

SEC

SPECIAL EDITION

COMMUNICATOR

NOV 2021 # 22



SUSTAINABILITY

£2.00



A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS



CONTENTS



THE SUSTAINABLE WORKPLACE



REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT: WHERE TO BEGIN?



PLANET BASED SUSTAINABILITY

EDITORIAL TEAM

- Editor**
Sam O. Davies
- Copyeditor**
Catherine Anthony Boldeau
- Proofreading**
Norma Borrett
- News & Photo Editor**
Don Roberts
- Layout & Design**
Peter Oppong-Mensah

- 03 EDITORIAL
- 05 THE PRESIDENT'S DESK
- 06 SUSTAINABILITY: A STEWARD'S RESPONSIBILITY – TODD FRIAS
- 07 SUSTAINABILITY AND SPIRITUALITY – CLIFFORD HERMAN
- 08 SUSTAINABILITY GOALS AND THE LOCAL CHURCH – NADINE BOKHOORY
- 09 REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT: WHERE TO BEGIN? – JULIAN THOMPSON
- 10 THE SUSTAINABLE WORKPLACE – JACQUI CRAWFORD
- 12 SUSTAINABILITY IS ABOUT PEOPLE – MAX MCKENZIE-COOK
- 13 THE CLEAN AND PEACEFUL ECO-MUM – SUJOYA BULLOCK
- 14 EXCUSE ME? IS THIS SUSTAINABLE? – WAYNE ERASMUS
- 15 PLANET BASED SUSTAINABILITY – CHIDI NGWABA
- 16 REVIEWS: THE ARTS – DARELL J. PHILLIP
- 18 WEEK OF SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS (WOSE) WEEK
- 20 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS
- 30 NEWS & CHURCH SPOTLIGHT – DON ROBERTS
- 33 DEVOTIONAL - OUR SACRED DUTY – JEREMY TREMEER
- 34 POEM – SUSTAINABILITY – ANNICE THOMAS

You can now read the SEC Communicator online at <https://seccommunicator.com>

The views expressed in this magazine are opinions of the writers

Editorial

As we revisit the subject of Climate Change, we shift our attention this time to COP 26, the UN Climate Change conference in Glasgow, Scotland, hosted by the UK. This conference is about uniting the world in taking action to address the devastating effects of Climate Change. The UN has been consistent with its warning that, 'Climate Change is the single biggest health threat facing humanity,' and needs to be tackled as a matter of urgency.

The seriousness of the problem now calls for a collaborative effort. COP 26 should be about 'Sustainability': our collective efforts to avert a climate catastrophe created by human irresponsibility and greed.

Governments and various industries have been the target of protests and demonstrations, and indeed, they are the agencies that need to halt activities which contribute to the destruction of our environment. However, as individuals, we all have a part to play in changing the current situation.

In this edition, as we focus on Sustainability, world leaders are meeting once more to discuss what to do about the impact of Climate Change. I heard Prince Charles saying in an interview that one can choose, if they are meat-eaters, to forego eating meat a few times a week, as a way of contributing to rearing fewer cows – meaning that the more our diets are plant-based, the smaller our individual carbon footprint will be.

As a faith group, some of our number have shared their opinion that we do not need to do anything about the environment, since it will ultimately be destroyed at the end of the age. This notion is a misrepresentation of scripture, because God Himself gave us the responsibility of caring for the planet: 'Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply: fill the earth and subdue it: have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."' Genesis 1:28 NKJV

As we make conscious efforts day by day to improve Sustainability, we should look at our lifestyle, at home, at work, at church and in all our activities. It is now time to be thinking about energy efficiency in our churches, with plans to become carbon neutral.

At the South England Conference, we have recently set up a task force to oversee Sustainability and raise awareness about the need to see it as one of our responsibilities as we engage with a world that has become increasingly serious about the repercussions of Climate Change in our environment.

Climate Change is the single biggest health threat facing humanity

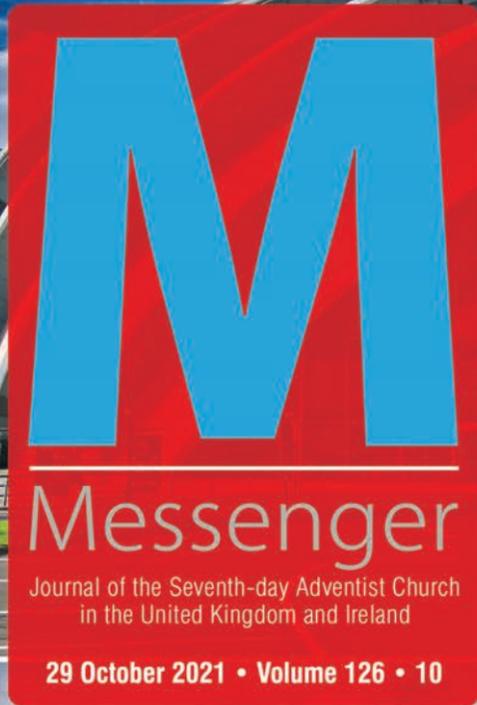
- THE UN

OUR COVER



SAM O. DAVIES
Editor

NEXT ISSUE: January 2022. Subscribe to receive your copy!



M
Messenger
 Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
 in the United Kingdom and Ireland
 29 October 2021 • Volume 126 • 10

Photos: Jimmy Botha



**Code Red for
 humanity!**
 Will we do our part?

the **President's Desk**

DR EMMANUEL OSEI



I and my siblings arrived in England on the 12th August 1967 to join our parents. The summer weather was nice and warm, and we enjoyed many outdoor activities. By late September and early October, I noticed the changing weather, as the autumn season transformed the leaves. That December, I experienced my first 'white Christmas' which-- coming from the tropics and being accustomed to a constantly warm climate-- greatly impacted me, as we waited out the winter around the paraffin heater. How we welcomed the arrival of April, the blooming flowers and the coming of spring. Looking back, it was incredible to experience the seasonal changes in a mere five months, to clearly distinguish the times and the seasons which appeared consistent throughout. However, climate, as we have understood it, has changed over the years.

Climate change has been described as 'the long-term alteration of temperature and typical weather patterns in a place'. Scientists largely attribute the current climate change to human activity such as burning fossil fuels, like natural gas, oil and coal, and the consequent release of greenhouse gases into Earth's atmosphere, particularly carbon dioxide, causing a 'greenhouse effect'. With our continued increasing demand for electricity and cars and other forms of transport that burn fuel, so climate change becomes more intense. Furthermore, the increase in deforestation for manufacturing and industry, reduces the planet's ability to eliminate the effects of burning fossil fuels.

So, should we be interested or concerned about climate change? Surely anything that is impacting human health should be our concern. Changes in weather and climate patterns are putting more lives at risk, as ocean temperatures rise, and hurricanes become more intense and destructive.

What can we do about climate change? Firstly, we need to be educated on this topic. Secondly, where possible, we should implement changes where we can, like powering our homes with renewable energy such as solar panels. We should also invest in energy-efficient appliances and reduce water waste. Eating less meat and dairy products would also be helpful, as well as supporting initiatives that keep fossil fuels in the ground and that protects forests like the Amazon.

As stewards of this earth, we, like Adam and Eve, have a responsibility to take care of our planet. I believe that Christian stewardship demands no less.

The long-term alteration of temperature and typical weather patterns in a place.

- CLIMATE CHANGE



SUSTAINABILITY: a Steward's Responsibility

Opening my email recently, I was surprised to see that my utility bill had doubled in the past month. Immediately, I reflected on how we use our utilities. As a family we needed to lower our consumption. Being mindful of the effect of the excessive use of energy, not only to the pocket but also to the environment, is essential in sustaining the energy supply and the much-needed care and management of everything around us.

It is high time for every Seventh-day Adventist to consider the proper care of our environment. This is a direct response to our understanding that we are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). We were given a unique responsibility to look after the earth and everything in it (Genesis 1:28). This privilege, to exercise stewardship of the earth (Psalm 8:6-8), allows us to deliver the sounding message that we consciously and actively favour a sustainable and healthy home for all humanity to enjoy.

Sustainability and stewardship are to be core values of every follower and disciple of Jesus. There needs to be thoughtful action in every decision we make, both as individuals and as a church community. We believe that maximising the efficient use of every resource given to us, honours God. He is the Giver, Provider and Sustainer of mankind's needs. So, we commit ourselves to radical sustainability management of resources, ensuring that we are helping and serving our community in a very responsible way.

But how can our commitment to sustainability as stewards affirm our beliefs and lifestyle? How can we encourage our church community to embrace practices and values that promote stewardship and sustainability?

Here are some ideas that we can explore and adopt first in our personal lives, then as a proactive community:

- Educate ourselves and the next generation about environmental stewardship. 'Search the Scriptures' for wholesome principles on living.

- Research better resources/appliances that are energy-efficient and conserve water.
- Use recycled products that can be reused, composted and recycled; and encourage others to do the same.
- Be responsible and dispose of contaminated waste (batteries, oil and chemicals) in a safe manner.
- Take alternative transportation that has low CO2 emissions.
- Practice restraint by buying only things that are needed and learn to refrain from being an impulsive consumer.
- Be temperate in everything especially in the use of resources.
- Recycle household products properly so that they won't end up in landfills.
- Learn and enjoy the art of gardening, planting and producing food in the garden or even in our tiny spaces at home like the windowsill.
- Respect nature.

Advocating a simple lifestyle and faithful stewardship is the world's solution to sustainability and the climate change crisis. God has placed mankind into this world to 'keep it and work it' (Genesis 2:15). It is a solemn responsibility that brings blessings to humankind and removes selfishness and self-centredness. May each one of us be found to be faithful stewards of God's creation.



TODD FRIAS

Stewardship Director

SUSTAINABILITY and Spirituality

We hear the word 'sustainable' often enough to understand that it lends itself to the longevity of the planet and the survival of all living organisms, sharing its resources. For the planet to be sustainable, the University of Alberta's Office of Sustainability recommends that (we) humanity, who share the resources with the rest of nature, must aim to 'meet our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.' In other words, it's considering 'a holistic approach that considers ecological, social and economic dimensions, recognizing that all must be considered together to find lasting prosperity.'¹

As a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, I contemplated the above reality carefully, in the light of our stewardship responsibility toward God and His creation. Christians find themselves in a world where climate change and concern for the environment are high on the social agenda. As a result, various branches in the Christian world already think about the relationships of humanity to the environment and are acting to either protest or make practical lifestyle changes.

