

Messenger

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Playing it safe



**A church-owned business
with a purpose**

Playing it safe

by Pastor Eglan Brooks,

*President of the
British Union Conference*



Stories throughout the Christian world should feature narratives of faith, conversion and hope; but too often they focus on the poor behaviour of church leaders who have flaunted the notion of safeguarding in favour of power.

Spiritual and sexual abuse top the 'misconduct' charts, and too often leaders are toppled from their ivory towers, destroy their careers, and leave a trail of suffering and misery for church members in their wake. Their families also become victims who get caught up in a web of deceit and lies.

For centuries, church denominations have 'played it safe' and protected the reputation of their organisation instead of protecting those they pledged to care for. Too often, we, the under-shepherds, have not protected the sheep, but have rather become wolves in shepherds' clothing. It is a horrible thing to say, but it is an even more heinous thing to experience.

At our recent safeguarding summit for church trustees, field leaders and directors, I listened to the stories of men and women who had suffered spiritual abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation at the hands of church leaders, including those in our own denomination. Several of

those who spoke had been victims of abuse as young children, and the devastation that it caused to their lives was evident through their tears.

New hearts

As a spiritual organisation we need to return to the Bible for guidance, and we as church leaders need to recommit our lives to God. When David lazed around and lusted after Bathsheba instead of being about his work, the immediate results were sexual exploitation, deception, murder on the battlefield, and the death of a young child; but the long-term impact was the disrespect of his children towards him, the shattering of his

kingdom, and the death of his son, Absalom.

When David realised the results of his actions, he confessed his sin and asked God, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and a renew a steadfast spirit within me' (Psalm 51:10, NKJV). As leaders, we need new hearts. We may not have directly committed acts of abuse or exploitation, but through our cover-up we are complicit in the very acts that we seek to decry.

Daily, we must commit our thoughts, words and actions to God and invite Him to take full control of our hearts so that we can be instruments of healing in His hands.

Safeguarding Charter

On Sabbath 22 February, all six presidents in the British Union Conference (BUC) territory signed a Safeguarding Charter. The seven commitments were:

- Dismantling enabling structures
- Creating safe spaces
- Leadership accountability
- Empowering survivors
- Education & training
- Policy implementation
- Transparent communication

We understand that some of these commitments will take time to embed within the culture of the organisation. Organisational culture within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK and Ireland is hard to unravel, and this will involve change – not merely organic, but intentional, deliberate and consistent change.

As a church we are ethically bound by our responsibilities to our membership, the people who use our facilities, and those who interact with us through our outreach services. As a church we will dismantle enabling structures, create safe spaces, and be accountable for safeguarding as we empower the survivors. All this is based on the sound theology of safeguarding.

As a charity, we will educate and train our members and our leaders at all levels to abide by safeguarding standards and implement policies that are easy to navigate and read to all our stakeholders.

As a corporation, we want to have transparent communication. Transparent communication engenders trust and informs stakeholders of key decisions that

are made by the organisation while protecting the confidentiality of victims and survivors.

As a church we are ethically bound by our responsibilities to our membership.

Conclusion

Here in the BUC, we are going to stop 'playing it safe' with safeguarding – instead, we're going to actually 'be safe'. We are going to 'see it, hear it, say it, stop it (the abuse)'. But we need to work together and remember that safeguarding is my responsibility, your responsibility, and our responsibility.



UK Church holds its first safeguarding summit

by Catherine Anthony Boldeau, *BUC Stewardship Director*
with Kerrine Guthrie, *Executive Personal Assistant, Office of the BUC President*



‘Safeguarding is not just a responsibility – it is a reflection of our values and our faith in action.’

These words of welcome from Pastor Eglan Brooks, President of the British Union Conference (BUC), set the tone for seven days of meaningful dialogue, the sharing of best practice, and the strengthening of our collective approach to safeguarding through the United Kingdom and Ireland at the British Union Conference Safeguarding Summit



held at Newbold College of Higher Education from 21 to 27 February 2025.

The Safeguarding Summit was for the benefit of the trustees (Friday to Sunday), field leaders (Monday and Tuesday), and departmental directors and sponsors (Tuesday to Thursday) throughout the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United Kingdom and Ireland. This was the first time that those governing the church and those strategically and operationally managing the organisation had collaborated in this way.

Friday evening

Kicking off the week was Lee Carmichael, a part-time helpline practitioner for Thirtyone:eight, an independent Christian charity that seeks to protect vulnerable people, whose topic was ‘The Theology of



Safeguarding: A Call to Protect the Vulnerable’. He presented a compelling theological case for safeguarding within the church. Rooted in biblical teaching, safeguarding is not merely a legal or procedural obligation, but a divine mandate reflecting God’s heart for the most vulnerable members of society.

God’s concern for the vulnerable

Surprising the attendees, he stated that throughout Scripture there are more than 2,000 references to supporting those in distress. God’s

disdain for empty religious practices is evident in passages such as Isaiah 58, where He rebukes His people for seeking His face while exploiting workers and neglecting the poor. In Matthew 18:6, Jesus issues a severe warning against harming children, emphasising the weight of divine judgement upon those who endanger the innocent.

Proverbs 31:1-9, particularly verse 8, also reinforces this message,



instructing believers to ‘speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute’ (NIV). This call to advocacy is central to the church’s mission in protecting vulnerable individuals.

He concluded his presentation by presenting safeguarding as a biblical imperative. If safeguarding is a biblical mandate, it must take precedence in church teaching and practice. Just as believers eagerly engage with books and conferences on prayer and evangelism, they must also commit to learning about and implementing safeguarding measures.

Safeguarding is not an optional add-on to faith, but a central theme of Scripture. As the church hears God’s voice through His Word, it must recognise that its role extends beyond saving souls – it must also commit to keeping souls safe until Christ returns.

Sabbath – ‘Somebody’s Got to Do Something, and That Somebody Is You!’

Dr Philip Baptiste, Departmental Director and Secretary/Treasurer for the Adventist Laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI) in the North

American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, titled his vespers devotional, ‘Somebody’s Got to Do Something, and That Somebody Is You!’

Based on Isaiah 1:17 (NIV – ‘Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed’) and the stories of Nehemiah and the Good Samaritan, Baptiste opened his presentation with the story of a baby that was found floating in the river by a villager. Every day more and more babies were discovered floating downstream, until it was decided that the village should build an orphanage. But one man decided that it would be more beneficial to go upstream to find out why the babies were in the river in the first place.

Dr Baptiste concluded that ‘looking away does not make you innocent, but makes you complicit’; therefore, ‘somebody’s got to do something, and that somebody is you!’

Power, protection and the price of silence

‘Sometimes we are buried under the weight of secrets not of our own choosing . . . when the culture of silence turns into a culture of harm,’



Lee Carmichael, a part-time helpline practitioner for Thirtyone:eight

said Dr David Defoe, Relationship Ministries Director for the Allegheny East Conference and the founder of Imera Counselling Services, unpacking the topic of power, protection and the price of silence.

‘Power is not something to fear; it is something to steward,’ he continued. His insightful discourse immersed the audience in an exploration of the dynamics behind positional, relational, cultural, institutional and situational power. He then explored the common excuses that enable abuse, and indicated that one of these was protecting the institution. ‘But protecting an institution at the expense of the people that it serves is not protection – it is corruption.’

To be continued . . .

What will we do with the power we hold?

by Pastor David Defoe, PhD, DMin
Allegheny East Conference Family Ministries Director



Have you ever had something to say, but couldn't find the words – or, worse, feared what would happen if you did?

That question was in my mind as I stood at the Safeguarding Summit hosted by the British Union Conference in February. I had been invited to speak about the power imbalance that can exist in the church, and how we might better steward the power entrusted to us. We had come together to confront an uncomfortable truth: harm sometimes happens inside the church. And, more often than we'd like to admit, it's protected by a culture of silence.

Silence can look like respect for a prominent person, an unspoken belief that certain people are beyond question. It can disguise itself as unity, where speaking out is seen as causing division. It can masquerade as loyalty, where protecting a person's reputation takes precedence over protecting a victim's well-being. Sometimes it even acts out the role of spiritual discernment, dressed in language that sounds wise but functions as avoidance.

Time and again I've sat with people, in pews or therapy chairs, wounded by those they had trusted to spiritually shepherd them. And when they finally gather the courage to speak up, they're often met with suspicion, shame, or the spiritualisation of their traumatic experiences.

This is where that power that each of us has comes into play – not the power of authority, but the quiet, pervasive power of influence,

proximity or relationships. Everyone has some influence that can either open the door for truth or build a barrier to it.

It can be argued that many survivors of abuse stay silent not because they're unwilling to speak, but because they've been conditioned to believe it won't make a difference. Some are afraid of being labelled as dramatic or divisive. Others fear spiritual retaliation, being told they're out of order, unforgiving, or a threat to the 'unity' of the body. Many have seen others speak up and get cast out, ignored, dismissed and disregarded. Silence becomes a survival strategy, because they have learned that telling their truth comes at a high cost.

