latter two.

**Adventist wins Wise Women Award**

Chipema Chitambala, operations manager at Barchester Healthcare’s Leonard Lodge, has won an award for leadership at the Wise Women Awards 2015. Chipema was announced the winner of the ‘Professional Christian Leadership’ category at an awards ceremony on 14 March.

The Wise Women Awards is in its eleventh year and is the UK’s annual leading event celebrating the achievements of African and African-Caribbean Christian women in the church and wider society.

The judges were impressed by Chipema’s career progression and said that she demonstrated strong leadership qualities. They also commended her passion to serve the community through the church.

LISA AND VERONICA

**The world’s toughest job!**

On Sunday, 15 March, households across the UK celebrated Mother’s Day. On the same day, in recognition of the occasion, mothers from the Hackney church were given flowers and a musical CD by their children as a thank-you for taking on the ‘world’s toughest job’ – motherhood.

During the Sabbath School programme, church members were introduced to some of the greatest women and mothers in biblical history (Dorcas, Esther, Jochebed, Ruth) and world history (Harriet Tubman). Sabbath School superintendent, Flora Blake, shared a hypothetical conversation God has with one of His angels about the value of mothers. A mother has just two hands to take care of several children. Not only can she think, but she can also reason and negotiate. She is soft, but I have made her strong. She can carry heavy burdens, cries when happy, laughs when afraid and finds strength to get through life. She has one drawback: she often forgets what she is worth. To me, she is worth everything.”

**Bradford Central Church**

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LISA AND VERONICA
Eggcellent response!

On Saturday, 28 February, a group of knitters from the Grantham church were able to display the 160 chicks they had knitted in response to the St Barnabas charity request to help raise funds for their hospice. A further 278 chocolate Easter eggs were also donated.

SHEBA HUGHES

Stanborough Park Church progress

A cold February Sunday morning saw more than sixty members taking advantage of the opportunity to inspect the progress of the redevelopment project currently underway at Stanborough Park Church.

Just three months away from the original completion date of late May, many had been puzzled by the apparent lack of obvious progress—the exterior walls for the new Pastoral Centre not appearing until after the new year. Few were prepared for the walls of scaffolding supporting the roof, which was open to the sky at one end, or the steel joists and exposed brickwork that greeted them. Only the central gallery looked much as it had always done.

Representatives of the builders and architects were on hand—although it still required much imagination to visualise their explanations of what would be appearing in the future. It seems that unexpected problems with the structure of the existing building and the need to bring in specialist equipment to support the existing roof had contributed towards delays.

One end of the Williams Hall was missing, providing a bird’s-eye view of the extension and the rear of the properties in neighbouring Holland Gardens. For many the development is viewed as an exciting opportunity to extend the church’s influence into the local neighbourhood, while others were seen poring over the builder’s plans for the layout of the new kitchen.

March saw a big change of momentum. The big crane arrived to put in the new roof joists; those for the extension’s first floor were put in place, along with the stairs; and the entire building will shortly be made watertight, enabling work to start on the interior.

With the project’s finishing date receding into the autumn, senior pastor Jacques Venter is confident that members will be worshipping in the refurbished church by the end of the year. Christian is the chief of Oveng village in the Nkomitret district. He too is worried about the water sources in the village. He says, “My biggest concern is that the children of our small school do not have access to water. The old well has run dry and is neglected. The children walk a distance of more than 500 metres to get water from the nearby river, with a risk of accidents as they travel along the road.”

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Emmanuel is the principal at a school in Moyemessi. Children who attend his school have to walk far, almost 2km, to find potable water. Emmanuel says, “Even the water they find is of questionable quality and often makes the children in my school sick. Please ADRA, help us to get a water point at the school and provide proper latrines to help with sanitation!”

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“With YOUR help in this year’s Annual Appeal, ADRAUK will help control the risks of water-borne diseases by providing access to clean drinking water, sanitation and personal hygiene training, benefitting over 32,000 people in 10 villages across Cameroon.”

Read the rest of this story online at adra.uk/projects to see how our ‘Water and Sanitation Project’ will help change Pascal’s life and many others in Cameroon.

Support ADRA-UK’s Annual Appeal Water and Sanitation Project in Cameroon at adra.uk/donate

ADRA response to Cyclone Pam

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Vanuatu continues to support the response to Tropical Cyclone Pam by providing local communities in need with safety, food, and access to water.

On Friday, 20 March, 110 water filtration kits were distributed to four locations in the northeast area of Efaté, the main island of Vanuatu. These kits convert contaminated water into clean drinking water and have been set up in schools and churches.

Six ADRA-supported evacuation centres were set up with generators to increase the safety and security for the women and children, and to charge devices to assist with communication.

Since Saturday, ADRA Vanuatu volunteers have distributed 320 much-needed supplementary food parcels to displaced people in the ADRA-supported evacuation centres. Each parcel is designed to sustain a family of five people for up to two weeks.

Currently there are nine ADRA-supported evacuation centres across the island of Efaté, supporting and providing more than 1,000 displaced people with shelter. ADRA Vanuatu country director, Mark le Roux, summarised the situation as follows. “Our volunteers are working hard to make sure the distribution of the food parcels happens quickly to those who need them most.” He added that “to effectively respond to the needs of the people, we rely on strong partnerships; with our local community, our volunteers, across all the agencies involved, and co-ordinated through the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).”

