

# SEC COMMUNICATOR

Jan 2020 # 13



Tribute to  
**ANDREW DAVIS**

# DISCIPLE *making*

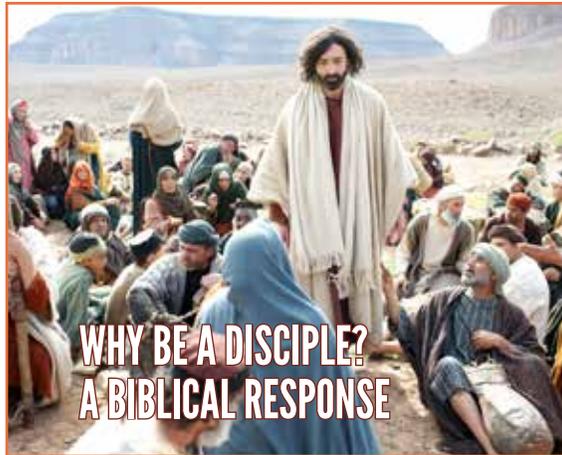
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# Editorial

**H**appy New Year. You may have wondered what fortunes the year holds for you. Perhaps, yours is a preoccupation with the quality of your health, while for others it may be something different, such as success in all areas of their lives. Maybe you might also want to reflect on the quality of your spiritual life. Are you experiencing growth or decline when it comes to your relationship with Christ?

In this issue we have collaborated with the British Union Conference Ministerial Director, Pastor Eglan Brooks, to focus on the topic of "Disciple-making." Pastor Brooks has commissioned some of our ministers to explore the theme of "Disciple-making" and to share their findings to encourage us in our local missionary engagements.

Discipleship is the hallmark of all followers of Christ, but, unfortunately, the reality does not always support that supposition. We can very quickly become good at appreciating the study of the Bible, which many of us do, but poor at transitioning that knowledge we have gained into active disciple-making lifestyles.

The emphasis in the articles encourages a mindset of disciple-

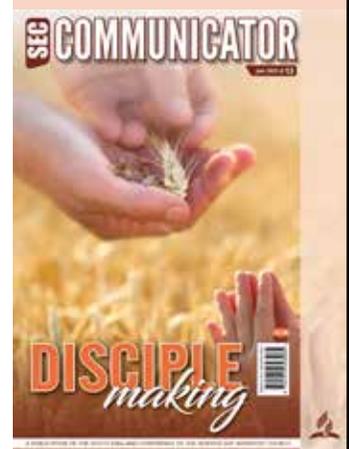
making. We must point people to Christ through discipleship. Very few of us have taken this mandate seriously. My prayer is that as you read this edition, you will be encouraged to evaluate your spiritual health as the new year unfolds and to become a more conscientious disciple-making follower of Christ.

We are also happy to share the story of Leon Seraphin's transition from a homeless person into a volunteer for supporting the homeless, by Darell Philip. Leon's story of giving back and helping the homeless is a remarkable story of how we must remember that as followers of Christ, we have a responsibility to reach out to those who have not yet come to the knowledge of the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Darell writes that Leon Seraphin, who is 39, is a Chef Trainer for the *Beyond Food Foundation* – a charity which inspires people who are at risk of or have experienced homelessness, to gain meaningful employment. Leon's passion for volunteering for such projects comes from having experienced homelessness himself.

May this year be a year of giving back and helping those who are still living in the shoes we once lived in, until Christ saved us.

## OUR COVER



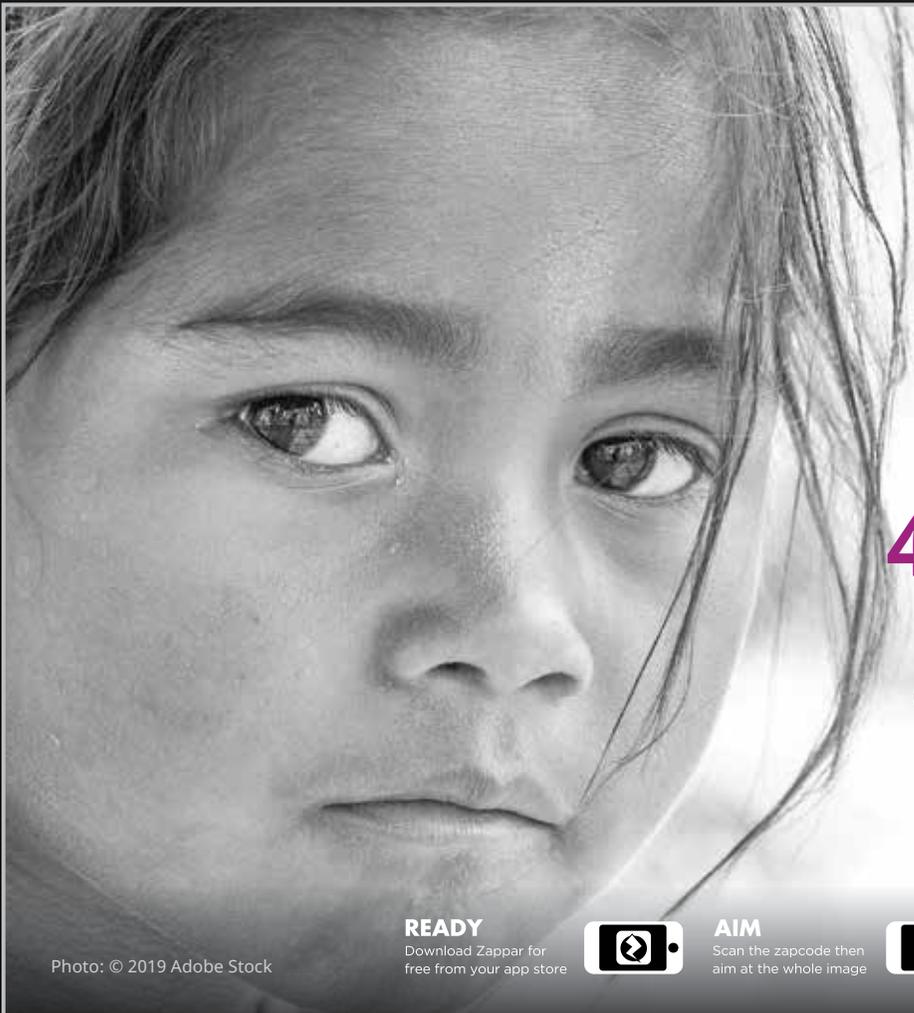
**SAM O. DAVIES**  
Editor

**10** DAYS OF PRAYER

# SEEKING GOD'S SPIRIT

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# the President's Desk

DR. EMMANUEL OSEI



I bring you greetings from Montenegro where we are engaged with the Trans-European Division year end meetings. We thank God for His guidance and leading over the past quadrennium.

I am grateful to God for the commitment and dedication of our members who have been faithful over the past years. To the Directors and officers in the churches, it's been a blessing to work with you. So, what does the Lord want us to do for the next four years? What is His purpose for the church in the South England Conference (SEC)?

As I wrestled with the Lord in prayer, He impressed upon my heart quite forcibly the place where He wants His church to be in the future. Although we are increasing in membership, I believe there is a lot more that we can and should be doing. Looking at our GC website, our mission is clearly stated: "Make

disciples of Jesus Christ who live as His loving witnesses and proclaim to all people the everlasting gospel of the Three Angels' Messages in preparation for His soon return"<sup>1</sup>

Again, in our Church Manual, p129, we read: "Every church must have a functioning board whose members have been elected during a church business meeting. Its chief concern is having an active discipleship plan in place, which includes both the spiritual nurture of the church and the work of planning and fostering evangelism."

Jesus Himself tells us in Matthew 28:18-20 to "go and make disciples ... baptising them ... and teaching them ..." (NIV)

From these statements it is clear that the church in the South England Conference should be engaged in making disciples. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we

can then impact our local communities. Although we have over 25,000 members in the SEC, I ask myself this question: How many disciples do we have? Our challenge is that we have a large number of believers; but how many of us are disciples? We have taught and encouraged people to become members but failed miserably in training them to become disciples. I would like to see us all on the discipleship track and receive the transformation of character which is so desperately needed in our lives. If we would select one person for the year who we will disciple, this will double our membership. Those we disciple will then disciple another person, and so the process goes on. Thus, our membership will not increase by addition but by multiplication. The Lord wants us to make disciples; this is where the emphasis should be placed.

As a church, we have been far too insular. In the Ministry of Healing (Page 143), Ellen G White states that 'Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with people as one who desired their good. He showed sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He invited them, "Follow Me".'

This is the work for the disciples of Christ. It is my hope that as we place our emphasis on being Christ's disciples, we will embark upon forming networks in our communities, interacting a lot more with them and taking the opportunity to invite them to follow Jesus. I look forward, with eager anticipation, to working with you in the next four years. Maranatha!

*1. Mission Statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, [adventist.org](http://adventist.org), 15 Oct 2018*



# EVANGELISM DISCIPLESHIP AND CHURCH MISSION

The majority of Seventh-day Adventists still hold the view that the mission of the church is evangelism, with discipleship as a subset of that mission. However, since 2014, the church has sought to alter its mission focus from evangelism to discipleship. The new strategies have included revision of the church mission statement, new definitions of the work of the church board, and discipleship-focused initiatives such as the Reach the World Strategic Plan.<sup>1</sup> That said, the majority of these changes have concentrated on the theoretical aspect, with little or no significant changes at the local church level.

This article outlines four practical recommendations that would help the church fulfil its disciple-making mission. First, consistently preaching and teaching discipleship at every level of

church, especially the local church. Second, the inclusion of ongoing discipleship training as an integral part of the church programme. Third, enabling discipleship to inform and transform the structures, routines and rituals of the church. And finally, the development of relevant resources to support every part of the discipleship process.

Jesus preached and taught a disciple-making gospel: "The kingdom of God is here... repent and believe this gospel... come and follow me" (Mark 1:14-17). Those who followed became disciples and disciple-makers. In the same way, ministers and leaders must teach and preach so that every member becomes a disciple and disciple-maker (Luke 14:27, John 13:35, 15:8-16). Without a concerted and relentless effort to teach and preach from all levels of the church, discipleship will remain

just another buzzword in the church instead of the main reason for the church.

In order to preach and teach, the church must first clarify three key aspects of discipleship. First, why is discipleship important? It was the mission of Christ as well as the early church, and it is the official mission of the Adventist church.<sup>2</sup> Second, what does it mean to be a disciple? A disciple is a person who chooses to live and reflect the life of Christ: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20, 4:19, John 15:1-8). To live and reflect the life of Christ, disciples must become committed learners, obedient followers and faithful witnesses (Matthew 11:28-29, 4:19, 22:37-40, John 14:15, Acts 1:8). Third, how do disciples make other disciples? By showing the gospel (Matthew

*"The church can practice many things but still fail to carry out the main mission of Christ."*



**MICHAEL NJAGI MBUI PhD**

5:13-16), speaking the gospel (Mark 16:15, Romans 10:17) and training those who have responded and desire to live the life of Christ (Luke 6:40).

The church must also develop a culture of ongoing training (Romans 12:2). Effective trainers must first model what it means to be a disciple (John 13:1-17) and then mentor believers to be like them or better (2 Timothy 2:2). The church, like a school, will successfully train its members when they commit to growing from a learner, to a teacher, and then to a trainer of teachers (Ephesians 4:11-16, Hebrews 5:12-14). This is the charge of Paul to Timothy: “The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2, see also 2 Corinthians 5:17-20).

The church can practice

many things but still fail to carry out the main mission of Christ. Every activity must be evaluated based on whether it facilitates discipleship, expresses discipleship or both. Every gathering should provide members with a holistic expression of discipleship, one that incorporates worship, fellowship and witnessing (Matthew 23:23).

Finally, development of relevant and simple-to-use resources will enhance the teaching and training of disciples. The new discipleship handbook is a good start. Other similar resources are needed to help the church mingle, minister and disciple in their communities. Such resources will need to be localised, simplified and available in electronic and other formats.