Research shows that to remain sustainable, the universal community must strive to maintain three pillars: Ensure the environmental systems are kept in balance. Allow those who provide resources to the rest of the world to maintain their independence and have access to the resources they require. Ensure that the rest of society who depend on the natural resources, have enough in order to keep their

families and communities healthy and secure.

God's word offers similar fundamental sustainability principles. In fact, Leviticus 25 identifies these similar objectives, introduced by God to his Old Testament people, to sustain their land, their nation and their future generations. The first 18 verses of the Chapter spell out the actions the people needed to take, in order to care for the current and future generations, both human and non-human. The actions are described in one action, which translate into an 'inaction'. God described this inaction with three words: Rest, Sabbath, and Jubilee. In other words, to usher in a framework of sustainability, God commanded them to rest for a whole year.

Not only did He require the people to rest, but their rest led to rest and rejuvenation of the land, the animals, and the environment, including rest for the less fortunate, servants and strangers. The chapter provides the following encouragement and hope for everyone He created. First, God promised that, through not ploughing, sowing, and pruning, the land would grow independently, and that it would provide a harvest at the end of that year. Second, this year-end harvest would be enough for every creature who depended on these natural resources. Third, and best, was that the harvest from this Sabbath year would provide enough food for everyone for the next three years.

From one year's rest, the land they depended on would be sustained and kept in balance. The farmer who fed the nation would have enough to survive; and those who depended

on the farmer—the servant, the animals and the stranger— would have enough in abundance for years to come.

Today, the Sabbath-rest principle of Leviticus 25 can be translated into actions I can take to give the land and environment a restful break. Perhaps through my recycling methods, minimising my carbon footprint and considering how I insulate my home, would definitely give my world that deserved break. For example, research shows that if every office worker in the United Kingdom used one less staple a day, by using a reusable paper clip, 120 tonnes of steel would be saved in one year.²

God has shown us, through one fundamental principle in Leviticus 25, that we who are anticipating His coming, can help to slow down the rate of environmental decay and leave something for the next generation to enjoy. Besides, it is our greatest opportunity to work alongside Him to care for the best resource he has provided for us.

² Horton, Jocelyn ed. "Mad About ... Tropical Rainforests." Friends of the Earth. Jan 2003. Web. Retrieved 27 June 2013. < http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/factsheets/rainforest_mad_about.pdf >



CLIFFORD HERMAN

Pathfinder Director

¹ <https://www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/files/sustainability/what-is-sustainability.pdf>

SUSTAINABILITY GOALS and the local church

In the G7 summit, held in June of this year, one of the hot topics was 'The Environment and Climate Change'. There was a call for world leaders to take serious action and show immediate transformation. This theme will also be followed through at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26) at the end of October. As a result, the UK has agreed to legislate a new target of a 78% reduction in national emissions by 2035.

What does this mean for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South England Conference?

When it comes to sustainability, we all have a part to play as stewards of God's kingdom. One area that involves us all, is our church buildings and building projects. The condition of our current buildings, how we use our properties and how we refurbish them should include provision for sustainability and future-proofing.

So where do we start?

Here are just a few actions for our existing buildings:

- Maintain the roof and gutters to prevent damp entering the building and warm air escaping.
- Fix any broken windowpanes and make sure opening windows shut tightly to reduce heat loss.

- Insulate heating pipes to direct heat where needed; this may allow other sources of heat to be reduced in this area.
- If draughts from doors are problematic, draught-proof the gaps or put up a door-curtain.
- Consider using rugs/floor-coverings (with breathable backings) and cushions on/around the pews/chairs.

Heating and lighting:

- Switch to 100% renewable electricity.
- Match heat settings to better usage, so heating is only switched on when necessary.
- If there are water-filled radiators, try turning off the heating 15 minutes before the service ends. For most churches, this allows the heating system to continue to radiate residual warmth.
- Add a glycol-based "anti-freeze" to your radiator system and review your frost setting.
- Replace lightbulbs with LEDs where simple replacement is possible.
- Replace floodlights with new LED units.
- Where there is an internet connection, install a HIVE- or NEST-type heating controller to better control heating.

- If current appliances fail, then replace them with A+++ appliances.

People and policies:

- Create an Energy Champion who monitors bills and encourages people to switch appliances off when not needed.

The above steps are ways for local churches to reduce their energy usage and carbon emissions. It's a way for us to play our part in God's Kingdom by becoming ready.

What about building projects?

- When taking on a building project, make sure that the most energy-efficient options, as well as sustainability, are considered.

For example, the SEC considered sustainability at Hay's Wood Retreat centre, selecting sustainable building materials and installing an eco-energy system. This is a part of good stewardship, and we all have our part to play.



NADINE BOKHOORY

SEC Property Development Manager

REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT: *where to begin?*

Terms such as 'Green Energy', 'Climate Change' and 'Sustainability' were, until recently, seldom heard outside environmentalist circles. Now, at least in the UK, it is difficult to go a day without seeing the bright green edging on the number plate of an electric car, hearing discussions about 'net-zero' or using a bin without being encouraged to recycle.

Understandably, an increasing number of Seventh-day Adventists are asking the question, 'Should we get involved with issues around sustainability?' The answer is, 'Absolutely yes!' Not only is the principle of caring for the environment captured under our official belief 'Stewardship'¹, but in 1995, the General Conference released an official statement on *The Dangers of Climate Change*, in which the GC not only recognised that '...to keep climate change within bearable limits, the emissions of greenhouse gasses, especially carbon dioxide (CO₂), need to be significantly reduced', but also requested that governments '...take steps necessary to avert the danger'²:

- By fulfilling the agreement reached in Rio de Janeiro (1992 Convention on Climate Change) to stabilise carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000 at 1990 levels.

- By establishing plans for further reductions in carbon dioxide emissions after the year 2000.
- By initiating, more forcefully, public debate on the risks of climate change.

Governments and businesses undoubtedly have an important role to play in the fight against climate change. However, we too, as an Adventist Church, have work to do in so far as committing to reducing our own carbon footprint. Real progress on climate change requires each of us to recognise the urgency of the situation and take responsibility for our own actions. As the saying goes, "A river that forgets its source will soon dry up".

So, what can we do to reduce our carbon footprint and become more sustainable? Well, firstly, I would suggest starting by calculating it. This would provide us with a benchmark against which to measure any future progress. There are various ways to go about this, but a good place to start is the *WWF Footprint Calculator*— you can access it by searching "WWF Footprint Calculator" in your search engine or by entering footprint.wwf.org.uk in your internet browser.

Once you have done this, simply follow the instructions. Not only will you be given an estimate of what your footprint is in comparison to the world average, but the brief questionnaire, focusing on diet, travel, home, and stuff (clothing,

household items etc.) also provides practical tips on how to improve. My carbon footprint was lower than the UK average, but, admittedly, there's still much more that I can do. Why not have a go yourself? Once you've calculated it, you can use some of the hints and tips to take steps toward reducing yours.

I recently came across the work of Dr Robin Kimmerer, a distinguished Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology. She said that we have a responsibility, not only to love the world but to heal it. How much more so should this be the case for us as Christians, whom the Creator—a God who loves the world (John 3:16) and whose intention is not for us to escape it—wants to participate with Him in its renewal (Matthew 25:21-40).



JULIAN THOMPSON

BA (Hons) LTh MA DPhil (Cand.)
Lecturer, Dept of Theological Studies
Newbold College of Higher Education



THE SUSTAINABLE workplace

The South England Conference is challenged with being more resourceful and intentional in our quest to engage with the sustainability agenda. So, where do we begin?

Did you know, “Every year, we throw away enough plastic to circle the world 5 times. Most UK households throw away at least 40kg of plastic each year, enough to make 10 recycle bins; [and] nationwide, we use 7.7 billion plastic bottles per year”? www.recyclingbins.co.uk/

According to Lindsay Walker and Jenni Sanderson, co-founders of *Unpackage Me*, “275,000 tonnes of plastic are used in the UK each year. That is the equivalent of around 15 million plastic bottles per day”.

As we challenge the norms within our office environment, the two key questions to tackle with our Sustainability Team are:

- What is our corporate social responsibility?
- How do we foster an ongoing culture of sustainability within the workplace?

We will consult and engage with staff members within the office to clarify the methods we will use, and the practical steps we will take, to make the office space environmentally friendly.

“Every year, we throw away enough plastic to circle the world 5 times. Most UK households throw away at least 40kg of plastic each year. Enough to make 10 recycle bins. Nationwide, we use 7.7 billion plastic bottles per year”.

www.recyclingbins.co.uk

As an office, we should explore our own carbon footprint and its impact on the wider environment. For example, what is the journey of a plastic drink cup which has been disposed of in the regular waste bin instead of in a recycle bin? How do microplastics which end up in our local waterways and distant seas impact wildlife and the wider environment? In our quest to be drivers of change, it is important to fully comprehend these journeys. It will be necessary for us to explore our office carbon footprint by linking with appropriate climate action organisations.

Some examples of how we will begin to engage are:

- Set up a task force to conceptualize what it takes to be a sustainable office.
- Introduce responsible and consistent recycling.
- Reduce the need for cleaning materials that are harmful to the environment.

- Promote responsible consumption of paper and paper-based products.
- Reduce the use of plastics, e.g., by providing staff with reusable water flasks instead of disposable plastic or paper cups.

Becoming a truly sustainable office takes more than just a desire; it must take a commitment on the part of all staff.



JACQUI CRAWFORD

HR Manager



SUSTAINABILITY is about People

When we mention the word, *sustainability*, we usually think about our impact on the environment. But we often overlook the fact that sustainability can be specifically about people. Sustainability should work for everyone. That means tackling inequality, improving living standards and providing adequate support for those who are vulnerable.

