

Messenger

Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
in the United Kingdom and Ireland

Established 1902

1 November 2024 • Volume 129 • 11

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Celebrating 140 years of changing lives

State of the Union: the address

by the Office of the BUC President

On 17 August 2024, Pastor Eglan Brooks, President of the British Union Conference (BUC), delivered his highly anticipated 'State of the Union' address. Broadcast live on YouTube, the speech offered an in-depth look at the progress of the BUC's Strategic Plan and provided an opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges facing the Union. This address also gave church members and leaders a chance to engage directly with Brooks through a Q&A session, creating a transparent and participatory environment.

Brooks began by acknowledging the challenges that the church faces within its territory, which includes the UK and Ireland. He stated, 'We must address the realities of our time – be they social, economic, or spiritual – and find ways to move forwards together as a church, in faith and unity.' His emphasis on unity was a recurring theme throughout the speech, as he underscored the importance of collaboration between the church's leadership, its members, and God's will in their mission.

One of the central focuses of Brooks's address was the ongoing implementation of the BUC's Strategic Plan, which is designed to guide the church's efforts in areas such as spiritual growth, community outreach, and leadership development. 'We have made great strides in many areas, but there is still work to be done. Our mission is not complete until every member feels empowered and our communities experience the light of God's love through our work,' Brooks affirmed.

In addition to the Strategic Plan, Brooks highlighted specific achievements, such as the expansion of health

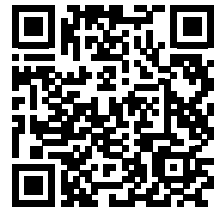


ministries, educational initiatives, and community service programmes across the Union. He praised the efforts of local churches and ministries for their adaptability and resilience, particularly in navigating the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. 'Our strength as a church is shown in how we rise to meet adversity with faith and action,' he said, emphasising the role of prayer and spiritual growth in these successes.

However, the speech was not without its candid discussion of the Union's struggles. Brooks acknowledged that some of the Union's programmes and initiatives have faced setbacks. 'We are at a crossroads where the demands on our resources are great, and the challenges are many. But I believe we are well-equipped, with God's guidance, to persevere and thrive,' he said, urging members to continue supporting the church through prayer, volunteerism, and financial stewardship.

A key aspect of the event was its interactive format. Attendees were invited to submit questions before the speech, which Brooks addressed throughout the session. This open dialogue allowed members to voice concerns and engage directly with the leadership, reinforcing Brooks's commitment to transparency. 'This is not just my vision; it is our shared mission. Together, we will build a church that reflects Christ's love in every action we take,' he said, concluding the address with a call for unity and prayer.

Brooks's 'State of the Union' speech ultimately struck a balance between celebration and realism, recognising the church's achievements while calling for continued effort and faith as we move forwards. For those who could not attend the live broadcast, the address remains available on the BUC's YouTube channel (youtube.com/@buc-tv or scan this QR code).



Editorial

by Dusanka Rancic,
Editor



Dear reader,

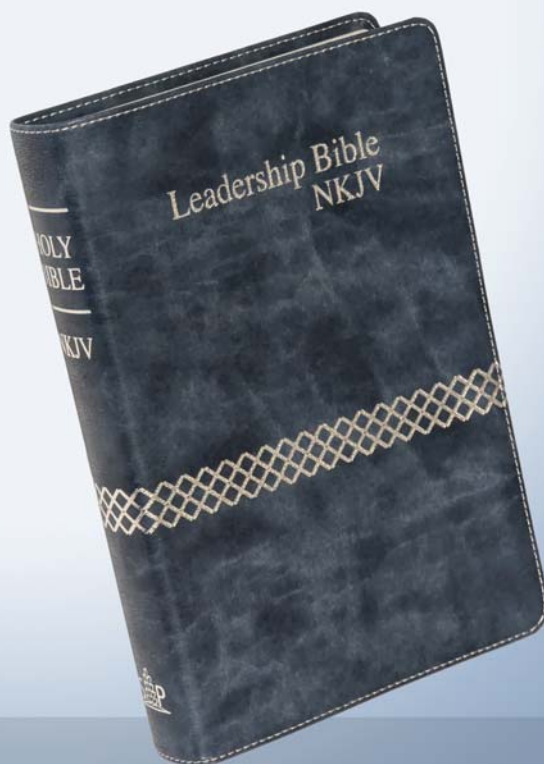
Closely following the BUC's Strategic Plan, 'designed to guide the church's efforts in areas such as spiritual growth, community outreach, and leadership development', we at the Stanborough Press provide resources to support you, your local church, and the community.

So, for example, if we talk about leadership development, we understand the difficulty and complexity of navigating and leading others in these turbulent times. Ordinary people as well as leaders are dealing with the aftermath of Brexit and COVID-19, climate change, natural and man-made disasters, the cost-of-living crisis, political instability, and wars in Ukraine and the Middle East. As Christian leaders, we turn to the Mighty Creator for wisdom, strength, and guidance.

While some leaders derive their authority from being experts in specific fields, others are blessed with charisma and the gift of leadership. However, all should have one thing in common: to follow Jesus' example, since He is the Model Leader, after all. Consequently, the question follows, 'What was the major characteristic of His leadership?' Jesus Himself answered this question, saying that He 'did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many' (Mark 10:45, NKJV). While Jesus was a Servant Leader, no one can argue that He did not possess authority.

A crucially important leadership principle found in this Bible verse is that good leaders lead by serving. You can learn more about this and many other leadership principles from our recently published *Leadership Bible*. Alongside the text of the New King James Version, you will find in this Bible plenty of insightful devotions and spiritual leadership tips to help you make a difference. Both aspiring and current leaders will be richly blessed by the supplementary materials, including the 64 page inserts and the Learning to Lead section.

May God bless you while you continue to spread the Gospel and share hope with the people you encounter on your life journey.

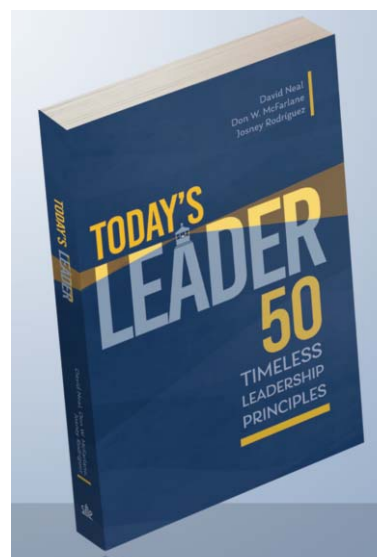


Scan this QR code to order the *Leadership Bible* (also available in giant print) and other resources on leadership.



Also, another resource is available for pre-order: *Today's Leader*, a book that examines the lives of fifty leaders of the Bible for timeless scriptural lessons relevant to the leaders of today. The invaluable principles expressed within these pages will enhance your ministry in whatever sphere God has called you to lead. To pre-order this book, scan the QR code or visit:

lifesourcebookshop.co.uk





Hundreds celebrate Stanborough Press's 140 years of publishing ministry

by Marcos Paseggi, *Adventist Review*

Church leaders and members recommit to the mission work of literature ministries.

Thick early morning fog and persistent drizzle gave way to a splendidly warm autumn day on 8 September as church leaders, members, and guests gathered at the Stanborough Press in Grantham to celebrate 140 years of service.

The event, which coincided with the annual Stanborough Press Open Day, called attendees' attention to God's steady providence through the decades as leaders and staff renewed their commitment to the publishing ministries of the Adventist Church in the United Kingdom and beyond.

'We were set up 140 years ago by the General Conference with a mission,' Press General Manager Elisabeth Sangüesa said, 'to spread the word of God outside of the US, in the English territories. And that's been our mandate since 1884.'

Scores of members, travelling from other regions of the UK, arrived early to celebrate '140 years of impact, of lives changed, of community transformation, of people coming to Jesus through the printed page', as Philip Baptiste, secretary-treasurer of the Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries (ASi) supporting ministry, said in a prayer to open the anniversary celebration ceremony. Baptiste is the author of *Leading Like Jesus*, a Christian leadership book published by the Stanborough Press.

Regional and world church leaders attended, including General Conference (GC) Publishing Ministries Associate Director

Stephen Apola and British Union Conference President Eglan Brooks.

'Literature reaches where we cannot go,' Brooks reminded everyone. 'God has opened marvellous doors through the use of literature to do evangelism. . . . We must continue to utilise the resource of the printed page.'

Greetings from around the world

Other Adventist leaders from all over the world who were not able to attend in person sent their greetings via video messages.

'Now, more than ever, the world needs messages of hope and faith,' GC Publishing Ministries Director Almir Marroni said through video. 'Looking ahead, I am confident that Stanborough Press will continue to play a vital role in our mission.'

GC Ellen G. White Estate Associate Director Dwain Esmond agreed. 'You have been an example of faithfulness to God down through the years,' he said. 'Stanborough, your future is better than your past.'

'The Lord still has wonderful things for you to do,' added Audrey Andersson, a GC vice president, adding, 'Thus far the Lord has helped us.'

Likewise, *Ministry* Associate Editor Jeffrey Brown, also a Stanborough Press author, showed his gratefulness for the Press's commitment to include voices from diverse Adventist backgrounds. 'Thank you, Stanborough Press, for moving with the times. May God continue to bless you in inclusive ministry, in creative ministry, because the books you published are a blessing all around the world.'

GC President Ted N. C. Wilson

highlighted the mission-driven nature of the enterprise. For him, the anniversary is 'an opportunity to see that God's mission continues through the printed page in hard copy and electronically'. 'God will use all of you celebrating and using materials produced by Stanborough to further the coming of Jesus,' he added. 'God is asking you to reaffirm your commitment to the publishing work, helping people to have Christ-filled, Bible-focused literature.'