Source: http://www.adra.org

ADRA UK

Annual Appeal ‘Water and Sanitation Project’:
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Prayer. It was a Spirit-filled weekend. We had a lot of time for prayer: praying for one another and interceding for others as well. There were presentations that helped us to reflect on Jesus, the Man, and also on our spiritual walk as men.

The theme for the weekend was ‘These men continued together in King House from 20 to 22 February. The call was once again answered by men from different churches and we were blessed to... attend the prayer retreat: Pastors Andrew Rashford-Hewitt, Mike Hamilton, Curtis Murphy, Paul Liburd, and Lloyd Lambert.

This year’s Calling Men to Pray retreat was held in Manchester at Luther Calling men to pray people in the Christian community and we have also made good friends through the cookery club and craft club, and by supporting the Weston Food Bank. As a result many Christians from other churches attend our Christmas carol service.

The Weston church recognises the importance of working with and has been involved with the Women’s World Day of Prayer for approximately 25 years. She has built up a friendship with... WWDP in the area was stepping down, and so she was presented with flowers to thank her for all of the work she has done.

Jennie Gallagher is the representative for the Adventist church and was the speaker at the Weston Women’s World Day of Prayer. She spoke about the importance of prayer and how it can bring unity and warmth within the group.

In John 13 Jesus washes the feet of the disciples and He tells them to do the same in remembrance of Him. One of the young women of our church walked up and down the aisles with a bowl and towel to emphasise the biblical event. At the same time a short video showing the washing of feet in the Weston church was screened.

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A recent Week of Prophecy series, held from 14 to 21 February, reminded the Yardley church in Birmingham of its mission, message and method. Church members were encouraged and revolved by the simple and understandable presentations and the moving personal testimony of the speaker, Andre Crawford, an elder from Manchester.

Calling the title of the last sermon, ‘Armed and Ready’, the Yardley church is also now ‘armed and ready’ to take up its mission to preach the message to the world through Christ’s method alone.

Colin Mitchell was born in Chelsea into an artistic family. He and his younger brother Terence enjoyed a happy childhood, at their London home during term time and at Wadhurst in the Sussex Weald during the holidays. All of that changed, however, with the onset of war, when the children were evacuated to join distant cousins in New Hampshire (USA) for the next five years. After the war Colin had to do National Service in Burma and Malaysia.

Although his mother and American cousins were all Christian believers, Colin was not until he went to Oxford, where he was converted at a Christian Union meeting. At Oxford Colin met Adrian Kent, a fellow student who introduced him to the Adventist faith, and he was baptised by Pastor Victor Cooper in 1952.

Colin’s next move was to the Sudan, where he worked as a soil surveyor. It was while he was doing further study in that field at Aberdeen University that he first met Clemency Phillips, at a prayer meeting in the upper room behind a shoe shop where the local Adventists met. They stayed in touch over the years while Colin worked in Iraq, Pakistan and other desert areas, and were eventually married at Newbold College in 1963.

Colin continued to travel widely, firstly based in Cambridge and then as a lecturer at Reading University, where he took students on field trips to North Africa and did occasional consultancy work for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, including lecturing in China and even Tibet. In retirement he continued to work as a consultant, writer and guest lecturer.

Sabbath was important to Colin and wherever he was he would seek out the local Seventh-day Adventist congregation, though this was not always possible in the Middle East and other arid areas.

Colin was actively involved in his local churches – Cambridge, Reading, and in later years Newbold Church. He served as a lay preacher and an elder but was particularly valued for his expertise in the field of Creationism. Many Adventists today own a copy of his book, *The Case for Creationism*, which was first published by Autumn House in 1994. This was subsequently revised and was republished in 1999 as *Creationism Revisited*.

Colin was proud of his four children, Patrick, David, Julian, and Laura, and later his nine grandchildren. He took a keen interest in the progress of each one of them, as evidenced by his twelve-year-old granddaughter Miriam at his funeral on Thursday 19 February: ‘He was the best grandad anyone could wish for, and I will miss him terribly.’

‘A good time to reflect and seek God in the context of a male audience where we affirm one another through the unique experience of manhood,’ was Pastor Andrew Rashford-Hewitt’s comment.

Another attendee, Witness Mujaji, had this to say: ‘I really enjoyed the retreat. We were reminded that our responsibility is not just to the churches that we come from. Ours is to look across the whole land – to every village, town, city – and allow the Holy Spirit to inspire us to be bold and courageous.’
In an ongoing quest for excellence, Stanborough Secondary School recently held its second annual classroom competition. A team of judges from non-teaching staff assessed each classroom with respect to creativity of displays, how God is revealed through the subject, students’ work displays, and neatness, among other things.

The judges were delighted at the wonderful use of colour, amazingly creative displays and each staff member’s passion for their subjects – clearly reflected in their classrooms.

It was extremely difficult for the judges to choose a winner, as several classrooms simply astonished them. After much deliberation, first place was awarded to Mr J. Poddar for the Physical Education room. The ‘Sugar In Drinks’ display, which students helped create, was especially impressive.

In second place was Mrs Milis-Hopa with the library. The overall aesthetics of the library are hard to deny. Third place was achieved by Mrs Poddar for the room where she teaches BSC.

The competition achieved its desired goal – to drive up standards. Each classroom exudes an air of accomplishment and pride. God is glorified through the beauty of the displays and the inspiring presentation of students’ work and achievement. The judges were impressed by the overall neatness and welcoming atmosphere of each classroom. Well done, one and all!

Already, we can’t wait for the classroom competition in 2016!