In conclusion, repositioning discipleship as the mission of

the church will require a major paradigm shift in the culture of the church, beginning with the content and format of the church’s teaching, preaching and training; then in the structures, routines, plans and programs of the church. All will need to be underpinned by a clear, simple and unified understanding of what it means and takes to be a disciple of Christ, and a disciple-making church. With these changes many more members will personalise Christ’s mission and by doing so, become disciple and disciple-makers. At the same time, churches will more successfully disciple their local communities.

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# WHY BE A DISCIPLE? A BIBLICAL RESPONSE

**B**ecoming a disciple starts when one is called by Jesus Christ (Mark 1:17; 2:14). This call is one that God initiates, for without it there is no motive for wanting to follow Jesus as His disciple. When the call is received, it often signals a break from the past and the acceptance of a new future reality (Mk 1:16-2; 2:14; 8:34; Lk 9:57-60; 14:26).<sup>1</sup> It is God who calls men to Himself and changes them, thus making them His disciples (Jn 6:44; 12:32).

As Seventh-day Adventists, we often evangelise by attempting to convince people 'logically' of the truth about Jesus Christ so that they can make a decision to follow Him. However, this emphasis often negates the joy of the experience of salvation. It is through discipleship that Jesus morphs from an historical figure to the Saviour of every individual.

## **Disciples spend time imitating their master**

The disciple of Christ always seeks to become Christ-like as he dwells in faith and practice. In John 15 the disciple is admonished, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me" (Jn. 15:4.8 ESV). It is virtually impossible for a disciple to be connected to Christ and not be producing the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). The disciple never graduates or becomes independent from their Master, even when shown to be fruitful; such is still contingent on their continual abiding with the Master.

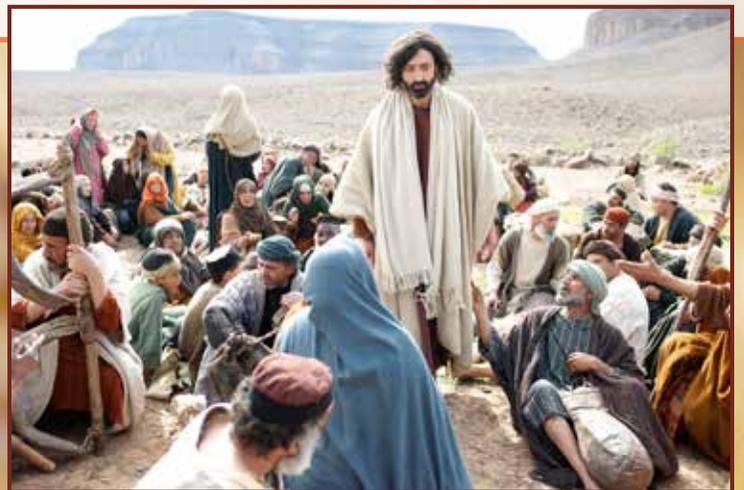
## **Disciples live out the kingdom principles of scripture**

A disciple accepts the lordship of Christ (Matt 10:7).<sup>2</sup> The disciple's habits, responsibilities, conduct, relationships, needs and ambitions are all lived out in light of God's coming kingdom (Rom 6:13-18). Under the rule of God, disciples are daily crucifying their desires in order that they live under the control of the Spirit of God. Biblically speaking, disciples are saved and pass on a living faith. The disciple is called by God and, in response to that call, becomes a follower of Christ. The goal of becoming a disciple is developing Christian identity and Christian vocation. Many join churches as disciples without ever progressing to discipleship, and as a consequence, they remain 'undisciplined' or they refuse to be further transformed fully into the character of their Master.

## **Disciples are mission-focused and driven**

God's mission has always been "to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10). Prior to giving the command to make disciples, Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Mt. 28:18). This authority provides the basis for the mission given to the church. This mission does not only encapsulate the baptism of disciples. Rather, it involves "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you (Matt. 28:20; cf. 4:23-24; 10:1, 7-8; Lk 4:40). So, what are the things to be taught by those who embark on disciple-making?"

The mandate for discipleship encompasses three elements, namely: preaching the Good News of the





**MARIO PHILLIP PhD**

kingdom of God; casting out evil spirits; and healing those who are sick (Mt 8:14-17; 9:35; Mk 1:39; Lk 4:38-44; 9:11).<sup>3</sup> Through discipleship God wants to restore the brokenness that exists in the structures of the world held captive by strongholds. The disciple, while proclaiming the spoken word, also gives attention to the social action required which is equally vital in the discipleship process.

### **Disciples are committed to a life of holiness**

The process of discipleship leads to holiness of heart and life. This involves loving God with our whole being through total commitment to God, singleness of intention, orienteering one's life completely on God; and trusting, loving, worshiping and obeying Him. "It consists of constant reliance on God's grace and using the gifts God gives us to become what God intends us to be."<sup>4</sup>

### **Disciples live their lives in continual obedience**

The disciple, once committed to a given teacher, owes them their absolute devotion. Jesus required the total allegiance of His disciples (Mk. 8:34-38; Lk. 14:26-33).<sup>5</sup> A disciple's obedience always stems from a response to the transformation that is taking place in the heart. Through discipleship we learn that right relationships provide the only true basis of loving obedience.

### **Summary**

Why should the church concentrate its focus on making disciples and not merely adding members to the record?

- Disciples are converted and baptised by the Holy Spirit. They are initiated into the School of Christ where they grow and mature in their relationship with God.
- Disciples imitate their master in both theory and practice and are teachable.
- Disciples are totally concerned with the agenda of the Master.
- Disciples are willing to make sacrifices for their faith.
- Disciples' conviction of God's rulership allows their present lives to be interpreted in light of their future hope.
- Disciples attract others to become adherents to their Master, who in turn makes them into His disciples

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# ON BEING

## Introduction

In an era when membership dropout is escalating among Adventist churches, disciple making should be paramount. The word “disciple” is a derivative of the Greek *mathētēs* which basically means a “pupil” or “learner.” In simple terms, a disciple is a student- someone who sits under the tutorage of a teacher to learn. Although Jesus’ ministry on earth was for the salvation of humankind (Luke 19:10), he consciously disciplined his followers. He walked, ate, traveled, taught, sent them out and preached with them. By so doing, he turned their hearts and minds to himself.

Discipleship was a major theme in Jesus’ life and ministry on earth. In his parting words, to the disciples, he reiterated their mission; which is also the mission of the Church, as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20. This has popularly been referred to as the Great Commission:

And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, all authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (ASV)

By specifying disciple making in his parting words, Jesus validates its importance. As such disciple making is a fundamental mandate of every Christian. In fact, until the second return of Christ Jesus, disciple making is, and will continue to be, the core duty of all believers. However, becoming a disciple maker is much more than mere church membership because disciple making does not just happen; it requires conscious effort. The question, therefore, is how one

can become a disciple maker; and how can a disciple-making culture develop in the church? This study aims at achieving this purpose. The study seeks to contribute to the existing knowledge on discipleship. Significantly, it calls upon each Christian to become a Disciple Maker.

## Effective Disciple Making is the Expression/Evidence of a Mature Disciple

Disciple making is one aspect of ministry that permeates the Christian life entirely. In one special sense, we may affirm that to be a Christian is to be a disciple maker. The natural outgrowth of faith in Christ is to become a disciple maker, where the believer replicates him/herself and multiplies God’s Kingdom by bringing others on board.

This essential aspect of being a disciple maker involves a three-step approach that must work together to be complete. Matthew 4:19 outlines this three-step approach as 1) The Invitation, 2) The Process and 3) The Promise. It reads, ‘Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!’” [NLT]. The Christian is the person who has accepted Jesus’ invitation to follow him and thus ready to be trained as a disciple maker.

The invitation to become a disciple maker is extended to all. Our response to the call of God through faith and baptism is the first step in becoming a disciple maker. In other words, as we accept the Gospel and join God’s church, we become co-workers with Christ in bringing others to the Kingdom. This first stage means that, for those who have not accepted the invitation, it may not be possible to bring others to God as they themselves do not have the experience to which they are inviting others. Being a disciple maker first

requires that the individual accepts and becomes a part of the fold of God to which he or she brings others to join.

Only when we are mature disciples can we effectively disciple others. For this to be possible, the Christian must be taken through a series of experiences that equip him or her for the task of making disciples or *replicating* himself or herself. This is the second stage of becoming a disciple maker. This is known as “the process.” Christ knew that the Twelve Apostles could become useful in disciple making after becoming mature disciples. He said, “I will make you fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19). Disciple making was Christ’s promise to his followers. Christ expected that his disciples would become his witnesses in all the world (Acts 1:8), bearing fruits (John 15:16) of repentance.

Christ trained and prepared His disciples for making disciples. Luke 9:1-2, 6 reads: “Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority. . . And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. . . And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere” (KJV). With the conviction that practice makes a man perfect, Jesus consciously allowed his disciples to practice disciplinmaking. Having taught them for a period, he engaged his disciples in practical disciple making. Thus, the second stage of disciple making—the process—is seen. With this, the disciples were charged to apply what they had learned. Luke 10:1 also, reads: “...the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come” (KJV). With this strategy, Jesus was preparing the infant church

# DISCIPLE MAKERS



**ROBERT OSEI-BONSU** PhD, MEd

members to become matured so that they could engage in effective disciple-making, even after his ascension.

In the same vein, disciple making was Paul's experience and his plea. Sharing his personal experience, he wrote: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:1-2, KJV). Paul tirelessly engaged in disciple making and was faithfully committed to it. He, therefore, entreats God's people to become faithful stewards of disciple making, his reason being that, as God's children, we have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. For that matter, "we are ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor 5:20, KJV). As ambassadors, we are to be committed to, and effective in, disciple making.

After the process comes the promise. Jesus said, "I will make you..." (Matt 4:19b). That is a promise to fulfil his purpose and render our efforts at making disciples fruitful. He bade us to do his will—to fish for people—and he is ever ready to provide the resources, protection and blessings that may be needed for accepting and actually doing the task of discipling others. Matthew's record of Jesus' final words is a reiteration of this assurance: "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." [KJV].

Other Gospel writers also give the same assurance of this promise, "... In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mk 16:17, 18), and "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and

scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19).

## **Christ Modelled Successful Discipleship**

To learn how to make disciples, the best place to start is with the original disciple maker, Jesus Christ of Nazareth. As a matured disciple, Jesus Christ modeled practical and successful disciple making. His selection of the Twelve and his manner of discipleship is in-depth and a life-long study. Thus, before the proposition of any discipleship model, it would be expedient that we learn from the strategies Jesus designed, practiced, and called his disciples to follow.

Jesus' first strategy in disciple making was to form a relationship through association. From among the many who were following Him, he chose a few of them as his close associates. Mark 3:13-14 reads: "And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto *him* whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him..." (KJV). When it comes to making disciples, Jesus had the Twelve whom he closely associated with. He ate, walked, traveled, slept, and preached the word with them. Jesus saw relationship building as the foundation of disciple making, and he utilised it. Matthew 9:35 reads: "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom. . ." He did all these with the Twelve close by him. In order to disciple the Twelve, Jesus had to first build a good rapport with them. His intimate association with the Apostles was so authentic that they were willing to die for Him. Matthew 26:35 records: "Peter said unto him, "though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Likewise, also said all the disciples.'

The second strategy Jesus employed in his disciple making was to secure trust by ministering to the immediate needs of the people. Christ gave himself to and for the people. The underpinning reason for the disciples' relationship with Jesus was his love and self-denial. Jesus Christ practically demonstrated disciple making before his disciples. He taught them by demonstrating what it means to trust someone. Jesus expressed his limitless love, unconditionally, to his followers. He was fully committed to meeting their immediate needs. He made disciples by sharing the love-salvation of God, motivating the disciples to surrender to him wholeheartedly.

Lastly, Jesus modelled disciple making by delegating and supervising. After he had demonstrated how to make disciples, Jesus put his disciples to work. After providing the Twelve with the necessary assistance and instruction, Jesus sent them out two by two (Matt 10:5) to operate on their own. However, Jesus checked on them and used their experience to instruct them further. Jesus gave the disciples room enough to operate and learn, yet he did not withhold timely correction and guidance from them. He wholeheartedly mentored the disciples. By this, Jesus has become the perfect model of a disciple maker.