Every contributor important

Sangüesa reminded attendees that every person involved with the publishing house has been a key link in its development and survival. 'Many people have come before us; we are just building up on their hard work for many years,' she said. Specifically, Sangüesa mentioned the ongoing support of the General Conference and Stanborough Press's partnership with the Pacific Press Publishing Association (PPPA) in the US, and others. PPPA's president, Dale Galusha, sent his greetings through a video message.

Sangüesa also had special words of appreciation for those who have led and served at Stanborough Press before her. They included Paul Hammond (General Manager, 1984-2015), who commended the support of PPPA and the Review and Herald Publishing Association through the years. Hammond also highlighted what, according to him, made working at the Stanborough Press so special. 'The most valuable asset we have is the staff,' Hammond said.

At the same time, Hammond acknowledged God's blessings through 140 years of history: 'I praise Him for it, and I am thankful that the Stanborough Press has continued the work throughout the world of producing books which bring people to the knowledge of Christ.'

This article was first published in the Adventist Review, 20 September 2024.

Roy Graham Library celebrates 50th anniversary

by Olga Milanova, *Assistant Librarian*



It might be hard to believe, but the Roy Graham Library on the campus of Newbold College of Higher Education celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Although its actual fiftieth ‘birthday’ was on 20 April this year, for Newbold College staff, students and especially library staff, this whole year has felt celebratory. For this reason, on the new academic year enrolment day in September, some delicious library-inspired cupcakes were served to the students and staff.

Before the new library building was built in 1974, the old library had been situated in Salisbury Hall for many years. It was a cramped space that held around 13,000 books and could only seat up to sixty students.

Thus, in the early seventies, the college leadership concluded there was a need for a bigger and better library of great standards that would support the academic work of the college. The appeal for financial help was given around the world; a few years later, the construction works began and were finalised in April 1974.

Teams of students and staff volunteered to carry books over from Salisbury Hall to the new building, and for the first time a professional librarian was acquired – William Schomburg. The decision was also made to change the classification system from Dewey Decimal to the Library of Congress, the system that is still used today.

Sunday 20 April 1974 was the

day when the new library building, which also included the European Ellen G. White Research Centre – the first one outside of the United States – was formally dedicated. Dr B. B. Beach, the Secretary of the Northern Europe-West Africa Division, delivered his powerful address at the service, which was held in Salisbury Hall. After the service, everyone made their way to the new building, which had been officially opened in the civil ceremony on the previous Friday by Councillor F. W. Cain, Chairman of the Bracknell District Council.

After a decade, even more space was needed. This led to the creation of the East Wing, which was officially opened on 15 November 1987. Its building was partly financed by the 13th Sabbath overflow offering from the second quarter of 1984.

Upon the opening of the new wing, the library was renamed after a former principal, Roy Graham, who served at the college from 1971 to 1976, and whose wife Jean worked as a library assistant. The new extension offered more study spaces and more room for books and periodicals, and it housed a spacious new reference room and listening centre.

The library building we have on the Newbold campus today is the very same building. It is made of steel, bricks, glass and concrete in an architectural style typical for the seventies and eighties. What makes it unique is not the building material or its appearance, but the human beings who have spent their time in it –

staff, students, and visitors.

Earlier this year I was given an exciting task – to track down the names of every person who has worked in the library over the past five decades. I headed into the library archives and successfully completed this venture. I found out that some of my predecessors had only worked in the library for a few months; others, a few years; and very few for a couple of decades.

If we were to mention all the names and their titles, this article would be much longer. However, some names, still in recent memory, deserve a special mention: Per Lisle (Head of the Library), Lynda Baildam (Associate Librarian), Jonquil Hole (Cataloguing Librarian) and Anne Turner (Senior Library Assistant).

To all of them, and everyone who has ever worked in Roy Graham Library in the last half a century, on behalf of Newbold College, I extend my gratitude and appreciation. They have laid a solid foundation for this institution to continue growing and improving.

The library collection is changing and expanding almost daily, including the addition of a significant number of electronic resources. It is the intellectual heart and soul of Newbold College and a retreat for those who like to dwell among books. My wish is that it continues to travel on its upward trajectory and offer academic excellence to all its users, but also to support the Seventh-day Adventist love for education and service to others.



Alive in Jesus: a new Sabbath School curriculum is coming

by Pastor Les Ackie, *BUC Children, Family and Possibility Ministries Director*



A few years ago, I attended a Family and Children's Ministry conference, the keynote speaker of which was George Barna, the former director of the Barna Research Group. In his plenary address, Barna shared the results of a study that surprised him so much that he initially concluded that his research must have been flawed. Having repeated the study, it produced the same results. The study was designed to ascertain the most effective form of evangelism for church growth. The research concluded: 'The most effective form of evangelism in the Christian church today is evangelism to children.'

If we believe and accept the results of this research, it has far-reaching implications for how we prioritise our ministries. One of the most significant challenges we face is the shift in mindset that enables us to see our children as responsive recipients of God's grace and as disciples for Jesus *now* as opposed to sometime in the future.

Our children are steeped in a culture that is becoming increasingly biblically illiterate. A report by The Bible Society stated that children between the ages of 3 and 15 demonstrated a shocking ignorance of biblical narratives such as the creation story, the flood, and Daniel

in the lions' den. Many had never heard of the crucifixion and did not know that the nativity was a biblical story.¹

We have a narrow window of opportunity to influence our children for Christ and nurture a biblical worldview within them. Therefore, we must utilise every opportunity to expose our children to biblical truth. Ellen White counsels, 'Parents and teachers should constantly seek for improved methods. The teaching of the Bible should have our freshest thought, our best methods, and our most earnest effort' (*Education*, p. 186).

The General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Departments are responding to this challenge by introducing the new Alive in Jesus Sabbath School curriculum for children and youth, set to launch in January 2025 worldwide. Alive in Jesus will be rolled out in stages, beginning with a new curriculum called Baby Steps: Growing with Jesus and the Beginner curriculum in January of next year. Other age categories will be phased in over the next few years until 2028.

Alive in Jesus is a uniquely Seventh-day Adventist initiative that emphasises the fundamentals of our faith. The lessons are designed to uplift Christ in a way that attracts, invites, and engages the minds and hearts of our young ones. They present the stories and teachings of the Bible clearly and accurately, and have the seal of approval from our Biblical Research Institute.

The Alive in Jesus curriculum seeks to equip and empower parents, caregivers, Sabbath School leaders, and others to model and foster a thriving relationship between Jesus and the children in their spheres of influence. Built upon the pillars of *grace*, *character* and *mission*, Alive in Jesus partners parents with Sabbath School leaders to transform the written word of the Bible into living words in the experience of our children, empowering them to respond to God's call to grow, share, and do His will.

The new curriculum emphasises and supports the spiritual growth of parents as the primary nurturers of their children's development, recognising that parents who are confident in mentoring and discipling their own children also become more confident to engage in the wider outreach efforts of the local church.

Please pray for God's continued leading so that we may take full advantage of this opportunity to nurture our children to become 'Alive in Jesus'.

Visit www.aliveinjesus.info for a more detailed curriculum overview, sample lessons, training videos and more information about the new Sabbath School curriculum, and visit LifeSourceBookshop.co.uk for the full sets of lessons.

¹www.biblesociety.org.uk/uploads/content/projects/Bible-Society-Report_030214_final_.pdf

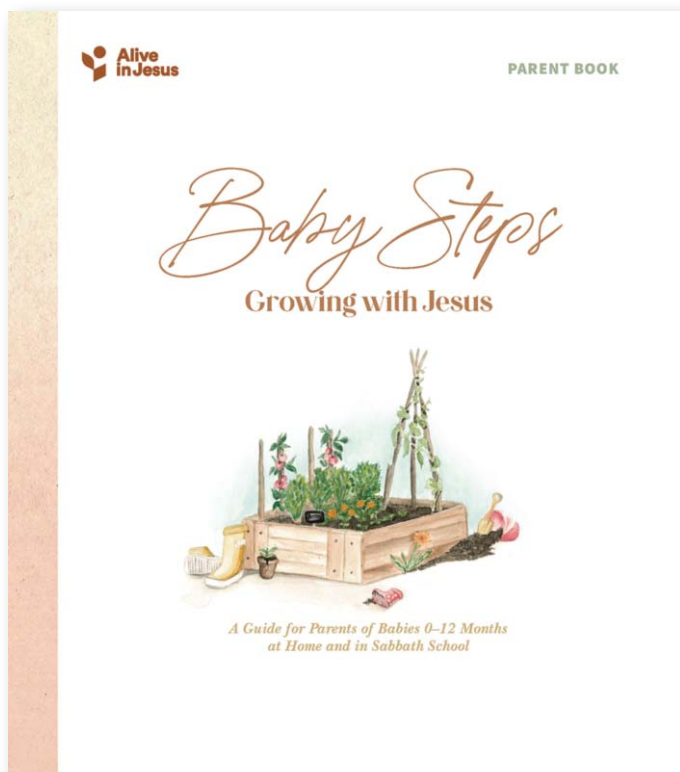
Scan this QR Code to watch a YouTube presentation about these new lessons.



Alive in Jesus curriculum

Lessons available for January 2025:

Baby Steps (birth-12 months)



Beginner (1-3 years)



These *Alive in Jesus* lessons are available to purchase *now* from the Stanborough Press!
Visit **LifeSourceBookshop.co.uk** or phone 01476 591700.

Future *Alive in Jesus* lessons

Coming in 2026:

Kindergarten (4-6 years), Primary (7-9 years)

Coming in 2027:

Junior (10-12 years), Teen (13-14 years)

Coming in 2028:

Youth (15-18 years)

Until the remaining *Alive in Jesus* lessons become available, you will still be able to purchase lessons for your children under the Gracelink curriculum as usual from the Stanborough Press.