This silence is often passed down. Generations of families never talked about what happened, or why certain family members were not allowed to stay alone with children. We were taught to 'take it to Jesus' instead of holding someone accountable. The result? We see it played out in headlines, in our communities, and in our pews: stories buried; trauma spiritualised; accountability avoided.

The silence becomes systemic, and the system becomes self-protecting. We are then left with institutions more concerned with image than integrity, reputation than restoration, keeping up an appearance at the expense of accountability.

However, to steward our power well, we must be intentional; we must refuse to let charisma cover misconduct; we must hold leaders accountable regardless of their seniority, popularity or position; we

must set up clear policies and independent reporting structures that don't rely on the discretion of a single individual or hand-picked committee. We are called to be stewards of the vulnerable . . . and that stewardship must be courageous.

Silence doesn't shield the institution; it shelters the abuser. And the longer it goes unchecked, the more dangerous it becomes. Left to its own devices, silence becomes emotional violence. It erodes truth, isolates victims, and normalises the quiet removal of the wounded while the perpetrator remains untouched.

If the church is to be a true place of safety, it must be a place where the wounded are not merely welcomed, but heard and believed; where telling the truth is not punished with exile; where speaking up doesn't mean losing your place, your voice, your community, or your dignity.

Power, when used with intention, can shield the vulnerable, create safe spaces and make room for healing. But when mishandled it intimidates, suppresses and silences.

It can protect or paralyse; restore or ruin; build or bury.

The power itself isn't the problem. The problem is how we choose to exercise it.

As Christians, we must believe in the power of redemption, but not at the expense of justice. We must believe in grace, but not without accountability. We must believe in unity, but not at the cost of honesty. And we must believe that protecting the individual always comes before protecting the institution.

So the question remains: **what will we do with the power we hold?**

ADRA's commitment to safeguarding

by Sandra Golding,
ADRA-UK CEO



ADRA

The safeguarding scandals that rocked the international development sector in 2018 served as a stark wake-up call for all international non-governmental organisations. They forced a critical reassessment and the urgent implementation of stronger measures to protect those we serve.

At ADRA, safeguarding is not just a priority – it is a fundamental responsibility as we reflect the love of God. Working alongside some of the world's most vulnerable and marginalised communities, we are committed to creating safe environments where every individual feels secure, respected and protected within our programmes.

At ADRA, communities – especially those in rural areas – are at the heart of our mission. We are committed to ensuring that our strengthened safeguarding practices not only protect the individuals we work with, but also provide meaningful support to victims and survivors.

Safeguarding is a non-negotiable priority for ADRA-UK. All staff are required to read and sign the ADRA Code of Conduct, which outlines clear safeguarding principles. They also undergo regular training to stay informed about the latest policies and legal obligations. Similarly, any partner organisations we collaborate

with must provide evidence of their safeguarding policies and practices. Furthermore, we are accountable to our institutional donors, consistently demonstrating that robust safeguarding measures are firmly in place.

True compassion means not only protecting those we serve, but also empowering them with the confidence to report safeguarding concerns freely and without fear.

While we actively encourage individuals to speak out if they have experienced abuse, we recognise that underreporting remains a reality. This can stem from a range of factors, including the fear of stigma or being viewed negatively. We are committed to breaking these barriers by fostering a culture of trust, dignity and support.

Safeguarding is not just a professional duty – it is a deeply spiritual one. The Bible contains more than a thousand verses that speak to the importance of protecting the vulnerable. God calls us to be a voice for the voiceless and a defender of those who have suffered

abuse and seek protection. This divine mandate drives our mission, reminding us that safeguarding is an expression of God's love and justice.

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

reminds us: 'Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.' This verse underscores the importance of protecting our inner selves – our thoughts, emotions and values – because they shape our actions and decisions.

Safeguarding is not just about policies: it's about principles in practice. When we witness something wrong and choose to stay silent, we are failing to uphold those principles. True safeguarding means being intentional, speaking out, and holding ourselves accountable for reporting concerns. It means standing up for the vulnerable – for those whose voices have been silenced by their abusers.

As we move forwards, ADRA-UK and the rest of the global ADRA network remain steadfast in our commitment to fostering a culture of safety and zero tolerance of abuse – both within our sector and in our offices. Safeguarding will continue to be a critical and ongoing priority, ensuring that we have the right measures in place so that every individual can live the life God intended – one of dignity, security and hope.

Should I answer the messages or cuddle the cat?

Finding balance in a busy world

by Pastor James Botha,
Scottish Mission President and Stewardship Sponsor



GOD FIRST
ADVENTIST STEWARDSHIP MINISTRIES



Entering the living room, I saw Mango, our kitten, still groggy from her spay surgery, nearly toppling over – a warm, vulnerable furball seeking comfort. Just then, three work messages pinged on my phone. I faced a choice: respond immediately, or take a few minutes to cuddle Mango.

Oddly, that question touches on the deeper issue of how we steward our time. How can we remain healthy in a world where tranquillity has become rare? I believe the answer lies in embracing a mindset of generous rest – the Sabbath.

Generosity versus rest?

Generosity is both a mindset and a biblical mandate: 'Freely you have received; freely give' (Matthew 10:8, NIV). Yet generosity often feels difficult. What if our giving goes unreciprocated? Do we even have time to be generous – with our attention, presence and participation?

In *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, John Mark Comer traces how our perception of time has changed. In 200 BC, people lamented new technology (the sundial). The Roman playwright Plautus wrote: 'The gods confound the man who first found out how to distinguish hours! Confound him, too, who in this place set up a sundial to cut and hack my days so wretchedly into small portions!'

In the sixth century, seven daily prayers segmented time. By the

twelfth century, monks had developed the mechanical clock. By 1370 a public clock had been established in Cologne, Germany – time was no longer

dictated by the sun, but by human measurement.

With the invention of the light bulb (1879), waking hours were artificially extended. Before then, the average person slept eleven hours a night. Today, we sleep five to seven hours – no wonder we're exhausted.

Less than a century ago, we chopped wood, walked everywhere, and wrote letters by hand. Now, we adjust thermostats, drive, send texts, and even use AI companions. Despite these conveniences, we're more tired and burnt out than ever.

Back to the Sabbath

The answer lies in God's generous gift of rest – a gift often neglected. How often do we truly rest on the Sabbath?

Sabbath is rooted in creation and time. God created the pace of time so that everything doesn't happen all at once. Yet we crave everything now. If you doubt that, observe your emotions when using a slow webpage! If Sabbath is going to heal us, it must be more than just a day – it must become a mindset.

The problem is that we are often forgetful. We document everything, yet remember very little. I have a box of childhood photos that we still enjoy, but capturing a moment digitally feels different. It says, 'Record this now, or it will be gone later,' but it also means I am not fully present.

There are thousands of photos on my phone – some of which I've

forgotten. This is why the Bible says, 'Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy' (Exodus 20:8, NIV). Don't forget this precious gift. Let it rewire your mind. Let it anchor you in God's presence.

Recently, a friend drove past a field of hay bales, reflecting on how the landscape had been transformed – from golden wheat to harvested land dotted with hay bales. She felt God's presence in that moment and remarked, 'Change can be beautiful, too.' She noticed it because she was present, living in Shabbat. But how do we cultivate that awareness?

How rest fuels presence

There is a profound synergy between rest and presence. God's intended rhythm transforms us. It fuels generosity, gratitude and mindfulness. Laura M. Hartman, author of *The Christian Consumer*, writes, 'Gratitude in action leads to savouring. . . . If we savoured more, we would communicate more deeply, relate more fully, compete less regularly, and celebrate more authentically.'

Savouring is key. What is the Sabbath meal you always look forward to? In resting and savouring, we learn to be in the moment. Is Sabbath – a mindset of generous rest – meant to guide us towards this kind of presence?

Choosing between Mango and my phone, the decision became clear. Stewardship of time isn't about responding to every task immediately; it's about caring for what's in front of us – whether it's people, work, or moments that refresh us. It's about putting on the mind of Christ and letting that experience rewire us. Those messages could wait five minutes while I cuddled my furball (guilt-free), reminding myself of the importance of presence and rest.

Nature's pharmacy, part 3 – herbs and remedies

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



If I were to ask you about the use of herbs for various ailments, I suspect a number of you could state at least one herbal remedy that your parents or grandparents used to ease various symptoms. So, perhaps, if someone suffered from indigestion, brewing some peppermint leaves to make a tea to settle the stomach was stated as the best treatment for gastric ailments. That is what is referred to as anecdotal evidence: basically, the detailing of a personal experience or narrative to make a conclusive point or argument.