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# THE DISCIPLE



## Introduction

The modern disciple-making movement has its roots in the International Evangelism Association, founded by Billy Hanks Jr in 1972.<sup>1</sup> That said, disciple making has taken on a new intensity in recent years. As a missional evangelistic movement or CPM<sup>2</sup>, the disciple-making movement challenges traditional Christian churches to be transformed into 'Disciple-Making Churches'. Today there are various effective models of disciple making used in a variety of churches and missions. What then is disciple making and how does a traditional, or institutional Christian church, become a disciple-making church?

## The Command of Jesus

**18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make

*disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age"* (Matthew 28.18-20, NRSV).

Matthew 28.18-20 is not generally taken as an exclusive instruction to Jesus' first disciples, but as a universal command applicable to Jesus' followers throughout all ages. The Greek verb μαθητεύσατε, translated 'to make disciples',<sup>3</sup> is an

<sup>3</sup> Nida, Eugene A; Louw, Johannes P., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*. 36.37 μαθητεύω: to cause someone to become a disciple or follower of—to make disciples, to cause people to become followers.' πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη 'go then, to all peoples and make them (my) disciples' Mt 28:19. In rendering μαθητεύω in Mt 28:19 and similar contexts, it is important to avoid the implication of duress or force, that is to say, one should not translate 'force them to be my disciples' or 'compel them to be my disciples.' In this sense, the authoritative command of Jesus would apply to those called to make disciples of

authoritative command of Jesus, given to his followers near the close of his earthly ministry. That said, what implications does this command of Jesus have for Christian churches today?

## The Going

For many, the command to "go" fills us with trepidation. Instinctively, we know that Jesus' words call for more than weekly church attendance. Robert E. Coleman frames well the commission to go: 'Christ's last command to the church is recorded variously in all the Gospels: "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." (Mark 16.15); "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21; cf. 17:18); "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8; cf. Luke 24:38-49); "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28.19-20).'<sup>4</sup> All disciples are commanded to make disciples of all people. Yet, many of us Christians, if honest with ourselves, do not fulfil Jesus' command to go.'

## The Barriers

Why then are so many Christian churches not fulfilling Jesus' command to make disciples? Should we as leaders take some responsibility, knowing that many believers are simply living the institutionalised Christianity that they have been taught, often for generations? They've been taught doctrine without relationship, liturgy without love for their neighbour, church attendance without gospel mission.

all men.

White, E. G. (1956) *SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6* (EGW). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association. 6BC 1067.4

<sup>4</sup> Robert E. Coleman, *The Heart of the Gospel*, 2011, p. 218

# MAKING CHURCH



LON JONES

PhD Candidate

Jacob Hudgins of Fairview challenges us with the uncomfortable prognosis that a major barrier to becoming a disciple-making church is the way we view others; that we are infected with the same prejudicial complex as were the leaders during Jesus' earthly ministry, and that disciple making is especially hard when we think that contact with sinners will corrupt us. Also, when we think that lost people are unworthy of our attention, that they are nothing like us and will not change. The parables of the lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son show that God's heart is for lost people; that they, like us, are his precious children.<sup>5</sup>

Another core barrier is our own instinctive resistance to change. Successful disciple-making churches are changed and driven, primarily, by a spiritually transformed leadership, responding to and modelling Jesus' command to go. As leaders, at times we say the barrier is the *context* of our ministry- *The gospel just won't work*

<sup>5</sup> *Biggest Barrier to Disciple Making, YouTube, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018 - Fairview Evangelist, Jacob Hudgins*

*here. Or this congregation is resistant to change.* Jesus became a man and dwelt among sinful man with hard hearts. Yet, he transformed men and changed the world.

We need not fear, for Jesus has assured us that He is with us, and that He is the Way. We are all, pastors and laity, called to the privilege of being participants in his mission to seek and save the lost (Luke 19.10).

### What Then Shall We Do?

Sylvia Coleman defines discipling in her book 'Making Disciples': *'Discipling is an intentional, largely informal learning activity in which two or a small group of individuals, typically in a community holding to the same religious belief, make a voluntary commitment to each other to form a close, personal relationship for an extended period of time, to enable the disciples to learn from the other.'*<sup>6</sup>

So, disciple making is people with

<sup>6</sup> *Sylvia Wilkey Collinson, Making Disciples, 2006, p. 161*

people, praying for, and sharing their faith and the Word with the other;<sup>7</sup> prayerfully challenging others to commit to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, as they read and share together. They freely cooperate in weekly accountability, assessment, and spiritual support. Bobby Harrington gives five best practices for disciple-making churches:

1. They make disciple-making the top priority.
2. They focus on every-day Christians.
3. They keep it simple.
4. They provide practical tools.
5. They make 'equipping Christians for ministry' the top responsibility of leadership staff.<sup>8</sup>

Margaret and Roy Fitzwater promote the IDEA model, where modelling and inspiration are the means to help others in a church *catch the fire*. One of the most powerful things a church can do to create a discipleship culture is to let fellow believers see discipleship happening actively in church leaders. Their IDEA model is as follows:

- Instruction
- Demonstration
- Experience
- Assessment<sup>9</sup>

Jesus gives us the clearest example of disciple making. While he continually went about serving people, he did not allow this to detract from his training a few men. He drew them close in a familial relationship. They saw how he lived (modelling); they got involved in his ministry (practical learning). When he finally tells them to go and make disciples (commissioning), they understand, for he was already preparing them.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Hearers & Doers*, 2019, p. 47

<sup>8</sup> <https://discipleship.org/bobbys-blog/5-best-practices-for-disciple-making-churches/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://thedisciplemaker.org/how-to-create-a-disciple-making-church/>

<sup>10</sup> Coleman, p. 218





## JULIAN THOMPSON

BA (Hons) LTh MA DPhil (Cand.)

# FROM SHARED MEANING TO LIVED UNDERSTANDING

The Greek word for 'disciple', *mathētēs*, occurs some 250 times in the Gospels and Acts. But, in the Old Testament, the equivalent Hebrew word, *talmîd*, occurs only once in 1 Chronicles 25.8, an unassuming passage that, amongst other things, lists temple musicians and their duties. Interestingly, the noun *talmîd* is derived from the Hebrew verb *lāmad* – meaning 'to teach', which is also the root from which the Hebrew noun 'ox goad' comes, the implement placed on the necks of oxen to guide them as they laboured. (Hosea 10:11)

The roots of the New Testament understanding of discipleship lie in the rich Hebrew and Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) teaching tradition, a tradition where the role of the teacher was about much more than imparting knowledge. Recent archaeological finds have unearthed vast amounts of discarded clay writing tablets and documents which scholars have used to study the role of scribal education in the ANE. These finds along with passages such as Deuteronomy 11:18, Proverbs 3:3 and Exodus 13:9, texts which tell of God's law being 'inscribed on hearts and minds', have led scholars to make the observation that in the ANE, education at the hands of a teacher was seen as the means by which a disciple could come to embody the highest values of their society.<sup>1</sup> For the Hebrews of course, those values were the values found in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), and they centre around loving God and loving our neighbours. Some came to believe that, in the hands of a true teacher, one could become the living embodiment of Torah.<sup>2</sup>

To be clear, in making these observations I am not preaching 'righteousness by works', 'We are saved by grace through faith' (Eph 2:8). My purpose here is to emphasise

the fact that in the ANE, the goal of the disciple was to internalise the teachings of their master by becoming the embodiment of their words, and to externalise those teachings by passing them on to others. While discipleship in the ANE involved learning from a master, it was primarily about having that knowledge become a part of you. If this was the case for the Temple musicians in 1 Chronicles 25, and for ANE Scribes writing from royal courts and palaces, how much more should it be so for those who claim to be disciples of Christ? Are Christians not called to be Christ-like?

"You're as stubborn as an ox" is a well-known saying in the English vernacular; you may even have had this accusation levelled at you once or twice! As is often the case with comments made in jest, there is an element of truth to the saying. Oxen are indeed known to be stubborn, not in the sense that they consistently pursue their own will, but in the sense that they have remarkable strength and an ability to keep going even when things get difficult. This characteristic was noted by the American Pioneers who, when on

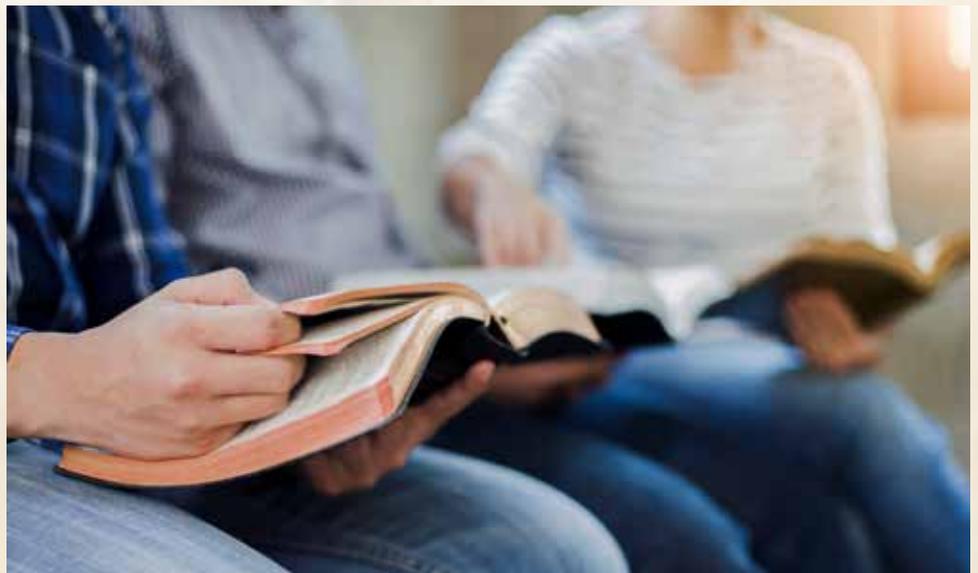
muddy, rugged terrain, often chose oxen rather than horses to pull their wagons because, though slower, their power, endurance and potential was far superior.

Like a farmer surveying his field, God looks out over the earth and surveys the work that is yet to be done. There are many ways in which it could be accomplished, but just as the pioneers perceived potential in the oxen, Jesus sees potential in us, his unlikely bunch of disciples, potential that will only be realised when we learn to trust and place ourselves fully in the Master's hands. Perhaps this is why Jesus, in Matthew 11:29-30, says: 'Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' (NRSV)

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# GROWING A DISCIPLE MAKING CULTURE



HEZRON OTIENU ADINGO

PhD Candidate, MA

Merriam-Webster defined culture as “the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization.”<sup>1</sup> Culture causes us to embrace certain values which in turn impact behaviour.<sup>2</sup> Disciple-making becomes a culture the moment it is ingrained in the belief system of the church members, among other things, as embedding it in our preaching. This results in the formation of habits, disciplines and lifestyles that encourage and demonstrate it. The culture that informs the modus operandi of many members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the British Isles at the moment, and in relation to discipleship, has led not only to its relegation but to missed opportunities, despite its being an existential matter for the church. In view of this, a paradigm shift is necessary.

The predominant culture which needs to be altered is the view that discipleship is post-baptismal or an exercise that waits until one is ‘good enough.’ Discipling could begin even prior to baptism and enrolment into church membership.<sup>3</sup> It begins immediately an encounter with a prospective member takes place. The way people are treated when they first visit a church determines how they will understand and practice discipleship when they finally become members.

The statement, ‘people belong before they become’ is very true. This is how it works in my congregations. We have non- Seventh-day Adventists in one of our congregations who participate in the life of the church, regularly attending services on Sabbath and supporting almost all of the programmes. They even reinforce the work of the church through offerings, as well as minister with us in the community in the two hostels and two nursing homes that currently benefit from our outreach programme. In the recent healthy cooking seminars,



they mingled with our health team to demonstrate to the community how healthy meals are prepared. As a result of this approach to ministry, we have baptised three people between the 2018 and 2019. One of them, now a youth leader, testified recently on a Sabbath morning that he subscribed to atheistic beliefs prior to his baptism, but the love shown to him by members melted his heart and he is glad to be in the family of God. Not long ago the other one, while sharing the story about the healing miracle of his heart condition, told me that he is grateful for the love and prayers he has been receiving from our church. These souls found belonging before believing; and a home, relationship, and family before contemplating any decisions for Christ.