Finding sheep

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,
BUC Director for Health, Adventist Community Services & Women's Ministries

'Go Find My Sheep' was the theme for this year's General Conference (GC) **enditnow**® (abuse awareness) emphasis day, which was observed globally on 24 August. Resources for the full day's programme can be found at: <https://women.adventist.org/enditnow-day>. This year's sermon was written by Joanna Daniel from the Welsh Mission, who is an experienced trauma-informed counsellor. She also wrote the seminar titled 'The Trauma-Informed Church', with contributions from Samantha Fessal (Welsh Mission Women's Ministries Sponsor). We applaud these ladies' extensive and impactful global ministry in the area of abuse awareness, prevention and recovery.



Reflections

This year's theme resonated widely across our church, evidenced by the following responses:

One church member said, 'I loved the focus of this year's **enditnow** message, encouraging us to follow Jesus' nurturing ministry as the Shepherd of the flock. It spoke to me of total membership involvement. I particularly liked the seminar on how we can become equipped to deal appropriately with people who suffer trauma as a result of abuse.'

One pastor reported: 'The title "Go Find My Sheep" is evangelistic in its reach and intentional in its message.'

Another member said, 'I wish we had such materials disseminated at church level when I suffered abuse. Perhaps I would not have languished in the wilderness for so long. Thankfully, though, eventually a dear sister reached out to me and encouraged me to get the help I needed, which gave me courage to come back to church. I did choose a different church on my return, as I couldn't face going back to where the perpetrator worshipped.'

An elder said, 'What a refreshing aspect of abuse awareness! We are the ones to go out and find the wounded, minister to their needs, assist in their recovery and welcome them home.'

The theme

General Conference Women's

Ministries Director Gelina Stele, explaining the abuse awareness package focus, writes: 'Both testaments refer to God's people as sheep, to the body of believers as a flock, and to our Lord as the Shepherd. More than ever, abuse victims need to know that Jesus cares about them.'

'And that's where we come in,' says Joanna Daniel. 'The Shepherd is looking for people to go in search of the lost. He is looking for people who will minister as He does.'

Emphasising the afternoon seminar and its importance in bringing awareness to the entire church, Stele further explains: 'In the seminar titled "The Trauma-Informed Church", Joanna Daniel tells us the trauma-informed church is aware of the impact trauma makes on the lives of members. The informed church operates with sensitivity, care, and compassion, making the environment safe for everyone to worship. She describes five ways the church can help traumatised people heal and find a community. They include an informed team, awareness of existing barriers, effective listening, preserved confidentiality, and continued support.'

Resources

The General Conference Women's Ministries department have produced a range of resources to equip us to respond sensitively to

individuals experiencing abuse, including documents and videos highlighting negative and positive approaches to safeguarding: 'Pastoral Response to Victim Disclosure', 'Recognising Red Flags', and 'Screening New Members'. These resources can be accessed at: women.adventist.org/enditnow-brochures.

National resources are being created, such as an interview with SEC President Dr Kirk Thomas, where he speaks comprehensively on the church response to abuse and safeguarding practices: youtu.be/kdEVCyMDJ6k?si=ZETvxtMBqxodJvnR.

Appropriate action

A searching question was once asked in a discussion on how the church dealt with abuse, particularly concerning the level of support given to individuals who had suffered abuse: 'What message does it send to wounded sheep when the shepherds primarily protect the reputation and well-being of the wolves?' At all levels, our church provides guidance on how to respond appropriately to allegations of abuse. One comprehensive resource is the BUC Safeguarding Policy, which covers aspects such as safeguarding our church, the protection of children and adults at risk of harm, and domestic abuse and violence. Visit: adventist.uk/departments/safeguarding/.

Autumn and your well-being

by Sharon Platt-McDonald,

BUC Director for Health, Adventist Community Services & Women's Ministries



The Psychology and Therapy Clinic London published an online article on the impact of autumn on our well-being. The article, titled 'The Psychology of Autumn: Embracing Change and Harvesting Well-being', makes the following observation: *'Autumn is more than just a season: it's a canvas*

*of change and transformation that can deeply affect our psychological well-being.*¹

The impact of change

Changes in the season's colour and temperature and the shorter daylight hours can have an impact on our well-being and how we manage change. Dr Melisa Gratiias, productivity coach, author and speaker with a PhD in Industrial and Organisational Psychology, shares some insights on the changes autumn brings. Referring to significant changes such as less sunshine, less warmth, loss of leaves on the trees and so on, she draws an analogy with the grieving process which eventually culminates in acceptance. 'Some people respond to change in a way that's similar to how they respond to a significant loss – with grief,' says Gratiias. 'Their feelings are normal and understandable, but to be resilient and happy, these individuals need to move through grief towards acceptance. [Because], sure, the leaves die and fall off the trees, but they also become mulch for new growth.'²

Let's look at some of the ways in which autumn can affect the mind and body.

Mental health

- Some people experience 'autumn anxiety' due to beginning a new school year, looming holiday season stress, and regret from not having achieved desired goals over summer.³
- Conversely, the autumn foliage and temperate weather encourage people to spend more time outdoors, which improves happiness and well-being and provides a sense of purpose.⁴
- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a cyclical depression commencing in late autumn and throughout winter. The shorter days and reduced sunlight can trigger SAD in some individuals.⁵

Physical health

- The change in weather can bring an increase in seasonal illnesses such as colds and flu. A comprehensive list of autumn-related illness can be viewed at: www.wheelinghealthright.com/13-common-illnesses-that-peak-in-the-fall-and-tips-to-prevent-them-your-guide-to-a-healthy-autumn/.
- Boosting your immune system is key to maintaining well-being in the colder months. Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, staying hydrated, getting regular exercise, practising hand hygiene, and taking a vitamin D supplement can assist you.
- Lifestyle habits like stress management and adequate sleep are also essential.
- Optimise the sunshine, taking every opportunity to top up on vitamin D naturally.

Activities for well-being

The summer, with its longer daylight hours and shorter hours of darkness, has passed as nature continues its progression of change. Embrace the change



with a positive mindset and some health-enhancing activities:

- Take a sensory inventory as you engage your senses in the changing landscape, noting sights, sounds and smells.
- Capture the visual stimuli as you revel in the beauty of nature's cycle, enjoying the golden yellow, burnt orange and russet colours of the leaves in their transition. Thank God for painting the world with beauty.
- Appreciate the final weeks of pleasant temperature and warm sunshine.
- Enjoy the benefit of the last few longer days before the clocks go back, bringing in shorter days and longer periods of darkness. Get out in nature.
- Relish the satisfaction of embracing dusk and watching sunsets outside while it is still comfortable to do so in lighter clothing.
- Make good use of the garden as you plant the seeds that, in time, will yield plants, flowers and foods that you can enjoy.

Good health!

¹www.psychologyandtherapycliniclondon.com/blog/the-psychology-of-autumn-embracing-change-and-harvesting-well-being#:~:text=Autumn%20is%20more%20than%20just%20a%20season,%20it's

²www.stylist.co.uk/health/mental-health/autumn-happiness-psychology-change/568902

³www.healthline.com/health-news/autumn-anxiety

⁴ureg.com/news/the-reason-why-we-love-the-fall-season/

⁵www.livescience.com/8639-change-seasons-affects-animals-humans.html



Navigating the economic landscape

by Wederly Aguiar, *BUC Treasurer*



Over the last sixteen years, the UK has faced a series of economic challenges that have reshaped its financial landscape, beginning with the 2008 global financial crisis. This crisis was followed by a chain of events, including the European Union referendum, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, which cumulatively have had a profound impact on disposable household income, leaving many, especially those in low-income households, struggling to make ends meet. The consequences of these events continue to ripple through the economy, with unemployment on the rise and a sense of uncertainty further exacerbated by frequent changes in government leadership.

Each of these crises has compounded the last, creating a prolonged period of economic stagnation that the UK has yet to fully recover from. While there have been brief moments of recovery – peaks amid the many troughs – the country has largely remained mired in the aftershocks of 2008. Despite these struggles, the UK has managed to avoid the recession that some analysts feared would be inevitable. Nevertheless, the path to long-term economic stability seems elusive.

This ongoing economic uncertainty is reminiscent of Pharaoh's dream in Genesis 41:17-21, in which seven fat, healthy cows were followed by seven emaciated and sick-looking cows that devoured the

healthy cows, yet remained as thin and scrawny as before. This dream, correctly interpreted as a warning of an imminent seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine, holds a significant lesson: times of prosperity can quickly be followed by hardship, and preparation is essential.

In many ways, the UK's economic journey over the past sixteen years mirrors this dream. The financial crash of 2008 marked the end of a period of relative economic plenty; and, since then, the country has seen years of economic struggle, punctuated by brief recoveries that, much like Joseph's dream, have left the nation's financial health seemingly unchanged. Even when the UK has experienced economic growth, the benefits have often been overshadowed by new challenges, whether it be the Brexit vote or the global pandemic, which have dragged the country back into periods of financial uncertainty.

One of the most significant effects of this prolonged economic turbulence has been the erosion of disposable household income. Wages have largely stagnated, while the cost of living continues to rise. For low-income households, these pressures have been particularly acute. Many

families that were already vulnerable have been pushed into poverty, and the struggle to make ends meet has become a daily reality for a growing number of people. Unemployment, while fluctuating, has also seen a worrying rise, particularly in sectors hit hardest by the pandemic and subsequent economic slowdowns.

Despite these challenges, the church has seen an upward trend in the faithful return of tithes and offerings from its members. In the face of economic uncertainty, members have continued to give generously.

The faithfulness of church members in returning their tithes and offerings is a testament to their trust in God's provision, even in times of economic uncertainty. However, it is also a reminder of the importance of stewardship – of wisely managing resources to ensure that the church can continue its mission even in difficult times. Just as Joseph advised Pharaoh to store up grain during the years of plenty in preparation for the coming famine, the church must continue to set aside resources during times of financial blessing, knowing that future challenges are inevitable.