Evidence-based research

However, research studies on large and diverse population groups have yielded what we call 'evidence-based research'. This is 'the use of prior research in a systematic and transparent way to inform a new study so that it is answering questions that matter in a valid, efficient, and accessible manner'.¹

Let's get back to the peppermint example. The treatment that we previously just had anecdotal evidence for (peppermint remedies handed down from previous generations that were claimed to help heal gastric ills) has now been scientifically proved to actually work. Peppermint has been widely researched, and evidence from numerous studies has attested to its efficacy in treating a range of ailments. Here is one study outcome reported in the National Library of Medicine by PubMed Central under the title 'The physiologic effects and safety of peppermint oil and its efficacy in irritable bowel syndrome and other functional disorders':

'Peppermint oil has been used for centuries to address gastrointestinal ailments. Peppermint oil's primary active ingredient is menthol, which is metabolised in the liver. . . . Peppermint oil effects on neuromotor function and visceral sensation have been studied most extensively.

However, more recent data demonstrate its antibacterial/antifungal effects, an ability to downregulate inflammation, and potentially affect attention, and possibly mood.'²

Ellen G. White's reference to herbs

More than 150 years ago, author Ellen G. White spoke about the efficacy of herbal preparations in several of her manuscripts. In one of these she wrote: 'There are herbs that are harmless, the use of

which will tide over many apparently serious difficulties.'³

In another manuscript she states: 'God has caused to grow out of the ground herbs for the use of man and if we understand the nature of these roots and herbs, and make a right use of them, there would not be a necessity of running for the doctor so frequently, and people would be in much better health than they are today.'⁴

The Uchee Pines Institute has collated several of Ellen G. White's manuscripts. In one of these she wrote: 'This is God's method. The herbs that grow for the benefit of man, and the little handful of herbs kept and steeped and used for sudden ailments, have served tenfold, yes, one hundred fold better purposes, than all the drugs hidden under mysterious names and dealt out to the sick' (Ellen White, *The Place of Herbs in Rational Therapy*, p. 12).⁵

The next issue will examine more herbal interventions.

Good health!

¹www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0895435620310957#:~:text=Evidence-based%20research%20is%20the%20use%20of%20prior%20research,matter%20in%20a%20valid%2C%20efficient%2C%20and%20accessible%20manner

²<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5814329/>

³<https://text.eguvwritings.org/read/343.37>

⁴<https://text.eguvwritings.org/read/343.17>

⁵<https://www.ucheepines.org/counseling-sheets/use-of-herbs-as-remedies>

Brewing some peppermint leaves to make a tea to settle the stomach was stated as the best treatment for gastric ailments.



Life Health Foods UK: a church-owned business with a purpose

by Darren Hagen, Internal Communications Manager (Sanitarium), with input from Jonathan Thorn (LHF UK) and Kevin Jackson (Sanitarium)

Did you know that one of the UK's large cereal manufacturers is owned by the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Life Health Foods UK, a business with a mission to provide nutritious and delicious food, is one of many food enterprises ultimately owned by the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world. With a team of nearly 400 employees across two sites in Wellingborough and Peterborough, Life Health Foods UK produces popular breakfasts, snack foods and beverages including Lizi's Granola, Fruit Bowl, Nutri-Brex and UP&GO.

While the business operates in the UK, its reach extends far beyond, exporting across Europe, Scandinavia, and as far as the UAE. But, at its heart, Life Health Foods UK is much more than a food manufacturer – it's a purpose-driven organisation, aligning with the church's ethos of promoting health and well-being and community service.

'We're pleased to have Life Health Foods UK as part of our broader global group,' says Kevin Jackson, CEO, Sanitarium Health & Wellbeing Group. 'It means that there is once again a health food business in the UK that benefits both the church and its community programmes and improves the health of its consumers.'

Originally established as Grain Health Foods in 1998 by the Sanitarium Health Food Company in Australia, the business changed ownership in 2003 but returned to church ownership in 2023 as part of the Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing Group, which operates in Australia, New Zealand, China, India and the United States. With this renewed connection, Life Health Foods UK is committed to supporting the church in the United Kingdom, collaborating on a number of community benefit projects here in the British Union Conference.

Life Health Foods UK offers a

diverse range of branded products designed for busy, health-conscious consumers:

Lizi's Granola – a range of delicious, high-fibre granolas made with wholesome ingredients such as toasted oats, nuts and seeds.

Fruit Bowl – convenient fruit-based snacks perfect for little lunchboxes – helping children get more fruit in their diets with minimal fuss.

Nutri-Brex – a gluten-free breakfast biscuit made with sorghum, rich in fibre and free from artificial flavours and preservatives.

UP&GO – a nutritious breakfast drink offering a quick and satisfying start to the day.

Now, for the first time, these products are available to church members through the Stanborough Press network.

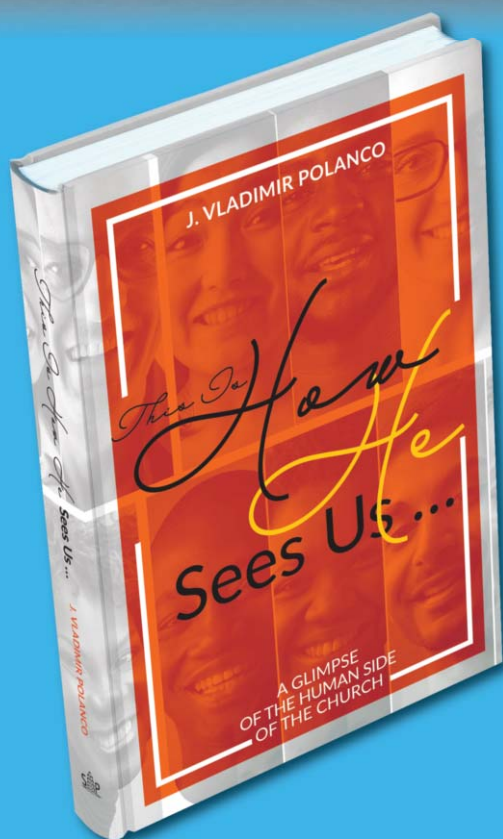
'We're delighted to be working with Life Health Foods UK to bring their products into our bookstores,' says Elisabeth Sangüesa, Director of the Stanborough Press. 'We're excited for church members to discover them, enjoy them, and benefit from having this food company in our territory.'

The LHF Team are committed to being more than just another business. 'We're proud to be one of the UK's largest cereal manufacturers, helping start consumers' days well,' says Jonathon Thorn, Managing Director. 'But, more than that, we're a purpose-led organisation committed to creating a positive impact among our workers and the community through our food and our values.'

So the next time you see Lizi's Granola, Fruit Bowl, Nutri-Brex, or UP&GO on the shelves, you can be pleased to know that these products are part of a business that is making a real difference – one serving at a time.



The Book of the Month



This Is How He Sees Us

This is a book that is indispensable for all who want to draw closer and closer to God. Through the Scriptures it shows how our Creator sees us and then reflects on what this means for the church and for each individual. It clearly demonstrates that, as valuable as earthly possessions may be to us, they pale in comparison to the value that God attributes to each and every one of us. God places an inestimable value on each of us, so we must take care to nurture, protect and safeguard each person in our sphere of influence, especially the vulnerable and 'the least of these My brethren' – all precious souls for whom Christ died.



To order this excellent book for yourself or to give it as a gift to someone you care about, call 01476 591700 (8.30am-5.30pm, Monday-Thursday) or visit: www.lifesourcebookshop.co.uk.

How to fake heartburn

by Adrian Samuel



The church is the only health centre I know of where heartburn is a positive sign; naturally, everyone says they have it.

You've likely guessed I am not talking about your aunty's acid reflux, but something entirely different; it is an experience every sincere Christian longs for. When felt, the breathing settles as the

lungs gather strength to suck in cool draughts of air; it is a burn that vocalises the expressions of laboured anguish often heard on Sabbaths of solemnity.

Fire is an agent that makes things burn, but that which brands us is the earnest work of the Spirit within, as noted in Ephesians 1:13 and Philippians 2:13.

The teachings of Christ were masterful, and in a perceptive moment the disciples finally learned the work of the Messiah and their place in it. Reflecting on a conversation where Jesus 'interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself' (Luke 24:27, ESV), they exclaimed, 'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us?' (Verse 32, ESV.) This was their genesis, the furnace of truth singeing every doubt, surging the power of conviction in their midst.

