

**SEC**

# COMMUNICATOR

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**SPECIAL EDITION**



**CHRISTIANITY IN THE UK TODAY  
BECOMING A MORE RELEVANT CHURCH  
MILLENNIAL DISILLUSIONMENT  
THINGS HAVE TO BE DIFFERENT  
SEC NEWS**

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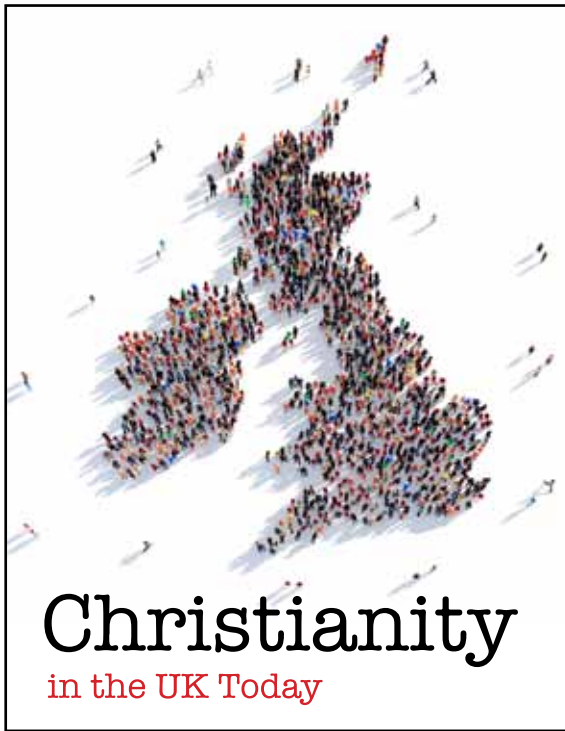
# REFRESH

 **EVANGELISM  
EVERYONE  
EVERYWHERE**

## RECLAMATION & THE MILLENNIAL CHALLENGE

A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH





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# Editorial

## STRATEGY AND APPROACH TO OUTREACH

In this special edition of the SEC Communicator, our focus shifts to the reality of the state of Christianity in the UK, alongside a revision of the SEC strategy and approach to outreach—*EEE Refresh*. We will also address the challenges that the church in the UK faces in ministering to, nurturing, and retaining millennials.

With the grim statistics of the declining numbers of Christians in the United Kingdom, we must consider that perhaps we are experiencing a paradigm shift in faith in our nation. Coupled with data from the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Department of Archives, Statistics and Research, showing almost 40% loss of members over the past few decades, it appears that the Church needs to revisit its retention strategy. Could this be indicative of the 21st century being the “best of times” and also the “worst of times?” Or is the Church under some form of spiritual siege?

The sobering statistics from the GC and the recent news reports in the mainstream media predicting the decline of Christianity in our nation are a wake-up call for us here in the SEC. At the Conference office, some initiatives have been discussed to address these challenges, and that has necessitated this special edition, a refresh of our theme for the quadrennial (**EVANGELISM EVERYONE EVERYWHERE**) as we focus on RECLAMATION this year.

Our focus on RECLAMATION will involve four key areas:

**1. A more NURTURING church** – Many of our churches are devoid of meaningful relationships, which makes retention very difficult. The aspiration is to become a more loving people who care for those who will join our congregation, not only to improve retention but to ensure that they become mature followers of Jesus Christ.

**2. A more RELEVANT church** – One of the most significant challenges facing churches today is relevance. A church that is not discovering the needs of the community where it is situated (including its own members) will soon descend

into irrelevance. Each member must be involved in reaching out to the needs of their communities.

**3. A SPIRITUALLY HUNGRY church** – In the great controversy between Christ and Satan, we must realise that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against powers of darkness. Our victory lies in being intentionally spiritually hungry, and in being in constant communion with God to be open to His leading. Bible study, prayer, and reflection assist us in this quest.

**4. A more RESOURCEFUL church** – Our ministry depends on the power of the Holy Spirit to infuse life into it. However, we also need resources, personnel, and finances for these ministries to continue and to be effective. Accomplishing our mission will require faithfulness in the giving of our time, talents, and the treasure with which God has blessed us.

A marked struggle for the church today is how to address the needs of the millennials. Corporate entities are conducting research into the working patterns of millennials whose *modus operandi* has shifted from that of previous generations. Many churches have unintentionally relegated the millennials to the fringes, to their detriment, as they do “business as usual.” If Christianity is for all, then millennials have a significant role to play in bringing their peers to Christ.

Many millennials leave the church because they do not feel valued, or they feel chided by the previous generation and they believe that leaders are unwilling to recognize that they, too, wish to participate in the Great Commission.

Perhaps at the core of the current situation is a need for change. Change at every level, the total involvement of more young people in the decision-making process, and dynamic, spiritually-hungry individuals.

May you prayerfully read and reflect on the need for change in the Seventh-day Adventist church in the South England Conference.

**OUR COVER**



Cover Photo: Anthony Fuller



**SAM O. DAVIES**  
Editor

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On DAB



# President's Desk

DR EMMANUEL OSEI | SEC PRESIDENT



## Where Are We Now?

Following our Directors' Residential meeting on 4th - 6th October 2017, the Lord spoke to us in no uncertain terms that:

- 1. All of our local churches must become relevant to our communities, and**
- 2. We must engage with the millennials within our church.**

It has become apparent to us that church membership within the British Isles is plummeting rapidly at an alarming rate. The recent statistics indicate that 53% of the British population has classified themselves as having no religion. Within the SDA Church in Europe, we are really struggling to evangelise and grow. Our churches are dying in Europe. The South England Conference has been referred to as the "bread basket" for the Trans-European Division, having a membership of just under 25,000. However, the picture is not very good because as much as we pride ourselves on the belief that the church in the SEC is growing, statistics show that out of every ten people that we baptise, four members leave the church. Thus, shockingly, we are losing 40% of those whom we baptise. What is worse is that 70% of the 40% who leave our church are millennials! This is alarming!

Millennials are categorised as young people from the ages of 18 - 35 years. This group of Adventist young people are professionals, focused, articulate, and extremely gifted. They have much to offer our churches but are very often disenfranchised and

ultimately disenfranchised. They want to be involved in the church but feel that the church does not value their contributions. They believe sermons should be relevant to their everyday lives. It has become essential as we evangelise to engage with our millennials and work alongside them to fulfil the Gospel commission.

As we focus on reclamation in 2018, we need to ask the questions: What are we reclaiming? Is it just lapsed or missing members? I submit to you that we also need to focus on reclaiming our finances. We have a goal of raising £65m by the end of this quadrennial. The Treasurer informs us that we are on target, and I would like to commend our members for their faithfulness. However, we are not doing so well with our Gift Aid. There is a lot of money that we can reclaim, if only we would sign up. It is our right to divert part of our taxes to a charity of our choice. Here is a resource that is so easy for us to reclaim at no effort to ourselves. Therefore, our church treasurers ought to be spearheading efforts to remind members of this right to use part of their taxes for the church's greater good.

Another area that we need to reclaim is that of discipleship. We do well in working to lead people to the baptismal pool, but, sadly, there is no follow-up. This often contributes to the loss of these new members. We need to have a discipleship training programme and ensure that members are participating in the training. It has become vitally important that we urgently stem the flow of members leaving our church.

A plan needs to be put in place to nurture and retain those who join our churches. We need to be more intentional with our discipleship programme, if we are to grow as a church.

If we are to reclaim lost members, where do we start? Do we know what our true membership statistics are? Where are those members who once walked with us? Do we have a tool to utilise a membership audit in our churches? What are the implications when we see the real picture of our membership?

At our recent TED year-end meetings, we were informed that over the past ten years, we have lost 7,145 members. This is significant. Each member matters. If one sheep meant so much to the Good Shepherd that He was willing to risk the safety of the ninety-nine and go in search of the one, how can we do any less for the hundreds that we are losing annually?

Lastly, our church was started by young people engaging in evangelism. Evangelism should not be viewed as an event but a way of life. We urgently need to reclaim our evangelistic fervour and zeal.

“SOME OF THE BEST YEARS OF MY LIFE SO FAR WERE SPENT AT NEWBOLD”



Coming to Newbold was challenging, but I soon realised that the College was a hub of people like me; hungry for community, friendships and relevance. Newbold is very international and I found it to be extremely open and tolerant to different cultures and personalities and a place you'll always find people who speak your heart's 'language'.

Studying Theology at Newbold left me spiritually challenged, refreshed, encouraged, humbled and excited about the God of the Bible and sharing him with others.

It wasn't always easy, but what you get from your Newbold experience is equivalent to the amount of energy you put into it. Some of the best years of my life so far were spent at Newbold: the experiences I had and the friendships I formed have been the most important and formative ones of my life, and I'm honoured to have had the opportunity to have a Newbold experience.

Christian Karlsson - Theology



8 PRINCIPLES for Igniting Change!

**Have you got what it takes to be a change agent?**

Three frogs are sitting on a log, one hot summer day. One of the frogs makes a decision to jump into the water. Question: How many frogs are left on the log? The answer is three, of course. The frog in question only made a decision; he took no action! As we launch the **EEE Refresh**, we are hoping that you will not be like the frog, but instead jump into the change that we're hoping will sweep right across the South England Conference.