What is truth?

by Dr Jeff Couzins



who generally live in colder or more temperate climates, it will feel hot. That is personal truth that is diametrically opposite to another person's subjective experience. We see a similar objective/subjective arrangement in Scripture.

For instance, 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 states, 'Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life.'

God is diffusing the fragrance of His knowledge in every place – an objective truth. Yet it is experienced differently by different people. It is the same fragrant knowledge, but to one group – those who are being saved – it is the 'aroma of life leading to life'; while to those who are perishing it is the 'aroma of death leading to death'.

The same objective truth results in different experiences. An objective truth can be experienced subjectively.

Pilate thought Jesus was a philosopher, not a rebel or a revolutionary, and therefore declared that he found no fault in Jesus at all. Whether modern or ancient, the words of Jesus in John 3:16 echo throughout the centuries: 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.'

Belief in Jesus is the only criterion offered for salvation, which signifies the centrality of belief. What Jesus said about belief captures a person's propositional attitude towards

salvation: that is, that individual categorically deems it either true or false. Yet belief in Jesus as our personal Saviour still remains an absolute requirement for salvation, regardless of what anyone else may say.

In this day and age, many people prefer subjective truth, such as non-binary genders. Yet subjective truth may just be an incorrect interpretation of absolute truth.

A non-believer's worldview would likely be, 'There is no God' (Psalm 14:1). A counter to such sentiments is found in Hebrews 11:6: 'Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.'

So, before an atheist, or even an agnostic, can accept the Bible as the word of God, he or she must first believe that God exists.

How can this happen?

If we pray for an atheist who subsequently experiences God's intervention, it may be dismissed as coincidence. The challenge is, there are too many coincidences of answered prayers for them to be coincidences. People can either continue to deceive themselves and deny God's existence, or accept the plain truth in Jesus.

¹All Scripture quotations in this article are from the New King James Version.



Jeremiah 17:9 says, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?'¹ Since the biblical description of the heart characterises our worldview, we should also anticipate deceitful worldviews.

While the Bible describes the human condition, people remain in denial of that condition. We may be in denial, and even oppose God, but God's word is truth (John 17:17), remains true for all time (Matthew 5:18), and will accomplish its purpose (Isaiah 55:11).

Pilate even raised the question of truth. In John 18:38 Pilate asked, 'What is truth?' And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, 'I find no fault in Him at all.' We do not see any response from Jesus, because Pilate was looking directly at the Truth.

The question Pilate asked has also been asked by philosophers over the centuries. The Bible tells us that Jesus is Truth (John 14:6). Also, that truth is absolute – it is the same in all conditions, situations, and ages.

Others believe that truth is relative and personal. However, truth remains objective while being experienced in different subjective ways, so the same truth can be objective and subjective at one and the same time. Let me explain.

For example, it may be 25 degrees Celsius outside. That is an objective fact at that moment. For those generally living in 30-to-40-degree heat, it may feel cold; but for those



WORD GRID

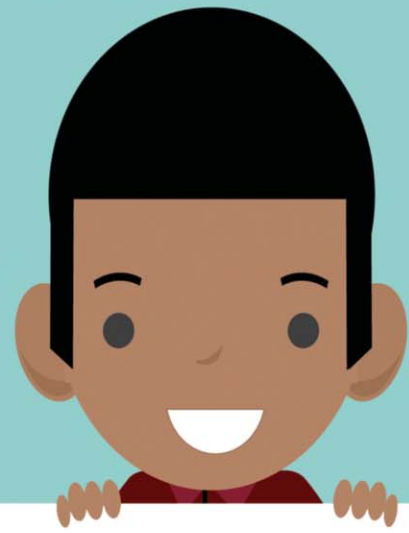
Quotation by Kate Douglas Wiggin

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

1. One man carrying three of these in 1 Samuel 10:3.
2. Put this instrument to your lips in Hosea 8:1.
3. A Horite chief in Genesis 36:30.
4. A clanging instrument in 1 Corinthians 13.
5. Prepare this room for me in Philemon 22.
6. It becomes a ripening grape in Isaiah 18:5.

1E	1D	1E	2B	4B		4A	3D	3B	1A	3A		4D	1B	2B	3F			
3B	3F	2A	1B		2A	3D	1E		6D	1B	2B	1A	3A		3B	1F	1C	
3F	1E	6D		2A	3D	1B	5B	5A	3D	2A		1B	6A		5A	6C	3A	
1C	3F		1E	1D	1E	2B		6A	2B	1E	1F	3D		1C	3F	3A		
2B	1C	3A	3B	1C	3F	2A		2E	1B	1F	1F	3B	4D	3B	1A	3B	2A	4B

Taken from *Bible Brain Teasers*, by Sylvia Coupland.
 To purchase your copy, follow this link: <https://lifeforcebookshop.co.uk/product/bible-brain-teasers/>



Lakeside adventure

It was almost midnight and still they had not found the place where Daddy had planned to camp.

As the headlights shone around one corner after another Daddy kept saying, 'It's pretty close now, maybe just around the next corner.'

But it wasn't. All the time they were climbing higher and higher up the mountain.

Mother was getting more and more worried, because she felt that Beverley and Blossom should have been in bed fast asleep hours ago.

'Surely it can't be much further,' she said. 'Look, there's the lake down there. This must be the place.'

'You're right! You're right!' said Dad. 'That's the lake I was looking for. The camp can't be far away now. I think I'll leave you and the children in the car while I walk up the hill and see if I can find it.'

'Don't be long.'

I won't,' said Dad.

When Daddy had gone Mother stepped out of the car to stretch her legs.

Suddenly in the darkness she had a dreadful feeling that the car was moving backwards. She put her hand on it.

Yes! It was slipping! She tried to get in it again to reach the brake, but she couldn't. The car was gathering speed by now. . . .

She called to Beverley to climb over to the front seat and step on the brake pedal, but that didn't help. The car kept moving.

Mother then grabbed the front bumper and tried to hold the car back. For a moment this seemed to help, but the car was too heavy for her and she soon felt herself being dragged downhill.

With gradually increasing speed the car moved nearer and nearer to the edge of the road, beyond which the hill dropped steeply into the deep, dark waters of the lake.

'Please, dear Jesus!' she cried aloud. 'Don't let it go over the edge!'

But it went over the edge. First one wheel, then another.

A moment later the front wheels followed the back wheels and the car was plunging headlong down, down, down towards the lake!

Did Mother let go? She did not. 'If my children are going to drown, I'll go with them,' she said to herself, as, holding on frantically to the bumper, she was dragged down the rocky slope.

The dark water now seemed to be leaping up at her out of the blackness of the night.

Beverley and Blossom, sensing their dreadful danger, were crying at the top of their voices, while Mother was crying aloud, 'Jesus, save my children!'

Suddenly there was a great bump and the car came to a standstill – right at the water's edge.

An old tree stump had stopped its headlong fall, just in time.

Beverley and Blossom told me of that awful night and, believe me, they love their mother! As long as they live they will never forget how she hung on to that bumper all the way down the hill and was willing to die with them if need be.

How wonderful is mother love! Did you ever stop to think that your mother would be willing to do the same for you? Of course she would! Why not show her a little bit of love right now?



Taken from *Uncle Arthur's Best Bedtime Stories*, by Arthur S. Maxwell.

To purchase your copy, follow this link: <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk/product/uncle-arthurs-best-bedtime-stories-set-of-5/>

Climbing Everest for Glasgow

A mountaintop conversation with Pastor Claudiu Popescu

Pastor Claudiu Popescu is one of the longest-serving ministers in the Scottish Mission. Although ministry is his main passion, he is also an avid mountaineer. A few days after Adina Lupu conducted this interview with him, Pastor Claudiu embarked on a 35-day expedition to the Himalayas.

Adina Lupu: *When did you discover your passion for mountaineering?*

Claudiu Popescu: It started quite early, during my Adventurer and Pathfinder years. Growing up in Romania, I lived near the mountains, and most of our activities took place outdoors with leaders who loved pushing our physical boundaries.

AL: *You continued to pursue your childhood passion. What experiences further solidified your love for outdoor activities?*

CP: In 1997 I moved to Austria, and the mighty Alps marked a new challenge for me. I was part of a youth group that loved exploration. Most Sundays, regardless of the weather, we were always doing something. Summer holidays couldn't come soon enough for me to conquer another peak or attend a 'survival camp', where we had to prepare food found in the forest for several days. I climbed Grossvenediger (3,666m), Wildspitze (3,770m), and Grossglockner (3,798m); then Tofana di Rozes (3,225m) in the Dolomites, Mont Blanc (4,800m) in the French Alps, Mount Kilimanjaro (5,900m) in Tanzania, and Mount Toubkal (4,167m) in Morocco.

AL: *What were the scariest moments during your expeditions?*

CP: I can recall many difficult scenarios, but one frightening experience occurred in 2003 in the French Alps when I attempted to reach Mont Blanc. A sudden avalanche claimed the lives of about four people at a higher camp, just 500 metres above where I was. The ferocious sound of snow, stones, and ice is still etched in my memory.

AL: *What have you learnt and experienced in the mountains?*

CP: I have developed valuable life skills that have served as building blocks in my life, including leadership, resilience, decision-making, financial management, cultural sensitivity, self-motivation, and real-world experience. Additionally, travelling with others provides an opportunity to establish close bonds among teammates and create lifelong memories and friendships. Another positive aspect of high-altitude expeditions is the amazing views above the clouds.

AL: *Vanessa Gendoma said, 'The best view comes after the hardest climb.' Taking on the Himalayas seems to*



be your most challenging trek yet. What can you tell us about this one?

CP: My goal is to reach Everest Base Camp at 5,364m, followed by an attempt to summit Mera Peak at 6,476m (claimed to be the highest trekking peak in the world). I will then challenge myself to reach Mt Pumori at 7,161m (one of the most difficult peaks above 7,000m due to its Grade 3 technical sections).