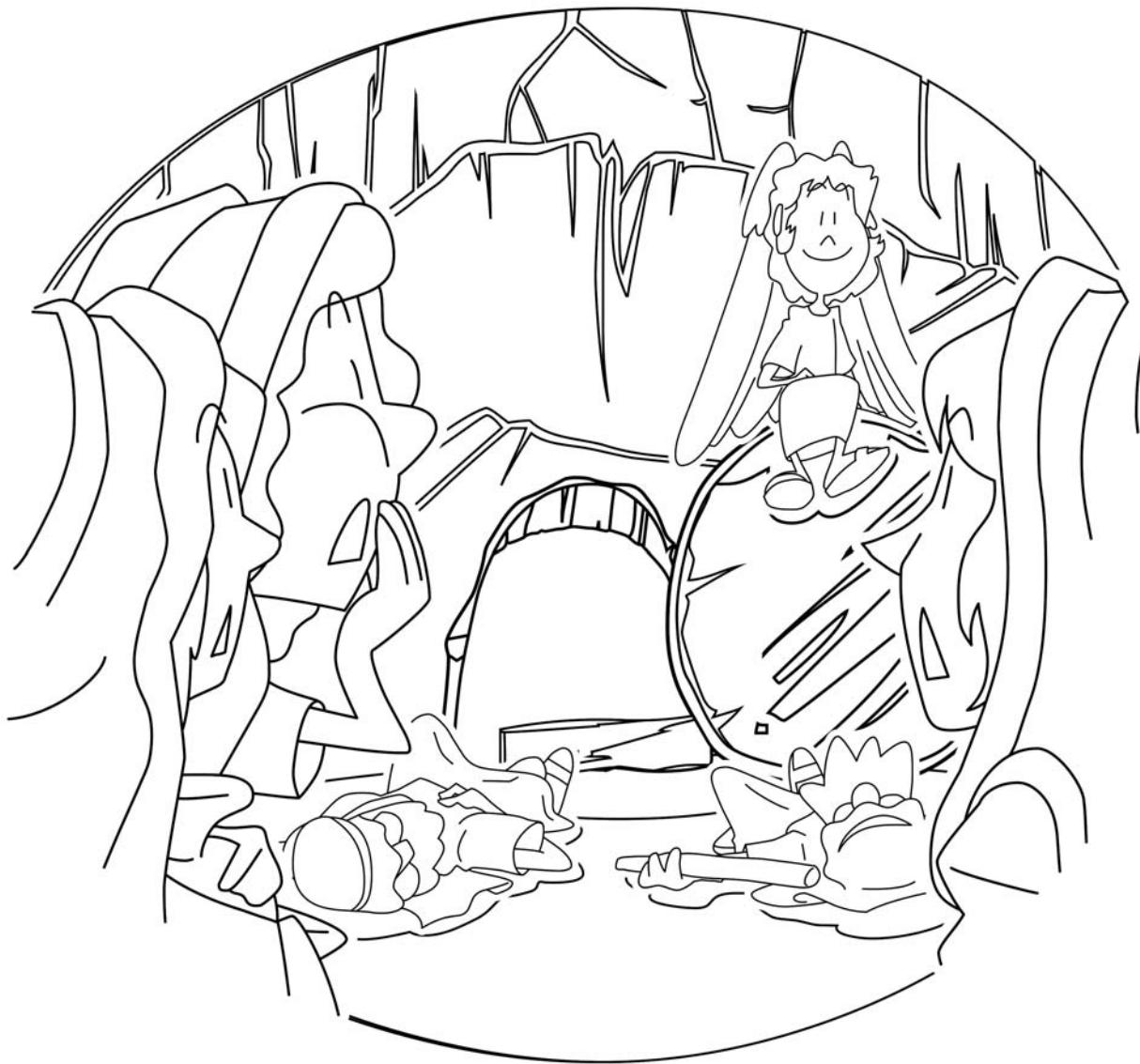
Isaiah 33:14, 15 suggests that to be sincerely in Jesus' midst, you must dwell in His fire. Our burns identify us among those who have allowed God's presence into our lives.

That said, burns can be faked. A ready comparison can be found in civilian life, where some men cosplay as brave, celebrated soldiers by dressing in worn camo fatigues crested with medals. Having never served in a war, they grind their gait and tear their tongue until it becomes coarse and rough, presenting an image that is apt to deceive.

Sadly, this phenomenon exists in the church today. As we march to make disciples (Matthew 28:19), are we careful to ensure that we are not simply making mimics: people devoid of faith and independent thought but gifted in theatrics? How are you confirming that the voice that leads you is from God and not the familiar fiend of our imagination?

If you've ever been concerned that your church lacks the flame that engulfed thousands at Pentecost, this is a call to put down your pitchforks and sincerely look within. Satan has the power to produce a flame that burns, but it is a strange fire. Whose mark do you bear?





Jesus' tomb is empty

⁵The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, the one who was killed on the cross. ⁶But he is not here. He has risen from death, as he said he would. Come and see the place where his body was. ⁷And go quickly and tell his followers, 'Jesus has risen from death. He is going into Galilee and will be there before you. You will see him there.'" Then the angel said, "Now I have told you."

Matthew 28:5-7



Taken from *Colouring books for kids: The story of Jesus*. For more titles in this series, go to: <https://lifesourcebookshop.co.uk>

Jesus' Death and Resurrection

H O R C J G W J T T
Q L E Y M E T Q X S
Q S B O D A S M G L
S N I A T R U C U A C R U C I F I X Z Q
E S E V E I H T C Q V G Y S X S H T R J
X S O L D I E R S F D P N J N Y O C I W
H Y T C D A C R O W N O F T H O R N S S
Q Z C W X S C A R L E T R O B E R L E C
W X U S Y P F N G Z I G C G T C J Z N X
D I O O H T A E D Q
J F I I Z B H R C I
Q S T N E M R A G Y
P M C E S O E B F R
G H E U R T W T B A
J G R C S O M O P V
P Y R L W T M R Q L
S N U P P Y O A C A
U K S Q L B U N N C
J O E P G Q M V E S
E A R T H Q U A K E

CROWN OF THORNS
CALVARY
RESURRECTION
STONE
THIEVES
EARTHQUAKE

SCARLET ROBE
DEATH
RISEN
MARY
ROMANS
CURTAIN

CRUCIFIX
GARMENTS
TOMB
JESUS
SOLDIERS



Left to right: Pastor Steven George, Sheryl Davidans, Pastor David Rancic, Pastor Sam Ouadjo, Elisabeth Sangüesa, David Richardson and Andrew Puckering

Book blessing Sabbath at Grantham

A special service took place at Grantham Church on 15 February to thank God and pray for His blessing on the most recently published books from the Stanborough Press, that they might impact lives and bring glory to God. The Press was represented by Elisabeth Sangüesa (Managing Director), Dusanka Rancic (Editor), and Andrew Puckering (Assistant Editor and one of Grantham Church's elders), and the message was

preached by Pastor Samuel Ouadjo (British Union Conference Ministerial Association Secretary). As well as expressing the Union's appreciation for the Stanborough Press's invaluable ministry, Pastor Ouadjo was able to reconnect with former colleagues, as at one point he served as Stanborough Press UK Sales Manager. Grantham's pastors, David Rancic and Steven George, also officiated.

After a prayer of blessing over the books, and Grantham Church Choir's rendition of 'Showers of Blessing' (arranged by Eniko Richardson and conducted by Kinga Csokasi-Kocsis), Pastor Ouadjo preached a message on the vital importance of reading for Christian growth and general well-being. Following a hearty potluck lunch, Elisabeth conducted a challenging quiz on Ellen White's books. Praise God, the day was a true blessing, and more such services are planned for the future.

ANDREW PUCKERING



Fitzroy Morris, pastor of the Edinburgh, Musselburgh and Dunfermline churches



Dr Augustus Lawrence, BUC Evangelism Director

Scottish Mission annual training day in Dundee

This year's Scottish Mission training day took place in Dundee on Sunday 2 February, attracting more than 100 church leaders from across Scotland. The annual event allows leaders to gather, reflect, and prepare for the year ahead. With a dynamic programme tailored to equip participants, the day focused on providing essential knowledge and practical skills, ensuring church leaders are well prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the coming year.

The day began with a powerful devotional from Pastor Fitzroy Morris, who passionately emphasised the Holy Spirit's importance to the church in fostering growth, unity, and the fulfilment of its mission with clarity and purpose.

This was followed by a plenary session that focused on significant changes to Scotland's disclosure system, including the introduction of the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) scheme membership as a legal requirement, effective from 1 April 2025. Those working with under-18s or vulnerable adults must be properly vetted members of the PVG scheme to prevent harm (see more at www.disclosure.gov.scot/disclosure-act-summary). Pastor Les Ackie (Director of the BUC Children, Family, and Possibilities Ministries departments) and Cathy Boldeau (BUC Stewardship Director) then delivered insightful talks on safeguarding, emphasising the critical role of church leaders in creating

safe environments where the well-being of vulnerable individuals is prioritised. Both speakers highlighted the danger of organisations becoming more concerned with protecting their reputation than addressing safeguarding issues effectively. They stressed that true safeguarding requires a culture of transparency, accountability, and a commitment to prioritising the safety of children and vulnerable adults, which is essential for building trust and ensuring that every member feels protected and valued.

Following the plenary, attendees broke into specialised training sessions that addressed the unique responsibilities of various roles while providing valuable resources to support their work. Meanwhile, youth leaders discussed plans for the year ahead, concentrating on strategies to deepen engagement and provide stronger support for young people in their faith journey.

In the afternoon, Dr Augustus Lawrence, BUC Evangelism Director, spoke on Sabbath School in a postmodern culture, encouraging members to cultivate deep personal relationships with God and others and emphasising the importance of ethical principles, respect, acceptance and non-discrimination in relational evangelism.