One way that we can work towards such impactful goals is by rebuilding our communities. Peter Block alluded to this when he stated that many of the societal problems highlighted, are simply symptoms of broken communities.¹

At the time of writing, we are still in the middle of a pandemic; and due to a shortage of HGV drivers, motorists are rushing to petrol stations. They fear that fuel will run out. The present actions are reminiscent of March 2020, when it was difficult to purchase toilet paper and hand soap. Additionally, as a country we are still feeling the impact from the 2008 recession, where the resulting austerity measures deeply hurt the most marginalised in our communities.²

Ensuring our communities are resilient must also factor into the conversation, if we are going to participate in transforming our world into a sustainable society. So, what practical steps can we take to ensure that we rebuild our communities?

There are three levels from which we can operate: the individual, institutional, and structural. At the individual level, it means actively forming partnerships with others and engaging with them.

Today, society often forces us apart. Could we make active efforts to get to know our neighbours again? Maybe. Then the most isolated members of our society will not feel so alone. Being part of a community means that we act on behalf of others as well as for ourselves.

On the institutional level, we can ask ourselves one question: *Who is missing from this table?* Are we making decisions that will negatively impact parts of society who have little or no say for those with 'lived-experience'? We can ask this question in our educational institutions, healthcare, businesses, and churches etc. Institutions do not operate in a vacuum. So, reframing our institutions, as active members of society, will go a long way to ensuring that all of our communities are healthy and supported.

Finally, we can be active in advocating for better policies. For example, there was strong precedent that austerity measures cause more harm to society than actually helping. During the 1930s, both the US and the UK adopted forms of austerity during the Great Depression to help the economy recover. Yet, the results for society were devastating.³ Advocating for

the most marginalised in society can protect us all in the long run. That could simply mean writing to your MP, signing a petition or raising awareness.

Jesus set the perfect example of looking after our neighbours. That famous verse in John 3:16 reminds us that God loved us so much that He was willing to die for us. I am not saying we need to die for others, but we do need to start thinking about others as our neighbours. That is the first step towards sustainable communities.

1. Block, P. (2018) 'Community' Oakland: CA, Berrett-Koehler p. 130.
2. Toynbee, P. and Walker, D. (2020) 'The lost decade: the hidden story of how austerity broke Britain' Accessed: 26th September 2021, Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/mar/03/lost-decade-hidden-story-how-austerity-broke-britain>.
3. Pettinger, T. (2021) 'Economics Without the Boring Bits' London, Welbeck p.80



MAX MCKENZIE-COOK

Community Services & Prison Ministries Director
& Diversity Coordinator

THE CLEAN AND PEACEFUL *ECO-MUM*

I always wanted to be more eco-friendly, having worked for a renewable energy organisation many years ago. Disposable nappy companies make billions of dollars. In the UK, 8 million nappies go to the landfill every day. Contained within them are pollutants, such as plastics, elastics, adhesives and chemicals which do not easily degrade. The soiling also leaks toxins into the ground. Cloth sanitary pads have similar problems.

Last year, while pregnant with my fourth baby, I prayed and asked others to pray for me to be able to do cloth nappies. It seems silly, but as one mature lady said, 'Now you've prayed about it, God will help you'. And it's all been so much easier than I'd thought.

I joined a supportive online cloth nappy group (<http://clothnappygeek.co.uk>). I learned about the best wash cycles to use and asked all my embarrassing questions. I have appreciated the much-needed camaraderie during this sometimes-lonely period of motherhood. I prayed for my family to be supportive, and my older children love putting the nappy covers and inner flaps together like jigsaws.

Bought second-hand, these nappies are a bargain! A friend gave me her whole stash. They also look gorgeous. The prints are arty, whimsical. They look positively posh on my baby's bottom! With some makes, baby's trousers need to be bigger, but others are a slim fit. Wool covers are trendy and eco-friendly; they are sustainable, do not leak or retain odours, and fit as snug as a mitt!

We will save more than £500! Many reusable nappies are available in Lidl for a few pounds. Cloth wipes can be made

from cutting up old t-shirts. Make up a box, then wet and wipe.

In our garden, I don't pollute the earth further. We use the best weed killer — <https://moralfibres.co.uk/homemade-weedkiller-recipe/>

boiled vinegar and salt, with washing-up liquid added when cooled. Put this in a spray bottle and spray on the weeds. Within a few days, weeds turn brown and can be brushed away. We don't use dangerous chemicals, such as glyphosate in Round-Up which is known to cause Hodgkinson's disease and other cancers. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-47633086>

I am mindful of what I put into my body, as it will come out in my breastmilk. I was vegetarian but learnt recently about the iGF protein in dairy, plus its casein and salt content. These contribute to abnormal growth hormone in our bodies. After many years of battling with the yumminess of cheese, a switch was flicked on in my mind, and I now feel a contentment with eating coconut and oat versions of cheese and milk.

I was a pescatarian, but salmon is now off the menu. So, I'm sourcing only small fish but will be reducing this as much as possible, as the farming methods for all fish is unregulated. Chemicals are pumped into them, and lice and cancers are abundant in their flesh before they're made to look meal-worthy in the shops. See the Documentary: *Farmed Norwegian Salmon World's Most Toxic Food*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYYf8cLUV5E>

Rather than be fuelled by fear, we can be fuelled by clean energy. One example of this would be the company Spirit Energy

which installs battery storage solutions and Photo Volteic (PV) cells in cladding and on roofs. This technology harnesses the energy of the sun to produce electricity for buildings or vehicles, and it even provides storage during energy blackouts. Homes, commercial buildings, and even churches may be able to function off-grid.

Facts instead of fearmongering are needed in our climate of panic. Listening to the mainstream media, one would think that our atmosphere was almost wholly made up of the deadly carbon dioxide gas. However, the real composition of earth's air comprises, 78% Nitrogen, 20.9% Oxygen, 0.9% Argon, 0.17% other gases and 0.38% Carbon Dioxide.

everythingclimate.org claims that the 1.5-degree temperature rises that our media is warning us of, already took place by the 1890s without the predicted climactic crises. Also, climate sensitivity is not as big a factor as the UN IPCC claims. The estimates of the temperature rise by the year 2100, range from 0.8 degrees to 6.0 degrees, and so "are dubious at best" claims Greenpeace co-founder, Dr Patrick Moore on whattsupwiththat.com

I'm cleaning up my body, my home and, in-so-doing, helping to clean up the environment. Moreover, I am following God's command to give glory to Him— a sure way of proclaiming the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation. Consequently, I have met like-minded friends who have not heard of the Creator of the environment they care about so much; and I get a chance to share my personal Friend, our soon-coming Saviour, Jesus— the only one who can really sustain us in peace, through every crisis, change, and the coming catastrophe.



SUJOYA BULLOCK

Sujoya studied history, and is a qualified teacher, musician and author

EXCUSE ME? is this Sustainable?

Sustainability. It's a word that we hear quite often, particularly in the realm of climate and energy conversations. While searching around for a helpful description of 'sustainability', I came across this phrase: "Sustainability focuses on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."¹ The article goes on to suggest that the concept may be explored by thinking about it in terms of "profits, planet, and people".

The COVID pandemic has provided us with an opportunity to consider our priorities, to think about sustainability in the way that we engage and operate and function as 'Church'. How are we balancing the dynamics of "profit, planet and people" within our faith communities? Are these elements still in healthy tension with one another? Has the focus shifted? And if so, what results are we likely to see from the shifts?

Our collective commitment in the mission fields of Britain—regardless of the individual/communal places of local ministry and mission activity—inevitably asks us to consider sustainability. Put simply, 'are we able to focus on meeting the needs of the people who are already part of our faith community, while also finding meaningful connection with our mission context?' Also, are we able to do this while ensuring that our future generations will be able to do the same? To answer that question is to ask ourselves, "Excuse me, is this sustainable?"

My local Pastor speaks of 3 boxes. This is how I understand the metaphor.

Box 1 is what *was working* but is working less well. It still works for some people, but not for most people, and so it is slowly moving off our field of vision and, in time, we will move our investment elsewhere.

Box 2 is what is *working well* for most people right now. This is where the bulk of our investment and resource is placed. Investment is slowly being drawn from Box 1 into Box 2.

Box 3 is what is *on the horizon*. Most people don't see it yet—Box 2 is where things are at for them and it can be hard

to see beyond its horizons. Box 3 is what may be, and it is perceived by a few who will begin to move from Box 2 in that direction. They will ask for a measure of investment and resource. Some in Box 2 will wonder why this group are not happy with what clearly works for so many. There will be tension, just as there was tension with those in Box 1.

The truth about the boxes is that Box 2 will, in time, become Box 1, just as Box 3 becomes Box 2, and a potentially new Box 3 will emerge on the horizon. This, in a general sense, is what sustainability begins to look like. The ability to keep transitioning, realising that our current box is neither the beginning nor the end of the story. Our efforts to stick only to Box 2 are ultimately what is unsustainable.

Mission within the United Kingdom contains several stories and is lived out in various forms across the ethnic, cultural and linguistic experiences of our faith community and in our context. It means that we live in at least 3 boxes of experience and activity: Those things that were working; those things that are working; and those things that we are noticing may bring opportunity in the near future.

Mission is supported by finances and embraced by our organisational culture, but people are always its heart. Like the cultural contexts in which we live, we human beings shift and change over time. The meanings we make, as we navigate our way through life in our places of work, our homes and in community with others, do not remain static. Meanings shift, not only between cultural groups, but also between generations. This is the nature of our



human experience, and the dynamic Gospel of Jesus Christ continues to speak into the lived experience of each generation across time.

If "sustainability is [fundamentally about focusing] on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs," then our ability to manage varying mission streams becomes key to an ongoing and sustainable work in the British Isles. Such missional work may look a bit different or may strike different chords with those who are different in some way from ourselves. But at its core, mission embodies the heart of God for people— in all times, in all places, with different faces, varying world views and contrasting life experiences— and that which God has already done, what He currently empowers, and that which He is bringing into being.

¹ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/sustainability.asp>



WAYNE ERASMUS

Church Growth and Advent Missions Director

PLANET-BASED SUSTAINABILITY

Road Runner, Bugs Bunny, Tom & Jerry. These were some of my favourite cartoon characters as a child. I must confess that I probably spent a little too much time watching them. Since I am confessing, I still enjoy the odd cartoon once in a while. The funny thing about cartoon characters is that they can do things that are impossible to achieve in real life. The classic example is when a character runs off the edge of a cliff and does not fall until he realises where he is. It's as if gravity is suspended until they realise where they are. Thankfully, the law of gravity is a constant, universal law; and it exists whether we are aware of it or not. We do not get to choose whether we obey the law.