Some of the challenges will include safely landing at Lukla, which is one of the most dangerous airports in the world due to its high elevation and short runway; traversing part of the Khumbu Icefall, a slow-moving river of ice that gives rise to deep crevasses needing to be bridged with ladders; crossing high suspension bridges; navigating challenging uphill and downhill trails; and trekking on the demanding route to the Mera Glacier, to name a few.

Some of the rewards will be experiencing stunning 360° views of Himalayan peaks, including the Everest region – as well as the chance to spot musk deer, pheasants, and possibly Himalayan tahr.

AL: *Why is this expedition special to you, and how does it relate to your calling in life, especially in your current role as the pastor of the Glasgow and East Kilbride churches?*

CP: Glasgow Church's worship space has become too small for the number of members and visitors who gather there every Sabbath, resulting in insufficient seating. The building is quite old and requires many repairs. The members of Glasgow Church have embarked on a fundraising campaign over the past few years with the goal of raising £250,000, which is the required contribution before receiving additional grants to purchase a new building or remodel the existing one. The Himalayan expedition is a personal initiative to enhance our fundraising efforts for this project.

To support Pastor Claudiu Popescu to achieve his fundraising target for Glasgow Church, please visit <https://gofund.me/bdc7c413>.

This article was first published on the Scottish Mission website.

Day of Fellowship in Dublin gathers Adventists from across the island of Ireland

The preparation for a truly special church service began early on Sabbath 14 September. Before 7am, my family and I were already travelling to Dublin, imagining how wonderful and blessed that Sabbath day would be – and so were more than 1,000 other Seventh-day Adventists from all corners of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic who were heading to Betania Church, in Dublin, for the Irish Mission Day of Fellowship.

The atmosphere throughout the day was filled with joy and unity as people came together to worship and strengthen their faith. ‘One of the biblical mandates is to be united. And if we want to keep the church walking forwards together, it’s important to have days like this, where we embrace one another, no matter what language you speak. No matter what culture we are from, we embrace everybody,’ said Pastor Adam Keough, President of the Irish Mission.

Heartfelt worship, powerful sermons, and multicultural connection

The praise and worship sessions that day were very powerful, beautiful and heartfelt. ‘The music was incredibly moving. Those moments of praise gave me goosebumps!’ said Janete Azevedo, a Brazilian living in Waterford. ‘It seems like Heaven is already here,’ said Kareah Orlina, a young girl who attends Dublin West Church.

The sermon was delivered by Clifford Goldstein, an American author and editor of the *Adult Bible Study Guide*, who said: ‘I hope that when people leave this place today, they will remember that we are not special: the message is. We have the privilege of being given that message. May we take it seriously and be used by God to share it with others.’

Because the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland is very diverse and multicultural, some church members don’t speak English as their first language and struggle to comprehend this language fully. This year, the Day of Fellowship organisers also included translation services in Portuguese, Romanian and Ukrainian for those who would feel more comfortable following along in their own language.

A moment of gratitude for Pastor Dan Serb’s ministry

During the programme, a special moment was designated to express gratitude to Pastor Dan Serb, Oana, and their family. Pastor Serb was the previous president of the Irish Mission. Pastor Keough expressed his thankfulness for Pastor Serb’s ministry, influence, leadership, and wisdom. ‘Your leadership has been marked by grace, a kind heart, open ears and a warm heart,’ he pointed out.

Praise, testimony, and engagement: a joyful afternoon

The afternoon programme was filled with beautiful musical performances from different groups and church



Pastor Adam Keough, President, expresses gratitude to Pastor Dan Serb, Oana, and their family
Photos by Daniel Nour



choirs. Besides the music, Clifford shared his testimony about seeking the truth and how God worked in his life.

Another great part of the afternoon programme was a very interesting Kahoot quiz based on the morning sermon, general Bible questions, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ireland. Many youth joined, and the three highest scorers each won an Andrews Study Bible.

Throughout the day, people could look in the concourse of the building to check the displays from various ministries and check how to get involved in them. ‘It has been a great opportunity for us to mingle and explain our goals and vision,’ said Amerson Fortunato, Director of Hope Media Ireland.

A call for unity and a song of hope

As the Day of Fellowship came to a close, there was a sense of renewal and joy. Pastor Keough reminded everyone that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a remnant movement with a remnant message. He then encouraged everybody to look around the room and pray: ‘God, even though we may be so different from each other, Lord, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, may we stand together, united as one. And may our oneness as a remnant movement be a testimony to the world of Your remnant message,’ he finished.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who attended and helped make this day possible, from the volunteers to the speakers and performers. We look forward to gathering again, stronger and more united in faith.

DEBORAH LESSA, IRISH MISSION COMMUNICATION SPONSOR

This article was first published on the Irish Mission website.

Welsh Mission churches connecting with their communities

Health emphasis

Hereford Church has focused on connecting with its community through health ministries. The church members had a stall at the Hereford Vegan Market on 5 May, giving out free literature and inviting people to the follow-up health check programme on 25 May. Fourteen people from the local community attended this follow-up programme and received free food, drinks, and books about health and God. The members were able to speak about Jesus and pray with those who were willing.

Respondents to a questionnaire highlighted topics of interest for further seminars. Various church members with professional and practical experience in those fields shared their knowledge through seminars, along with a retired dentist, who gave advice to the children.

Through these health events a couple have started attending Sabbath services; another wants to keep in contact with the church whenever they are offering further health programmes; and someone who reached out via the Facebook ads wants the church to partner her with health checks for elderly people in the community.

Family fun days and park outreach

Family fun days were held by Carmarthen and Ystrad Mynach churches as part of the Reflecting Hope initiative. Ystrad Mynach's event in the park featured singers from a local college, a barbeque which fed 200, a smoothie bike, and interactive activities for children, which saw 11 from the community sign up for the summer holiday Bible school.

In June, a lady who first met them at the Family Fun Day came to church. She had been looking for a church after recently moving to the area. Passing near the park, she heard the music from the college students and looked to see what event was taking place. There she met the church members and loved the warm, friendly atmosphere. A few weeks later she asked a work colleague about the church's location, only to discover he attended the same church!

On 22 June, the Family and Children's Ministries sponsors led the Newtown church in a 'Gospel in the Park' event in the main town park, aiming to share the Gospel



Hereford members pose outside the Aspire Centre ready for the community health checks.



through music and to encourage and strengthen listeners and fill them with hope in Jesus. Posters in local shops and adverts on various community Facebook pages drew more than 100 people to the event. Members introduced themselves as the local Seventh-day Adventist church and extended an open invitation for people to worship with them at their church.

Pop-up marquees were erected, and *The Messengers*, a praise team from Wolverhampton Great Brickkiln Street Church, provided music, along with Marie Jones (West Bromwich), the Chigbo sisters (Newport), and the local Hafren & Llanidloes Community Choir, one member of which was celebrating his 75th birthday.

Contacts were made, with requests for books and studies. Food prepared by Mitchel Mitcham, a chef from Telford Church, added to people's enjoyment. The spiritual atmosphere and warm sunshine induced people to remain. One little girl, who recognised the McKenzies from a previous children's programme, happily received a balloon with the caption 'Smile: Jesus Loves You!' Staff from the Oriel Davies Gallery who run the park programme calendar enjoyed the event, with one person saying, 'It was perfect.'

Youth outreach

Young people from Carmarthen Church travelled some distance to attend the Knife Crime & Violence



Carmarthen youth ensemble at Knife Crime & Violence Awareness event

Awareness Youth Fete on 30 June. Three young people courageously persevered with knocking on doors to encourage people to attend the youth fete, despite some doors being shut in their faces. Air Ambulance Cymru sent three volunteers to serve the community alongside the youth. Their highlight was playing rounders with the young people, and they asked to be invited again when the youth plan their next event.

The local councillor stayed, mingled, and took away an armful of Food and Behaviour literature and the youth fete theme song CD to play in her car. Intrigued by the SDA logo on their high-visibility vests, she asked, 'What is SDA?' Now she knows! She was so moved by the youth ensemble boldly playing on the street that she invited them to a local fete and urged them to keep in touch to work together again.

Although the footfall of guests was low, the event has made some valuable inroads and connections for future events. Particularly inspiring were the youth's optimism and perseverance despite serving in a challenging mission field.

WELSH MISSION OFFICE



ASI UK: A fresh commitment to evangelism in the UK

ASI UK is a lay organisation that has been set up to support the church's mission in the United Kingdom. Its objectives are multifaceted. First, ASI UK supports individual outreach programmes that are in harmony with the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by providing resources, funding and exchange of mission ideas; second, it promotes networking, unity, and inspiration through its annual mission conventions; and third, it fosters collaboration among church members focused on winning souls for Christ. There are various lay-led ministries in the UK, including telephone evangelism, social media channels, health mission work, distribution of printed literature, and even building mobile escape rooms. ASI UK aims to bring all these lay-led ministries in the UK together at its annual convention, scheduled to take place in one year's time.

The organisation recently hosted an inspiring weekend event featuring Pastor Eglan Brooks, BUC President, as the guest speaker. The programme included powerful messages, exciting testimonies, networking opportunities, and the exchange of evangelism ideas. The weekend culminated with a general assembly on 23 June 2024, when new ASI UK executive officers were elected. In line with the organisation's objective for unity with the church, the BUC will have a permanent representative to the ASI UK Executive Committee. This was the first general assembly since the organisation's relaunch earlier this year.

Daniel Klop, the newly elected president, emphasised ASI UK's potential to support the church's outreach efforts. He stated, 'This is a moment when ASI UK can really help the church in its outreach. ASI UK wants to help evangelical ministries and small groups that support

the Adventist mission by providing them with the resources and funds to complement their individual efforts.'