Dr Lawrence also explored the role of caregiving in the church, emphasising its significance within the Sabbath School context. This includes active listening, offering meaningful support, and empowering individuals to find their own solutions. For this we need empathy, confidentiality, genuine warmth, and a non-judgemental attitude.

The event was marked by warm fellowship and excellent hospitality. A generous lunch provided by Oy'Nissh Grandiece and Eduard Balasoio from Edinburgh Church received high praise.

The day reinforced the Scottish Mission's strategic vision: 'Gratefully Received, Abundantly Shared'. The value of such events lies in their ability to strengthen our collective commitment to creating safer, more supportive, and spiritually vibrant church communities across Scotland with God's guidance and blessing.

SM COMMUNICATIONS

(PHOTOS BY WEIERS COETSER)

A World Book Day to remember: Dudley House School visits the Stanborough Press

On World Book Day, 6 March 2025, Key Stage 2 pupils at Dudley House School had an incredible opportunity to explore the world of publishing at the Stanborough Press. From learning about the history of the Press, which celebrated its 140th anniversary last year, to understanding the journey of a book from manuscript to print, the children were truly inspired!

They were amazed by the dedication it takes to edit and proofread a book, and enjoyed meeting Philip, who designs the website, and Andrew, who ensures every text is perfect. Our budding authors even got hands-on experience with bookbinding and folding, creating their own texts!

The warehouse tour was a highlight, with demonstrations of cherry pickers and forklifts by Mark, and the children were thrilled to weigh themselves on the scales used for shipments!

A huge thank-you to the Stanborough Press for their warm welcome, their time and their effort.

The children returned with smiles and stories, making this World Book Day truly unforgettable. Thank you, Stanborough Press, for an educational and exciting afternoon!

DUDLEY HOUSE SCHOOL STAFF



Andrew Puckering (Assistant Editor) shows the children the importance of spelling and good grammar



The children had a great afternoon away from the classroom



Abigail (Graphics) explained the tricky business of imposition and folding, to get all the pages in the right order in a book. Each child then had their own colouring book, which they themselves had folded correctly, to take away with them.

'Proclaim!' SEC Evangelism Expo 2025

Hundreds of members from across the South England Conference (SEC) packed the gymnasium of Newbold College of Higher Education for the SEC Evangelism Expo on Sunday 12 January 2025. The expo, which was also livestreamed on the SEC Media YouTube channel, gave insight into the strategic focus for the year ahead. Local church officers and members could also meet the SEC leadership and attend workshops to equip them for effective evangelism and community outreach.

After a rousing song service, Pastor Heli Otamo-Csizmadia set the tone by encouraging members to collaborate with God in winning souls. Musical items by the Reading SDA Community Choir and two young people from the Southampton church further reinforced the Gospel Commission.

Judy Clement OBE spoke of the importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse, with training provided for all pastors and elders in attendance. Dr Stephen Currow (Newbold College Principal) welcomed everyone to the venue while also highlighting some of the courses they have for those interested in studying Bible-based subjects to equip them in ministry.

Dr Kirk Thomas (SEC President) revealed that this year's camp meeting would take place at Newbold College during the first week of the school summer holidays (21-27 July) and that all are invited to come to what promises to be an uplifting atmosphere of worship and spiritual

revival. The strategic plan and vision set out for 2025 is for the membership to be inspired for mission in their homes, in their churches, on their streets and in their hearts, with Christ at the centre of all they do. The SEC leadership will provide support through in-person and online training while also identifying congregations across the SEC that exemplify best practice and could be modelled by other churches.

Joined by his wife, Shackarah, the guest speaker, Dr Aaron Chancy, testified of growing up in the Seventh-day Adventist Church but being lured down a path of criminality, drug addiction and prison as a teenager. In 2008, he found himself at rock bottom and suicidal. Out of his despair, he sent a text message to his father, saying that he 'felt lost and friendless'. His father replied, 'What a friend we have in Jesus,' and, from that moment on, Chancy did not look back – he was baptised before later achieving a PhD, despite having previously dropped out of school. He and his wife currently reside in Philadelphia, USA, with their young children, where they take the message of Christ to the streets as living testimonies of the good God can do in the lives of those who desire a change.

'As you return to your homes, let people know that Jesus Christ is alive and coming back again,' said Dr Kirk Thomas, who then added: 'We know that Christ is alive and not dead because He lives in you and me – so go SEC, and be inspired for mission!'

DARELL J. PHILIP



Children shine in Pathfinder Bible Experience

Faith and learning were evident at the Adventurer and Pathfinder Bible Experience conference-level event on 8 February 2025 as children showcased their dedication and skill in memorising sacred Scripture. More than 1,050 people gathered at Newbold College of Higher Education to see them answer Bible questions with confidence and reverence.

The event, organised by the South England Conference, brought together children from various age groups. It included devotional messages from Dr Eike Mueller (Newbold College) and Dr Mario Phillip (Holloway Church) that inspired all present to embrace the word of God. 'We were amazed by these young minds and their families and friends, who have

worked tirelessly to support them,' said Pastor Stanley Teixeira. 'It is all about experiencing the word of God and planting seeds of faith that will grow throughout their lives.'

The contest featured two categories, and the Adventurers were celebrated for their remarkable achievement as all eighteen teams achieved first place, going to the next level. Of the thirty-one Pathfinder teams, twenty achieved first place, six second place, and only five third place. Ten Kenyan teams also took part remotely from Kenya, supported by the SEC Pathfinders team.

The next level would take place on 8 March at Newbold College, involving teams from across the British Union Conference. All were looking forward to reaching the TED level that will take place on 12 April in Hungary, with teams from many other countries of the Trans-European Division.

PASTOR STANLEY TEIXEIRA

Reading West Pathfinders: champions in the making

The Reading West Church Pathfinder Club has been making strides in the Adventurer Bible Experience (ABE) and Pathfinder Bible Experience (PBE) competitions. What started as a new initiative in 2024 has blossomed into an inspiring journey filled with victories, personal growth and spiritual development.

In 2025 the club entered teams for both ABE and PBE competitions. Their dedication and hard work shone through at the area-level testing on 11 January 2025 as one ABE team secured third place, another earned second place, advancing to the next stage, and the PBE team also secured second place, qualifying for the next round. At the conference level on 8 February, ABE Faith Fighters 1 and PBE Bible Warriors both achieved first place and proceeded to the union-level competition in March, demonstrating their continued pursuit of excellence in faith and scholarship.

Every success story has its champions. Special thanks go to the dedicated teachers who have guided and mentored their teams: Cherly Singo, Jack Kay, Nomvulla Ncube, Dorcas Ongaya, Tsiti Gore, Eveline Anderson, Caroline Madisye and Ellen Domfey. Thanks also to Club Directors Dr Darlington Oddity and Donette James, and the supportive parents of ABE and PBE members. Your encouragement, patience and prayers have been instrumental in nurturing these young champions.

Beyond the trophies and accolades, ABE and PBE represent a journey of faith. Young Pathfinders commit Scripture to memory and develop teamwork, perseverance, and a deeper connection with God. Whether or not they secure more titles, they have already won in ways that truly matter. Let's keep our young scholars in our prayers!

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Wood Green Pathfinder investiture

On the bright Sabbath of 25 January 2025 the Wood Green Pathfinder Club had much to celebrate as it marked the first investiture since the club's relaunch. Festivities began with an impressive parade led by the Ilford Central Drum Corps and the Pathfinders themselves. As bright-faced Pathfinders marched into the church in perfect unison, the rhythmic drums captured the attention of the neighbourhood.

Inside the church, the atmosphere was filled with excitement and anticipation. Five Pathfinders were formally invested, receiving recognition for their dedication and achievements. Additionally, one SEN Pathfinder was awarded a participation certificate, a heartfelt moment that emphasised the club's inclusive spirit. Marsha Mills (Pathfinder Director) delighted the congregation with a humorous and insightful PowerPoint presentation that recapped the year's activities. Carolyn Daniels (Area 6A Pathfinder Coordinator) delivered an inspiring appeal to continue supporting the club.

Siblings Roshan and Eden Ekoli provided a beautiful musical item before a sermon from Pastor Clifford Herman, a former South England Conference Pathfinder director. His message, based on Philippians 2:1-4, reminded the congregation that the Pathfinder scarf is a symbol of honour and a reminder of their spiritual commitment.

As the service concluded, the Pathfinders and drum corps took to the streets once more, marching around the block to the delight of neighbours. Residents emerged from their homes to watch and wave, while curious motorists slowed down to take in the colourful display and lively drumbeats.

On Sunday, the club hosted a children's Pathfinder banquet to reward each Pathfinder for their hard work. It was a time to recognise the unwavering support of the Pathfinder team and well-wishers who had made the year such a success.

The investiture was more than just a ceremony – it testified of community, dedication, teamwork and the boundless potential of young people guided by faith and purpose. Here's to many more investitures to come.