The same is true throughout the natural world. Our bodies, for example, are a collection of trillions of laws, all working in perfect harmony. Those laws cannot be broken and cannot be ignored.

"...the Law bends not for me, but I must bend unto the Law..."
James Allen, "As a Man Thinketh"

The law states that, to be physically healthy, our bodies require fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds,

water, exercise, rest and sunshine. When we appear to break the law, by eating unhealthy foods and indulging in unhealthy practices, the body simply, according to the law, makes alternative arrangements which often results in sickness and disease. In fact, the best definition of disease is:

"... the effort of nature to free the system from conditions that result from a violation of the Laws of Health." **Ministry of Healing 127.1**

What really fascinates me is that the laws of health are in perfect harmony with the natural laws of the Earth. Eating a healthy, plant-based diet is not only good for the body, but also great for the planet. In fact, it could be called "**The Planet-Based Diet**".

The fewer animal-based products we consume, the fewer animals are needed to be farmed, the fewer greenhouse gasses will be emitted, such as **carbon dioxide and methane**. These gases are some of the principal causes of global warming. Animal farming, particularly beef and dairy, are also responsible for large amounts of

deforestation globally. This reduces the Earth's ability to produce **oxygen**. The Amazon rainforest is often called "**the lungs of the Earth**". Yet every year, an area half the size of Wales is destroyed for cattle farming. The **Water** requirements from the earth for somebody who eats meat is 14 times higher than for somebody on a plant-based diet.

Also, during this time of a global pandemic, it is important to remember that all viruses in humans have their origins in animals; and the majority are found in farmed animals.

So, let us combine the two honourable goals of looking after God's temple, our bodies, and being good stewards of the earth, by practising one of the most important principles common to both: Eating a "**Planet-Based Diet**".



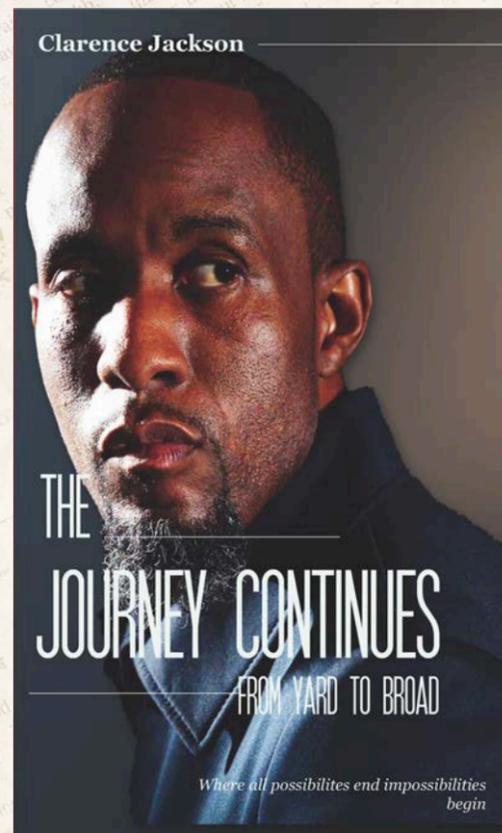
CHIDI NGWABA, MB BS

A physician who specialises in lifestyle medicine including reversing illnesses such as type-2 diabetes, hypertension, autoimmune diseases and obesity.



Two, not-to-be-missed, events to look out for this month

Clarence Jackson publishes a follow up to his debut book – *The Journey from Yard to Broad* – while Mark Grey’s new play – *The Betrayal* – pays homage to the Windrush Generation



Clarence Jackson, affectionately known as *The Poetic Preacher*, publishes his second book, *The Journey Continues from Yard to Broad*. The 37-year-old from East London and a member of the Ilford Lane Seventh-day Adventist Church, is a highly sought-after preacher, poet and youth worker, with a passion for living life on purpose, and inspiring and encouraging others to do the same. His debut book – *The Journey from Yard to Broad* (2019) – tells of the struggles and pain he overcame in his pursuit of finding purpose and meaning in his life. In the book he encourages readers to be determined and courageous in the face of adversity, and how faith in God can unlock the gate of impossibilities.

“I was pleasantly surprised by the response I received for my debut book,” says Clarence. “Feedback from the UK, to as far as my native Jamaica, was really positive with many expressing how inspired and encouraged they were to persevere and trust God more during their times of challenge. I’m hoping that my latest book provides a similar response.”

While Clarence’s latest offering is a continuation of the first, he does reveal that there are some differences. He says: “Where the first book highlighted some of the struggles and obstacles I had to face and overcome, such as those related to immigration and challenges of acclimatising

Also taking place this month (1st-7th November at The Union Theatre, SE1 0LR) is *The Betrayal* – the latest stage play produced by award-winning playwright Mark Grey, which brings to life the true stories of individuals from the Windrush Generation, having fallen victim to the infamous Home Office Windrush Scandal, uncovered by one of *The Guardian’s* lead Journalists, Amelia Gentleman: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/apr/20/the-week-that-took-windrush-from-low-profile-investigation-to-national-scandal>

Mark Grey, 60, from East Dulwich, and a member of the Balham Seventh-day Adventist Church, decided to pay homage to the Windrush Generation in this latest play, having been born of Windrush parentage himself. He says: “My parents came here in the fifties, did their stint to help put the ‘great’ in Britain after the war and then retired back home to Jamaica. My parents did have British passports



Mark Grey

and, as children, we all had them; however, we see that the story could have been so different if we did not. I feel for these people whose parents did so much for Britain. They are my people. I sympathise.”

Mark, who is founder of the Agape Theatre Company and Carmel Greystone Production Company, is a seasoned veteran of both the stage and screen with no clear signs of stopping.

Taking the individual stories, as reported in the national press, of Anthony Bryan, Paulette Wilson, Sylvester Marshall and Michael Braithwaite, Mark weaves a story which highlights the shameful treatment of the Windrush generation by their own government, which includes the refusal of access to work, benefits, housing and healthcare, before driving them out of a country they have called home for over fifty years. The message Mark wants the audience to take away from the performance is simple:

- In the eyes of God, we are all equal; and as *The Guardian* journalist, Amelia



Performers during Rehearsals

THE ARTS



Clarence Jackson

to a new country and way of living, this new book focuses on the maturity which comes to believers who, having placed their full confidence in God, are able to take their faith to another level, as they continue in their journey with Him.”

During the process of writing his first and second books, Clarence became a father to two young children, and while that could present as a challenge for some authors, Clarence admitted that he somehow was able to take things in his stride. “I had to learn the art of self-discipline, organisation, maximising opportunity and working with the time afforded,” he says. “It was a tremendous sacrifice, but I knew it was possible through prayer and commitment. I had to make the time by working around the family and creating a routine, especially at night when it was quieter. Plus, in Francesca I have a very supportive wife, too.”

The book, which is set to be published on 7th November and followed by a book launch on the evening of Saturday 13th November, has a message that the author would like to get across to the readers: “Where all possibilities end, impossibilities begin,” says Clarence, who then adds: “Our calling and purpose are in His mind. To find and fulfil that purpose will take heart, soul, mind, strength and total trust. The outcome is sure. Accept the call and trust the process.”

Gentleman, who uncovered the scandal rightly put it: “They are only here because we were there!”

The Journey continues from Yard to Broad (2021) by Clarence Jackson is available on Amazon and at: <https://clarencejackson.org/>

The Betrayal: Windrush directed by Mark Grey takes place at Union Theatre, Old Union Arches, 229 Union Street, SE1 0LR and runs from 1st - 7th November 2021 at 7:30PM, Sunday 5:30PM. Tickets priced at £15 & £13. Click here for details to purchase your ticket - www.uniontheatre.biz/the-betrayal.html



DARELL J. PHILIP

BA, Academic Mentor and Freelance Journalist

THE UNION THEATRE

Old Union Arches | 229 Union St | London | SE1 0LR
uniontheatre.biz | 02072619876

Agape Theatre Company
 PRESENTS



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Based On True Stories
 #Experiences

Real People
 Real Experiences

MONDAY NIGHT
 'Pay What You Can'

TUESDAY NIGHT
 'BSL Interpreted 4 The Hard of Hearing'

Prices
 £15 & £13 (concs)

November Dates

Monday 1st - Thursday 4th @7:30pm
 Saturday 6th @7:30pm | Sunday 7th @ 5:30pm

WOSE

WEEK OF SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS

"As we experience seasons of change or earth-shattering moments of life, embracing by faith and experientially living out this promise and assurance of God's friendship and abiding presence through the Holy Spirit is potent enough to settle and give peace through the uncertainty and instability that change can bring." – Pilira Zapita, 2021 WOSE speaker and Theology Alumna.

From 18-25 September 2021, Newbold College of Higher Education had the pleasure of engaging with so many individuals across the College, church and wider community, in person or online, for the Week of Spiritual Emphasis.

It made for a truly profound week, listening to seven speakers offer seven unique viewpoints on what change, as a concept, can look like. After the last 18 months, we can, as a global collective, relate well to the notion of "change". The aim of this semester's WOSE was to offer words to inspire and comfort in a reality that can feel somewhat uneasy at times.

The Week of Spiritual Emphasis is a space where the contemporary world meets with evergreen scripture, reminding us that He is there through the challenges that we come face to face with, on our life journeys.

Infused with music, poetry, interviews and, of course, the talks themselves, it was a week the College won't forget in a hurry.

WOSE relived

If you missed this semester's WOSE or would like to relive moments of the week, you can view the collection at newbold.ac.uk/wose





SEC DEPARTMENTS

Reports & Articles



A Reflection on the recent Rise in Membership

The South England Conference membership recently exceeded 26,000 for the first time, with baptism figures already exceeding those of 2020. 2020 will be one of those years that will forever remain in the psyche of the world's population for generations to come, as they regale stories of the time when COVID-19 hit and changed everything. And yet COVID-19 is not the only crisis or even the greatest crisis the world faces.