Disciple-making also works better when there are effective structures to support it, of which the devotional life is primary. Christ was very much aware of the value of spirituality in the life of a disciple-maker, for as Mark recounts, “He appointed twelve— designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.”<sup>4</sup> Secondly, structures that support the study of the Word among members, including memorization, sustains the discipleship

programme. Mentorship is the final aspect, and it involves modelling how to do ministry to those being disciplined. Training enables growth and productivity among Christians at both personal and corporate levels. A loving fellowship provides a conducive environment for discipleship; and adopting Christ’s pattern of working with a few people at a time will make for a stronger foundation.

## Recommendations

1. Allow disciple-making to be at the centre of the church’s program.
2. Make disciple-making a relational exercise.
3. Help potential members to find belonging in our churches prior to their baptism.
4. Set structures that encourage disciple-making to be integral in the life of the church.

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4. Mark 3:14

# Help Someone...



...eat

...learn

...shelter

...live

'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

**Matthew 25:40**

**ADRA APPEAL 2020**

28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH - 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL (19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL IN LONDON)



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## HELP SOMEONE...

**Endings and Beginnings:** that precarious moment in time where reflections merge with expectations. We can look back at a challenging year for ADRA, in which we have found it very difficult to secure new European Commission development projects against the looming prospect of Brexit, and in which increased global competition for UK Aid funding has made the sector very competitive.

At the start of a new year, we want to thank the churches in the South England conference for their continued support of the work we do at ADRA. Remember, we are not funded by the church and are fully self-funded. Your help in raising funds allows us to not only provide direct assistance to those in need, but also to attract large funding opportunities from governmental donors.

For 2020, we have chosen to bring the Appeal closer to the church with the theme of, 'Help Someone': If you donate to ADRA, you can 'help someone eat', 'help someone shelter', help someone learn', help someone live'... The variations are endless.

Our theme was based on developing Matthew 25:40 (NIV) "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did

for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' We studied this theme in Sabbath school between August 17-23.

Jesus also talked about the "kingdom of heaven". In Jesus' description, the kingdom of heaven is a reality that we can be part of, even now. It is a way of life that functions with a different set of priorities, values and morals than are found in earthly kingdoms. Jesus' teachings set out the blueprint for this kingdom, and it includes a strong focus on how we serve God and, in serving Him, how we are to relate to others. We also discover that serving —caring for their needs and uplifting them—is one way in which we can directly offer service to God."

May we continue to work together in 2020 to care for the needy of the world and to lift them up, both overseas and here in the UK.

*Help  
Someone...*

# MAMAS IN NEED

Deborah St Cyr (Mrs)

**'Deborah, I want you to stop pushing now just try and breathe through the next contraction.'**

There was something in the way that the midwife said those words, I knew that something was wrong, but at the same time I knew that I was in safe hands. The midwives talked calmly but firmly to each other and, in one smooth move one, of the midwives hit the small red button above my head.

Within seconds the room filled with masked people. I distinctly remember a man leaning against the frame of the door, he said nothing and stood with his arms folded, watching everything that was going on in the room. Two people in blue scrubs were waiting with an incubator. It seemed that everyone was waiting on me. My next move would dictate the next action of every person in the room.

All the while, the two midwives were busy working on what I now know was removing the umbilical cord from my son's neck. Finally, they placed him on my chest and everyone that filled the



room slowly left. The man that was leaning against the wall asked, "Is everything OK here, midwives?" The wonderful midwives acknowledged him, and he quietly left.

I am still overwhelmed at the knowledge and skill that was in the room, at the press of a red button, but I did not really appreciate it until I spoke with Nina.

Nina and I were casually speaking after school one day, when she spoke of her last visit to her home in Nigeria. She spoke about a visit to the local mother and baby clinic. From her description, I use the term 'clinic' very loosely. She relayed the very stressful conditions for mums-to-be, who had to go through labour in, what can only be described as, horrendous conditions. No sanitary instruments, no operating theatre, if an emergency were to arise, no nappies to help wrap their babies in. And ultimately, NO RED BUTTON to be pushed, ushering in a team of skilled professionals to save the life of the baby.

What they did have was a midwife who was determined and gave off her best, but she was without the tools and team to really be of assistance if something went wrong.

Sadly, Nina spoke of the painful story of a mother who gave birth to twins. One of them was gravely ill and was being rushed to the hospital in the back of a van. The baby died on route. The other twin soon after became ill and had to be





taken to the hospital, but before transport could be provided, he died.

As I write, I think about the immediate medical access I had and the lack of the medical attention that a fellow mother had.

Nina, being a woman of action, set up a charity called **Mamas in Need** to help support these mothers and provide basic medical intervention and good aftercare. Presently, this looks like antenatal care along with supplies to help the mothers clothe and feed the babies immediately after the birth.

I can hear you, as a fellow mum or concerned person, asking, *What can I do to help a Mama in Need?* Here are the things that the charity needs immediately: bedding, sanitary towels, underwear, nursing pads, thermometers, first aid boxes, solar lights, blankets, baby towels, baby clothes, vest, socks, hats, nappies and wipes. Of course, money will help with the shipping but if you prefer to purchase something specific, please see the above list. If you want to purchase any of the above or donate money, please do not hesitate to contact Nina at Mamas in Need [info@mamasinneed.org.uk](mailto:info@mamasinneed.org.uk) or telephone us on **0300 030 1006**.



# WILL HOMELESSNESS



**Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' (Matthew 25:34-36, NKJV)**

Homelessness is a huge problem in the United Kingdom. A record number of homeless people died in 2018, in the biggest increase in deaths since reporting began in 2013. According to data collected by the *Office for National Statistics (ONS)* an estimated 726 homeless people died in England and Wales in 2018 – a rise of 22% from data collected in 2017. Since 2013 there has been a steady rise in the number of homeless deaths with statisticians from the *Museum of Homelessness* already predicting the likelihood of there being a continual rise in the number of deaths in 2019. Many of the deaths recorded have been drug and alcohol related while other factors are related to the increase

in freezing temperatures, coupled with the cuts to financial benefits which often lead to an increase in diagnosis of mental illness and strokes: (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/oct/01/homeless-deaths-in-2018-rise-at-highest-levels>)

While homelessness and poverty have existed since biblical times, it has perhaps become an even bigger issue during these present times of austerity. It's in times like these where the church can take a stand and make a real difference in the lives of those needing support. Jesus identifies his followers as those who generously meet the needs of those suffering from hunger, thirst, nakedness, sickness and incarceration.

To combat the number of deaths during winter, a number of rough sleeper shelters are set up each year across the country. Charitable organisations such as The Salvation Army and our churches through their Adventist Community Services departments and initiatives, funded and supported by our very own ADRA-UK, welcome hundreds of homeless individuals in temporary

made shelters during the winter period. For many rough sleepers, such shelters are a lifeline, offering warmth, safety and hope. For those who volunteer their time in service to the homeless, the reward is in simply knowing that a difference has been made in someone else's life.

The Advent Shelter, run by the SEC Community Ministries Department and Stratford Seventh-Day Adventist Church through their



# EVER END?



Darell J. Philip

own Shelter, met the needs of hundreds of homeless individuals during the period of 24<sup>th</sup> December 2018 to 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019. One of those who volunteered for a second consecutive year was award winning chef Leon Seraphin. Leon, 39, is a Chef Trainer for the *Beyond Food Foundation* – a charity which inspires people who are at risk of, or have experienced homelessness, to gain meaningful employment. Leon’s passion in volunteering for such projects comes from having experienced homelessness himself.

“I have always been invited to contribute cooked meals and assist in the running of the shelter,” says Leon, before adding: “Christmas and New Year are especially one of the most difficult times for the homeless, so this is just one way we can put a smile on their faces and offer them some hope that there are some good people in the world who really do care.”



Leon Seraphin

Leon, who as a child attended the Portsmouth Seventh-Day Adventist School in the Caribbean island of Dominica, pays tribute to his grandmother, Ann Roberts (deceased), a former member of the Hackney Seventh-Day Adventist Church, who often prayed for him during his times of trial.

“She would always pray for me and offer a word of encouragement. She believed in me and always wanted the best for me; and I know that where I am today is as a result of those prayers and I am so grateful and look forward to meeting her again someday.” Until then, Leon, who escaped a life of homelessness through his recruitment and participation in a Hoxton apprenticeship scheme, is content to continue to make a positive impact in the lives of those experiencing homelessness:

“Remembering where I was before and the second chance I’ve now been given, there is no greater feeling than giving back to

those in need and, in some cases, seeing them experience what I am experiencing now.”

As well as providing shelter from the cold, along with the distribution of hot meals and warm clothing, the Advent Shelter also facilitated a range of meaningful activities, including basic computing, back-to-work skills and free health check-ups.

So, the message is clear- Homelessness can end, but the question is: what will you do about it?

For more information on the Stratford Shelter, please email [shelterstratford@gmail.com](mailto:shelterstratford@gmail.com) and for the Advent Shelter, please email [gbenjamin@secadventist.org.uk](mailto:gbenjamin@secadventist.org.uk)

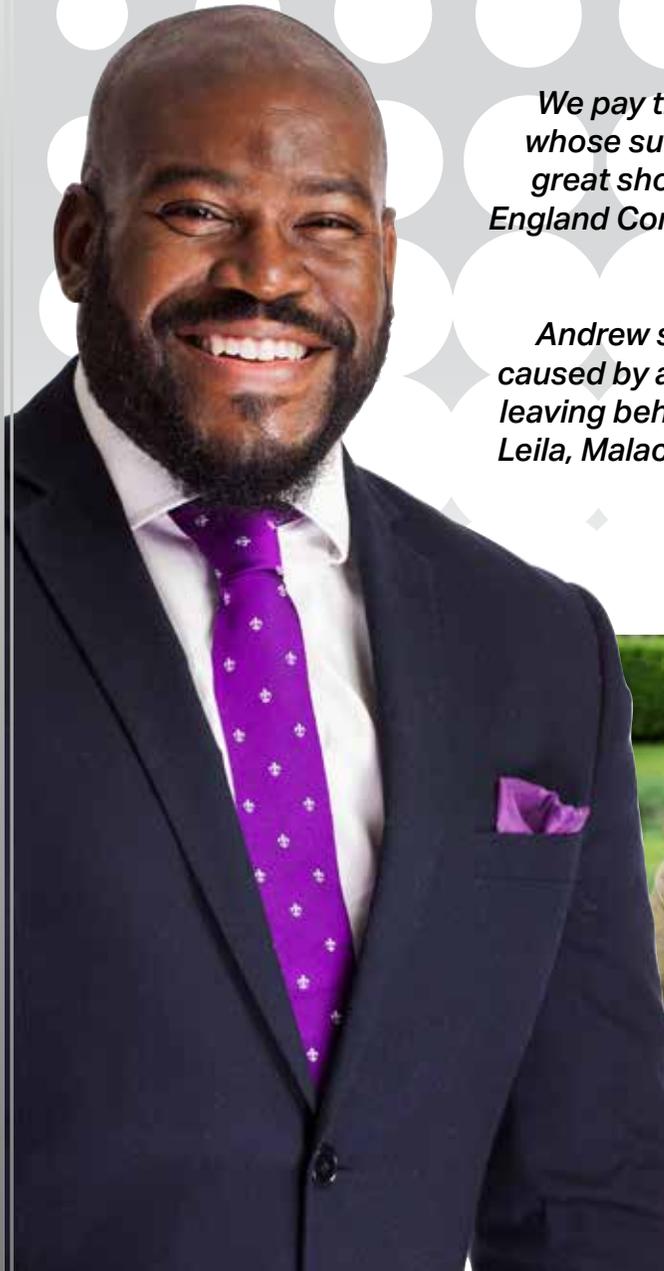
If you would like to read the full story of Leon’s life, from homelessness to award winning chef, then pick up the January 2020 Issue of *The Voice* newspaper.

Darell J. Philip (BA) is PR & Communications Assistant at Hackney Seventh-Day Adventist Church and a regular contributor to *The Voice* – the only national black African-Caribbean newspaper in the United Kingdom.