Change is one of those things that is easy to talk about, yet so hard to do. For this reason, change normally happens as the result of a crisis. In relation to our church's mission, this reminds me of something that Ellen White once wrote:

*"The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances."* ELLEN WHITE-5T 463 (1885).

Currently, our church faces a triple crisis: the serious decline of Christianity in the UK, missing "millennials," and proposed legislation which could mean the loss of religious freedoms we have taken for granted in the UK. Tackling serious issues like these will require more than nicely choreographed one-off events.

**EEE Refresh** is about changing church culture and mind-set to become a more nurturing, spiritually hungry, and resourceful church with extra emphasis on relevance. But how do you shift the culture of the SEC so that everyone sees it as their personal mission to be totally immersed in the mission of the church? Where do you start?

Culture change does not just happen by accident. It calls for the involvement

of change agents at every level of our organisation. The great news is that anyone can be a change agent, from the youngest child in Cradle Roll to the most senior member of the congregation. There are eight well-documented general principles that change agents need to be aware of for bringing about change, right where they are.

These are as follows:

**Principle 1: Create a sense of urgency**  
Change agents create urgency using personal stories, creating messages that are simple, imaginative, and call people to change.

**Principle 2: Create a team that can get things done**  
Change agents create teams with clear unifying goals, influencing others to get things done and make informed decisions.

**Principle 3: Create a compelling vision for change**  
Change agents create a compelling vision of how things can be different or better than they are now. This will do far more to engage people than an authoritarian decree from the lofty heights of the General Conference.

**Principle 4: Communicate for engagement**  
Change agents use every opportunity to communicate change, referring to it in emails, meetings, sermons, and prayers. The change agents that transform communities, organisations, and churches are the ones who walk the talk. They embody the change that they are asking everyone else to make.

**Principle 5: Remove barriers**  
Change agents remove barriers, supporting people to do their best work. They confront active saboteurs and those lacking the energy to go with

the game plan openly and with honest dialogue.

**Principle 6: Identify the "quick wins"**  
Change agents create visible success, as soon as possible. They recognise that quick wins are key for undermining the credibility of resistors and nay-sayers. "Quick wins" bring momentum.

**Principle 7: Keep moving**  
Change agents don't declare victory too early. Instead they launch more and more initiatives to drive change deeper. They are fully aware that once you stop the change process, it's always harder to build up the momentum again.

**Principle 8: Embed the change**  
Change agents embed change by inspiring more people to follow them. They know that relevance and "followership" are linked. They are also aware that a change agent without followers is just someone taking a walk.

(Based on John Kotter's 8 Steps for Leading Change)

Do you have what it takes to be a change agent? What are you going to change to bring the **EEE Refresh** to life in your church? Use the principles of change laid out in this article to transform the culture of your local church to a culture that is more nurturing, spiritually hungry, resourceful, and relevant. Don't just sit back like the frog on the log. Jump in!



**Antonio Belgrave**  
Strategic Planning

# Christianity IN THE UK TODAY

Writing about the state of Christianity in the UK, Damian Thompson, journalist and associate editor of The Spectator, starts his article entitled "2067: the end of British Christianity" with these words: "It's often said that Britain's church congregations are shrinking, but that doesn't come close to expressing the scale of the disaster now facing Christianity in this country. ... If that rate of decline continues, the mission of St Augustine to the English, together with that of the Irish saints to the Scots, will come to an end in 2067." He continues, "The Church of England (CofE) is declining faster than other denominations; if it carries on shrinking at the rate suggested by the latest British Social Attitudes survey (BSAS), Anglicanism will disappear from Britain in 2033. One day the last native-born Christian will die and that will be that." Ouch!

These statements are stunning, dramatic, and gloomy. The decline is across all four UK countries, and in Scotland is as high as 44%, based on 2008-2013 figures and projections for 2013-2020. The table below tracks the top 10 denominational trends:<sup>2</sup> The decline of 2008-2020 shows the Anglican church -14%, Catholic -32%, Methodist -39%, and Presbyterian -50%. There are rays of hope with growth for New Churches +19%, Orthodox +30%, Pentecostals +26%, Smaller Denominations +34%, and Fresh Expressions 323% (from a low start). However, growth is from a small base and is not significant enough to counter the decline.

Denomination	2008 Membership	% change 2008-2013	2013 Membership	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est Membership
Anglican	1,436,329	-5%	1,362,855	-9%	1,241,695
Baptist	208,488	-9%	189,152	-8%	174,873
Catholic	1,611,954	-13%	1,399,942	-19%	1,128,800
Independent	232,281	+3%	239,709	+4%	249,273
Methodist	270,832	-15%	231,357	-24%	176,160
New Churches	195,993	+9%	212,911	+10%	234,155
Orthodox	390,659	+19%	464,194	+11%	514,585
Pentecostal	358,370	+21%	432,687	+25%	541,954
Presbyterian	814,669	-20%	649,067	-30%	455,367
Smaller Denoms. excluding Fresh Expressions	155,425	+18%	182,723	+16%	211,883
Fresh Expressions	19,300	+273%	71,900	+50%	108,200
<b>ALL Churches</b>	<b>5,694,300</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>5,436,497</b>	<b>-7%</b>	<b>5,036,945</b>



decline. People embedded in the British culture, whatever their ethnicity, are more difficult to reach. We cannot continue to rely on immigration to grow the church! The borders will not always be open. And more importantly, the effects of immigration do not last beyond the second generation. Who knows what impact Brexit and developments in Zimbabwe will have on UK Adventism?

## FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DECLINE

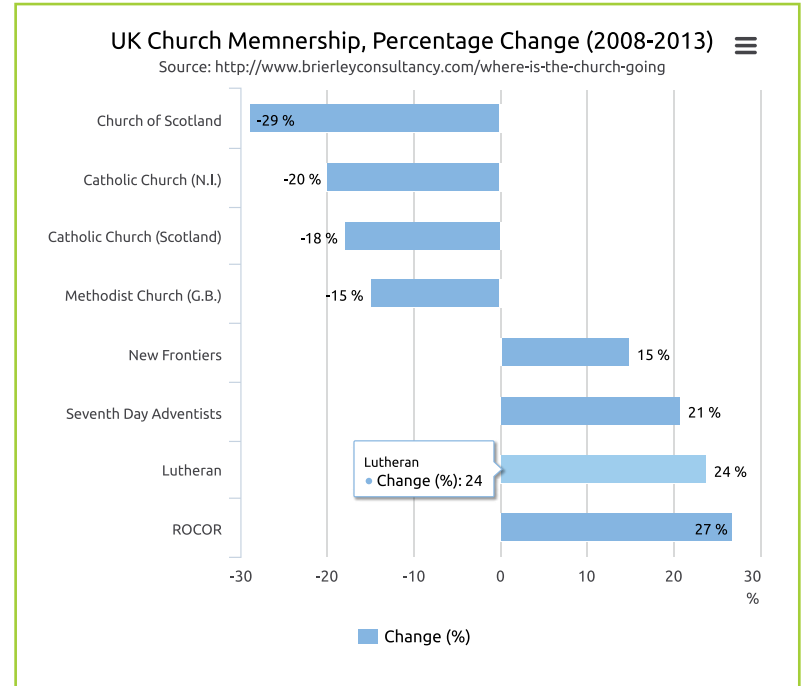
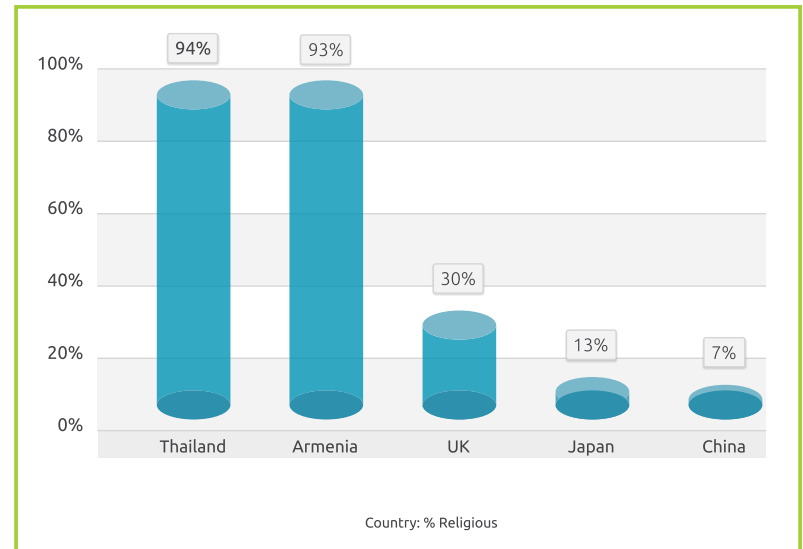
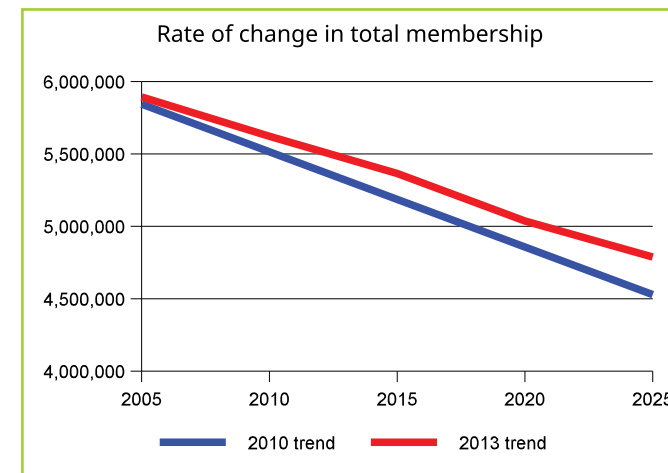
97% of 20,500 CofE ordained clergy are white male, yet their decline is faster than other denominations. "Black majority churches" derive their growth from first generation immigrants but are less successful with UK-born generations. Therefore, the issue is not simply about the race of clergy or membership, but the host culture. A convergence of several factors contributes to this decline: decline in cultural capital and social capital, consumerism, individualism, secularization, demographics, and institutionalisation.

## SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Two things. Firstly, as an organisation we need a strategy fit for the times and UK context. Secondly, as individuals, Jesus says to us, "We must work the works of him who sent (us) while it is day; night is coming when no one can work." (John 9:4 adapted) "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us." (2 Cor 5:20) The work can be finished "only by the whole church acting their part under the guidance and in the power of God."<sup>5</sup>

There's no denying that Christianity in the UK is in deep trouble. How the story evolves for Adventism in the UK depends on strategies adopted and what we do as

individuals. My hope and prayer is that we will each roll up our sleeves and get to work, adopting the SEC's **EEE Refresh** strategy for 2018 to help to reverse the haemorrhaging in our congregations.



However you look at the statistics, the trajectory is that of sharp decline. According to a UK Census, between 2001 and 2011 the number of Christians born in Britain fell by 5.3 million—about 10,000 a week. With a continued rate of decline at this level, the number of UK-born Christians would be reduced to zero by 2067, and according to Thompson, "the CofE will close its doors by 2033."

A 2014 survey of approximately 64,000 people in 65 countries revealed the UK to be one of the world's most irreligious countries, with only 30% of those surveyed identifying as "religious."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the BSAS 04 September 2017 on religious affiliation reveals that for the first time more than half (53%) of the British public now describe themselves as having "no religion," up from 48% in 2015, and a gradual increase from 31% in 1983 when the survey started. There is no denying the Christian churches are in trouble.

## EFFECTS OF IMMIGRATION

Prof Mike Kenny of the Institute for Public Policy Research said, "The research shows that recent waves of inward migration have given a boost to some of the UK's established faith communities at a time when Britain's society and culture are generally more secular, and smaller numbers of the indigenous population are regularly attending churches. ... Catholicism has been boosted by the arrival of almost 600,000 immigrants...." Britain's most senior Catholic cleric, Vincent Nichols insists that "new migrants are bringing fresh life to 'weary western culture.' ...It would be meaningless to discount the effects. If you 'strip out' immigration you are talking about a place that doesn't exist"<sup>4</sup>. Immigrants and CofE Fresh Expressions are credited for pushing back the rate of decline by 5-6 years.

## HOW ABOUT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS?

Between 2008–2013, the Seventh-day Adventist church grew by 21%, largely attributed to immigration. A recent breakdown of BUC membership by ethnicity shows that only 7% are White (UK). When the effects of immigration are stripped out, the trajectory is that of

1. The Spectator (<https://www.spectator.co.uk/2015/06/2067-the-end-of-british-christianity>)
2. <https://faithsurvey.co.uk/download/csintro.pdf>
3. <https://faithsurvey.co.uk/uk-christianity.html>
4. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/6799755/Study-reveals-impact-of-immigration-on-UK-faiths.html>
5. Spirit of Prophecy Counsels on Self-Supporting Work (10:2), Ellen G White



## MFAKAZI NDEBELE

BSc, MSc, MBA is a Non-Stipendiary Minister for The Oasis Church. He holds Certificates in Coaching, Applied Behavioural Science (OD) & Applied Neuroscience

# A More Nurturing Church

# A More Relevant Church



For years we have been talking about the decline of Christianity throughout Western Europe and the secularisation of society. Recently, UK statistics have shown for the first time that more than half (53 percent) of the British public say they have no religion. The figures are even more stark for those in the 18-24 age bracket, with

share that since 1965 there have been 35,825,953 baptisms. And out of that 35 million, nearly 14 million have chosen to leave. That is a net loss rate of 38.96%. In effect, four out of every ten church members are slipping away. The reasons why members are leaving might surprise

and unimportant. In Mark 3:31-35, Jesus defines who are the family of God: *“Whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and My mother.”* In John 13:34-35, Jesus tells us what that family looks like: *“A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one*

Well, from the perspective of the Secretariat, it starts by knowing who the family members are. Does the church board regularly review the membership list? Is every effort being made to identify those who no longer come to church, and find out why? Who is looking after the new members and staying in touch with them? Do the elders, the deaconate, or the pastor know who is out sick? If I was a member of your church family and I stopped coming, who would be the first person to call me? During 2018, as part of the **EEE Refresh** strategy of the SEC, we would encourage all our members to reflect on how they treat each other.

If we truly seek to imitate Christ corporately and individually, not only will we be drawn to our Saviour, but we will be drawn to each other to nurture, support, and love each other into the Kingdom of God.



**Douglas McCormac**  
Executive Secretary

Every church can and should be a relevant part of her local community, even if its members just commute in for worship. Christ first characterised the church as the *“salt of the earth [and]... the light of the world”* (Matthew 5:13-16). He then showed how His disciples can become needed and important to their community by His visible interaction with all groups of people in His community, and by the compassionate care extended in ministering to the needs of the people.

A visible, positive presence will enable the church to be Heaven’s embassy in their community. The church’s regular involvement in the happenings of the community will eliminate many negative stereotypes. Participation and representation in community events offer many opportunities for visible mingling with the community.

- In one church, the Community Ministries partnered with a local supermarket to collect food donations from shoppers every fourth Sunday. They then distributed donations to the food banks in the area and gave food parcels to the needy. The work of the church made it visible in the community.

- Many schools, hospitals, charities, and other community groups always seek for volunteers and facilitators for different activities. Every second July, I participate in the interfaith day

at the local secondary school. The church and a summary of our key beliefs is featured in the brochure of the day. This has led to productive discussions and relationships with other community groups and individuals.

- Representation at community events fosters friendship and offers opportunity to acquaint the community with the Church’s perspective. Many borough councils and local charities seek representation from community groups. Each church should appoint an individual to liaise with local authorities or represent the church community.

Only the church willing to follow the example of Christ in ministering to the immediate needs of the community will become relevant to that community. Christ went about healing the sick, feeding the hungry, setting captives free from demonic possession, and giving hope for a better tomorrow (Luke 4:18). Like Jesus, the church that ministers to the physical, emotional, and relational needs of her community will also find a way to minister to the spiritually hungry.

- Many communities have homeless and poor people who suffer hunger and other physical needs. Every church should endeavor to find the hungry or team up with another organisation to run a regular feeding program for the homeless. These events can also extend other types of care, such as hygiene services.

- Poor health from bad lifestyle choices offers the church numerous opportunities for providing information and experiences about health. From health expos to cooking classes, hiking, or cycling events, there are activities that appeal to every age and class.

- Around Christmas time, one church offered Christmas hampers to the seniors in the community. They also wrote to the nearby school for contacts of families that might need food parcel help and gifts for the season. The response was overwhelming!

- To address the friendship and financial needs of their community, one church established a counselling ministry that created and/or facilitated services to help with parenting, marriage, and managing debt. This was really appreciated.

There is no end to what the church could do. But the church cannot afford to do nothing. This would be failing to fulfil one of our reasons for existence. Therefore, the conference proposes a three-tier engagement for each church target:

1. Engage with community leaders and organisations to establish the pressing needs.
2. Report back to the church board and seek the Lord’s guidance on what and how to address some of these clear needs.
3. Finally, put together and facilitate sustainable programmes to meet these needs.



May our churches be salt and light in our communities, witnessing to the goodness and grace of God for humanity.



**Michael Mbui**  
Personal Ministries & Sabbath School Director

“A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another”

the statistics around 70%. It is against this background that the Adventist Church is seeking to share the hope of the Gospel message in a world that is becoming increasingly secular. However, that is only one front in the Great Controversy. There is another battle taking place, and it is taking place inside our congregations.

At the 2017 Annual Council of the General Conference this autumn, Dr David Trim shared some frightening statistics with the delegates who had congregated from across the globe. As a global family, our membership is just below 22 million. It is great that we add over one million members annually. However, he went on to

you. It is not because of theological difference or that they decide they no longer want to be an Adventist. Rather, it is because they might be going through a crisis in their life, experience conflict in the church, and feel un-missed, un-cared for,

*another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

What are some of the practical steps we can take so that we are the family that Christ has called us to be?



# A Spiritually Hungry Church



**Few of us are ever desperately hungry. We may get peckish and our blood sugar may dip, but we are seldom in the position of being driven by our need for food.**

Hunger is a curious thing. It does strange things to our bodies and minds. In extended periods of fasting or starvation, the body and brain will reduce their need for energy until only using minimal amounts of “reclaimed” fuel. The body can handle periods of starvation only if it remains adequately hydrated.

Hunger and thirst are not aspirational states of being! They are signs that things are not going well with us. Signs that the body is under-resourced and neglected in vital ways. So, what does Jesus mean when He says, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matthew 5:6)?

Of course, Jesus is not idealising the state of being hungry (and surely there were many poor and hungry in first century Palestine), nor is He proposing that dehydration is something we should strive toward. Instead, Jesus is aiming at the point of need, that place where we sense our very deep drive for nourishment and refreshment, where our whole being is demanding resources to strengthen and empower it.