The newly elected treasurer, Michael Garkov, who was the initiator and main driver in re-establishing ASI UK, said, 'ASI UK is becoming a powerful organisation that could play a major role in the evangelism work in the UK. With its network of professionals, businesses and ministries, ASI has pledged itself to support the mission of the church in a dynamic way. ASI UK is the platform that can bring the lay-led ministries in the UK together for synergy, higher efficiency, and inspiration.' Elder Michael Garkov is also the treasurer of ASI Europe and is actively involved in supporting the church in spreading the Gospel in the UK and throughout Europe.

How can I get involved?

You can join ASI by becoming a member. There are two membership types: Ordinary Membership for business owners, professionals, or people running their own ministries, and Supporting Membership for students and other ASI UK supporters.

Together, we can achieve more. On our own, we can accomplish little, but working together, inspired by the Spirit, we can reach the world. ASI UK is a powerful network of laypeople who collaborate with and inspire other laypeople to work together to advance the mission of the church. For more information and regular updates, please visit www.asiuk.org.

MICHAEL GARKOV, TREASURER OF ASI EUROPE



Join the Cancer Champions programme: 'A Call to People of Faith'

Cancer is a formidable challenge that affects many lives in the UK. To combat this, One Vision has partnered with Macmillan Cancer Support to launch the Cancer Champions programme in Watford and the Three Rivers District. This initiative aims to address health inequalities by reaching out to all community groups, especially underserved populations.

If you feel called to make a difference and support people on their cancer journey, we invite you to join us as a Community Cancer Champion. To express your interest and arrange a telephone meeting to discuss the role further, please contact: Info@ovwatford.org.

ENOCH KANAGARAJ, CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND FOUNDER OF ONE VISION CHARITY



Church plant in Kingston-upon-Thames

Sabbath 6 July 2024 saw the launch of the new church plant, Thayagam Tamil SDA Church, in Kingston-upon-Thames. The place of worship is right in the heart of the council's Cambridge Road estate, built in 1969. Today there are around 1,810 people living in this community, contained in 832 households. Children and young people aged 0 to 15 years old make up 26% of the community. It is an ethnically diverse area with nearly half (45%) of the residents from ethnic minority backgrounds. Nearly a quarter of households on the estate have nobody aged 16 or over speaking English as a main language. It is also the most disadvantaged area in Kingston, with an Index of Multiple Deprivation rank of 4,711, which places it in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. Needless to say, God has definitely placed the church plant in the right place to serve the community. Led by Pastor John Melki, Thayagam Church's mission is to reach out mainly to the Tamil-speaking community in the borough.

R. CRUZ



Knowsley Church attains milestone

On Sabbath 17 August 2024 the Knowsley church plant was dedicated and organised as part of the NEC family. The theme, 'This Far by Faith', testified of how God has grown this small community from the initial five families of twenty people who have worshipped together since 2017. Since then, the church plant has persevered under the direction and leadership of Pastor Romel Ricarte. Nothing stopped the company of believers from continuing their worship services, even throughout the COVID-19 lockdown via online Zoom meetings. Today the church members have multiplied to approximately sixty and still counting.

On this beautiful occasion, Knowsley Church was graced by the attendance of the Mayor of Whiston Council, Mr Stephen Henry, and his consort, Mrs Kathleen Oakes, and her husband, representing the Whiston community. It was also attended by the senior leadership team of the North England Conference.

Pastors George Kumi, Emanuel Bran, and Patrick Herbert presided over the organisation and dedication ceremonies before the presence of a packed hall full of friends, families, and visitors, representing the churches within Area 2. The programme showcased Knowsley Church's multinational ethnicities and mixed culture, highlighting how they worship as *one body, with one Spirit, having one hope, to glorify one God* (Ephesians 4:4-6).

The event concluded with an afternoon programme of music and a short talk by Pastor Noel Apugan based on Exodus 25:8: *'Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them'* (NKJV). It was a brilliant way to end the Sabbath event for the new Knowsley Seventh-day Adventist church to go further by faith with a rekindled spirit and an invigorated mindset of service to God and the community.

ELDER EDWIN ABACAN



Warrington Church organised

When God creates life, He infuses it with the power to grow and multiply, and He has done so with Warrington Church. God has used visionary pastors and leaders who lived in the community to share in the mission, be welcoming, pray, worship, and teach His word. By His grace the plant was officiated as Warrington Church on Sabbath 20 July 2024 as the following officiating NEC ministers joined the local minister, Pastor Romel Ricarte, for the service: Pastor George Kumi (then President), Pastor Emanuel Bran (Executive Secretary), Dr Patrick Herbert (then Personal Ministries Director), Pastor Juljan Kastrati (Ministerial Secretary), and Elder Michael Ageyi-Asare (Treasurer).

All church members signed their names on the register as the organised body. Dr Herbert preached an empowering sermon, 'You can't just sit there', depicting the attitude of mission we must uphold. A plaque from the NEC was handed to Pastor Romel and the elders to hang on the new church wall.

After the fellowship lunch, a few families shared their inspiring testimonies of how the original gathering began, as they branched out from Liverpool Central Church and Liverpool North to start a fellowship in their local area. Musical praise was raised to give God all the glory. Pastor Romel and his family were affirmed for being supportive and catalysing this event. As God pours out His Holy Spirit, we pray to be used as His vessels to contribute to the viral growth of God's kingdom in the world.

ELAINE MCCARTAN

100th birthday at Manchester South

Manchester South Church was the centre of celebration for one of our longstanding members, Sister Lorna Hewitt, who celebrated her hundredth birthday on Sabbath 2 March. It was a joint event with the Women's International Day of Prayer, which focused on '100 Promises of God' and longevity, led by our guest speaker, Dr Beatrice Kastrati, NEC Health Director.



Sister Hewitt grew up in the Parkfield Street church from age 6, and made the decision to follow Christ on 30 April 1938, when she was baptised at 14. As a church member she held the role of Assistant Treasurer for 22 years; Personal Ministries Secretary for 35 years; and her favourite role was serving as Church Clerk for 20 years, even when she was in her nineties. Despite Sister Hewitt's age and slight hearing loss, she has an excellent memory, as she can recall every pastor in order who has served at her church (initially at Parkfield Street Church, and later at Manchester South Church, from the date it was established on 6 June 1959 until its present day).

Sister Hewitt's 100th birthday was acknowledged by her church family and friends across the UK and abroad, and also by the TED Field Secretary, Pastor Ian Sweeney, and King Charles. When Sister Hewitt was asked her secret to be blessed with longevity, she said, 'A close walk with the Lord.'

AMANDA QUESTEL-LEWIS

Hackney Church champion awestruck at his surprise 90th birthday service

On the afternoon of Sabbath 8 June, Elder John Locker, a Hackney Church member who had turned 90 on Monday 3 June, was surprised



with a dedicatory service celebrating this milestone and his sixty years of service, organised by Myrtle O'Keefe. The co-hosts were Hackney's musicians and singers, Brother Curtis and Brother Lloyd. Elder Locker had believed the afternoon programme would be an AY Men's Ministries service, so he received a big surprise.

John's father Alfred had been one of the pioneers of the faith in Montserrat, bringing Adventism to the tropical island in the late 1930s, and John has been involved in Men's Ministries in both Holloway and Hackney. Like his father, he was an avid collector for ADRA: one year he collected £3,800. He married his first wife, Edna, at 22. God blessed them with nine children, 24 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren. John

subsequently married Eva in 1981.

Pastor Picart, Pastor Bonnie and Hackney's current pastor, Vaughn Thorpe, were joined for the service by the SEC President, Dr Kirk Thomas, and the SEC Women's Ministries Director, Jacqueline Otokpa.

Elder Locker stood back in disbelief, smiling to everyone as he took his seat. There were beautiful birthday tributes from family, friends and colleagues. His sister spoke of growing up together in Montserrat, and his grandchildren sang him a birthday song online. One of his sons spoke of how his father had helped him become an accomplished sports journalist who had also worked in Buckingham Palace. Pastor Delcina Rodney, Brother Locker's niece, said he was instrumental in encouraging her to take up ministry.

ZINZE BISHOP, HACKNEY CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS AND PM SECRETARY



Portuguese-speaking Day of Fellowship

For the first time in the UK, the Seventh-day Adventist Portuguese-speaking community held a Day of Fellowship in London on 15 June with more than 800 attendees under the theme 'United in Gratitude and Worship'.

Organised by the Portuguese-speaking advisory and led by Maria Elisa de Batista with a dedicated team of volunteers, the event welcomed participants from Manchester, Leeds, Swindon, Oxford, Peterborough, Bournemouth, and Ireland, as well as all six Portuguese-speaking churches in London. The joyful occasion provided fellowship and revival, with participants encouraged to share their faith and hope in the imminent second coming, as presented by guest preacher Pastor Jeferson Lorenzi from Brazil. Ten individuals decided to get baptised in the coming months, and Sarah Zav captivated the audience with her songs of praise. The congregation received hundreds of copies of *The Great Controversy* to share with friends and members of the Portuguese-speaking community.

The event was advertised and broadcast on social media, with continued viewership and shares on Instagram at *adventistasnaeuropa*. Participants expressed their gratitude to God for this event, cherishing the opportunity to connect and worship with those of the same culture and language. Pastor Clebson Braga, president of this community, expressed his gratitude for everyone's massive support and gave all the praise to God.

RODRIGO CERENCOVICH



Newark Pathfinder investiture

On 27 July Newark Church held its annual Adventurer and Pathfinder Investiture. Twenty-four young people and children from the Newark and Grantham churches received awards and badges for course work successfully completed during the year. The various groups from Little Lambs to Companions each reflected on special moments over the year, recited Bible texts, and received their awards, with the Pathfinders playing an active role and three Builders performing a violin trio, 'Make Me a Servant'. Four Adventurers officially joined the Pathfinders, receiving their new scarves and woggles.