SYVELLA GALLOWAY-ELLIS



Serving the Lord in their first week

The Sunderland Adventurer and Pathfinder Club may have been only a week old, but their enthusiasm to serve the Lord already shone brightly. On a cold and wet Sabbath afternoon, the newly formed club joined Newcastle Personal Ministries for outreach in Sunderland's high street.

Determined to make an impact, the young Adventurers and Pathfinders donned red uniforms and cheerful smiles, catching the attention of passers-by. One curious

individual stopped to enquire about the event. Upon learning that free books such as *The Great Controversy*, *The Sabbath Is Not Sunday*, and *Be Ye Ready* were being distributed, he eagerly expressed his interest. One Pathfinder recounted that 'I was struggling to open the box, but the passer-by was so eager to get a copy that he offered to open it with his bank card!'

Despite the wet weather, the team distributed around 180 books in just an hour, also taking time to explain what these books are about and why they're so important for everyone to know. The outreach also facilitated further spiritual connections. One individual expressed a deep interest in learning more and requested Bible studies, providing her contact details and sharing her excitement about visiting the Seventh-day Adventist church in Sunderland. This filled the young Adventurers and Pathfinders with hope and renewed their commitment to mission.

With teamwork, dedication and God's guidance, the Adventurers and Pathfinders' efforts touched many lives. Please pray for all who received the books, and for the woman who has taken the next step in her journey with Christ. As the club embarks on its journey of service, its members are already sharing the Good News with courage and love.

EDMUND CHAN, CHURCH ELDER AND DIRECTOR OF SUNDERLAND ADVENTURER AND PATHFINDER CLUB



The start of Barnstaple SDA Group

After much prayer, effort and waiting, a branch of Exeter SDA Church officially opened on Sabbath 15 February 2025 in Barnstaple, North Devon. It is the first time a group of fifteen Adventists living in the area have consistently gathered for worship, fellowship and mission. They do so in a meeting room provided by the local council in Castle Centre.

Pastor Florin Orasanu, serving the Exeter and Torquay district and acting as Area 1 Coordinator, was present at the event and asked for a special blessing upon the group. The Bible message (Isaiah 43:10-12) reminded them that God is calling us to be His witnesses, sharing with others what we ourselves have experienced. Our consistently loving and authentic lives speak much more for God than our doctrine as a church.

As we have formed good relations with Barnstaple Town Council, it is our hope and prayer that God will open the way for autumn health checks in the town centre and that people will become aware of the activity and values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Soli Deo Gloria!

PASTOR FLORIN ORASANU



‘Come sup with me’

On 11 January 2025, the Tottenham Lighthouse church hosted a remarkable Sabbath service that brought together a diverse community.

Pastor Jude Jeanville delivered an inspiring sermon based on Revelation 3:14-22, inviting everyone to join in fellowship and encouraging members that God was going to do something wonderful in pouring out His Holy Spirit. ‘Faith without works is dead,’ he continued, quoting James 2:26.

The morning scripture reading emphasised the importance of unity and community, resonating deeply with the congregation. In a heartwarming gesture, all members of the church and the community food hub were invited to share a sit-down meal inside the church. After the service, tables were laid and everyone enjoyed a meal together, allowing meaningful conversations and connections.

Each church member was encouraged to engage with at least one of their neighbours and community members

and obtain their contact details. This should build stronger bonds and promote inclusivity.

The fellowship was a resounding success, with church members and community members mingling and sharing their experiences. The church members emphasised the joy of connecting with those at their doorstep.

‘Wonderful, a good day,’ a visitor said. ‘I want to give my heart to the Lord.’

‘Good service to talk to people of the community,’ said someone else. ‘We should continue on a regular basis. Some didn’t understand the language too well, but it was a blessing for them to come and sup with us. So many people are happy. We give thanks to God and pray that we lifted up Jesus.’

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Pastor Nicholas, Pastor Solon, Elder Sue and Owen

Community engagement and support: reflection and hope ahead

The Mansfield Woodhouse church looks back on a year filled with compassion, generosity, and a deep sense of community. Its various initiatives have strengthened bonds and made a meaningful impact on the wider Mansfield Woodhouse community, embodying the church’s mission of service.

In 2024 fifteen sleeping bags were donated to The Beacon Project in Mansfield, providing warmth and comfort to the homeless and vulnerable. The Harvest Festival on 5 October was another significant highlight as the church generously donated 97kg of food – equivalent to 302 meals – to Sherwood Forest Foodbank, helping families struggling with food insecurity. On 5 December the church hosted a Christmas dinner, welcoming fifty-two guests for a warm meal and fellowship. A couple of days later, on 7 December, the church contributed essential supplies for children aged 0-3 years to the Mansfield Woodhouse Family Hub, offering vital support to struggling parents.

Spreading holiday cheer, members visited The Beeches Assisted Living Home on 21 December, singing carols and gifting knee blankets to residents. The church’s Christmas Eve Carol Service on 24 December brought the community together in worship. Christmas offerings of £570 were also donated to the Sherwood Forest Foodbank on 11 January 2025, ensuring further support for those in need.

With gratitude for the past year, Mansfield Woodhouse members look ahead with hope and renewed dedication to serving their community in 2025 and beyond.

COMMUNITY SERVICES TEAM

'We've come this far by faith' – Hackney Seventh-day Adventist Church's 45th anniversary

Pastors, elders, church members and friends gathered in person and online on Sabbath 22 February 2025 to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the formation of Hackney Seventh-day Adventist Church. The full-day celebration, which included an evening concert, took place at Bridge Academy opposite Hackney Church.

Among the special guests invited were Britain's first black female Member of Parliament and the Mother of the House of Commons, Diane Abbott MP, and the South England Conference President, Dr Kirk Thomas.

The adult Sabbath School lesson was presented by Hackney's former first elder, John Mathieu, alongside a former pastor of the church, Simeon Esson. The Sabbath School mission story highlighted snippets of Hackney's 45-year history, presented by founder members of the church, who told of how those from the *Windrush* generation came together, often working two jobs, to secure a place of worship on 12 February 1980 for themselves and their families, and how they pulled together in serving the physical and spiritual needs of both the church and the community around them. A pre-recorded video came from Jamaica, where Pastor Humphrey Walters spoke fondly of the years he had spent in leading Hackney Church before taking up an appointment as the SEC president – which would also be repeated during the tenure of his successor, Pastor Sam Davis, a former pastor of Hackney.

Hackney's Legacy Choir led by Lloyd Reid sung 'Marvellous' while a slideshow was played in remembrance of those who had fallen asleep during the 45-year span of the church. The Junior Sabbath School told the story of Hackney's journey with the Lord, including insight from one of the founder members, Petra Constantine, via a pre-recorded video.

Myrtle O'Keefe, daughter of Hackney's first head elder, the late Curtis Bruce Snr, then rendered the song 'Faith that Reaches the Unreachable' before Pastor Stephen McKenzie presented a message encouraging members to look to the past in order to move forwards in the present in anticipation of the future with the Lord Jesus.

While Sisters Yvonne Waithe, Ruby Merchant and Ann Williams had in the previous week been recognised for their years of service to the church during a special prayer meeting, another three founding members were honoured in the same way during the Sabbath afternoon programme. Marguerita Bruce (wife of the late Elder Curtis Bruce Snr), Elder Dorina Williams and Petra Constantine all received an award from Diane Abbott MP, who thanked them for their service to the church, along with words of commendation from Dr Kirk Thomas and tributes from family members and the current pastoral team. Patsy Reid, a founder member, presented a colourful bouquet of flowers to Diane Abbott as a token of appreciation.

Pastor Joojo Bonnie, a former pastor of Hackney who now serves as the SEC Teens Director, offered a prayer for the special ladies (all of whom also received a bouquet of flowers) and for Diane Abbott.

The evening then came to an end with a concert featuring various artists including Hackney's Legacy Choir, Myrtle O'Keefe, Deborah Waisome, Pastor Vaughn Thorpe, Generation X, The Lewisham Worship Team, Representatives of His House, Gill Francis, Tara Goddard, Clive Brown and Urban Sound, giving praise and thanks through music and song in recognition of God's leading of Hackney Church for 45 years and beyond.

DARELL J. PHILIP, PR &
COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT;
PHOTO: JOSHUA AMARTEY



Myrtle O'Keefe, daughter of Hackney honouree Marguerita Bruce and Hackney's first head elder, the late Curtis Bruce Snr, singing the meditational 'Faith'

Moving on to new pastures

On Sabbath 28 December 2024, the members of Tamworth Church bid farewell to Pastor Jermaine Swaby and his wife Kerry-Ann Swaby, who were moving on to new pastures. After a special communion service entitled 'This Same Jesus', conducted by Pastor Swaby, the elders thanked him and his wife for their ministry at Tamworth Church and in the community and wished them God's richest blessings as they move on to new

territories. They were presented with gifts of flowers – and, being keen cooks, with a set of beautiful saucepans.