In this quadrennium we, in the South England Conference, are imagining “a spiritually hungry church.” While we would never wish to see the church

starving for food (our potlucks are generally very abundant), we realise that we are often far less abundant in the regular feeding of our spiritual lives. With so much on offer and so many topics and issues to occupy our minds and use our energy, we are tempted to “fill up” in areas that won’t bring us closer to Jesus.

To be “spiritually hungry” is less about being issue driven and more about our passion for the person and character of Christ. It is to be “hungry” for His company and presence, knowing that we are more fulfilled and whole with Him than we are when wrapped up in the myriad of interesting (even important) issue-driven fare on offer. To be “spiritually hungry” is to devour His Word and drink in His Spirit as the life-sustaining essence that they are! To be pleading that the Fruit of the Spirit fill our interactions even as the Bread and Water of Life attend to our daily needs.

But a “spiritually hungry” church must also be moving toward being a “spiritually mature” church. We have a responsibility to learn to feed ourselves. We cannot remain little children who wait helplessly for someone to bring the food, prepare the food, and then spoon it into our mouths. A healthy, mature,

and vibrant church will have been learning discernment in its spiritual diet as well as the value of regular balanced meals.

The spiritual effects are similar to the physical:

- A healthy glow
- A strong immune system
- Greater capacity to heal when wounded
- More energy for work and play
- A brighter view of the world and our place in it
- A willingness to be challenged and stretched
- And the best part is that on this “spiritual diet,” we are encouraged to “eat between meals!”



**Wayne Erasmus**  
Church Growth & Missions Director

# A More Resourceful Church



## Reclaiming Generosity

One of the key factors for success in the SEC’s maxim “**Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere**” is to become “a more resourceful church.” This is crucial to achieve the goal of reclamation for the year 2018, where every member, church, ministry, and minister in the conference is encouraged to practice resourcefulness.

The Collins dictionary defines resourcefulness as being “ingenious, capable, and full of initiative, especially in dealing with difficult situations.” The Harvard Business Review explains resourcefulness as not just a “means of coping with difficult situations,” but also that “it can be a virtue that opens the door to greater accomplishment.” (Baldoni)

Many narratives in the Scriptures teach us lessons on resourcefulness. We are all invited by our Provider to give resourcefulness a try by exercising our faith in God.

In Luke 9:13, Jesus told His disciples, “You give them something to eat.” Here, Jesus called on His disciples to feed the starving people during the miraculous feeding of the 5000. In being resourceful, finding five loaves of bread and two fishes through the generosity of a little boy, they accomplished their work.

On another occasion, when Jesus sent out the seventy-two, He said to them, “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are

few; therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals” (Luke 10:2-4). They were to have faith, travel light, and be resourceful. And the disciples came back full of joy, praising the Lord.

A severely disabled man desired to be healed, but because he couldn’t get through the doorway, his friends cut an opening in the roof and gently lowered their paralytic friend down right in front of Jesus. He was healed immediately, and his friends were praised by Jesus for their inventive and resourceful demonstration of faith (Mark 2:1-5).

Today, Jesus is telling us to be resourceful in providing for the needs of the great harvest that is set before us in the South England Conference. We have been given the fields from Cornwall to Norwich and from Gloucester to Dover, where we are seeking to advance the three angels’ message.

Every church member knows that God has a plan to support His mission and ministry on earth through “Systematic Benevolence.” This is a principle based on scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 16:2, which emphasises systematic planned giving, and 2 Corinthians 9:5-7, which emphasises cheerful giving and an attitude of generosity. By reclaiming these biblical

principles and practices, our churches will raise more faithful stewards and mission-oriented disciples, who are encouraged by the Spirit of God to support the mission of the Church. In demonstrating resourcefulness by responding to the needs of the Church’s plans and projects, we exhibit faithfulness in returning our tithes and in giving freewill offerings.

Resourcefulness will be of great benefit to God’s end-time church. The more inclusive our church community becomes, the more resourceful it can be in supporting the cause of God. Jesus said that we will see greater things than what He did on earth, for the power that is at work within us is greater than he that is in the world (John 14:12 and 1 John 4:4).

Be a more resourceful church and share your God-given resources for mission!



**Todd Frias**  
Stewardship & Trust Services Director



# Let us Cross Over

**“Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere, Refresh” (EEE Refresh)** is a sacred vision. It is about total membership involvement (TMI) for nurturing and reclamation. As we consider this vision, I want to make a point from a story recorded in Luke 8:22 (KJV): *“Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples, and he said unto them, ‘Let us go over unto the other side of the lake.’ And they launched forth.”* As they crossed to the other side of the lake, Jesus fell asleep in the boat, even when a fierce storm placed their lives in jeopardy. Jesus got up, when roused, and rebuked the storm. Suddenly, there was calm. In the middle of the storm, Jesus was able to sleep.

Let’s reflect on the story. First, Jesus was in the boat with his disciples. His presence inspired confidence. Likewise, if we are going to be effective, we must stand with our people to “cross over.” Second, Jesus gave the command to “cross over,” and the Bible says that *“they launched forth.”* Success comes by obeying the command of God. Third, Jesus was not disturbed by the raging storm. This is reassuring; we know that, consistent with Jesus’ promise to be with us till the end of the world, we are not alone even in our storms.

This year, the SEC is focusing on reclaiming lost members. It will not be easy to reconnect and reclaim. The journey ahead will be stormy. The Ministerial Association, in collaboration with the churches, will engage the elders, deacons, and deaconesses over February 16-18, 2018 to pray and seek the Lord to lead all our churches to reclaim missing members.

Among the topics to be addressed during this weekend are:

- (1) The visibility of our churches in the community.

- (2) Practical ways to reclaim people.
- (3) The millennial challenge. *(We have a large membership falling within the age bracket of 18-35. We must begin to empower this group in the “cross over” command.)*
- (4) Process and procedures.
- (5) The vital role of deacons and deaconesses in our churches.

In trying to reconnect with and reclaim lost members, we know that the Enemy will try to frustrate our efforts and break our ranks. However, it is possible to reclaim everyone who has left the Adventist church. The call by Jesus to “cross over” is a sacred work. Ellen White writes that *“to handle sacred things as we would common matters is an offense to God; for that which God has set apart to do His service in giving light to this world is holy. Those who have any connection with the work of God are not to walk in the vanity of their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of God, or they will be in danger of placing sacred and common things on the same level, and thus separate themselves from God.”* (Review & Herald, September 8, 1896)

Let us carry out Jesus’ command to “cross over” and reclaim the lost through His wisdom and power.



**Ebenezer Jones-Lartey**  
SEC Ministerial

# Change begins with Self



## Health and Reclamation: Lost Property, Found Again

The London Tube Lost Property office is the largest of its kind in Europe and second in the world only to the Tokyo depot. For over 80 years the dedicated staff in the huge office at 200 Baker Street have collected and recorded thousands of items. These items include keys, computers, mobile phones, umbrellas, wedding rings and even artificial limbs! As well as storing the objects, the office does its best to return the items to their rightful owners. It can take weeks, months, or years to achieve this. But what keeps the staff motivated to continue their search for the owners is the responses they receive when they are finally found. Often, they are met with tears of joy, a deep sense of relief, or just sheer amazement that something given up as lost has been found again.

We can all remember that feeling of joy and relief we experience when we find something precious that we thought was lost. I remember losing my mobile phone in Dubai. For 24 hours, not only was I full of regret (*“Why didn’t*

*I pay more attention?”*), but it was also difficult to function. I couldn’t access any phone numbers and therefore was unable to make any calls. I couldn’t access my email as I had no computer with me. It was really quite a challenge. The next day, when the taxi driver returned the phone to me, I was so thankful—and I also started to appreciate my phone a little more.

We often don’t appreciate something until it has gone. Those of us who are experiencing good health need to thank God every day. It is a gift of freedom from pain, worry, medication, and treatments.

When we have lost our health or are unwell, we yearn to be free again, to be the person we used to be. Often, we ask the same question that I asked about my phone, *“Why didn’t I pay more attention?”* and *“Why didn’t I look after my health when I had the chance?”* Illness limits us in a much more profound way than losing a phone. It restricts us physically, emotionally, and

spiritually.

But, thankfully, there is hope!

For most of us, even if we find ourselves unwell, there is usually a cure. Often the cause of the illness is poor lifestyle choices, stress management, diet, and lack of exercise. The cure can then be found in a more intentional lifestyle.

I have had the privilege of helping people reclaim their health after thinking that it was lost for good. Just like the lost property workers, I can say that it is such a joy to see the reaction when health is restored—not just the reaction of the cured individuals, but of all their friends and family. There’s a party atmosphere as if they have been released from prison. In many ways they have been released. Released from a prison of diabetes or hypertension or depression. What a wonderful feeling to reclaim something so precious that was lost.

2018 can be your Year of Reclamation. Whatever was lost, may it be found! May this be

the year that you reclaim your health. May this be the year that you help others reclaim their health too.