# TRIBUTE TO **ANDREW DAVIS**

*We pay tribute to the memory of Pastor Andrew Davis whose sudden death, on 16 December 2019, came as a great shock to his family and friends. The entire South England Conference family received the news with immense sadness. He was 38 years old.*

*Andrew succumbed to a short and unexpected illness caused by a clot in his respiratory system. He passed away, leaving behind his beloved wife Natasha and their children, Leila, Malachi and Zoe. Our loving thoughts and prayers are with the entire family at this loss.*



Andrew joined the South England Conference worker force on 1 November 2011 as an intern at Brixton Church in London after completing his studies at Newbold College of Higher Education. He was subsequently posted to serve the Colchester and Ipswich churches before being called to serve at the Newbold Church. His last district was the Reading Parkside and Reading Central churches. Andrew was very recently appointed as the Coordinator for Area 5. Our thoughts and prayers are with his congregations in Reading who gathered in their numbers at short notice on the day of his passing to express their grief and to share words of comfort and support with each other. The much-loved Andrew Davis will be missed immensely by all in the South England Conference and beyond. May he rest in peace till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

# TRIBUTE TO MY SON

by PASTOR SAM DAVIS, former South England Conference President

Andrew was born in 1981, the very year I began my studies at Newbold College. From the very outset, it was apparent he was a strong-willed child. He knew what he wanted to do and would go for it. As he grew, Andrew was not a reader. He just loved comic strips and Bible stories in comic format. Therefore, his Bible was a comic strip version. We would buy him quarterlies and Bibles that he would leave at home instead of taking to church. At the age of 14, it was so difficult to get him out of bed that we decided we would leave him at home and go to church, concluding that we could not force worship. The amazing thing was that he would always turn up late and then spend the time in the corridor with his friends.

To put it mildly, our son had one foot in the church and one foot out. We prayed for him and encouraged him in his walk with God. As a young man, he made more choices for the world rather than for God. We were concerned. Andrew was a liberal, easy come, easy go, Christian. But we never gave up hope.

At the age of 18, Andrew was offered the opportunity to go and work in Germany. He asked me what I thought, and I encouraged him to go for it. When he went to Germany, Andrew discovered that he was with a group of SDA young people who were more liberal than he was. He came from an Adventist home and knew what God required. So, this liberal young man began to give Bible studies to his friends who were more liberal than he was. In the process, God changed him.

I remember, we were working in South Africa when Andrew sent me a message



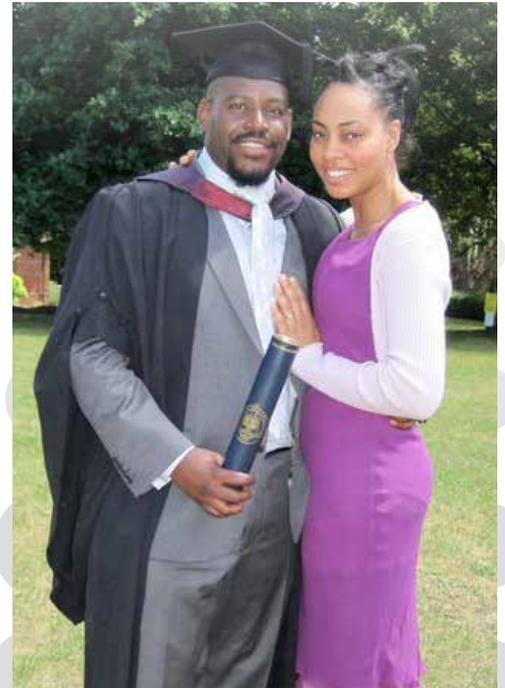
to tell me that he believed God had called him away from his family and friends so that he could work on him, just like he did Abraham. The next message was one that was utterly unbelievable. He wrote, "Dad, I believe that God is calling me to pastoral ministry." I could not believe what I was reading. It was amazing. The rest, as they say, is history. God did call him to ministry, and the proof of the call has been his amazing ministry, and the lives touched and changed in such a short space of time,

Andrew was bright, confident, loving, intelligent and caring; a dedicated man of God, and the whole nine yards. He was an excellent pastor- not my analysis but that of his members. He was my best friend. We chatted all the time about numerous things. Having relocated to Spain, there are times we would tune in to listen to his sermons online and he never disappointed. He knew how to connect

with people; he knew how to touch lives and make a difference.

He was such a role model when it came to his role as a family man. He was there for his wife and kids, in a way that I wasn't. He knew how to juggle his time so that his family was prioritized, while there was still a good emphasis on his ministry. Andrew lit up the room wherever he went. He was not proud or arrogant, just lovely. Our hearts are breaking.

We would like to thank God for this wonderful young man who lit up our lives for, albeit, such a short time. The psalmist David wrote, "I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad." We bless the Lord for this wonderful treasure that he gave to us. We will understand it better by and by. Good night my son, from mum, dad, and Anthea. You were one of a very special kind.





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# SEC DEPARTMENTS

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## *Reports and Articles*



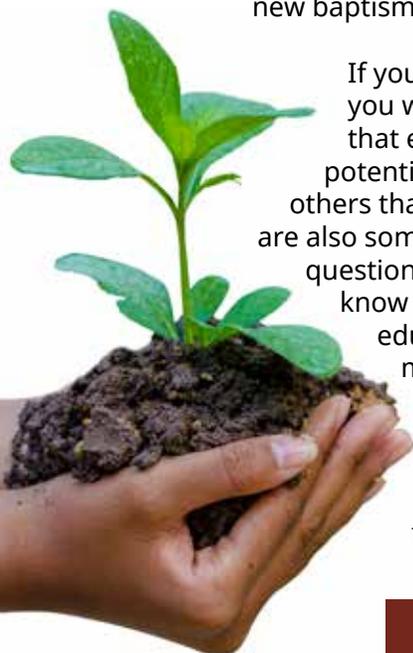
# CHURCH GROWTH DEPARTMENT

The New Year often comes with resolutions. They may be as simple as resolving to walk more each day; or they may be more complicated, like resolving to take action on unhelpful habits and behaviour patterns. Resolutions usually relate to making better choices for oneself and for those we love. Often, they are aspirational – speaking to us about the “self” we would like to be, the life we would like to have or the goals we wish to achieve. Probably, you have already made some resolutions for 2020. Perhaps this is “your year” to see everything more clearly!

Many resolutions focus on health and wellbeing, using weight as a key marker of health. But a single health marker is greatly deficient in indicating overall wellbeing. This is also true within the body we call the Church. Often, the single key marker used to determine the health of a church is the number of baptisms. Sometimes we will add giving habits to that, and also count the number of people showing up at worship services. These are loosely termed, “Baptisms, Budgets and Bodies,” and if we are honest, they are the way we gauge congregational health and wellbeing. Are we wrong to be interested in these things? Not at all! Is there more to the picture? Yes, absolutely!

So what is that “more”?

Let me share a little something that I came across recently. It helped me in thinking about healthy churches and the key



markers we could use to help us gauge that health.

As you and I look at our local Adventist congregation we need to (at least) be asking the following questions:

- Are our church services appropriate for the age mix, educational level and cultures of the members and for the local community context?
- Are our members trained for the kind of service for which their spiritual gifts prepare them?
- Are our members participating regularly in outreach?
- Is the outreach effort from our congregation appropriate for the local community context?
- Are the number of baptisms appropriate for the general receptivity of the local community context?
- What provisions are in place for newly-baptised members to continue in spiritual growth and ministry for the long term?
- Is retention at the one, two, and five-year marks celebrated along with new baptisms?

If you are a reflective person, you will already have realised that each of these questions potentially leads on to several others that are not stated. There are also some assumptions in the questions. “Do we adequately know the age range, educational and cultural mix of our congregation?” “When last did we teach on spiritual gifts and help our members understand their gifting?” “What

percentage of our congregation is active in outreach? And what are the challenges or obstacles faced by those who are not involved?”

A local congregation wanting to invest in their “church health” this year may wish to conduct a Natural Church Development survey and take a good look at the eight quality characteristics (Empowering Leadership; Loving Relationships; Need-based Evangelism; Gift-based Ministry; Effective Structures; Inspiring Worship; Holistic Small Groups; and Passionate Spirituality). If so, please reach out to the Church Growth Department for support and we will be pleased to assist you.

Also, please take some time to prayerfully and carefully think, discuss and analyse local practice. The questions phrased above will help a congregation take meaningful steps forward in assessing their overall well-being. And if you want to assess Spiritual Gifts, we have survey booklets in stock too!



**WAYNE ERASMUS**

# CORNERSTONE COUNSELLING

## Breaking the chains for our young people through listening

Our young people are going through so much, and all they are trying to do is navigate life. They are at a crucial and fragile stage of brain development, physical growth, emotional wellbeing, intellectual stimulation, learning social cues and learning how to be a Christian and really believe in God. Do we as adults remember how it felt to be a young person, trying to find who we really were? Guardians telling us what to do? Peer pressure? Finding a sense of belonging, and gaining our own self-worth? Due to the increase of social media influences, having everything at the tip of your fingers, gang culture, bullying and education, our young people are struggling emotionally and, most of the time, all they need is someone to just listen. Parents, guardians and leaders are there to help shape and impact young people's lives, positively. They can be instrumental in helping them to understand themselves better, finding who they truly are by just being there to listen. We have two ears and one mouth, and this means

we have to listen twice as much as we speak. Relationships are built when we listen. How to effectively listen to young people?

- Be present, show interest, give your time. It starts from the moment they are born, or the moment you interact with that young person.
- Let them know they can always talk to you. Just sit with them and do something engaging together.
- Give them a voice, encourage them, act on their behalf, pray for them and stand up for them.
- Do not get into arguments with young people. You may win by forcefulness but will prevent them coming to you when they need to talk.
- Show empathy by walking in their shoes and understanding their world from their perspective.
- Be authentic. Young people respect honesty, so be honest even if it makes you look bad.
- Value what they are saying and inquire further.
- Build a relationship. Listening enables connecting, while not listening can weaken that connection.

Taking time to listen impacts young people's lives by showing them the wonderful skill of listening and being listened to. This

helps them to understand that:

- Listening shows Commitment - "When I want to talk, my guardian makes time to hear, even when they disagree with what I have to say".
- Listening is an act of Affirmation - "When my guardian takes seriously what I have to say, I feel they are taking me seriously. I feel Valued".
- Listening encourages Listening - "I listen to my guardian because they listen to me."
- Listening can yield Consent - "I didn't get to do what I wanted, but I did get to have my say. I feel heard".
- Listening teaches Speaking Up - "I am comfortable expressing myself with other people like I do with my guardians, enabling me to know what is best for me".
- Listening is Educational- "The more you let me talk, the more you get to know about me. We learn from each other."

Most children and young people are abused by people known to them and sometimes in their own home so, guardians, be sensitive and observe the reactions of children and young people. Do not dismiss their behaviours or reactions when people are around.

Be extra careful to listen to your children and young

people, being watchful for changes in behaviours or moods. Pull them aside and talk to them. Say, for instance, "I have noticed when this person or those people come around, you cling to me or you hide away."

It is essential that guardians listen and communicate appropriately with children or young people when they ask something, finding appropriate solutions to their needs, with reassurance that needs can be met in other ways or in due time.

The best information guardians have about their young person's internal and external worlds of experience is the young person themselves. So, guardians, listen to everything, including arguments. It may take time and energy, and it may even cost money, but that investment can bring many payoffs in averting problems that could arise, had we not listened.

Listening to the young people can strengthen relationships in many powerful ways, just as our heavenly Father listens to us when we need him. Let us learn to listen to our young people. Most of all, listening is an act of giving.

**by Hannah Commodore  
CCS Counsellor/Receptionist**



**THEMBIE MAPINGIRE**

## A servant of God and a friend to man

Every Pathfinder knows the pledge, “By the grace of God, I will be a... servant of God and a friend to man”.

It is not difficult to raise our hands to acknowledge that we are servants of God. However, being a friend to men is often difficult. An Irish rhyme expresses it thus:

‘To live above with the Saints we love, Ah,  
that is the purest glory.

To live bloke with the Saints we know,  
Ah, that is another story.