As the SEC, we have been called to share the gospel with the communities in which we live, allowing the Holy Spirit to use us as instruments of hope in a world that is scrambling around in the dark. Our strategic emphasis is *Making disciples, Building communities*. But my question for you is, which part of this is the most important role of the church?

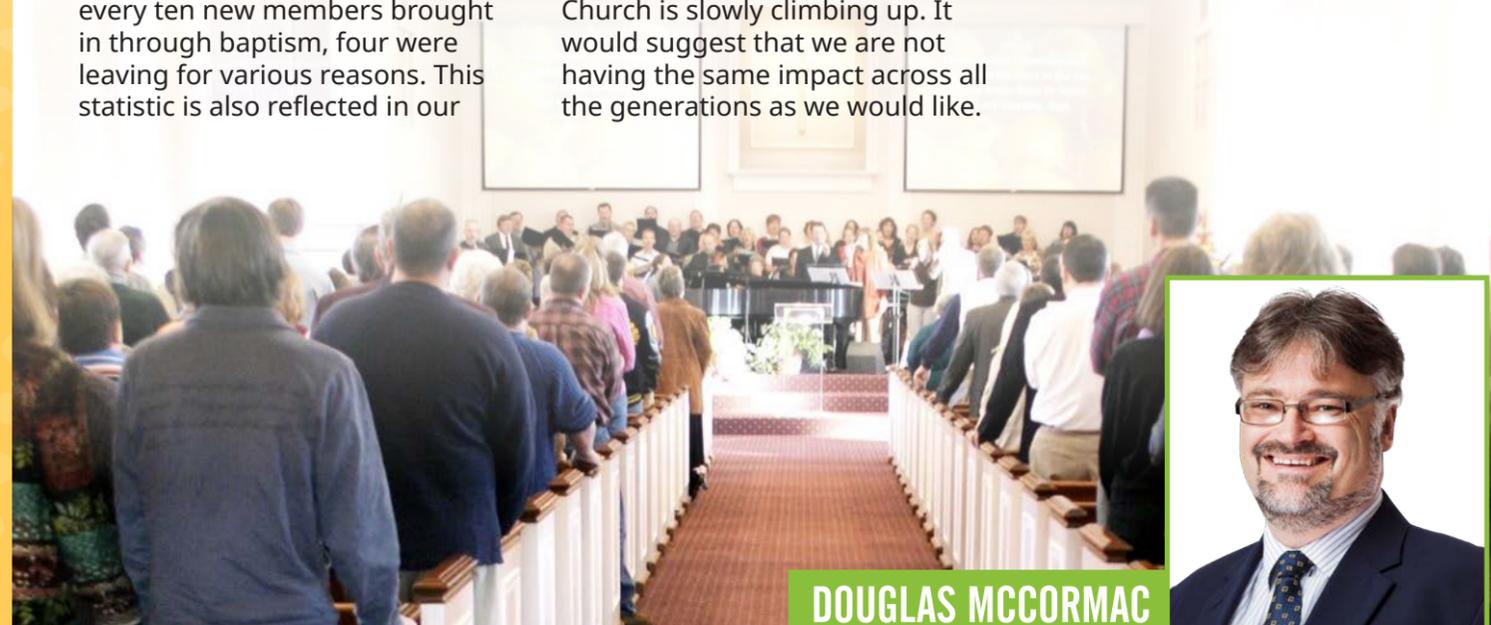
In a recent study carried out by the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research into membership trends, and in particular why members leave the church, demonstrated that for every ten new members brought in through baptism, four were leaving for various reasons. This statistic is also reflected in our

own conference where attendance figures, which are recorded on the second and seventh Sabbaths, also reflect this attrition rate. So, while baptism numbers continue to show that the SEC is growing, those figures are impacted by the those who chose no longer to attend our congregations.

While making disciples is what we are called to do, it is equally important to give them a loving caring home in which to remain. John Stott referred to this as the *'double identity'* of the church, where its people are *'both called out of the world to worship God and sent back into the world to witness and serve.'* Creating a loving environment in our congregations is of equal importance if we are to retain the 40% of those who leave, some of whom will be family and friends.

Another statistic which we are currently discussing, but which has not been formerly studied, is the age profile of our Conference and the World Church. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that the average age of the Adventist Church is slowly climbing up. It would suggest that we are not having the same impact across all the generations as we would like.

As the Executive Secretary, part of my role is to prepare statistical reports which are used by ourselves and our sister institutions to paint a picture of our membership, which will help inform the plans of our congregations, conference etc., so that we can continue to meet the needs of the world in which each of us resides. Page 129 of the Church Manual lists the responsibilities of the Church Board, the first three of which are: An active discipleship plan; Evangelism in all of its phases; and Spiritual nurturing and mentoring of members. I suspect, if you looked at your board agendas, it may well be inverted, where much of the business is about finances and building issues. If evangelism and church community are not first on the agenda, then I suggest you bin it and start putting people first, allowing the Spirit to guide not just the board, but the whole congregation in *Making disciples, Building communities*.



DOUGLAS MCCORMAC

What a mighty God we serve! Up to August this year, our year-to-date Tithes Income stands at £10.9m. Compared to £8.7m in this same time period in 2020, it is 26.3% higher. The situation is quite understandable, as we are at the height of the pandemic around the 2nd quarter of last year. However, compared to the pre-pandemic period in 2019, it is 8.5% higher, which is impressive! Indeed, we serve a living and powerful God.

While we see the global economy still scrambling with an inflation rate higher than expected, the Holy Spirit has been working through the hearts of our members who have remained generous and faithful. Up to August 2021, all Areas showed a positive increase compared to last year, with Area 1 having the highest percentage at 24.2%. Area 8 had the highest per capita of £518. I am sure that many of our members can testify of God's goodness and provision during these difficult times.

I thank God for our pastors and workers who have supported and encouraged our members to stay true to our Christian principles. Staying faithful is especially important as we genuinely believe that we are living at the end of time. I praise God for our local church treasurers. They have continuously dedicated their time and effort to account for the tithes and offerings received at the local level, and to ensure that the reports and remittances are sent regularly and on time. The number of outstanding monthly reports peaked at 360 in May and decreased in August to 129.

This number represents the total number of churches around the Conference that have not submitted monthly reports to account for their income.

I am blessed to be surrounded by a committed Treasury team, working hard amid the lockdown to be up to date with our reports and submission of claims. We live in uncertain times, but we continue to put our trust and confidence in our Almighty God who is in control of everything. We remain grateful for the bountiful blessings that He showers on us daily. As declared in 2 Corinthians 9:11, "You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us, your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God."



CANDY LAYSON

Prayer Ministries During Lockdown

Lockdown was a devastating time. Thousands were affected by the deadly COVID-19 virus. Many of our members suffered bereavement, and many more feared for their lives. However, while we were locked down in our homes, our members were praying.

Prior to the lockdown, the SEC Prayer Ministries morning session had less than 10 people. Now the prayer line has over 90 faithful members joining each morning. Also, the SEC Prayer Ministries have encouraged several churches to start their own prayer line. There are dedicated lines open to desperate members who require prayers and support. Every morning, there is a session dedicated for testimonies.

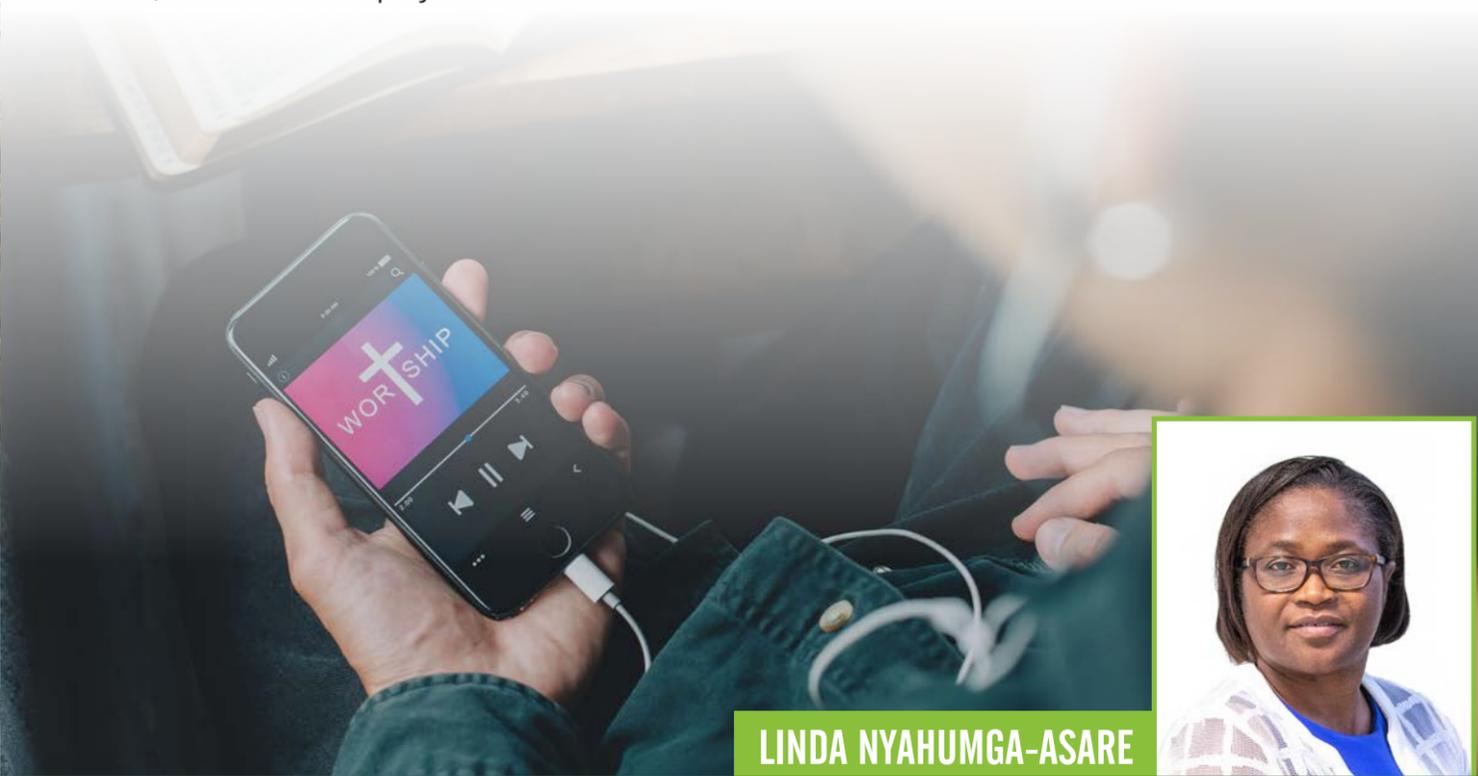
Sharing the Word of God has proven to be a pragmatic approach in discipling others. We study the Bible, one book at a time, as daily devotions, led by various people - including those who would normally be silent in our churches. These devotions have been an encouragement to many.