In 2018, the SEC Health Ministries department will be launching the Life Colours health programme which will help people, communities, and groups work together to reclaim our physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

Turning **ILLNESS** into **WELLNESS** requires us to replace **“I”** with **“WE.”** Let’s reclaim the health of this nation together, to open the way for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



**Dr Chidi Ngwaba**  
MB, BS is Health Ministries Director



# Religious Liberty

## Countering Extremism and The Temper of the Times

*"From the tribe of Issachar there were 200 leaders of the tribe with their relatives – all men who understood the temper of the times and knew the best course for Israel to take."* 1 Chronicles 12:32 (TLB)

In September 2017, the government launched its recruitment process to appoint a Lead Commissioner to head up the Commission for Countering Extremism. The Commission's purpose will be to identify extremism and to advise the government on policies, laws, and other measures designed to tackle radicalisation and extremism in all its forms.

This decision follows the failure of the government to pass its proposed legislation in the HM Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill in 2015 and 2016. The key features of the Bill were that there would be a requirement to register Out-of-School education settings (such as children's Sabbath schools, vacation Bible schools, and home schools) with the authorities, so that they could be inspected by Ofsted and sanctioned in cases of the school failing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The counter-extremism strategy has defined extremism as *"the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs."* The problem with this definition is that there is no apparent difference between the treatment of violent and non-violent extremism, which has alarmed many faith groups.

Furthermore, the government's two-pronged approach to dealing with this issue, namely regulating activities in out-of-school education settings, while at the same time facilitating integration through the promotion of fundamental British values, could directly infringe on religious liberty.

The fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, equality, freedom of speech, mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding of different faiths and beliefs are, by and large, concepts that we can also embrace as law-abiding citizens.

However, the Casey Review, which is being used to inform the strategy on integration by the Department for Communities and Local Government, also includes *"equality"* in the fundamental British values. The standard for equality is set out in the Equality Act 2010. This Act effectively combines all the anti-discrimination legislation in one statute, covering the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex and sexual orientation—but it does not effectively address situations where there may be a clash of interests between the protected groups.

Christians have been given a commission to share the Gospel, the good news of salvation to be found in Christ alone, but in doing so they risk falling foul of the law and being labelled as bigots or *"strait-laced extremists"* by people who do not share these beliefs. All these issues collide when we consider the challenges that the phenomenon of transgenderism presents to the church. Under this new regime, it is expected that children should be taught about different lifestyles, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender lifestyles, and if the schools fail to meet the expected standards, they may incur sanctions



which could include closing the school or preventing the teachers from working with children in the future.

Equally concerning is the proposal that under the new rules, all public office holders would be required to take an oath to uphold the fundamental British values. Increasingly, our church members are having to confront these issues in their own lives, at home, at work, and in the church, and there is a clear need for a church policy and guidelines based on fundamental biblical principles to help them as they do so.

Furthermore, while issues such as transgenderism present significant challenges, they also present opportunities for us to witness for the truth. The consultation on government proposals to de-medicalise the gender recognition process is imminent, and women's groups, concerned about the violation of women-only spaces by men claiming to be women, are certain to be actively engaged in the process.

In Testimonies Vol 5, page 713, Ellen White counsels us that *"we are not doing the will of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve liberty of conscience."* Benson's commentary on 1 Chronicles 12:32 observes that the children of Issachar *"understood public affairs and the temper of the nation, and the tendencies of the present events. And they showed their wisdom at this time."*

Like the children of Issachar, are we ready as an Advent Movement, both individually and collectively, to meet this challenge?



**Dr Brighton Kavaloh**  
Retired Pastor

# LET US CROSS OVER

## Reclamation

**16-18**  
Feb 2018

## ELDERS & DEACONS

### Conference

**Is Your Church Visible?**  
*(Sam Davies)*

**Paradigm Shift for Deacons & Deaconess**  
*(Mfakazi Ndebele)*

**Process & Procedures**  
*(Ebenezer Jones-Lartey)*

**The Millennial Challenge**  
*(Anthony Fuller)*

**Practical Steps to Reclaim**  
*(Dr Emmanuel Osei)*

For more information please contact Ruth Stewart at SEC  
**01923 232728 or RStewart@secadventist.org.uk**

# Millennial Refresh



## THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL FOR EVERY GENERATION

Within corporate companies around the world, there is a crisis of millennial workers, who are leaving the workplace faster than previous generations. Millions of pounds are being spent on research and training to help employers better motivate and understand millennial young adults. At times, it can appear that leaders from the older generation struggle with leading youth. However, I do not believe this is the case. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, at the tender age of 67, motivated 61% of under 40's to vote for his party at the recent General Election, which had not been seen since 1992. Why is this?

Based on a paper about motivating millennials, which I recently completed for my MBA, there are some common reasons as to why millennials leave companies. Unlike previous generations, their motivating factor for employment is not primarily money. Although an important issue, it is not their main reason for leaving highly-paid employment. Instead, my research found that if they did not feel valued, challenged, respected, or a part of the company's vision, then their motivational levels were greatly reduced.

*"People don't leave companies; they leave managers. They're*

*not mad at the building. They're mad at who they work with on a day-to-day basis. We [Baby Boomers, Gen X] may have tolerated it for five to 10 years. [Millennials] will tolerate it for five to 10 months. This is leading to significant changes at many companies, where savvy leaders are shaking up the long-stagnant management level."* (Reutemen, 2017)

It is not surprising then that at a church level, millennials—our young adults—have been leaving churches in droves for similar reasons.

SEC Youth Ministries recently carried out the 50\*7 project, which was set up to gain insight from the different age groups and demographics that make up our church. We found that a large percentage felt undervalued and unused, while there was also disparity in view of our fundamental beliefs. We concluded, based on the outcomes of the project, that our young adults have become disenfranchised by the church due to the following reasons:

1. They are unable to relate to the beliefs of a church in a way that resonates with their lives.
2. They are unable to honestly share their perspectives in the church community.
3. They are not mobilised to

create and establish communities that would reflect the values they want to see prioritised in the church.

Why was Jeremy Corbyn able to win the commitment of so many young people? He spoke the language that resonated with youth, but more importantly he cared. According to one campaign source, *"people were seeing stories about their school and hospital, not just national messaging like the Tories were doing. It has played in to the fact that people felt Labour's message was authentic and speaking to them and their lives."* (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/jun/10/jeremy-corbyn-youth-surge-votes-digital-activists>)  
The greatest need within our church is to live and experience the power of the Gospel that brings salvation to everyone who believes. Transformation of lives. Liberation. Unity. Community relevance.

Currently, what young adults actually see and experience in our churches is a political, racial, and cultural divide. A top-down operation. In-house fighting and inconsistency. A vision and spiritual belief system that does not resonate within their lives. Unbalanced representation where decisions are made. A church that does not value

innovation.

It's interesting to note that Jesus' ministry was not based on class, age groups, gender or race, but to all those that believed and were in need.

People will always leave church, but we, as leaders, need to be open to and allow for innovation, growth, and responsibility so that our millennials will find the church more relevant to their spiritual needs.

As part of the **EEE Refresh** strategic vision in 2018, the SEC Youth Ministries department will work to engage with many of its young people and especially millennials who are no longer in our congregations. Please pray that we will be sensitive and open to their needs when they do return.



**Anthony Fuller**  
Youth Director

Make a Difference!

## THINGS HAVE TO BE DIFFERENT

If you ask any millennial what they want from their life, they will most likely answer, *"I want to make a difference."*

Millennials are often branded as narcissistic, entitled, and lazy. But we are a generation on the hunt for an ultimate cause, constantly looking to be part of *"something greater than ourselves."* We want it to matter that we have lived, seeking out careers that make positive social and economic change. We'll take a pay-cut to find a job that matches our values, and try to make sure that we reduce our waste output to fit one tiny little Mason jar.

However, though this mindset manifests itself in our career choices, recycling habits, and paychecks, it does not always seem to translate into our church life and involvement. There are a number of different reasons for this. However, in this article, I would like to suggest just one: lack of opportunities to be involved in church.

Many Adventist millennials have found their elusive ultimate cause in Christ. Many of our hearts are captured by the Gospel and the

commission to take it to the ends of the earth. We see the big dreams and radical examples of Paul, Daniel, and Esther and desire similar experiences. We desperately want to give of our time and talents.

But, too often, our local churches and their administrative units simply do not offer the opportunity to support such a desire for sacrificial Christian service.

While I recognize that sometimes we do not take the initiative to do more, structural constraints can work against us. Even though we are challenged in our jobs with performing keyhole surgery, writing speeches for government ministers, or dealing with humanitarian crises, the church settings often limit our involvement to Scripture readings and one-off Sabbath School lessons.

The local church has the potential to be one of the primary vehicles by which the Gospel can be brought to our communities—with millennials at the helm. Not only are we capable of more, we desire it. This is not a generation that lacks a spirit of sacrifice; rather, we only need the opportunity to exercise it.

Here are a few suggestions for involving millennials in your local context:

Redefine millennial involvement from giving a Scripture reading to bigger and more meaningful tasks.

Trust them with a big project suited to their gifts and mentor them through it.

Ask them what area of ministry they would like to develop in and invest in their learning and growth.

Challenge and empower them to take up a creative evangelistic or community-focused project of their own and let them run with it — I'm sure you'll be surprised with the results!



**Alex Browne**

Stanborough Park Church  
Member, Civil Servant

# Millennial Disillusionment



**James Lammy**

Chelmsford Church Member, currently pursuing doctoral research in Epidemiology

While I was a student at Cambridge University, I sharpened my cognitive powers to such an extent that twelve years on, I can still remember the years 2001-2005 as being cerebrally formative. However, when I properly reflect on those years, it is not the positive development of my mental faculties that I remember as much as the fact that I became an agnostic, for various reasons, in my later undergraduate years.