Jesus continuously reminded us that true disciples of his, love each other. Two stories in scripture illustrate this principle well. The first is that of the Good Samaritan and the second that of the Rich Young Ruler.

The Samaritan showed true discipleship by crossing cultural and religious barriers to help a fellow human being. The Rich Young Ruler, on the other hand, struggled with crossing economic and status barriers to show his love for those less fortunate than himself. There are so many other stories of compassion that Jesus highlighted, that how can we fail not to see that kindness and love can make or break the Christian image we are called to portray? It is this challenge that the SEC Pathfinder department wish to rise to in the remaining years of this quadrennium. It excites me just to think about how our children and youth uniforms - Adventurer or Pathfinder - have the potential to bring a smile to a neighbour, hope to the downcast and help to someone in need.

In the first two months since I took office, I am excited to have heard of the work of clubs around the country. In East London the Dagenham Eagles and Barking’s Rising Stars were involved in a community youth parade. The Highbridge in Somerset started a community club. In North London, Holloway Pathfinders marched against knife crime, and in Hertfordshire the Watford Town club turned heads as they led the Christmas lights parade and engaged with the community about the work of the church. I wish that every club encapsulates the Christ’s love as they minister in their communities.



The motto for the Pathfinder Club is, ‘The Love of Christ Compels Us.’ To understand the meaning of that clause, it is worth considering the Adventurer pledge which offers this simplified meaning: ‘Because Jesus loves me, I will always try to do my best’. No one is truly capable of loving others without the encouraging nature of Christ’s love. True friends to humanity must wholeheartedly depend on the love of Jesus Christ.



**CLIFFORD HERMAN**

# WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

## Women and discipleship

**Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:19-20 (KJV)**

**H**ow can I make disciples when I am in pain or how can I make disciples when God has not answered my prayers? These are questions that I have encountered when working with women. Society has been partially successful in the acknowledgement of women's rights and equality. Women also have access to education in many parts of the world. However, women face much pain and violence such as those illustrated in the Biblical accounts Dinah in (Gen 34:2), and Tamar (2 Samuel 13:32) to the latest victims reported in the national news. Everyone, everywhere, is under attack, one way or the other. The enemy has truly come to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10), but Christ assured us in the same verse: *I have come, that they may have life, in abundance.*

As women in today's world, how do we cope? What is the solution to our troubles? Where do we stand in this battle? The answer is



the same as it was in the past thousands of years: *Jesus! He is the answer!*

Many women today are facing a number of challenging issues, often not knowing where to turn. There is fear in speaking out, so many of them suffer in silence, not knowing that a relationship with Christ is the answer to their problems.

When we come together as women, united in Christ, what is meant for defeat will become a turning point for change and a source of encouragement for someone in need. Your life story can be a blessing in someone's life. Against all odds, having a life with Christ assures us that we will be more than conquerors.

Often, when the words 'Disciples of Christ' are mentioned, we tend to think only of the 12 male

followers of Christ. However, women were also followers of Christ. From Tabitha, who was on the inner circle of the church, to Mary Magdalene, the prostitute-from the 'best' of women to the 'worst' of women- Christ is willing to use anyone who is willing to make themselves empty vessels, willing to be used by him. Women were the first messengers to be given the task of spreading the good news of the risen Saviour. You too, like them, can be a true follower and disciple of Christ in your action and communication. Christ is the answer.

***Dear Sister, You are not alone. Christ has won your battles at Calvary! There is no need to fight. Hand it all over to Him. He is waiting with open arms to set you free. Turn your story into your testimony in making Disciples for Christ!***



**JACQUELINE OTOKPA**

## To be a man...

What does it take to be a man?

I think the question is important because there is something in each man that drives him. There is a desire to discover who we really are. We long to be tested and to discover what it means to authentically be in our own skin.

What definition do you look to, to understand what it means to be a man?

When I was conceived, it was considered a mistake; it wasn't meant to have happened.

As I grew up, I didn't have anyone to show me or explain to me what it meant to actually be a man. Yes, I had a dad, but he might as well have not been there for the help or guidance I received in preparation for manhood.

My mum brought me up the only way she knew how, as a mum trying to teach me to be a man. But this only came from her understanding, from her female perspective.

You need to understand that men and women are distinctly different, and women can only teach a man so much about manhood.

So, I just drifted through life, living to work, but certainly not working to live. I had good jobs, good cars, my own place and of course a stream of girlfriends; but no better understanding. I was always feeling empty and the lifestyle was getting me nowhere.

Years went by, but then God woke me up; and that experience would change my life completely from that moment on (but that's for another time).

I started attending church and taking



Bible studies, which opened up my eyes to this world in such a way I had never expected. It was then that I started to understand what it meant to be a man, and this is where the work began.

I would read about the great men of the Bible: Abraham (my personal favourite), David, Solomon, just a few of many. I drew inspiration from the great faith they showed, and that was where my answer lay - FAITH.

I wrote earlier that there is something in each man that drives him. Well, that something is God. You need to get to know God and read his Word. By doing this you ultimately get to know who you are, and of course, by knowing who you are, you will then start to understand how to be the man God created you to be.

Without faith you cannot expect to have a relationship with God, and without faith you will never know the man you were created to be. The world cannot and will not teach you how to be a *Real Man* because the world doesn't know. Only God knows who you are, who he created you to be and, of course, your purpose in this world as a man. We are not here by coincidence

or by accident. Our Bible tells us that, before we were born, God had a purpose for our lives.

So, what does it take to be a man?

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33, KJV).

No one person in this world can tell you who you are and who you will become, but your Father in Heaven is waiting for you to ask him.

**by Jason Grant  
for Men's Ministries**



**DEVON BOYD**

# FAMILY MINISTRIES

## Finding hope in the storm before, during and after 2020

Living in this world can feel like being in a storm. Worry, anxiety and fear, like a storm, are powerful emotions that can overwhelm us in its thick shadow of darkness. Perhaps you are in a storm now, coming out of a storm, or, unknowingly, heading into one.

Some would-be storms that we may experience from time to time include: worry about finances; uncertainty about the future; worry that something bad might happen to loved ones; worry and fear about a diagnosis; feeling overwhelmed about a situation; worry when battling depression; and despair when you feel like God has forgotten you.

Every Christian has some experience with storms; and the Bible is replete with example. Mark 4:35-41 gives an account of Jesus and his disciples being caught up in a fierce and unexpected storm such that they feared for their lives. It was when the disciples were doing what Jesus had asked them to do that the

storm occurred. The truth is that fierce and unexpected storms will arise as the children of God are doing his will. In their state of confusion, Jesus responded to their fear with words of faith in verse 40: "And he said unto them, why are ye so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" (KJV). The enemy will lure us towards panic and worry if we focus on all the storms around us in this world. God offers us, in the middle of our storms, confident peace that can never be found in this life without him.

The assurance you and I can cling to, as we gaze into 2020, is confidence in what God has said to us. What has he said? When in fear of danger, he tells us not to forget his promise in Psalm 34:7 - that God's angel "encamps around" us. He said not to forget what he said in Isaiah 43:2 - that "Fire and flood cannot harm us." We are not to forget what he has said to us in Daniel 3:24-27, 6:16-22; Acts 12:4-11; Genesis 32,32 and Psalm 91:10-12, when God protected Daniel, the three

Hebrews, Peter and Jacob. Moreover, when facing the storm of trouble, we must not forget what he said to us in Psalm 23:4, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil"; and also in Psalm 27:1, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?" (NIV)

In the realm of the marital relationship, with its challenges of anger issues, communication problems, financial stress, marital gridlock, loss of closeness and dysfunctional behaviour, he said through the apostle Paul, in Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Perhaps the fierceness of the storm pressed the disciples such that they forgot three things: Firstly, what he said to them and to us in Isaiah 41:10: "Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed; for I am your God: I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with the right

hand of my righteousness" (KJV).

Secondly, they may have forgotten that he was the answer to their fear. E.G. White states, "Only the sense of God's presence can banish the fear that ... would make life a burden" (Education, 255).

Finally, the surprise nature and fierceness of the storm caught the disciples off guard. While they trembled, they forgot that God is sovereign and all-powerful: "They feared exceedingly, and said one to another, 'What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'" (Mark 4:41, KJV).

As we face 2020, we can have confidence that our God is near and able to respond to our faith in him; and he will bring us through every circumstance and every storm we will encounter. Let us not forget but let us remember and hold fast to the promises of his grace that we might have hope and claim the victory now and in the days ahead.



**AUGUSTUS LAWRENCE**

# STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT

## Discipleship in StewardShift

Stewardship is all about God and everything he has created. The word 'stewardship' in itself is bigger than the world we live in because it involves all of God's creation.

When God created man in his own image (Genesis 1:26), he chose mankind, out of his whole creation, to reflect his image and be his image bearer in this world. God gave man the power, wisdom and dominion over all he had created, and started a partnership with him. Sadly, this partnership was torn apart by sin, causing man to be unproductive and insecure in life and mistrustful of God.

Thanks be to God for what he has done through Jesus Christ, who restored our connection and partnership with heaven so that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, we can now have within us the reality of God's presence in our heart (Ephesians 3:16-19), providing us with everything we need to live godly lives (2 Peter 1:3) and to give us the ability to respond to the partnership with Jesus that yields awe-inspiring results in our daily lives. As Paul says, "For we are God's masterpiece. He has

*created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." (Ephesians 2:10 NLT)*

Our creator is calling us back to this wonderful, relational partnership with him. We do not just work for him, but we actually identify ourselves with him, exercising our faith, our trust, and our everyday choices to walk with God and have an intimate bond with Him.

As disciples of Jesus, we become part of this new reality. We are known through our persistent imitation of the Master's life and by our obedience to his words and teachings. This occurs when we give God our consent for him to change our thoughts, heart, ideas and life, to be in accord with his life. As Paul declared in Philippians 2:13 saying, "God is working in you to make you willing and able to obey him."

Putting God first and shifting ownership back to him is *StewardShift*. When we give up the notion that we can do things on our own and that we have control over everything we own or have, then we can take to heart that we are Jesus'

disciples and stewards, whose lives are fully surrendered to Him. Ben Maxson defines Stewardship as 'the lifestyle of one who accepts Christ's lordship, walking in partnership with God and acting as his agent to manage his affairs.' We can start looking, from our hearts, all around us for what we can give back to God to bless his creation. As William Barclay put it: "A man's Christianity should be perfectly visible to all men."

With all these principles in mind, the Stewardship department continues every Sabbath to bring life-changing messages and workshops to the different churches here at the SEC, to help equip members for StewardShift - the process of transitioning from the common notion of money-based stewardship, to a broader understanding of our true identity in Christ and what it means to live the life of a disciple on a daily basis, in connection to all aspects of a Christian life. Truly, God's abundant blessings help us to realise how we can truly be partners with God in making disciples for His kingdom - our mission in this world - while we await his soon return.



TODD FRIAS

# PRAYER DEPARTMENT

**'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations' (Isaiah 56:7, NIV).**

The Prayer Ministry department is looking at inspiring, informing, educating and challenging people to develop a sincere and fervent prayer life. The Bible says that Elijah was just a man like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three-and-a-half years; and again, he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced crops (1 Kings 18:41-46). This is why the goal of the Prayer Ministry department is to remind each individual that God is real, and he answers prayers, no matter how big or small. We aim to encourage and motivate our members to be a sincerely praying people.

We all face troubles on this journey of life. The Bible states that many are the troubles of the righteous, but God delivers us out of them all (Psalm 34:19).

As believers, we are told that we need to pray (Psalm 50 :15),

regardless of the situation or circumstances. Our prayer formula, as believers, should always be:

Occasion - Trouble  
Command - Call on God  
Assurance - He will deliver you  
Design - Glorify God.

So, in essence, to everyone who is sincerely calling on God, we are asking him to intervene and overrule in all our affairs so that the outcome of each event will always give glory to God.

In troubled situations, believers should be like Daniel who used two valuable resources - close friends and prayer. Together, these prayer partners fought a spiritual battle against failure, doubt, despair, fear and defeat; and they conquered. They called for divine help from the Almighty God to help them understand the king's dream and deliver them from death; and God came through for them. When we face difficult situations, God has promised to be an ever-present help in times of trouble.