Another interesting development of SEC Prayer Ministries was the introduction of a new group known as the "School of Prophets". The concept behind this was to teach lay people to lead out in devotions in homes, churches and at prayer retreats.

The Lockdown did not stop us from having our yearly '10 Days of Prayer', with prayer and fasting at a peak throughout many areas of the Conference, such as Areas 4, 6A, 6B, 6C. In addition, other prayer groups joined each evening (notably Prayer Tower, Ghana Prayer Group, Church Without Walls, Willesden Church, and the London Asian Church, leading out in prayer, and sharing on Zoom what God had been doing in their areas during the Lockdown. This gave birth to a Prayer and Fasting Day, every first Monday of the month, where we prayed for the needs of the Conference, our troubled children, the bereaved and the sick. We also held a special day of prayer and fasting for church workers and encouraged our church members to pray for their pastors.

The Prayer Ministries core team has also set aside time to hold special prayer for the SEC department directors. There is a hunger for more prayer initiatives.

Training in effective Prayer Ministries was provided by Pastor Samuel Telemaque.



LINDA NYAHUMGA-ASARE

The Communication and Media Department played a critical role during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown that affected regular worship patterns within our conference.

When the first lockdown was announced in March 2020, it was uncharted waters for many of our congregations. Our department hurriedly put together a centralised online service programme to cater for the regular Sabbath services that the local churches would be missing because of the lockdown. The SEC media team hurriedly converted our in-house recording studio into a live studio, broadcasting through our YouTube channel, SECMedia, on ROKU, online, and on Facebook platforms. We ran this service from our studio for four months, until most churches were able to hold their own online services via Zoom.

We facilitated a regular COVID-19 update from the Conference President, through video broadcasts that were aired on our YouTube and Facebook channels. In addition, we published editions of the SEC Communicator that focused on COVID-19, to help our audiences understand issues relating to the pandemic. The Communication and Media Team were active throughout the lockdown to expedite needed information from the Conference to our audiences, including several presentations on health from Dr Chidi, the Health Ministries Director at the time.

As Crisis Awareness is an important aspect of what organisations consider critical to the continuity of their operations, we had to deal with some of the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 crisis, especially with helping the Conference administration respond to the discontent from some members regarding acceptance of the furlough scheme.



SAM DAVIES

We handled the situation, collating by theme all the points of discontent, and putting them to the collective knowledge and expertise of SEC, BUC and TED administrators, who responded to these pressing concerns in a Q & A format.

We continued to publish the SEC Communicator on a regular basis throughout the lockdown and went fully digital because of the changes posed by the pandemic. We also published a first, Special Edition on Racism, because of the impact of the killing of George Floyd, the African American man killed by a police officer in Minnesota.

The department also helped to facilitate our first online Camp Meeting in June 2020 and, subsequently, in 2021. Another major streaming was the January 2021 SEC Evangelism Expo.

This year, we have continued to support our various departments with their recorded and streaming programmes, including the Pathfinder World Day programme at the Stanborough Park grounds which brought together hundreds of Pathfinders from the various regions of the Conference.

At the start of the year in February, the department introduced a new app which they developed for all SEC Pastors. The aim for the app is that it will facilitate engagement with all Pastors and be a one-stop shop for communication and for creating social groups among Pastors for their various interactions.

Sharing During and After COVID-19

Over the last 18 months, COVID-19 has caused a level of worldwide upheaval unlike most people now living have seen in their lifetime. This crisis affected people in their most important, committed and intimate relationships. Although this crisis damaged the health and well-being of individuals, crushed economies and led to an extensive period of uncertainty about the future, there also may have been positive outcomes in motivating people to protect their relationships. The pandemic, such as we have seen, caused many more people to find themselves feeling unsafe in this world, and leaving them with high levels of stress and anxiety, which are rarely beneficial for their relationships.

Given the context in which we find ourselves, what has been the response of the Family Ministries Department, as it relates to families and individuals dealing with issues related to marriage, parenting, singleness, and healthy intimacy? The Family Ministries Department has been positioned to walk alongside people through their hardest seasons in life: death of a loved one, job loss, illness, divorce, unwanted singleness, childlessness, abuse and so much more. For example, we walk alongside people burdened by the distress and pain of life experiences, by letting them know that they can count on us being there alongside them, when they ask key questions that define their relationships – such questions as:

- Can I count on you?
- Are you there for me?
- Will you respond when I call?
- Will you respond if I am in need?
- Do I matter to you?
- Am I valued and accepted by you?
- Do you need me or rely on me?



AUGUSTUS LAWRENCE



These are key relationship questions spouses ask in times of crisis, when their wellbeing is threatened or challenged. They ask these questions in times of emotional crisis, when there is fear, uncertainty and a reduced sense that the world is safe and predictable. Central to this is the need for positive relationship that is not about general physical closeness or distancing, or spending more time with a partner who might be problematic. It is a fact that in times of crisis and danger, we search for comforting contact. It is this comforting contact that the Family Ministries Department, throughout this season, has been sharing through various virtual seminars, workshops, premarital counselling sessions and sign postings. For example, the seminar, “How to double the happiness in love and marriage”, shares secrets for deepening intensity in the marriage relationship. It fosters the desire for a more robust relationship, encouraging and supporting new behaviours that promote marital satisfaction.

The department also supported individuals through the vital steps of preparing for lifetime commitment, by providing education and highly practical insights to those who are dating, courting or interested in love or marriage. These virtual seminars proved to be highly successful.

It has been a great privilege to support our local churches. Through sermons, weekend seminars and workshops, as well as numerous marriage and family counselling, we have been able to address some of the needs of the local church, as well as share relevant resources to support the development of healthy relationships both in the local church and community.

Whilst we express gratitude and appreciation to the Lord for granting us the opportunity to serve, the pandemic has posed a serious obstacle for doing family ministry face to face. However, we look forward to greater opportunities to serve and support our members and communities through Family Ministries, when we will return to normality.

TEENS MINISTRIES

Our year began at the Virtual Evangelism Expo 2021, where we listened to the ideas, concerns and input of our brothers, sisters, parents, guardians and friends. Their insights informed and enriched our strategic plan for the year 2021, as we integrated their creative ideas into the different weekly services, programmes, webinars and activities throughout the year. Subsequently, we celebrated twelve virtual teens days. We also held three ABC training webinars, monthly, from January to March. Besides these monthly webinars, we also celebrated six ABC training webinars during weekdays.

Teens Ministries began its Second Quarter with a virtual spiritual retreat entitled, Guard Your Heart, from 2nd to 4th April. The main speaker was our very own Dr Chidi. Then from April to May we celebrated 11 Teens days and 5 training ABC webinars.

Our Third Quarter began with the SEC Virtual Camp Meeting 2021 Teens Services, from Monday 1st of May to Sabbath 5th of June. On this occasion, we had the honour of working with our wonderful Pathfinders, their dynamic director, Pastor Clifford Herman, and his fantastic staff of Pathfinder leaders. It was an absolute honour and an inspiring experience to work with them, and we look forward to celebrating more services together.

From July to September, we celebrated 10 Teen services, three ABC monthly webinars and three ABC webinars during the week. We also celebrated our SEC Teens Concert on the 24th of September. Our artists consisted of teens and Pathfinders; some of the teens were from outside UK. The Teens Ministries also attended and supported virtual vigils, prayer retreats and meetings where parents, guardians,

grandparents and friends prayed for our young people.

In addition, we are constantly thinking, discussing and planning how to prepare supporting materials that will assist our teens and their parents, guardians and teen leaders as they lead our young people at home, at school or in church. Our plans and activities are based on the surveys we administer at the churches and our conversations with our teens and their parents. These concerns, challenges, fears and struggles are some of the issues that inform our activities, services and programmes. Additionally, to ensure we give our best to our teens, their parents and churches, we research past work and recent investigations on behavioural science, social studies, health, neurology, self-image and the teen brain, among other topics.

Thank you all. We do not have enough words to thank you for your support and prayers, and for always opening the doors of your churches, especially the virtual doors, during this pandemic. We want to thank you for thinking about our teens and for considering them, not only once a month or every other quarter, but always.

Please remember to pray for our teens and SEC Teens Ministries. Without your prayers and support, we would not be able to do anything, but together, by God's Grace, we will be able to save our teens and help one another.



JUAN CARLOS PATRICK



YOUTH MINISTRIES

In this season of uncertainty, these are exciting times for our young people within the South England Conference. We are blessed to have so many young adults who are *multi-talented with varying skills* and responsibilities, who are full of energy and ideas, and who bring so much relevance and youthful zeal to our beloved church.

They are *technologically smart*, and life for them revolves around the use of artificial intelligence, social media, and the internet. However, despite the integration of technology into all aspects of their lives, they are compassionate; and many of them see themselves as *global citizens*, relinquishing patriotism in favour of a sense of responsibility to make the world a better place. They are also conscious with regards to *health, society, and economic and environmental issues*. The result of this is that many of them are frugal. They believe in authenticity and want open and honest relationships. They are a generation that is more tolerant of *gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and religion* which some consider to be liberal; and this opinion is often reinforced as they don't believe in or follow the status quo, as did previous generations. This is their time.

Youth Ministries *continues to lay foundations* and remains committed to *specialist training and empowerment* for youth leaders and their teams, whilst creating opportunities and spaces for youth and students to personally experience the reality of God. Despite physical events still being restricted, it allowed for more innovation and opportunities to reach our youth students differently, allowing for our *digital and social media platforms to take centre-stage*.