I remember agonizing over the question of God's existence and receiving comments from pastors and church members that included the following: I was just being stubborn in refusing to accept the Almighty's existence, or I needed to read the four gospels to remedy my internal angst. Such responses left me hurt, lost, and despondent.

Indeed, by consistently failing to tackle my crisis of faith during those years, my church environment fostered an atmosphere where disbelief could take root and flourish. Moreover, that atmosphere was worryingly underscored by unhelpful initiatives that were apparently designed to engage and "faith-inspire" young, educated, and professional individuals. For instance, the many youth-day sermons I heard not only evidenced more rhetoric over actual biblical content, but were too often communicated through contextually inappropriate Americanised expressions, fits of shouting, irreverent jokes, and logically faulty analogies and anecdotes. These provoked the emotions more than they awakened and elevated my mind.

It is, therefore, unsurprising that millennials, who are bombarded with intellectually diverse study and/or work challenges during the week, leave church



services entertained but spiritually starved, since they are not being fed at a level that resolutely engages their cognitive machinery.

However, it's not all doom and gloom. Millennials can be reached if:

1. Clergy and laity take a more structured and intellectually rigorous approach to their prayer and Bible study habits to provide more spiritually sound, cogent, and rational responses to the real-world questions that our young people continually ask.
2. Millennials are inspired to gospel action via evangelistic efforts that are serious in their intent to save the spiritual lives of non-believers. We need, therefore, those in positions of authority to make evangelistic cycles, as opposed to events, their ecclesiological priority, where young people are employed and rightly trained as valued stakeholders in outreach efforts.

3. Seventh-day Adventist pioneer history is put back on the discursive "curriculum" - i.e. if the church polity actually begins to talk about our rich church heritage in an unashamed way from our pulpits, Sabbath School classes, afternoon programmes, and AYS meetings. Why? So that millennials have an informed understanding of their unique denominational identity through which they could gain a thorough understanding of why they belong to this church and why they should, in fact, invite others to come and join this eschatological movement.

Insofar as these three items are not in vogue, a renewed and sustained emphasis upon them will necessarily entail engagement towards millennials that is radically different to what we are perhaps accustomed to.



**Shaniqua Benjamin**

Croydon Church Member, Writer, Poet & Founder of *Young People Insight*

As Christians, serving others should be at the core of who we are. Jesus came to this earth to serve, and if we are supposed to be following His example, we should be serving others, particularly members of the community who may not know God.

As a millennial - who also regularly interacts with, works with, and researches into millennial culture - I believe that serving the community is a key element of our Christian walk. It is practical and necessary in the world, but is unfortunately one of the weaker focuses in our church, and does not fully engage millennials.

However, I believe that it is time for millennials to take ownership and stop waiting for the church to give them

"permission" to start a ministry and find ways to serve their community. Too often as Christians, we believe that a ministry must contain religious terms or take place on church premises, but this is not the case. A ministry can take a variety of forms - what is important is that we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit moving within us. Shouldn't all aspects of our lives be glorifying God anyway?

Over the years, the Holy Spirit has created a stirring in my heart to do good, make a difference, and fight injustice in the world. There are numerous issues I would like to address and many ways I want to make a difference, but I am currently focusing on empowering millennials between the ages of 16 and 26.



# BE THE Change



Last January, I launched a platform called Young People Insight (YPI), to give individuals of these ages an opportunity to feel heard in a society that often ignores them. Each month, we come together to have a topical conversation, and in January this year, I added a monthly poetry night into the mix so that voices can be expressed creatively, as well.

For me, this is a simple concept that can have a major impact on the lives of millennials, particularly those who are marginalised. Communication skills are developed, confidence is built, respect for others is exercised, and skills not always provided in schools are gained.

There is a lot more to YPI, but at its centre, the platform is ensuring that fellow millennials feel heard, loved, and valued, and that we are being the change we want to see. Sustaining YPI hasn't been

easy, but watching the difference it has made in people's lives has been worth it.

Ultimately, if you want to start a ministry or serve the community, don't feel that you can't do it because of your age or because you want to do it outside of church walls. I started YPI at 23, on my own, in an events venue - and I haven't looked back. It is not associated with the church, but if anyone asks me why I do what I do, I tell them that it starts with being a Christian.

Our ministry should be personal and a way of life that allows others to see Jesus shining through us. So, whether you want to eradicate homelessness, prevent social isolation, or fight racial injustice, pray and take the steps forward to starting your ministry and serving your community. You may be the catalyst for change in someone else's life.



**Luke Whyte**  
Church Planter, Templeway

# We Need to Know IT'S NOW OR NEVER!

Luke Whyte is also Youth Leadership Consultant, Author - A Beginner's Guide to Youth Ministry and Founder - www.TheYouthWorkshop.Com

I love youth ministry. I really do. It's an insatiable passion that I can't shake, nor do I want to. My thirty years have been shaped by the work of amazing individuals who have taken the time to pour life and energy into me, including my biological and church family, which is why I find the current statistics so heartbreaking.

Current data from my church suggests a net loss rate of 39.95% globally. In effect, for every ten members we have had, four have slipped away. Dr David Trim, Director for Archives, Statistics & Research, stated that "we don't know for certain, because we don't currently collect and report age data in statistical reports, ...but surveys reveal that young people make up a large proportion of that 40%, though it varies around the world."

We don't know who they

are. We. Don't. Know. Who. They. Are. For those of us with children, siblings, or close relatives, can you imagine one of them wandering off and we not even knowing who they are?

My friends, youth ministry is in crisis. This means our church is in crisis.

What is most saddening is with all that being said, there is still a lack of belief and trust placed in the young people who remain. I know this to be true for the following reasons.

Belief in the next generation would be evident through an investment of energy and enthusiasm, money and expertise into their training and development (long-term planning), rather than another special day where young people are herded up like cattle (short-term, old-school

mentality). Restructuring and reorganizing youth ministry around the former may prove costly in the short term, but it will produce an immeasurable return on investment (ROI) in the future. It is placing long-term strategizing over short-term metrics. Sure, you can ram 3000 young people into a venue in September, but where are they in October 2030?

We can learn a lot from Joseph. Joseph's strategy of placing a fifth of the plentiful harvest in storage for the time of famine to come was ingenious, and epitomized prioritizing the long-term over the short-term. The future over the present was the deciding factor in the survival of millions. Can we demonstrate this ability to see what's not right in front of us?

The situation we now find ourselves in is an

amalgamation of decisions made over the last ten, fifteen, or even twenty of years, not simply the last couple of weeks or months.

And here lies the absolute conundrum, the conundrum that I believe our youth ministry and possibly our church at large is struggling with. How do we produce "results," whatever they may be over the short-term, whilst also proactively building for the future? This should be the perennial question of every thinking leader.

The statistics show that we have already lost a whole generation, maybe even two. And so it's time to call it quits, own our loss, and regroup. Rather than trying to reverse the tide, it's time to accept we lost the battle so that we can now turn our minds to the war. Let's start strategizing for the future, which is nearly here. Let's make sure this never, ever happens again.

# WHAT WE WANT to Achieve



**Emmanuel Osei**  
President

## WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

3. Converts from major public evangelistic efforts.

Interestingly, the three top reasons for people leaving the church are:

1. Perceived hypocrisy
2. Conflict in the local church
3. Lack of friends

I will be encouraging all our pastors to catch the vision, which I call **EEE Refresh**, and participate in the reclamation exercise which will be rolled out at our Evangelism Expo to stem the haemorrhaging of our members.

We would like to be intentional in having millennial representation at all levels of our church leadership structure. We have already implemented this at our Directors Meeting. This will mean putting something into our constitution that will ensure that the millennials are represented in our leadership and sit around the table and are given a voice in the decisions of the church. The millennials are the demographic within our church family that can mentor our teens and offer ideas and support to the older

generation. By working closely with our millennials, we can create safe places for our young people to develop their spirituality and give direction to the church. The SDA Church was started by young people but, sadly, today we are reluctant to allow them to share in the leadership.

We would want to re-emphasize the need for mission and allow the young people to participate in mission trips. The Youth Department will work very closely with the President's department to review how youth ministry will be done in the future. We are not only about baptisms but also discipleship. This is a cycle; we cannot have one without the other. Pastors need to work collaboratively with their elders and with church members as we seek to emphasize baptism and discipleship. Every baptised member is a minister/disciple, and our commission by the Lord is to go and make more disciples. 2018 promises to be an exciting year as we focus on reclamation.

My vision is to have a relevant church serving in our communities. As a church, we exist not to entertain ourselves but to uplift the name of Christ within our communities through the proclamation of the Gospel and kind deeds of service. We must continue to form links with our local authorities and engage with our communities. The church must not be insular in our approach to ministry but reach out in love to those in their communities. People may argue over our fundamental beliefs but when they "see our good works, they will glorify our Father who is in heaven" (see Matthew 5:16). We are to be witnesses for Christ in our communities, and this is accomplished by being relevant to their needs. We need to become a caring community as a church.