So, in the Prayer Ministry department, we desire that we keep an eye on our friends and neighbours who are going through challenging situations and to direct them to God, such that, when he intervenes, we will all have a great testimony; and people will know (like Naaman in 2 Kings 5:15) and declare, There is a God in Israel.

I, too, am a living testimony that there is a God who hears and answers prayers. I have seen miracles upon miracles happen in my life. I live a life of gratitude, daily, as I know for a fact that even if God does not answer my prayer immediately, he has a clear plan to deliver me (Jeremiah 29:11), and I will always trust him and his ways (Proverbs 3:5-6). In him I find love, joy, rest and peace, knowing it is all under control.

We will be organising days and nights of prayer to meet the needs of individuals who are experiencing difficult times, helping them to know about God and his power, so making disciples in our communities.



**LINDA MUKWADA**

SEC TEENS MINISTRIES PRESENT



# TEENS CONGRESS



07

MARCH 2020

Time: 10:00 – 17:00

STANBOROUGH SCHOOL  
STANBOROUGH PARK, WATFORD. WD25 9JT

**teens**  
**ministries**  
*south england conference*

Register at: [www.secteens.org](http://www.secteens.org)

Call us: 01923 232728

Email us: [teens@secadventist.org.uk](mailto:teens@secadventist.org.uk)



Vanessa Pizzuto

# IN CHRIST ALONE

Christopher Yuan was a dental student by day and drug dealer by night. But he was not afraid, in fact, he felt invincible. Soon after moving away for dental school, Christopher shared with his parents that he was gay, and he was making the most out of the party scene, without a care in the world.

His double life caught up with him, though. The university found out and Christopher was expelled from dental school, just four months before graduation. Undeterred, he moved to Chicago and continued to use and sell drugs. Christopher abandoned himself to a lifestyle of partying and uncontrolled promiscuity.

But his mother, Angela Yuan, kept praying for him daily. "Lord, do whatever it takes to bring this prodigal son to You," she would say in her prayer closet.<sup>1</sup> She fasted once a week for her son, and on one occasion, Angela fasted for 39 days in a row. The answer to her prayers came years later, with a knock on Christopher's door. Twelve federal drug enforcement agents walked into Christopher's flat and confiscated his drugs. He was charged with possessing the street value equivalent of 9.1 tons of marijuana.

Christopher was sentenced to six years in federal prison. On his third day, he walked by a pile of rubbish and saw a book on top. It was a Gideon's New Testament. Having nothing better to do, Christopher picked it up and started reading it. He started to see he had rebelled not only against man, but against God.

But things were going to get worse, before they got any better. One day, Christopher was sent to the nurse's office. Looking worried, and without being able to keep eye-contact, the nurse passed him a piece of paper. Christopher looked down and saw three letters and a symbol - "HIV+".

Feeling he had received a life sentence; he went back to his cell. Christopher lay down and looked up at the graffiti-covered bunk: "If you are bored, read Jeremiah 29:11." He did. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." For the first time in his life, Christopher believed that God could use even him. Maybe he had something to look forward to!

As Christopher read every page of his New Testament, he felt convicted. God was inviting him to find his identity and purpose

only in Him, not in his past or his sexual orientation. Christopher resolved to follow Jesus, no matter the cost.<sup>2</sup>

While in prison, Christopher felt called to ministry. His sentence was shortened to 3 years, and Christopher applied to Moody Bible Institute, using a prison guard as one of his references. He was accepted and graduated in 2005. Today, Dr Christopher Yuan teaches Theology of Sexuality at Moody Bible Institute. He has penned a number of books, including, "Out of a Far Country: A Gay Son's Journey to God" and "Holy Sexuality and the Gospel: Sex, Desire, and Relationships Shaped by God's Grand Story."

It is wonderful to consider that the words that turned Christopher's life around are still true today. God has a plan for you. We serve a God that can bring hope out of a wasted life, and a future out of a prison sentence. It is not too late. You have not ruined God's plans for you beyond repair. God is the great recycler of our past. He will "restore the years that the locust has eaten" (Joel 2:25). Come to the Father; it is never too late.

1. The popular Christian novel "War Room" was dedicated to Angela Yuan for her bold prayers.

2. Recently, I had the privilege to interview Dr Christopher Yuan to explore his concept of holy sexuality. If you'd like to hear that conversation, visit <http://adventistradio.london/podcast/on-the-go/>

# PRESENTERS



**BARBARA LAWRENCE**  
*Family Matters*



**LYNETTE ALLCOCK**  
*The Breakfast Show*



**VANESA PIZZUTO**  
*On the Go*



**MARK GREY**  
*In the News*



**JOSH ANDERSON GREY**  
*In the News*



**CYNTHIA OSEI-OWUSU**  
*In the News*



**MIKE HAMILTON**  
*Explore*



**SOPHIA PEART**  
*Explore*



**NIGEL MAUNGANIDZE**  
*Drivetime*



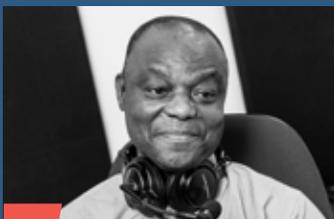
**MIKE JOHNSON**  
*Sabbath Breakfast/Christian Living*



**TREVOR JOHNSON**  
*Reflections*



**RAY PATRICK**  
*Prayer on the line/Ray of Hope*



**EBENEZER JONES-LARTEY**  
*Our Times*

“I hope that through my shows, people will see God as someone real and relevant, someone who genuinely cares about them”  
- **Lynette Allcock**



# NEWS & CHURCH SPOTLIGHT

## HEALTH SCREENING IN GREAT YARMOUTH

Sunday 6 October saw Great Yarmouth's Health Team once again in the town centre offering free health screening to the community. Although there was torrential rain throughout most of the day, we were protected inside the Market Gates Shopping Mall where we occupied the main thoroughfare. We are grateful to the management for giving us free use of this site twice each year.

Our location at the main lane junction is in full view as the public approach from each of the four directions. Our screening service offers body mass index, blood pressure, blood sugar tests, as well as carbon monoxide tests for smokers, and a counselling service.



Although, on this occasion, we had perhaps the lowest number of attendees than previously due to the downpour leaving the town very quiet and the shopping mall fairly empty. Nevertheless, we had the opportunity to talk to several people and encourage them. One couple had just driven up from London to enjoy "the sunshine in Great Yarmouth", only to find torrents of rain and the main A47 flooded. What a disappointment! The lady's gabardine raincoat "weighed a ton" as it was soaked through. She noticed our church's name and logo on our sweatshirts and commented that they were Baptists. After her health check, she accepted several of our booklets on the book stand, including 'Steps to Christ' and 'He is Coming'. Her husband suffered from hypertension and was ready to receive the helpful advice we offered.

Who knows the outcome of such encounters? We pray that the Holy Spirit will use these introductions to lead various individuals in the right direction, not only for their physical health but also their spiritual well-being in preparation for Jesus' soon return.

## ACTIVATE MONTH WITH ADRA-UK, I AM URBAN & ACS

How can we respond to a person who believes that they don't have access to the same work opportunities as others because of their skin colour? What about the churches

response to someone who lives in poverty, especially when they hear that their decisions have brought them to that porous position?



Adventist Community Services (ACS), partnering with ADRA-UK's, I AM URBAN – the urban ministries arm of the church – held a two-week 'community engagement drive' to tackle some of these issues. We facilitated various solution-focused training and opportunities.

The first event was to partner with Holloway Seventh-day Adventist Church and Pastor Warren Gillian on 5 October. We focused on biblical social justice and God's desire for us to respond to the needs of the marginalised in society. In the afternoon, we narrowed our focus to address the rising level of violent crime, which was highlighted through dramatic spoken word by the Edmonton Drama Group.

The keynote address was from Dr Sung Kwon, the Executive Director for ACS in the NAD. He reminded us that our focus should not be when the Kingdom of God is coming, but *where* is His Kingdom. He explained that we should be compelled to engage our communities to let them know His Kingdom is already here.

The second event was Adventist Community Services and Urban Ministry Certification. For one week at the BUC Headquarters, Dr Sung Kwon equipped Pastors and Community Services leaders with practical skills that would help local churches to engage in their communities.

The final event, again at BUC Headquarters, was the Voices Conference, where we focused on highlighting our need to be a voice for the voiceless. We celebrated the community work done over the years and challenged those in attendance to build for the future. Dr Sung Kwon also trained leaders to apply the logic model for community planning. A practical demonstration of this model was showcased in the launch of 'Pedal Forward', a project in partnership with the mental health charity 'MIND' in Tower Hamlets and Newham, that refurbishes unused bicycles and donates them to those in need. Refurbished bikes will be repainted and badged with the ACS and ADRA logo.

At ACS we see momentum building as leaders take up the challenge to engage effectively in their communities.

## BRISTOL CENTRAL CHURCH HELPS BREAK DOWN MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

According to the 2019 statistics, 1 in 4 people suffer from a mental illness at some stage in their life. Mary Philip, Community Ministries Leader for the Bristol Central Church, who has been employed as a Nurse in a Mental Health setting since 2011, is currently collaborating with the University of the West of England (UWE) to launch a project called 'Adopt A Student'. A representative from the university, Andrea Maggs, visited the church on Sabbath 5 October. The initiative was deemed necessary following reports of several university students who had committed suicide. The project aims to seek to help and support university students on a socio-psychological level during their academic year.

Mary also organised a Mental Health Awareness Day on Friday 18 October at a vegan restaurant. The event attracted many health professionals, with a total of 25 people, including the local church minister, Pastor Royston Smith attending, as well as eight nurses, two health care assistants, Karen Allen from 'Time to Change', and neuropsychiatry doctor, Jahnvi Archarya.

It was an informal session where the group huddled together in a circle for the discussion and shared a vegan meal. Sherine Smith opened the discussion by addressing the relevance of the church in the community. Other areas of discussion included anxiety and depression and how tradition, culture, faith and other issues can be barriers for people to seek or receive treatment.

On Saturday 19 October, a church group called Identity- the brainchild of Leandra Philip-Chipulu and led by young people- thought it was fitting to continue with the same theme. Four members from the group presented on the topics of mental health disorders, postpartum depression, suicide and mental health for men. Video presentations and discussions were the main structure of the programme which generated much interest among the audience. It felt like a time when emotional healing was necessary, and some members stayed afterwards and joined in worshipping God through songs of praise and prayer.



## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT DAY OF PRAISE, PRAYER & RESTORATION

A 'Women's Empowerment' Day of Praise, Prayer and Restoration took place at the Hackney Seventh-day Adventist church on Sabbath 2 November 2019. Hackney's Prayer Ministries leader Eileen Philip led the day with prayer, while Hackney's Women's Ministries leader, Beverly Daley, gave the welcome. A Prayer Room - set up for anyone needing prayers for themselves and/or family, friends and loved ones - was just one initiative on offer throughout the day. The lesson study, 'Violating the Spirit of the Law', was presented by Janice Lendor. Lillian Kabambe, from Willesden Adventist church, then gave a presentation on the importance and benefits of prayer and fasting. She also spoke about the various prayer lines within the conference, which can encourage people in their spiritual lives.

Those in attendance heard messages from three speakers. Elder Shirley Grant from the Lewisham Adventist church, spoke on the topic God turning sorrow into joy, focusing on the transformation of Mary Magdalene after her encounter with Jesus.



Newly elected South England Conference (SEC) Prayer Ministries director – Linda Mukwada, spoke on the theme of Restoration. She said, "Sarah, Esther, Hannah – these workers of God were hurt in their service, but God recompensed them all for their injuries. There are unclaimed packages God has in reserve for those who have suffered loss. Reclaim what God has for you and be restored."

The last speaker was Hackney's former elder and Women's Ministries leader, now SEC Women's Ministries Director, Jacqueline Otokpa. Her message to the congregation was that "it's not over until God says it's over." She said, "God can take you from economy to first class, from nobody to VIP. God makes a way when there seems to be no way. Keep

trusting, keep praying, keep believing and keep moving, for there is nothing too hard for God.”