We held panel talks via Zoom and Stream Yard, ranging through topics on race, relationships, current events and spirituality. Instagram, YouTube and Facebook

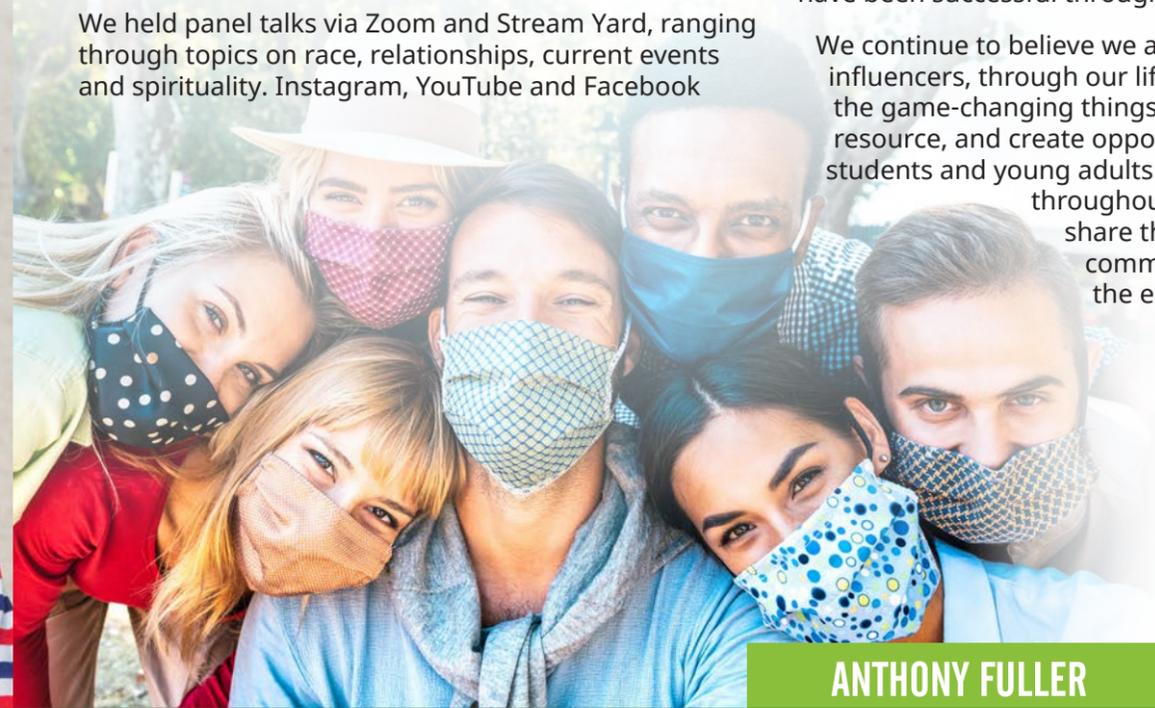
pages hosted live chats, including exercise sessions from trained professionals and motivational videos.

Over a two-day weekend, February 26 and 27, the SEC Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) was virtually attended by almost 213 participants. The aim of the conference was to *Equip, Empower and Engage* youth leaders, youth influencers and their teams. Additionally, a virtual Youth Conference was hosted alongside the YLC on several social media platforms, especially for the young people. More than 1200 youth and youth leaders were reached that weekend. The programmes were designed to have high interaction, to keep all those in attendance empowered and engaged.

Overall, our youth engagements and followers saw a significant increase, as we navigated these strange times with relevant, on-demand programmes. The new Senior Youth Leadership Award continued online to ensure training and development was not affected

Once the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, we held our first physical Youth Day, *The Fearless Generation*, on August 31 at the Rock Tower in London. It was attended by over 600 young people, where we came together for the first time in over a year, to fellowship, praise and be inspired by the messages and songs, encouraging us on the power of vulnerability, facing our pasts, and trusting God. We were proud to invest a further 11 Senior Youth Leaders that day, as they had successfully passed all requirements that had been set during the pandemic. We give God thanks for the perseverance and commitment to finish the race. During the summer we also saw the return of our sporting events which have been successful throughout.

We continue to believe we are called to be disciples, influencers, through our lifestyles, characters and the game-changing things we do. We aim to train, resource, and create opportunities for youth, students and young adults in our local churches throughout the SEC —partnering to share the gospel with our communities and to the ends of the earth.



ANTHONY FULLER



MINISTERIAL

The SEC Pastors are not just talking about making disciples and building communities, but actually making disciples and working in the community. Let us hear from Pastor James Shepley himself.

Over the last 18 months, we in Cheltenham and Swindon have tried some great resources in terms of making disciples. Most of these have been run on-line, in a small group setting over Zoom because of COVID-19. We tried 'Christianity Explored'; 'The Bible Course'; two inspiring courses on Revelation ('Revelation, the Fifth Gospel') by Doctor Elizabeth Talbot; 'Acts (Proclaiming Jesus)' on *Jesus 101.tv*; and a discussion group based on David Cox's stimulating little book, 'Future Church'. These were all valuable, but the two resources that made the most difference, in terms of equipping church members to share their faith in our context, were 'Talking Jesus' and 'Discovery Bible Reading'.

'Talking Jesus' is a 6-part video-based series, training Christians to share their faith. <https://talkingjesus.org>

This series, based on research carried out in the UK in 2015, reveals how people view Christians and Christianity, and it is designed to train Christians to share their faith. There are two videos for each session, which serve as icebreakers and promote discussion and learning. The videos were filmed in the UK and, like the accompanying booklet, are tailored to British realities.

We ran 'Talking Jesus' several times in different settings. But the best was when we ran it in the main service in Swindon over six consecutive weeks, breaking the congregation up into small groups, using break-out rooms on Zoom, to promote discussion and prayer.

'Talking Jesus' has helped our church members realize that successful witnessing to their friends, family or work colleagues is possible in the UK, and helps them know how to do it. It made a difference to me. Afterwards, I did a special service, sharing my testimony, and inviting my friends and family. They came. It has helped us become more intentional about sharing our faith, and more invitational.

Discovery Bible Reading has helped *hugely* too. This simple method, pioneered by Peter Roennfeldt, consists of reading through a Book of the Bible (such as the Gospel of Mark, John, or the Book of Acts) in a group, one passage at a time. The passage is read in two different Bible versions and then summarized by one of the participants in their own words. Each time, five simple questions serve as the basis of discussion: What is new? What is surprising? What don't you understand? What will you apply/obey? What will you share?

We started 2 Discovery Bible Reading classes over Zoom, both Swindon/Cheltenham on a Saturday morning; and held one class on Zoom mid-week, which has several community members who keep coming back. But best of all, one of my church members started a Discovery Bible class with her family on Zoom. First week, there were six people. The second, there were fifteen. Since then, five of them have been baptized. I started one on Zoom in my extended family. Since then, we have had eleven family members attending, and enjoying reading and discussing the Bible together. God is blessing! Pre-pandemic, I would never have thought this were possible!



SAM OUADIO



South England Conference
Family Ministries Department Presents

Happiness Is Your Choice: Making A Difference In Life And Families

4TH DECEMBER 2021 @ 7:00 PM

This seminar would focus on

- 1 Life Principles for abundant living.
- 2 Our role in accessing abundant life.
- 3 Setting new goals for managing the ups and downs of real life experience in personal and family living.



Paula Jacob-Fox MD
Curtis A. Fox Ph.D, LMFT, CFT, CFLE

YouTube
LIVE STREAM

SECmedia



Meeting ID:
850 6540 8720

Passcode:
419314

GOD FIRST

WATCH OUR VIRTUAL SERVICE:
 StewardSHIFT
 SEC.Stewardship

Stewardship
Revival
Week 2021

28 November – 04 December
Every night @ 7:30 pm

- D1 My Father's Business
- D2 The Walls Must Fall
- D3 Bought with a Price
- D4 Facilitators of a New Vision
- D5 The God First Day
- D6 The Deal of a Lifetime
- D7 Even When It Hurts

ILFORD CENTRAL REFLECTS ON THIRD QUARTER SPIRITUAL HIGHS

(Author: Don Roberts)

The challenging COVID-19 era for many has been an elongated voyage, and many churches and businesses have closed their doors for the safety of their members and customers respectively. Yet, despite the temporary halt to all sense of normality, God always has a backup plan to ensure that His mission, to spread the good news of salvation to all people and nations, is fulfilled. During these challenging times, all of our suspended church gatherings made the switch to online services (Zoom, YouTube, Teams etc.) to maintain regular contact with members.

Since the highly anticipated reopening of Ilford Central's church doors on Sabbath 12th June 2021, members have witnessed the baptism and addition of twelve new members to the fold of God. While the church is now open for worship every Sabbath, Ilford Central continues to stream its services for members and visitors who are housebound or remain cautious to return.

Besides the baptisms, the hosting of South England Conference President Dr Emmanuel Osei on Sabbath 31st July 2021 was another memorable highlight. For many members, it was a joy to see both the President and his wife, Laura Osei, in person. Reflecting on the Great Commission Jesus gave to His disciples, found in Mathew 28:18-20, the SEC President reminded the church of its mission to make disciples and build communities, with the dedication of four lockdown born babies alongside the announcement of three pending weddings from within the Ilford community.



Ilford Central Leadership with newly baptised members

Paul the Apostle wrote in the book of Philippines, Chapter 2:4, "Let not each of you look unto his or her interest alone but also to the interest of others". These words have certainly rung true during these times of COVID. Through various outreach programmes and initiatives, including evening Discovery Bible Reading sessions, Ilford Central continued to work to meet the needs of its congregation and local community, knowing that Jesus is soon to come to take home His faithful saints.

SEC WORLD PATHFINDER DAY IN THE PARK

(Author: Don Roberts)

1300 Pathfinders and their guardians from across the Conference met at a beautiful green and sunny Stanborough Park to celebrate the 71st World Pathfinder Day. Being able to meet together as a Pathfinder movement, after being apart and doing events on a virtual platform for a long time, was a blessing. With COVID still a reality, an open-air event enabled us to keep people safe. The crowd gathered for a day of worship, community outreach and baptisms, with picnic lunch, picnic chair, blanket, and some even with pop-up tents and gazebos.