I am hoping that the SEC will have an accurate record of active as well as inactive members. A membership audit is desperately needed in our conference so that we can see the true picture of our church in the SEC. This needs to happen in all our local churches. The parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15 indicates

that the Good Shepherd counted or took an audit of his sheep and realised that one of his sheep was missing. Even though it was risky to leave the ninety-nine and go in search of the one that had gone astray, the Good Shepherd was willing to pursue the missing sheep because it was precious to Him. The story of the Good Shepherd tells us that for just 1% loss, Jesus was prepared to risk everything in search of that one sheep. Today, we are losing 40% -- the church is in a crisis! Doing a membership audit will give us a golden opportunity and motivation to go and redeem those who have left. As we reclaim our members, let us do so like the father of the prodigal son and embrace those who return.

As 2018 is the year of reclamation, we would like to reclaim not just lapsed or missing members, but reclaim our finances, our evangelistic fervour, and the mission of this remnant church. Studies have shown that the three most likely groups to leave the church are:

1. New converts.
2. Young adults without families in the church.



Margaret Johns

# MSA MINISTERIAL SPOUSES ASSOCIATION

The motto for the Ministerial Spouses Association (MSA) is "each one, reach one," in conjunction with the South England Conference's strategic initiative for 2018 and beyond, EEE Refresh.

The aim of the MSA committee is to motivate ministerial spouses spiritually, physically, mentally, and socially, with support from the SEC and through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

We are pleased that Carmen Chisholm is chaplain for the MSA. She brings a special message to all ministerial spouses: "Let us give consecrated service so that everything will work well and according to God's plan and the purpose of the MSA. We pray for the Holy Spirit's anointing on all of us, especially Margaret as she leads out in this very sacred ministry."

We want to encourage a support network of contacts using social media as well as visits, praying together, eating together, and sharing experiences. For example, Lurline Thomas, the wife of Dr Steve Thomas, made some YouTube videos regarding her journey of healing. Lurline says that "challenges come in many forms, no matter the magnitude. But God is sufficient for them all and His presence enables us to smile with confidence."

Coping with hair loss - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZzGJBDfZY>  
Eye make up for hair loss - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPolsdBNTWs>

### GOODBYES AND CONDOLENCES

I wish to say a big thank you to Anita Martin for all the hard work and support she gave to the MSA over the many years. Anita has now returned to Norway.

We were all saddened to hear of the passing of Maureen McPherson. Let us continue to keep Pastor McPherson and the family in our prayers.

I also wish to thank the previous MSA committee members for their hard work for the past two years. May God continue to bless you all in your individual ministries.

Margaret Johns - Coordinator  
Laura Osei - Sponsor

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Launches the

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Dr Petras Bahadur  
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Dr Sam Telemaque  
 (IAD Missions/SS)



Dr Bjorn Ottersen  
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Pr Simon Martin  
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Pr Michael Simpson  
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# Departmental Articles & **REPORTS**

## HAVE YOU HEARD?

## ADVENTIST RADIO LONDON

However, this opportunity has come about for the purpose of mission, and all who are on board are there because of a strong sense of mission. This indicates a commitment to seeing it through until “mission accomplished.”

3. Quality programming. God has blessed this church with wonderful resources. Our message is holistic, and it must be presented to the general public with the highest quality, that represents the degree to which we value our message and our Lord who commissioned it. Rising to the challenge of maintaining high standards in our programming will contribute to the on-going success of our broadcast.

4. Sustainable funding. A sacrificial spirit is essential. This mission will succeed as essential resources are provided. These include dedicated personnel, quality equipment, and new and innovative programming ideas. This will not be a short-term venture and so a long-term financial strategy will help to maintain the standards which all are expecting.

5. Relevance to London’s demographics. Throughout history, the Everlasting Gospel was always made relevant to the generation who needed to hear it. The prophets, our Lord Jesus, the Apostles and early church, and the Protestant reformers all saw the need to adapt their method of delivery to meet the needs of their contemporary audience. Adventist Radio London must do the same. A fresh approach to sharing the power of the Gospel message given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church must become a priority and so success will be dependent on the relevancy of our approach.

Adventist Radio London is God’s thing! We echo the sentiments of the Apostle Paul, that He who has begun a good work will carry it through to completion (Philippians 1:6). Our prayers are for openness to knowing and fulfilling His will as He leads on to a finished work. Each member of the South England Conference must own this as our mission project.

Unceasing prayer for the staff, the equipment, and the community to whom we broadcast is essential and we humbly solicit this.



**MICHAEL HAMILTON**

A great opportunity has been granted the South England Conference to potentially share God’s wonderful message of hope to London and beyond. The opportunity is given via a brand new Digital Audio Broadcasting License issued to us by the government’s Office of Communication (Ofcom). This is made possible with support from the General Conference (GC) and Adventist World Radio (AWR). It is a pilot project intended to reach the multicultural community of our nation’s capital and, if successful, will be replicated in other major cities in Europe. The vision is for a successful live launch by the end of January 2018, and for this we solicit your prayers.

Certain factors are necessary for success.

1. Cooperation of all with the workings of the Holy Spirit. This has come about not by might, nor by power, but by the workings of the Holy Spirit. He is moving in a way that will bring closure to his work of saving humanity and we, His servants, must move with him. We do not pretend to have the answers, so we watch to see where God is leading and humbly follow. He has led to this opportunity, inspired our leaders to move at the right time, and now we continue to cooperate with him.

2. Staff and broadcasters who have a strong sense of mission. Adventist Radio London is not just another station; it is one designed with a specific purpose. It is easy to get caught up with the technicalities and glamour of radio and lose our sense of mission.

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY & COMMUNITY Services

The past year has been a very busy one, especially in the Community Ministries department, but I'm so grateful to God for blessing us to be able to assist those in need and to help the spiritual growth of our young people.

## Children's Ministries Training

We had 59 children's Sabbath School volunteers who spent a whole weekend learning how to make Sabbath school come alive. We also had day delegates who were able to look at our programmes, including involving them in a role-play and addressing how we can recruit more male volunteers.



## Lone Parent Camp

In August this year, we scheduled our annual camp in Cornwall, but we had so many families wanting to attend that we ended up running two camps with fruit picking, go-karting, zip wire, beach activities, and a well-spent day at the Eden Project.

## Adventist Community Services

Adventist Community Services has had a very busy year with a variety of programmes running throughout the South of England. Every Sunday afternoon at 3pm, there is a feeding initiative under

Waterloo Bridge. Churches in London take turns in providing hot food for between 70 to 100 people each week. This outreach has attracted the attention of several non-Adventists who are also on our rota.

## Community Organisations

As part of my role, I believe that it is important for me to be fully conversant with the communities that we seek to serve, and therefore I sit on several committees in my local area.

These include:

- The Islington Faith Forum. I represent the black-led churches in the borough.
- The Islington Hate Crime Forum as the Faith Representative.
- The Safer Neighbourhood Board.

## Grenfell Tower Fire

Immediately upon hearing of the Grenfell Tower Fire on the 14th June this year, ACS were on the ground to offer support and help with the aid of the Cornerstone Counselling Service. We value the financial support of ADRA-UK, who provided funds to assist the survivors

and families of the victims, and we were also very pleased that Dr Emmanuel Osei, SEC President, was with us as we ministered to the diverse needs of those affected by the fire.

## Advent Shelter

By the time this report is published, the Advent Shelter, held at the Advent Centre in Central London, will just have completed its 2017 programme ministering to the needs of the homeless in several boroughs. Each year we are supported by volunteers, both Adventist and non-Adventist, especially young people, and also with donations of food from major retailers



and donations of warm clothing, bed linen, and toiletries from churches and individuals. From the 24th December until the 2nd January, we fed and ministered to countless homeless people in need. My thanks to all those who gave of their time, money, and resources to make the Advent Shelter a reality.

## 2018, the Year of Reclamation

2018 promises to be a busy year. As part of the EEE Refresh initiative, we plan to host a special retreat. We will also host "The Marketplace" – a signposting event to showcase the community services offered in our local churches and to highlight some of the partnerships that we have forged. We will continue to promote Keeping the Church Family Safe through weekend training. With regards to Children's Ministries, we seek to retain our children, who are often seduced by the internet, by offering courses in Digital Safety for parents, guardians, and carers, as well as to children, in addition to facilitating Drug Awareness sessions for the same group.

# COMMUNICATION Department

The three key areas of the Communication Department's focus during 2017 included the development of crisis communication management awareness, enhancing local church visibility, and the revamp of the SEC Communicator, in addition to the usual news coverage for the conference.

## CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Crisis communication has become a necessary part of every serious organisation in recent times, though it has been around for some time. Any serious mishap within an organisation has the potential to deeply damage its reputation if not handled well.

Often, organisations are not prepared or well-equipped for how to deal with calamities when they occur, both logistically and in communicating the situation effectively. This has compelled the SEC to embark on training its directors in crisis management and its communication to its stakeholders, as well as to the wider public.

The department has provided spokespersons training for all directors. The spokespersons training is now a yearly event, and this will be the case for pastors. A core team has been established to facilitate crisis communication management, which will also involve responding to public disasters such as the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy. This involvement beyond the church community will entail providing logistical help and other forms of help such as counselling etc.

## TRAINING LOCAL CHURCHES TO ENHANCE THEIR VISIBILITY

The department conducted several training seminars in local churches

to encourage their visibility in the local press. The first training began at the January 2017 SEC Evangelism Expo, where the mostly local church communication secretaries, attending two workshops, were taught how to enhance their presence in their respective communities by getting their stories published in the local press. The idea was to encourage sharing significant and relevant church events which could benefit the local community in a medium that already exists for their use. Many of our churches do great programmes relevant to the community, such as health expos, family building seminars, and vacation Bible schools, but these stories are not shared with the community.