Paulette Pendergrass then led the church into an atmosphere of worship with her Spirit-filled renditions of ‘The Saviour’s Blood Covered It All’ and ‘Grace Will Always Be Greater Than Sin.’

## GHANAIAN ADVENTIST DAY OF FELLOWSHIP

This year’s ‘Ghanaian Adventist Congregations in the UK’ (GAC-UK) event took place on Sabbath 5 October 2019 in the Gymnasium of Newbold College of Higher Education. Abigail Wright, Newbold College’s Chief Financial Officer, welcomed an audience of over 1000, mostly made up of Ghanaian Adventist congregations from across sixteen churches within the British Union Conference.



Pastor Kwadwo Kwarteng-Ampofo, of the Lea Valley and Luganda churches and current GAC-UK Chairperson, speaking on behalf of the GAC-UK executives, greeted the attendees and commended the youth in the church. “We are always trying to find new and innovative ways of keeping the young people engaged and integrated. The brilliant work being done by passionate young people such as George Osei Bonsu, (an elder at Lee Valley church), Amos Mitchell, (pastor at Slough Ghana) and motivational speaker Michael Agyei, popularly known as Lyrical Soldier, inspires the youth and gives us hope for the future.”

The occasion saw several persons receiving awards for their outstanding contributions to GAC-UK since its inception in 2005. The most poignant was when Derick Addai Snr of the London Ghana church, popularly known as ‘Chancellor’, received a posthumous award for his selfless dedication to the treasury department of GAC-UK. His only son, Derick Addai-Asiedu Jnr, spoke on behalf of his sisters Sabina and Christiana, as well as for the entire Addai family: “We feel very honoured that GAC-UK has recognised our dad’s hard work over the years. Our father was a man of few words. But we know that he would have given glory to God for giving him the strength to carry on right to the very end.”

The South England Conference President, Dr Emmanuel Osei, had the following parting words for the audience: “Life may seem unfair at times when we learn to grow in Christ. But we must feast on God’s word... and let us continue growing no matter how long the waiting is.”

## HACKNEY CHURCH ON A HEALTH MISSION

In a year which has seen members of its Pathfinder Club take to the streets in a march against youth violence, including gun and knife crime; and its youth travel all the way to the continent of Africa to assist in the rebuilding of a church struck by lightning in Rwanda, the Hackney church are now meeting the needs of their local community through a number of health initiatives.

A nationwide increase in the number of families struggling on the poverty line and needing the support of church and community food banks has been well documented. Members from the Hackney Church Community Ministries team are meeting the needs of families in this position through their own food bank service. Open every Monday from 4:00-7:00pm, Community Ministries leader, Vilma Williams, says the food bank is a lifeline to struggling families in Hackney. “As a church, we are called to meet the needs of people in our community. We feel it is important to offer this service to those in need while also being a listening ear to those who want to speak to someone or who just need to hear a word of hope and encouragement, letting them know that they are not alone. They shouldn’t suffer in silence.”

As well as the food bank, members of the community can participate in Hackney’s Fitness Club. On offer is the Power Blitz session on Sundays at 10am, Chair Aerobics for over 55’s on Tuesdays at 11am and a Fitness Boot Camp on Thursdays at 7:30pm. Sessions are £2 per class but half-price for those on benefits and free for pensioners. Hackney Fitness Club Founder, Joan Reid, is hoping to see a healthier Hackney community through participation in the club. She said: “We want our Hackney community to be happy and healthy, so we are encouraging them to come along and take part in our fitness sessions.”



# ADVENTIST CONNECT 2020 - 1ST QUARTER

## CONNECTING WITH ADVENTISTS AROUND THE WORLD

by Catherine Anthony Boldeau

### 8-18 JANUARY - 10 DAYS OF PRAYER

Many Seventh-day Adventists start each day with prayer and Bible study. So, at the start of the year, it is no surprise that we begin 2020 with **10 Days for Prayer and Fasting** from the **8-18 January**. This year, the theme is 'Seeking God's Spirit'. We have seen that God works miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit when we have fasted and prayed, and we look forward to further miracles this time as well. To download the guidelines, posters and additional resources, please go to [www.tendaysofprayer.org](http://www.tendaysofprayer.org)

### 18 JANUARY - RELIGIOUS LIBERTY DAY

Resources, including a Sabbath Sermon entitled, 'Champions of Freedom and Love' by Dr Ganoune Diop, Director for Public Affairs and Religious Liberty at the General Conference.

### FEBRUARY - MONTH OF LOVE

February is known world-wide as the month of love. One of the ways in which we show our love to others is by telling them about our Friend, Jesus Christ. On **1 February**, it is **Reach the World: Personal Outreach Sabbath**, and we would encourage you to engage in personal witness on that day. The theme, *The Making of Disciples*, is fully utilised in the **Family and Marriage Week (8-15 February)**. Resources for this 8-day programme can be downloaded at [www.family.adventist.org](http://www.family.adventist.org)

### 7 MARCH - WOMEN'S DAY OF PRAYER

The theme is 'Virtuous Living in an Un-Virtuous World' and you can access the relevant sermons, resources and promotional materials from <https://women.adventist.org>

### 14 MARCH - ADVENTIST WORLD RADIO SABBATH

Please make sure that you tune into **Adventist Radio London** [www.adventistradio.london](http://www.adventistradio.london) and support your local Adventist radio station.

### 21 MARCH - YOUTH WEEK OF PRAYER, GLOBAL YOUTH DAY & GLOBAL CHILDREN'S DAY

In 2020, the theme for Global Youth Day is 'I CARE' and suggested activities can be found at [www.youth.adventist.org](http://www.youth.adventist.org)

### 21 MARCH - EDUCATION

**Education Sabbath** on the **28 March** rounds up a busy quarter.

# Discipleship

*GO ye therefore and teach all nations, is the commission of our Lord.  
GO ye therefore, win souls for Jesus, but, be in one accord.  
In one accord, with God and each other, our whole bodies ought to be.  
'I will make you fishers of men, if you're willing to follow me.'*

*And what does it mean to follow? It means we must sacrifice.  
Holy, acceptable service, to the one who paid the price,  
Who paid the price to save us, friends, family and enemies too.*

*Did you not know, or don't you remember, there was a time  
When the one at enmity with God was YOU.*

*Christ is the vine and we are the branches; in Him we must all abide.  
For without Him, we can do absolutely nothing; and will fruitless be, besides.  
The harvest is ripe, but where are the labourers? For God to send them we must pray.  
But if you hear Him to you speaking, rise up and GO labour today.  
Yes, let us rise up and work for the Master. As we have learnt, likewise GO, teach.  
And let us all be careful to remember, how we live speaks louder than the words we preach.*

*And He saith unto them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19*

*Eileen G Philip  
© 26 November 2019*

# PERSPECTIVE AND THE NEW YEAR



Lorraine Fontaine

**H**ave you ever met a person who is always happy? It could be a grey, wet summer's day (we have many of those in the UK), and this specific person could be met with the brightest smile, commenting that it is important that the ground receives moisture in order for the plants to grow! These are the sorts of people who can see the best in almost any situation. And while this attitude can be an annoyance to a serial pessimist, a positive perspective has the ability to turn hopelessness into hopefulness.

The impact of perspective can be clearly observed in the book of **Ezra Chapter 3** when the Israelites return to Jerusalem:

<sup>8</sup> Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Joshua the son of Jozadak, along with the remnant of their brothers the Levitical priests and all who had come out of captivity back to Jerusalem, began work and appointed the Levites twenty years old and older to supervise the work on the house of the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Then Joshua with his sons and brothers, and Kadmiel with his sons, who are the sons of Judah, along with the sons of Henadad with their sons and their brothers—all Levites—stood together to supervise the workers on the house of God. <sup>10</sup> When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their apparel stood with trumpets and, from the Levites, the sons of Asaph stood with cymbals to praise the

Lord, following the example of David king of Israel.

<sup>11</sup> They sang responsively, praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, "For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel." And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. <sup>12</sup> Now many of the older Levitical priests and chiefs of the fathers' households who had seen the first temple wept with a loud voice as the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes, though many others shouted exuberantly for joy. <sup>13</sup> As a result, the people could not distinguish the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people since the people had raised such a loud noise that could be heard from afar off.

After 70 long years being in a home that was not their own, they were free to return to rebuild Israel. The temple foundations are built and as the people of Israel step back to inspect the foundations, there are two very different responses.

One group look at the temple foundations and they are overwhelmed with joy and excitement. They are just so happy to have reached this milestone. The other group (the older generations who remembered the old temple) look at the newly laid foundations and weep loudly. I imagine that they were disappointed that the new foundation paled in comparison to the one of

Solomon's time.

Two groups, two very different reactions; two very different perspectives. Both are totally valid. The truth was that the new foundation probably was not as good as the former. They were building it on a shoestring. The young people were just happy to have a temple to worship in, but the old generation had probably hoped for something grander.

Going into a new year, we are all going to look back and reflect on 2019. We will all have different perspectives on what we did and did not achieve with the year God graced us with. Did we use it wisely, did we do what we set out to do? Maybe we were hoping for more or for better in 2019, and that did not really happen. Might I suggest that the most helpful way is to reflect, see what was "built", whether good or not so good, learn what we can from it, then look towards the future with a determination to build anew with God in 2020.

As Christians and believers in God's Kingdom in the here and now, let us always look forward with a perspective like the One whom we serve- positive and hopeful of the future. New perspective, fresh start.

**Romans 8:28** "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

# Devotional



A student's fare for secondary and sixth form students

# CAREER'S DAY



03

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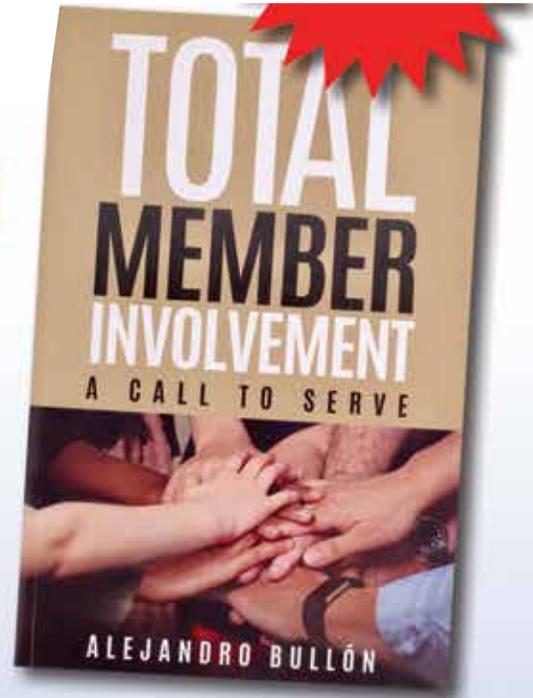
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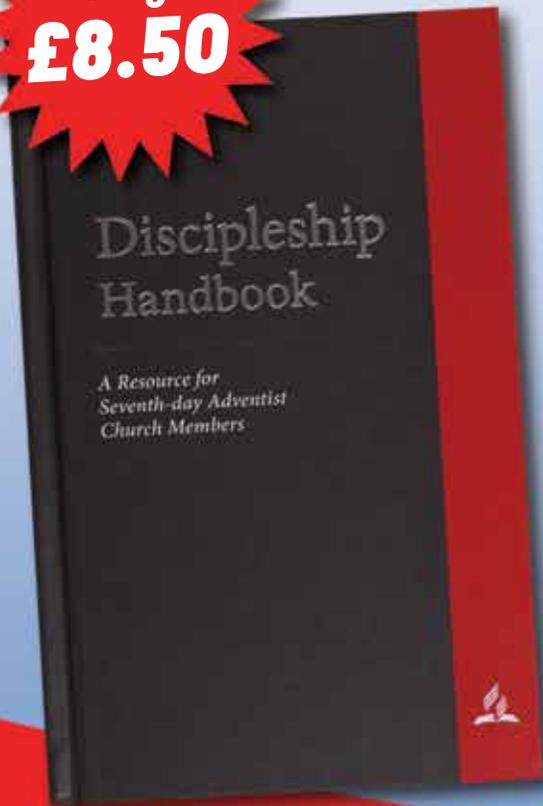
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