Tamworth members are grateful for the love, support and spiritual guidance shown to them by Pastor and Sister Swaby, who will be dearly missed, and they pray for them as they continue to serve God in His vineyard.

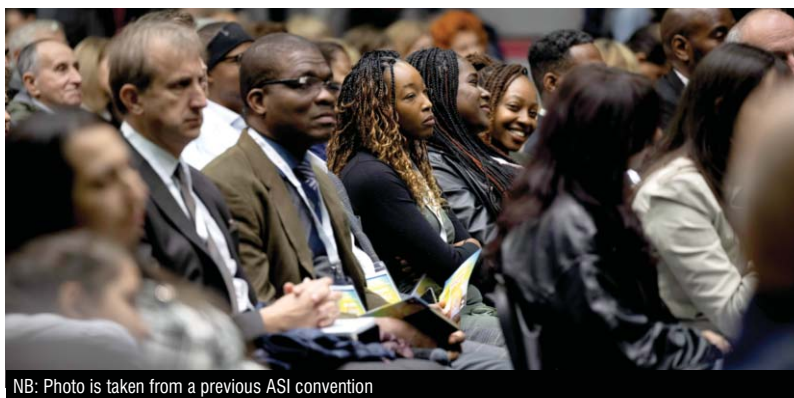
PAULINE NEWTON, COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

ASI UK to fund lay-led projects at 2025 convention

Do you have an evangelistic project that needs funding? The UK chapter of Adventist Laymen's Services & Industries (ASI), a global network of Adventist laypeople dedicated to supporting the mission of the church, is thrilled to announce that it will be funding lay-led evangelistic projects during its first annual convention since its restart last year, set to take place in June 2025. This is a remarkable opportunity for mission-driven church members to receive financial support for their projects, impacting many for Christ. However, the window for applications is short, so it is vital to act quickly.

How to apply

To be considered for funding, applicants must submit a completed application form and budget to ASI UK by email at evangelism@asiuk.org by **30 April 2025**. Both documents can be downloaded from the ASI UK website at www.asiuk.org. Applicants must be members of ASI UK; the project must be evangelistic in nature; and the requested funding must not exceed 40% of the total project cost. You can apply to become a member at the time of submitting the application for funding.



NB: Photo is taken from a previous ASI convention

Successful applicants will also be required to submit promotional materials – ideally a short video – so that their projects can be showcased to the wider ASI UK community. A special offering will be collected at the convention in support of the approved projects.

Join the ASI UK 2025 annual convention!

ASI UK invites all church members to attend its annual convention on Sabbath 21 June 2025 at the Mercure Daventry Court Hotel under the inspiring theme 'Reconnect'. The event is an opportunity to network with like-minded believers, share ideas, and be inspired by powerful messages, testimonies and seminars. The keynote speaker for the event is Johnny Wong, a church planter from Melbourne, Australia, and the founder of Gateway Adventist Centre. To register, visit www.asiuk.org today!

MICHAEL GARKOV, TREASURER, ASI UK

Hybrid pastoral care for a digital generation

The rapid advance of technology has opened new avenues for pastoral ministry, challenging Seventh-day Adventist leaders in the British Isles to offer spiritual support to congregations both online and face to face.

One Adventist pastor who has taken an active interest in connecting with a congregation through digital platforms is Dr Sam Neves. Whether reaching members who are housebound, bridging generational gaps, or exploring new ways of evangelism, he became convinced that future-ready ministry must blend the best of in-person pastoral care with thoughtful online engagement. In 2019, at the University of Westminster, Neves began his doctoral research on how pastors can encourage members to open up across digital and physical spaces, building on his MA in Pastoral Theology from Newbold College. In June 2024, after five years of research, he defended his thesis, 'A Constructivist Grounded Theory of Self-Disclosure in Hybrid Pastoral Care', identifying and critiquing the nuanced ways pastors can facilitate genuine and meaningful spiritual care.

Neves's journey culminated in a memorable graduation ceremony at London's Royal Festival Hall on Monday 11 November, surrounded by family and friends, followed that evening by an intimate service of thanksgiving at Stanborough Park Church. The atmosphere of gratitude and reverence was palpable, with those who had gathered acknowledging that every talent is entrusted by God and best employed for His glory. Today, Dr Neves continues in ministry at the General Conference, where his main responsibilities focus on branding and digital strategy for the Seventh-day Adventist world church.

While technology evolves rapidly, the core question remains: how can pastors meaningfully connect with people's hearts, online and in person? For Dr Neves, the answer lies in a God-centred approach that makes the most of every communication tool, without ever losing sight of the personal connections that lie at the heart of Adventist ministry. May his work inspire others to reach out creatively in service to every soul that seeks freedom, healing and hope in Jesus.

CAROLINE SWAIN



ASNA FAMILY RESPITE WEEKEND 2025

Asna

25-27 April '25



Building Resilience

VENUE: Hay's Wood Retreat

Setch Road, Blackborough End, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, England PE32 1SL

COST: ALL ADULTS £150 (£120 ASNA members)

ALL CHILDREN 5- 17 yrs £50 per child

ALL UNDER 5s : FREE

Website: www.asna.info Email: info@asna.info @OfficialASNA
ASNA is a Reg. Charity 1100447



2025 Welsh Mission Session Notification

Notice is hereby given that the Triennial Session of the Welsh Mission of Seventh-day Adventists will take place at the:

Holiday Inn, The Coldra, Newport, NP18 2YG
on Sunday 28 September 2025.

Delegates will receive documentation in advance of the session.

PASTOR MAX MCKENZIE-COOK (EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY, WELSH MISSION)

North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

REDISCOVERING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM CAMP MEETING 2025



Pr Stephen Bohr
Adult Bible Study Speaker



Pr Sikhumbuzo Dube
Adult Mid-Morning Speaker



Pr Steven Conway
Adult Commitment Speaker



Jacqueline & Winston Brown
Health Speakers



Lo-Ammi Richardson
Youth Speaker



Jemaule Gardner
Teen's Speaker



Bekezela BK Peters
Children's Speaker

28TH MAY - 1ST JUNE 2025

Four-Night Stay (Wednesday - Sunday)

Accommodation and meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) are included.

• Adult	£280 per person
• Child (4-12)	£260 per person
• Infant (0-3)	Free
• Family (2 adults, 2 children)	£1,080

Two-Night Package (Friday - Sunday)

Accommodation and meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) are included.

• Adult	£140 per person
• Child (4-12)	£130 per person
• Infant (0-3)	Free
• Family (2 adults, 2 children)	£540



SCAN ME

This year's Camp Meeting will take place at **Yarnfield Park Training & Conference Centre**, located in Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 0NL. Day delegates are welcome from Thursday to Sabbath. For more information about attending as a day delegate, making other enquiries or booking your place, visit nec.adventist.uk/camp-meeting or scan the QR code.



LifeSource book sales

DATE	VENUE	TIME
May 28-1 June	NEC Camp Meeting, Yarnfield Conference Centre	

Messenger

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

To receive the *MESSENGER*, delivered free to your home along with *Focus* magazine and *Adventist World* magazine, scan the QR code or email: msubs@stanboroughpress.org.uk



All adverts as supplied, errors and omissions excepted



Chinese Adventists celebrate lunar new year

Praise and thanks to the Lord for leading the London Chinese church to the successful conclusion of its new-year activities!

With the festive atmosphere of the lunar new year in the air, the church organised a series of activities to bring warmth and care to the Chinese community during this traditional festive season as well as seizing the opportunity to share the Gospel with this minority ethnic group.

On Sunday 26 January the church spread festive joy in the largest Chinese Market-upon-Thames organised by the UK Hongkonger group, setting up a booth to sell Chinese New Year festive cakes and cookies, various decorations such as auspicious couplets and calligraphy, and a simple fun game to celebrate the lunar new year with those who visited.

The church also distributed promotional Chinese calendars and health booklets, which were carefully labelled with the church address and contact details. Church members prayed that all who received these things would begin the new year with the blessing of the Gospel.

On 1 February, the church welcomed a special group of approximately thirty teachers and students from the Hong Kong Tai Po Sam Yuk Secondary School. All these students came from a non-Christian family background, many of whom were enjoying the blessings and fellowship of a church worship service for the first time.

On 2 February, the church hosted a Chinese New Year Family Fun Fair outreach event at North London Grammar School, attended by more than a hundred community friends. More than ten stalls offered food, games, massages, herbal remedies and so on, and visitors received goody bags with evangelical literature. We give thanks to the Lord for this wonderful event, which was enabled by more than fifty volunteers, half of whom were not church members, but who served the community with love and care. May the Gospel seeds take root in their hearts and bear good fruits for the glory of our Heavenly Father, and may God continue to lead the London Chinese church to walk in love in the new year, sharing the Gospel and inviting people to receive the grace of the Lord.