Thanks go to the club counsellors and directors from both churches who play such an important role in guiding these young lives through the Adventurer and Pathfinder programmes, as well as to the North England Conference area coordinators who participated in the service.

MARCUS DOVE, NEWARK CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS



New Life Church's Community Fun Day

On 21 July 2024 the New Life Seventh-day Adventist church, led by its pastor Dr Hezron Otieno Adingo and the Community Services team, held a Summer Community Fun Day that was well received by the local community. The day was filled with laughter, food and slushy beverages, face-painting, bouncy castles, dominoes, chess, musical chairs, and gospel music. The pastoral team prayed with the members of the community who requested prayers and listened to those who needed someone to talk to. Approximately 200 people attended.

The community members were encouraged that New Life Church exists to serve them, and that they can visit and even be part of the church, which is a place of peace and comfort and a safe haven. The church is there for them. We hope to plan more days like these.

One of the residents wrote to say a massive thank-you to everyone at New Life Church, saying, 'It was lovely to see so many friends and neighbours having fun!'

SIQBHAN FEATHERSTONE



Praying Mothers Connect

On 15 June 2024, Stanborough Primary School hosted an inspiring event titled 'Praying Mothers Connect,' organised by Holloway's Toyin Aworinde and her dedicated team, to seek God's blessings on our children. This gathering brought 140 women together, with many more joining virtually, to engage in powerful prayer sessions led by Pastor Linda Asare, Pastor Ayo Adesina, Elder Gloria Moshu-Onchiri, Uche Ademuyiwa and Lola Adegbenjo, incorporating beautiful worship songs and scriptures.

Sister Yewande Oladipo said, 'I do not think I have prayed this much all year,' and participants testified to the palpable movement of God. Mothers all agreed that this event was much-needed and would be biannual from now on. Their next meeting will be in December, and more details are on the way! Make sure you're in the loop by emailing us at Mothersatprayer@outlook.com or phoning us on 07402 010428. These events are too important to miss!

AYOBOLA CHIKE-MICHAEL



York SDA Church community activity

On Sabbath 15 June 2024 the compassionate souls of York SDA Church's Community Services team – Susie, Ruth, Sasha, Kanga, Josephine, Roxane, Bhekss and the spirited young Logan – entered York's city centre to distribute twenty-six care packages to those in need. Within these parcels lay yummy sandwiches, water, crisps, fruit, clinical wipes, tissues, and the handbook *Keys to Happiness*. In answer to our prayers, the rain held back until everyone was back in the car park. The recipients' gratitude was boundless, and we plan to repeat this activity every third Sabbath of the month.

The following day (Sunday), Roxane, Bhekss and Kanga sang and visited the sick in Harrogate Hospital. It was a joy to hear patients and families join in the singing. The healing power of music and the spirit of giving uplifted everyone with the light of God's grace. We could make a difference – one parcel, one song, one heart at a time.

ROXANE DIGMAN NKOMO

BUC EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT



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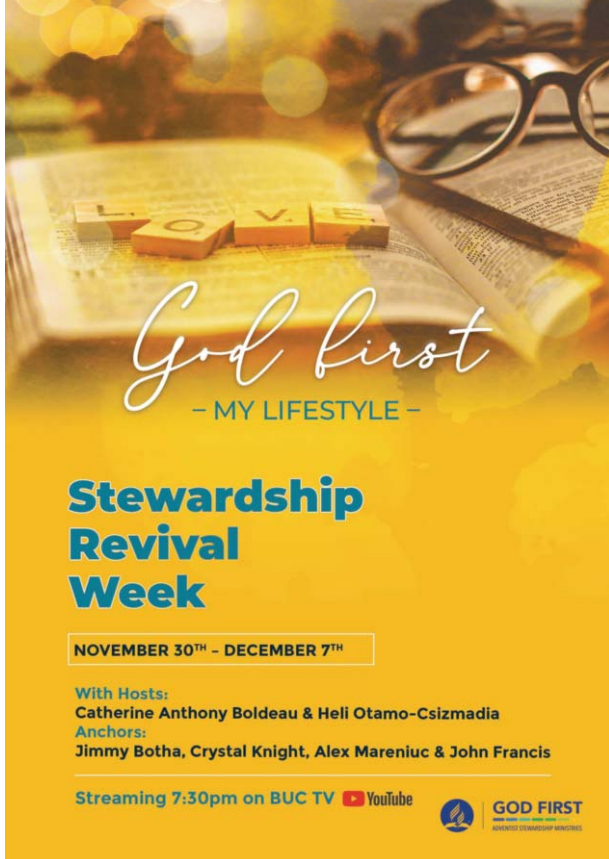
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NOVEMBER 30TH - DECEMBER 7TH

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Anchors:
Jimmy Botha, Crystal Knight, Alex Marenic & John Francis

Streaming 7:30pm on BUC TV   **GOD FIRST**
ADVENTIST STEWARDSHIP AMERICA

Non-Executive Expert Advisors



The British Union Conference (BUC) of Seventh-day Adventists is excited to extend invitations for application to members willing to serve as Non-Executive Expert Advisors to our Trustee Board (commonly referred to as the Executive Committee).

As a Non-Executive Expert Advisor to the Executive Committee, you'll play a pivotal role to the Executive Committee in their governance of the BUC and its territory, providing specialist advice and guidance. Your contributions will be instrumental in sharing good governance practices, supporting the vision of the future of the BUC and driving positive change in line with our organisational strategic plan.

There are five areas of expertise that we are currently seeking to strengthen our board:
• Legal • Compliance & Audit • People • Safeguarding • Assets & Investments

Please see the full details and relevant application packs by visiting the website: <https://adventist.uk/who-we-are/jobs/>

Applications are welcome from individuals who are not employed by the entities BUC, SEC, NEC, IM, SM or WM or by affiliated institutions, and who are not currently serving Executive Committee members.

Employment Type:
Voluntary

Application deadline:
Applications are open until the end of 2024 and successful applicants will be contacted at the start of 2025.



LifeSource book sales

DATE	VENUE	TIME
November		
2	Camp Hill (featuring Brenda Walsh)	After sunset
9	Filipino International Church (featuring Brenda Walsh)	After sunset
22-24	Reflecting Hope Weekend, Leonardo Hotel, Hinckley	
30	Southampton	After sunset
December		
1	Manchester South	10am-2pm
8	Brixton	10am-2pm
15	Hyland House	10am-2pm

Messenger
Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United Kingdom and Ireland

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Back, left to right: Pastor Ikwisa, Pastor Vernon Nambo, Elder Prem Wilson, Pastor Ebenezer Daniel and Elder Prasanna B. Front, left to right: Dr Elish Srikakolli, Jaya, Shania Ayyanki, Artus Kisku and Elder Johnson Jacob.

Baptisms at Manchester Southern Asia

Heaven’s host of angels and our church members in Manchester rejoiced to witness Shania Ayyanki and Artus Kisku give their lives to Jesus on 27 July, having received Bible studies from Elder Sungeeth Kisku. They made this public affirmation in front of the entire congregation and a host of friends and extended families from around the UK and abroad.

They have entered a holy covenant with God and have promised to take upon themselves the name of Jesus and to remember Him always, keep His commandments, and serve Him to the end, and they were baptised by Pastor Daniel Ebenezer (GC Associate Director of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries) and Dr Elish Srikakolli (President and CEO of the Metas Group of Institutions, India).

We extend our gratitude and thank the NEC dignitaries present; Pastor Vernon Nambo, our officiating church pastor; the pastor and members of Manchester South Church; the elders and the entire diaconate; and the media teams from both churches for their immense support on this occasion.

SUJAN AYYANKI



Left to right: Elder Naomi Griffiths, Elder Frank Anti, Pastor Steve M. Roberts, Divine Ebireri, Aleesia Costa-Ekun, Pancetta Fowler & Pastor C. Williams

Three members added to Downham Church

At 4pm on Sunday 15 September, friends, family and Downham Church members joyfully witnessed Pancetta Fowler, Aleesia Costa-Ekun (Pathfinder) and Divine Ebireri (Pathfinder) committing their lives to Jesus Christ at Lewisham Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Elder Naomi Griffiths enthusiastically welcomed everyone as the programme began. Pastor Steve M. Roberts, minister for Downham Seventh-day Adventist Church, officiated and delivered a sermonette encouraging the candidates to prepare for the second coming of Jesus Christ, the great hope of the church. He praised God for the candidates’ decision to willingly accept the call in Mark 1:14, wherein Jesus announced the Good News in Galilee: ‘The time is fulfilled, and the

kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel’ (NKJV).

Pastor Christopher Williams assured the three candidates that if God brings them to it, He can bring them through it, and Elder Frank Anti, the first elder of Downham SDA Church, conducted the examination of the baptismal candidates. The Downham praise team sang vibrant hymns giving glory to God, moving the entire congregation.

We thank God for His leading, guidance and protection in the lives of these three people, whom we urge to continue to walk with Jesus Christ until they see Him face to face.

ELAINE VICTOR (CHURCH CLERK)



Four baptised at Aylesbury Church

We praise God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Aylesbury as Pastor Royston Smith, SEC Personal Ministries Director, conducted the ‘Words of Hope and Life’ evangelistic series from Sabbath 14 to Sabbath 21 September, themed around faithfulness, grace, and hope, with practical sessions for singles, married couples, and those going through difficult times. Each evening began at church and online with praise and worship, health nuggets, an enjoyable quiz on the previous evening’s presentation, a prayer for all, and special musical items. On the final day prizes were given to those with the highest quiz scores.

During the sermons Pastor Smith engaged church members and visitors alike with a deep dive into the stories of Ruth, Esther, Sarah, and Rebecca, revealing the loving kindness of our gracious God.