The day was unique in that we had no visiting overseas speaker addressing the children, but instead the involvement from Pathfinders from beginning to end. Under the direction of Tina Brooks, the Praise and Worship team from Willesden and other adjoining clubs initiated the high worship temperature for the day.

The Pathfinder involvement included a skit from Brix Kids, a choral verse from Watford Town, a sermonette by West Bletchley teen David Shumba and music items from various other clubs.

Area 5 had a creative welcome by children speaking various languages, while Holloway engaged the crowd with their understanding of the phrase 'I Will Go'. The service was crowned with a beautiful mime by Pastor Geert Tap, to the song, 'Watch the Lamb', from Ray Boltz.

After lunch, three Pathfinder groups and a drum corps left the grounds to do community outreach in the Watford area. This included a skateboard demonstration, a puppet show, drum and drill performances and handing out branded trolley coins, shopping bags and Christian literature. On the main grounds, Pathfinders were challenged to start a Community Service Honour, followed by V.I.P. guests gracing us with their presence. The Pathfinder Day was honoured to receive visits

from Watford Mayor Peter Taylor, the Assistant Chief Constable of Hertfordshire, Genna Telfer, and Clarence Jackson, a youth speaker. These guests formed part of a panel with Pastor Clifford Herman, SEC Pathfinder Director, to answer valuable questions from our young people about how they could be supported in making a difference in their communities.

Then came the highlight. Three young Pathfinders – one from Walthamstow, and two from East London Portuguese church – wanted to be baptised at a Pathfinder event. We decided to provide them with that opportunity and to make it special for them. It was indeed a blessing and an emotional experience for the girls and their families who supported them. Their baptism inspired many hands to go up, when the appeal was made for anyone who wanted to be baptised at a future event.

By 6 p.m. the event was over, but many still lingered until after dark, to soak up the last threads of the blessings of a glorious day.

Looking back at the day and the potential differences these events make in young people's lives, one can only praise the Almighty God for His wonderful blessings in the lives of Pathfinders in the SEC, BUC and across the world. World Pathfinder Day in the SEC proved that a difference can indeed be made. In addition to God, one cannot but recognise the efforts of committed Pathfinder Area Coordinators, wonderful Master Guide and TLT Volunteers, a dedicated SEC Media Team, and the amazing local Pathfinder and Adventurer leaders in our Conference.

Our appreciation also goes to the British Union Office and Stanborough School for their efforts and assistance in making the day a wonderful success.

The theme for the 72nd World Pathfinder 2022 Day is 'Changing the World'.

THE HIGH SHERIFF OF BEDFORDSHIRE JUSTICE SERVICE.

(Author: Sam O Davies MA, MCIJ, MPRCA, CIIC)

On 29th October at the St Paul's Church in Bedford, the Seventh-day Adventist High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, Eric Masih, hosted a Justice Service with a strong Adventist flavour. His appointed Chaplain, Seventh-day Adventist Pastor Ottakal Chackochen, delivered the sermon. The service was attended by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire and members of the Judiciary Community.

Representatives from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK were among the special guests. SEC President, Pastor Emmanuel Osei, and Stanborough Press Editor, Pastor David Neal, took part in the service. The service is a tradition that dates back to 1166 and is part of the system of assizes created by Henry II. The courts of assize – commonly known as the assizes – were courts held in the main county towns and presided over by visiting judges from the higher courts based in London. Since the 12th century, England and Wales have been divided into six judicial circuits which were the geographical areas covered by visiting judges.

www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/laworder/court/overview/assizes/

Part of the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire's role is to support and promote the voluntary sector. He particularly gives prominent support to those organisations which encourage law and order, and those who tackle crime and social concerns in their communities.



OUR SACRED DUTY

In the run up to the UN Climate Conference, COP26, around 40 prominent religious leaders around the world have just announced an initiative to encourage world leaders to act on climate change. They are encouraging believers of all religions to act, and for faith and science to work together to reverse the effects of global warming and pollution.

One of the challenges I have noticed in and around Adventism is how we relate to this issue. We have traditionally stood apart from ecumenical movements and have regarded meetings, such as the recent one on COP26 held at the Vatican, with suspicion. We believe in the soon coming of Jesus, and perhaps this has led to a tendency to view any attempts to save 'this world' as futile and irrelevant. But does looking forward to a 'world made new' give us permission to ignore the current environmental issues? Should we not also have something positive to bring to the table on this matter, in addition to our ultimate hope of the Second Coming? I believe there is. Allow me to share a couple reasons.

Firstly, we have our belief in the Creation story as found in Genesis. The world we inhabit was lovingly crafted by God with design and purpose, and even in this middle of sin and suffering, there is still much to be thankful for. The Creator placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, "to work it and keep it"¹, to look after all of Creation with care, as His representatives. We are called to reflect His character in the way we look after the natural world in all its forms. The words 'work' and 'keep' (in the Hebrew) are also used to describe the priestly duties in the Sanctuary.² Our care for the environment is therefore a sacred duty, a part of our high calling. In the words of theologian Leonardo Boff,

Devotional

'We have been placed on earth to care for and keep this sacred inheritance that God has given us... we are the guardians, the caretakers, but to this point, we have not fulfilled that work. We need to return to our original vocation'.³

Another compelling reason, at least for me, is understanding our prophetic voice in the world. We have always been interested in the books of Daniel and Revelation, books that describe the history of the world in a series of beast-like powers that rule over us. Much of the driving force behind these powers is greed for wealth. Every empire throughout history has made huge economic gains, but this has come at a cost. Violence, slavery and poverty have all been a product of these empires.

Our environment is also paying the price for this greed. As part of our sacred calling, I believe we have a duty to speak out against this, and to take personal responsibility, wherever we can, to alleviate the damage our lifestyle has caused to the environment. There are many ways we can take part in this, such as through activism and also by changing the way we do things, even down to something as simple as using our own water bottle, rather than buying plastic ones that end up polluting the planet.

As we seek to care for the world God has given us, may we be a people with a voice and a people of action; for each time we care for our planet, we fulfil our sacred calling.

1 Genesis 2.15, English Standard Version
 2 See Numbers 3.7-8 for one example. Only in the Garden of Eden and also concerning priestly duties are these two words used together in the Bible
 3 Leonardo Boff, speaking at The Justice Conference's Climate of Injustice event, 2021



JEREMY TREMEER

Pastor for Redruth/St Austell and Bodmin District

POEM

SUSTAINABILITY

*Going green should be our scene
United in humanity teams
Sustainability for a bright future
Or we'll need a massive suture*

*The ozone layer is depleting
Amazon tropics are fleeting
Plastic bags bathing in oceans
Toxins destroying bodies and emotions*

*Nature choking on our fumes
Continents turning into tombs
Let's work together in harmony
To save our forests and our seas*

*Let's take time to protect and care
The planet earth that we all share
Let's work together to sustain
Each do our part for future gain*

*Annice Thomas
November 2021*



DIGITAL AND PRINT DESIGN SERVICES FOR EVERY PROMOTIONAL PROJECT

Get in touch for any request.

Graphic Design • Printing • Media • Promotional Items

SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES

£2.00

For a guaranteed copy, please contact us using the details below

Tel: 01923 232 728

Email: communication@secadventist.org.uk

Address: 25 St Johns Road, Watford Herts. WD17 1PZ.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If you would like to write to the Editor, please contact us at – communication@secadventist.org.uk.
Letters to the Editor will be published at the discretion of the editorial team.

Title: Forename: Surname:

Address:

Post Code:

Tel:

Mobile:

Email: Church:



The Stanborough Press Ltd.

FOCUS

MAGAZINE

28 What does God have to do with the environment?

Clifford Herman takes the time to answer some questions people might have about the connection between God and our concern for the environment. What does the Bible have to say about our responsibility to care for God's creation, and what would a balanced biblical view of environmental matters look like?

Q First, what is the Christian perspective on the nature of the created world?

The world was created 'good' by God, and its goodness comes from God's sustaining presence here. The world around us is not sacred in and of itself, but neither is it to be exploited. We value and preserve the creation not of respect for the Creator.

Q What effect did the entry of sin into the world have on our environment?

Our responsibility, as those who gain immortality with the rest of creation in anticipation of the restoration of all things when Jesus comes back to Earth (Revelation 8:22, 23), is to slow the rate of environmental decay, to take care of God's creation, and to ensure that the inhabitants of our shared home can continue to enjoy a wonderful and meaningful life.

Q What part do we have to play in restoring the environment?

16 God's charge to humanity

by Max McKenzie-Cook

At the moment you can go on the Office for National Statistics website to see a snapshot on the health of the British economy. The figures include employment, the UK population, the gross domestic product (GDP), and about the economy is to give an overall picture. The reasons for these figures are: the labour force, that is, how many people are in work; the amount of goods and services produced; and whether the price of goods is at a stable level. The goal is for GDP to be ever increasing! However, there is a problem with GDP as a gauge of the nation's resources are needed to produce the goods and services that we need to live.

they are to care for the earth and all living things. The gift of the world, with all its beauty and wonder, is in our charge. We are to look after it to ensure it remains resilient during climate change and sustainable events. As a result, close to the heart of Christians, are subjects sustainability, with an immediate need for action. Contributions to develop goals of the long term will operate sustainably in the world. We must support the need for urgent action, and show that change to our way of living is inevitable, and the only choice we have is to embrace it. If we do nothing, that change will come to us, and we may be forced into change because

our natural resources will have been depleted. What can we do to help transition towards a more sustainable way of living? Can an individual level we can all make small changes that reduce our carbon footprint, lower waste usage and protect our lifestyles. We could choose to buy local, eat less meat, or to change into a big impact.

On a structural level we can be more involved with institutions, like governments, your schools, schools or businesses. How can we look out for environmental and social issues? We can lobby politicians and make our voices heard. What partnerships and collaborations can we form together to address the issue? Green change will support all of us, and we all work together we can make a positive difference.

Climate change and our future

01476 591700
sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk

LifeSource
Christian Bookshop

or visit our shop online at
www.LifeSourceBookshop.co.uk