ORIGINALLY BY PASTOR CONNIE TSANG, TRANSLATED BY PIN YEO

Hong Kong Adventist school students visit the UK

Twenty-eight students from the Adventist Sam Yuk Secondary School in Hong Kong, led by Vice Principal Vincent Yong and two teachers, Ngai Ka Yee and Queeny Lam Kwan Lai, were warmly welcomed to the UK this year on their first visit since the pandemic. They were received by the Elected Mayor, Peter Taylor, in Watford Town Hall on Tuesday 28 January, which happened to be the eve of the lunar Chinese new year. Each student received a special gift from the Mayor and the visitors also presented their gifts to him.

Then, on Sabbath 1 February (the fourth day of the Chinese new year), a special reception was given to the young visitors by Pastor Connie Tsang of the Chinese-speaking church here in the UK, in St Luke's Church. The morning service was taken by the visiting vice principal, Vincent Yong, followed by a fellowship lunch with Chinese vegetarian food. The afternoon service included a special visit by Councillor Tim Williams, Watford Borough Councillor and a Hertfordshire county councillor. Tim and his wife Ludmila and their daughter Kristina took time to meet and exchange greetings with our visitors. It was a very happy and enjoyable Sabbath for all concerned.

JOHNSON WONG



Left to right: Christine, Michael, Connie, Councillor Tim Williams, Vice Principal Vincent and Stanley.

Visit from Pastor Peter Liebhardt

On Sabbath 15 February, Pastor Peter Liebhardt, South England Conference Church Growth Director, was the guest speaker at the Chinese-speaking church in West Hendon, which has been meeting over the past two years. He preached a sermon on crossing the Red Sea.

The Chinese-speaking church, led by Pastor Connie Tsang from Hong Kong, usually has sermons in either Cantonese or Mandarin with a regular attendance of some thirty or more members, some of whom come from as far as Bristol, Nottingham and Manchester as well as other areas around London. There is usually a full day of services, with a sermon in the morning, a fellowship lunch, and a talk or other activity in the afternoon.

If you wish to visit this church, please contact Pastor Connie at ctsang@secadventist.org.uk or by calling 07455596396.

JOHNSON WONG (ARTICLE AND PHOTO)



Centre: Pastor Peter and his wife Edit with Pastor Connie and her husband Michael

Possibility Ministries Day inspires change at Holloway Church

On Sabbath 18 January, Holloway Seventh-day Adventist Church witnessed a powerfully transformative Possibility Ministries Day that left a lasting impact. The event, led by the dedicated Possibility Ministries team, championed inclusivity and broke down stigmas surrounding visible and non-visible disabilities. Holloway members with special needs played an active role in the day's activities.

Elder Louanne Sampson from New Life Church delivered an enlightening personal presentation on navigating life with lupus. This inspired the congregation, challenged preconceived notions, and fostered greater understanding of individuals with disabilities.

The afternoon session took the conversation even further, diving into the symptoms and effects of various visible and non-visible learning needs. The congregation actively engaged in discussions, sharing feedback and brainstorming practical ways to provide support. This impactful day underscored the importance of ensuring everyone feels valued, seen and heard.

EMEKA NWOKOYE, COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



'The Unspoken Love' youth worship evening

On 1 February, an Advent Youth Ministries (AYM) night of fellowship with music saw at least 200 young people attending Leicester Central Church from as far as Luton, Bedford, Ipswich, Wales, Wolverhampton, Nottingham, Birmingham, Leeds and Stoke. Following the theme of 'connected praise' in the 2025 NEC mission statement, Leicester Central's Bulgarian young people collaborated with more local youth in running the afternoon and evening programme.

The month of February was dedicated to the theme 'The Unspoken Love', which refers to the love that God has demonstrated to His chosen that isn't spoken about enough.

The youth were encouraged that they are God's special people, and were encouraged to be the 'unspoken love' to someone, to do their best to emulate this type of love in their own unique ways.

One of the members, Katerina, made a presentation about God's love shown through diet and a healthy lifestyle. The presentation, featuring the books of Genesis, Hosea and Philippians, discussed how our mental health and well-being can be linked to our gut health.

The church leadership are grateful for the musicians who formed the RESET Praise lineup, and also for special guests Kiril Kolev and family, a Bulgarian family from Coventry, for their contribution to the church's worship.

The climax of the praise evening came when Shona's praise team from the Leicester district, led by Kiana, reminded everyone that we need each other as part of God's family. They and the other musicians provided an uplifting medley of songs for the congregation to sing along to.

Dr Patrick Herbert, Leicester Central's pastor, gave an inspiring contemporary message that led young people to recognise that God's unspoken love is available to all. Even if we have drifted from Him, He longs to welcome us home.

The worship service was followed by a social with refreshments. Everyone agreed they are looking forward to the next youth worship event!

KAMBALA NTUMBA



Messenger

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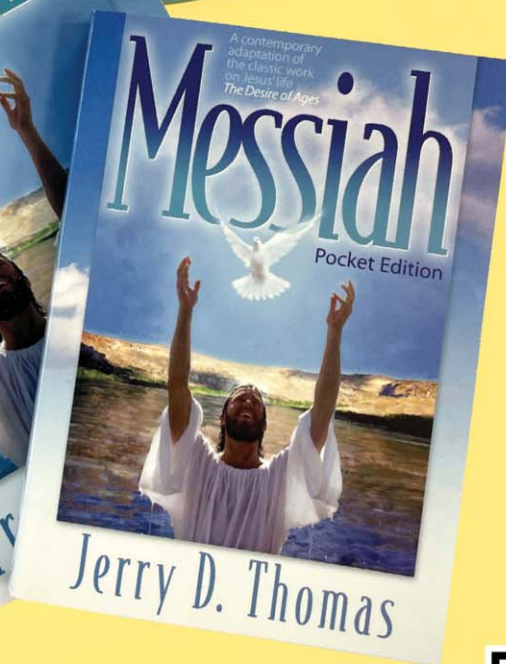
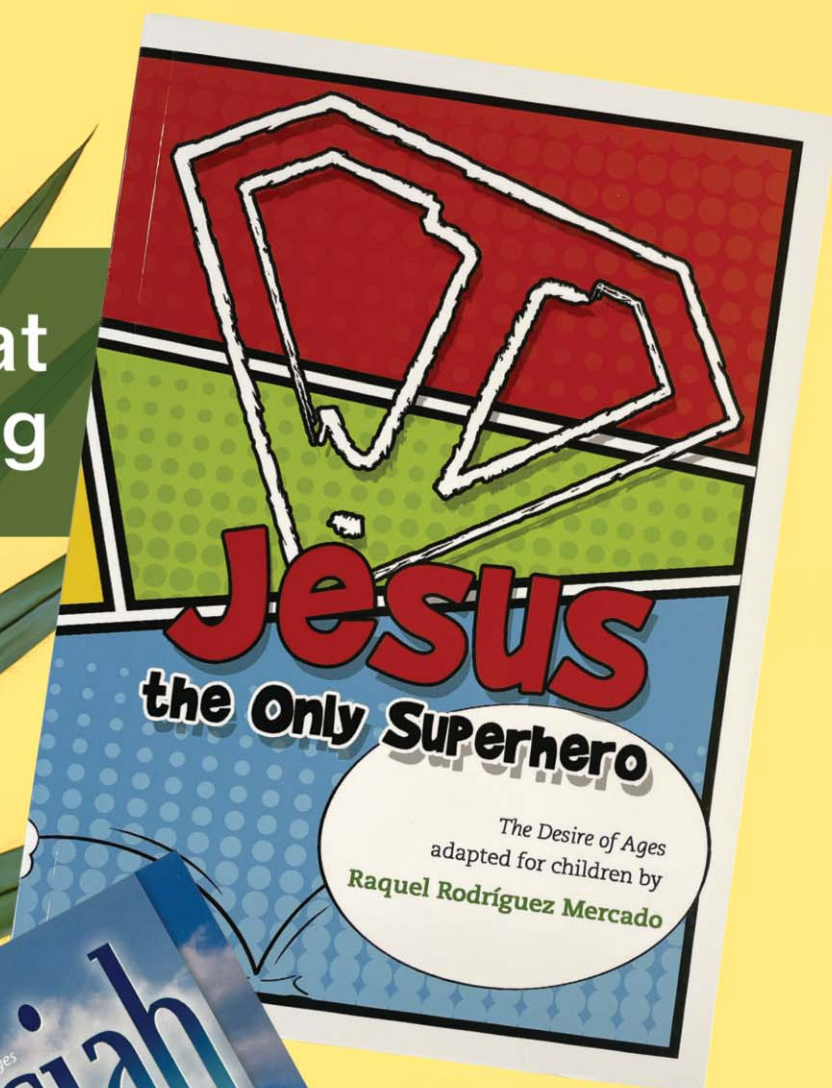
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Apr	4	7.39	7.52	7.45	7.58	8.06
	11	7.51	8.03	7.58	8.12	8.20
	18	8.03	8.15	8.10	8.26	8.33
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