All were moved into a deeper relationship with Jesus, as evidenced by the altar call each evening. Four individuals – Thando, Ayanda, Ian, and Tony – stepped forward for baptism, agreed to the baptismal vows, and were voted into membership. Thando’s mother testified: ‘We have watched her showing her love for God through singing, children’s stories, Pathfinders and area activities. We are overjoyed that Thando decided to commit her life to Jesus. To God be the glory!’

As the pastor at Aylesbury Church, I praise God that we are currently examining our church values, health, and purpose. This evangelistic series marks the first of more to come as we plan to reach out further into the local community.

PASTOR TREVOR THOMAS

Photos by Sister Ska and Pastor Simeon Essene

Mary Shields (d. November 2022) and Neville Shields (d. 24 July 2024).



Neville and Mary Shields were married for fifty-four years. They were both faithful Seventh-day Adventists who loved the Lord Jesus Christ and were loyal members of Stanborough Park Church for well over twenty-five years before retiring to Northern Ireland, where they attended the Larne and Belfast churches.

Mum & Dad would attend the South England Conference Camp Meeting faithfully. They loved the church and were active within it: Neville was an elder and church treasurer, and Mary was a deaconess and helped in the kitchen. They were very well-known throughout the Adventist Church in the UK, being known by Pastors Eglan Brooks, Richard De Lisser, Cecil Perry, Roger and David Neal, Don McFarlane, Weiers Coetser, Andrew Willis and Adam Keough, as well as Dr David Marshall, to name a few.

Mary and Neville made a donation to Larne Seventh-day Adventist Church within their will, as they wanted to remember the work of the Lord.

LORRAINE FERNANDES (DAUGHTER)

Dennis Stanley Porter (1930-2024) d. 16 August.



Dennis Porter, born in 1930 in Tottenham, was dedicated at Holloway Church before his parents moved to Edmonton, where his mother took him to church. He was baptised at 16, and at 21 he began sixty years of lay preaching.

In 1965 he became the first lay preacher to give the Sunday address at the Newbold College graduation service, something he did five times until 2000 – partly because several times he taught history at the college between 1953 and 1973, a subject in which he had two degrees from London University. On one of these occasions he met the new preceptress, Vera Lauderdale, who had been a missionary in Kenya for nine years and had reluctantly accepted a one-year post at Newbold before a projected return to Africa – but instead, in August 1962, she became Mrs Porter. Their happy marriage of forty-eight years concluded with four years of Vera's Alzheimer's disease, during which time Dennis cared for her at their four-hundred-year-old cottage near Oxford, where Dennis had secured a post in the Department of Western Manuscripts at the Bodleian Library of Oxford University. He took early retirement in 1988, and for a further eleven years catalogued manuscripts in several

college libraries at Oxford before finally retiring at 68.

Long before Dennis met Vera, he had been engaged to a young Adventist lady name Lynda Mudford. Her husband and Vera died within four weeks of each other in 2010, and later that year Dennis visited Australia, met her after 52 years apart, and a year later they were married. He was 80 and she 78. Her poor health prevented her from travelling, so he moved to Queensland, where he lived with her until her death in 2023.

Dennis was fond of quoting a famous statement by President Kennedy with the change of one word: 'Ask not what your church can do for you; ask what you can do for your church.' He exemplified this, including securing the building of the present Oxford Adventist church.

In later years, Dennis became a victim of dementia and moved to a care home in Australia, where he passed away. His funeral took place in Australia, and there was an online memorial service for him on 19 October 2024. He now sleeps in peace until his Master returns.

BUC COMMUNICATIONS

Arthur John Woodfield (1916-2024) d. 3 September.



It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Arthur John Woodfield, affectionately known as John, who fell asleep peacefully at the age of 107 in Wokingham. Born in Hereford on 11 September 1916, John lived a remarkable life filled with dedication to his family, faith, and education.

In 1943 he married Jean Florence Lauderdale, who predeceased him in 1995. Together they had three children: Rosemary, Christopher, and Elizabeth. In 1999 John married Anne-Marie Parsons, and they celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary shortly before his death.

John's early life was marked by resilience; though he left school at 14, his thirst for knowledge drove him to achieve a BA, MA, and PhD in English Literature from London University and a noble profession in education. He trained as a minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church but soon discovered his passion for teaching. John served as the headmaster of Stanborough School and later taught at Newbold College of Higher Education, where he inspired students with courses in English literature, fine arts, and homiletics for many years until his retirement.

Beyond the classroom, John was a self-taught watercolourist, a skilled reproduction furniture maker, an accomplished wood carver, an avid gardener and a gifted poet, leaving a legacy that will continue to inspire

future generations.

John's devotion to his faith and the church is evident in the more than 40 years he spent working within the Seventh-day Adventist community, impacting countless lives through his teachings and service. John was a humble man, known for his modesty and sharp sense of humour. His warmth and kindness will be greatly missed.

His funeral was held at All Saints Church in Wokingham on 4 October, and his legacy will forever resonate in the hearts of those he touched throughout his extraordinary 107 years. He will be dearly missed and fondly remembered.

BUC COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA

Messenger

Volume 129 • 11 – 1 November 2024

Editor: **Dusanka Rancic**
Design: **David Bell**

Proof reading: **Andrew Puckering**
Production and distribution: **Peter Oppong-Mensah**

COPY FOR No. 1 – 28 November 2024

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The Editor may alter, clarify, précis or expand articles sent to her if she thinks it necessary. Published monthly on Fridays by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. For general enquiries, email: info@stanboroughpress.org.uk
Printed in the UK.

Visit the **BUC website** at: www.adventist.org.uk
ISSN 0309-3654

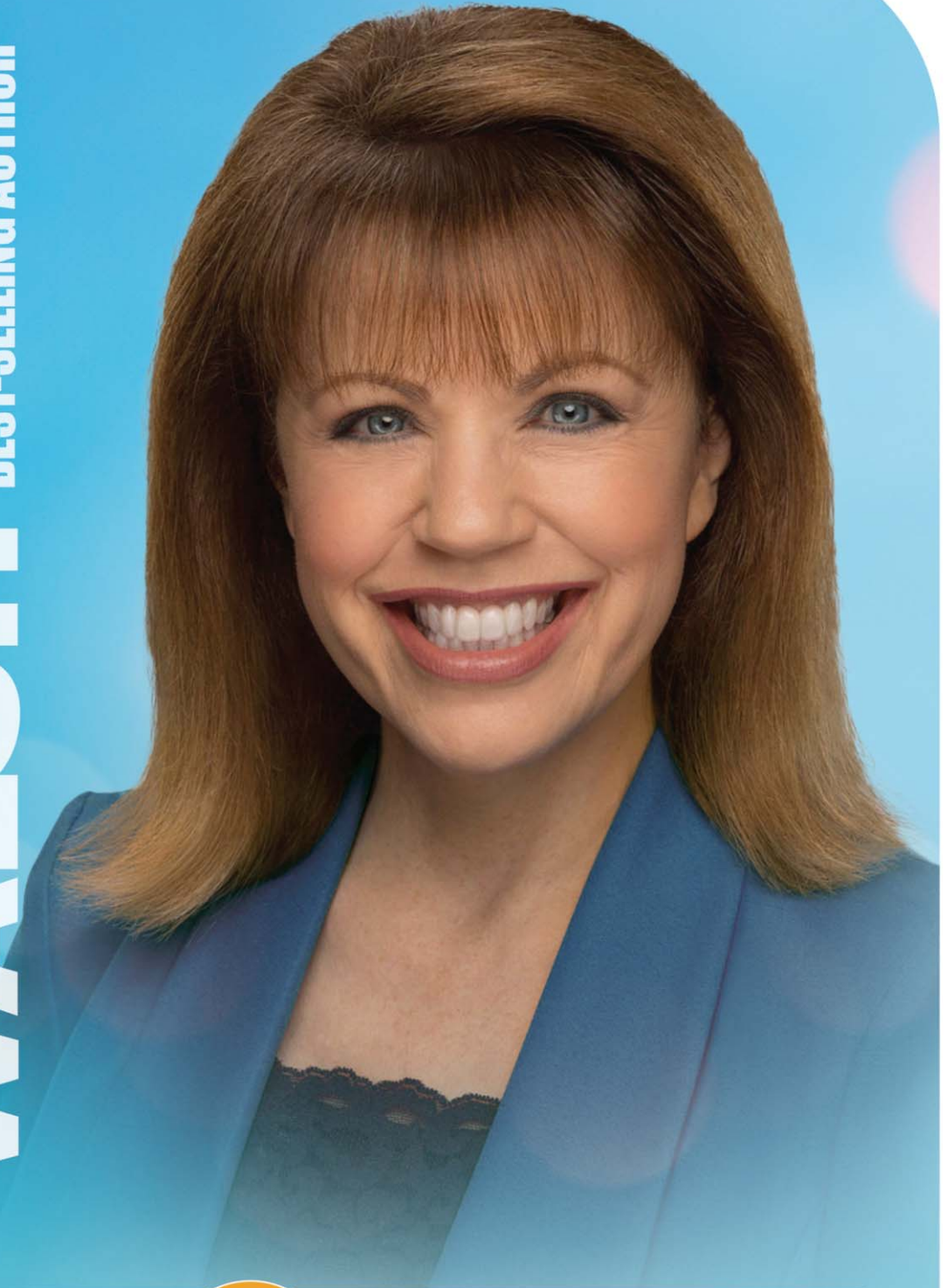
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	Lord	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Nov 1	4.33	4.45	4.33	4.31	4.47
8	4.21	4.33	4.20	4.17	4.33
15	4.11	4.23	4.09	4.04	4.21
22	4.02	4.15	4.00	3.54	4.11
29	3.56	4.08	3.53	3.45	4.04

2024 BRENDA WALSH

TV HOST/PRODUCER AND
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For more information please contact Trevor Johnson on 07736277011



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