## COMMUNICATOR REVAMP

The SEC Communicator got a facelift at the beginning of the new year 2017. It has progressed from being the annual or biannual magazine to a regular featured quarterly magazine. It has traditionally been a Directors' report magazine to constituents within the SEC. While the reports are retained, the new-look magazine now features areas of ministry that are relevant and timely for both Adventists and non-Adventists.

We are delighted to share that the new outlook and content of the magazine has caught the attention of two of our institutions of higher education, Andrews University in the USA and our own Newbold College of Higher Education. These two institutions now subscribe to the SEC Communicator for their respective libraries.

We are happy to announce that from 2018, the magazine will have an online version as well as hard copies.

We are looking forward to building on what has been started in 2018 through the vision of the **EEE Refresh** initiative, which we will communicate to our stakeholders in a timely manner.



MALIKA BEDIAKO



SAM DAVIES

## Looking Back at 2017 and Moving Forward into 2018

### Introduction

Today's world is characterised by rapid advances in every area. The pressures of life create numerous opportunities for stress and anxiety to occur, and many people suffer from a wide variety of mental and emotional health problems and challenges. Consequently, mental health has received an unprecedented level of attention in recent times, with high-profile individuals such as royalty, footballers, and other celebrities talking openly about its negative impact on their lives. Christians are not exempt from some of these negative experiences, and as a result the Cornerstone Counselling Service (CCS) has supported church members and their communities for the past two decades.

We are a confidential and professionally run counselling service whose continual growth has necessitated our coming out of the Family Life Department to be a separate department (since September 2016). Our clients are children, young people, couples, families and individuals.

### Key Achievements in 2017



**Counselling Training** – Our first cohort of twelve students graduated from the Level 2 CPCAB accredited Counselling Skills course and continued onto Level 3. Eighteen students started on Level 2 this year, eight in Bristol and ten in London, bringing our total of trainee counsellors to thirty.

**Increased Accessibility and Expansion** – Our services are now available at the following satellites: Watford, Stanborough School, Milton Keynes, Croydon, Greenwich,

Stratham, Balham, Herne Hill, Dunstable, Luton, Newbold, Basingstoke, and Strafford. We presented emotional well-being awareness workshops across the SEC, including at camp meeting, youth conferences, and the

**THEMBIE MAPINGIRE**

SEC and BUC women's retreats. The topics covered included addiction, self-harm, depression, anxiety, stress and nutrition, domestic violence, and dealing with trauma. Our telephone lines are now open Monday – Thursday, 9:30 – 17:30. Skype and telephone counselling is available, and we now have a dedicated team of twelve counsellors.

**Community Impact (Grenfell Tower)** – CCS reached out to the London community in 2017, notably during the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire, which affected the lives of hundreds of people. We provided emotional support to the survivors, their families, and the local community. It was a humbling experience to be involved in such a tangible way. CCS also facilitated a day's training on how to support people through traumatic times.

**Onsite Counselling Support** – Our counsellors provided on-site counselling support at various SEC events.

### Looking Forward to 2018

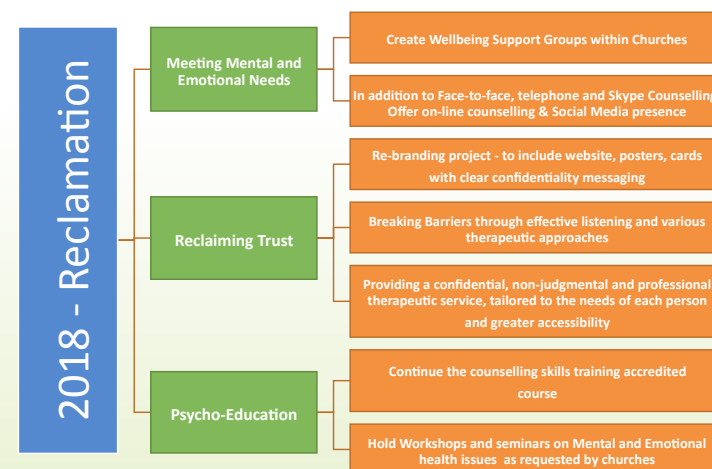
**The Bigger Picture** – Our Strategy for the next two years is in line with the SEC's EEE Refresh strategy.

### The Picture for 2018

2018 is the Year of Reclamation. Our aim is to reclaim emotional well-being through restoring trust in counselling as a profession and in Cornerstone (CCS) as an effective SEC department, thereby reclaiming people back to God through our plans outlined in the diagram below.

### Conclusion

It is crucial to look after our mental wellbeing as we connect in meaningful relationship with God. Whatever affects us spiritually, emotionally, and physically will also impact on our relationship with God. This is where Cornerstone makes a difference, helping people to experience a holistically satisfying life.



2017 was an eventful year for the Health Ministries department. Around the country, many of our churches have decided to use the health message to help their communities enjoy a better quality of life. The people in these communities have met and talked to our members and this has led to friendships which have opened the way for the Gospel to be shared. This is the practical and modern demonstration of "Christ's Method."

*"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then he bade them, 'Follow Me.'"*  
Ministry of Healing 143.3

These words have inspired men, women, and children throughout the territory of the South England Conference to commit to minister to the needs of their communities. The Health Ministries department has been able to assist by providing our excellent health expo team who come to many health outreach programmes and also train local volunteers to set up their own expos. We have also been showcasing Life Colours, the health

programme which helps the public understand how to reverse disease. Many churches have used this resource as a powerful outreach tool.

The Dunstable SDA Community Church was given the opportunity to lead a health fair supported by the local council and MPs, because of the excellent work that they do in the community. Many local people attended and the Dunstable church continues to have a great relationship with the community leaders.

Aylesbury church conducted a health fair in the local town. Food demos, music, and health consultations were free to the public. Oxford church had a combined health and teens day. It was great to see the young people so engaged in health ministries. Wimbledon invited the public and its former members to a health day where people were able to ask me any questions on lifestyle.

Portsmouth invited the public to hear how to reverse disease. Many local health professionals attended. It was a privilege to be at The Hub in Watford where members and guests came together for an intimate health day.

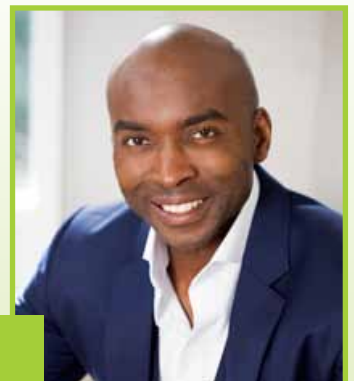
Bristol & Gloucester organised spectacular community health events. Such is their standing in the community that the Mayor of Gloucester and the Councillor of Bristol were in attendance.

And the West Bletchley health team, led by Pilira Zapita, also held their first public health event attended by the Mayor.

The London Asian church put on a very informative health day where the young people, musicians, etc. were all used to proclaim the message of health, healing, and hope.

Stanborough church used every Monday evening in October to invite the public to hear a health message. It was so wonderful to see over 100 people each night, mainly from the community. Many have already asked for Bible studies and some for baptism.

In line with the SEC's **EEE Refresh** initiative, 2018 will see the biggest "rollout" of the Life Colours programme, where people will be trained to lead out in their communities. Furthermore, from the 17th - 21st of April, there will be a European Health Conference in Bucharest, Romania, focusing on lifestyle medicine and reversing disease. And from the 7th - 9th of September, the Healthfest UK will make its return to the SEC.



**CHIDI NGWABA**

# DIVERSITY & DISABILITY Departments

The aim of the SEC Disability and Diversity ministry is to empower local churches to be places where everyone belongs and is able to be part of the body of Christ in ministry and mission.

## Open minds, Open hearts, Open doors

This has been the vision for the SEC Disability Ministry over the last year and since its development in 2015. Working closely with ASNA and other local and national Christian organisations, the SEC Disability Ministries department has achieved a number of objectives towards this vision of opening the minds of the membership. The ultimate aim is to support a change in behaviour and attitudes by opening the doors of our hearts and churches to many in need of the Gospel.

To achieve this vision, the department has focused training and support on equipping, enabling, and empowering the members of the church to develop sound relationships with people living with disability and special needs; to become more aware of the issues facing people with disability; and to address any unconscious stereotypes or prejudices that have determined behaviour and attitudes.

Activities have included:

- Training in the area of unconscious bias
- Training in disability-specific seminars and workshops
- Training in disability awareness

In 2017, the department ran a number of seminars and training programmes in churches and SEC-wide events. These included the SEC

Evangelism Expo, SEC camp meeting, ASNA Respite weekend, ASNA Carers weekend, and the Hanwell, Dunstable, Wallington, Newlife, and Milton Keynes churches. Further resource development and partnership working across the SEC departments will continue in 2018.

## Partnership work

During the National Learning Disability Awareness Week, the department worked with ASNA to launch the *#thinkaboutit* campaign. Attendees were encouraged to consider issues and barriers facing people living with disability and special needs, including negative attitudes, inappropriate built environments, and limited disability-specific resources. A free online course was developed to provide self-directed training and indepth study. Over 300 people signed up for the course. Comments from those who took the course included, *"This really opened my eyes," "I need to rethink my attitude to people with disabilities,"* and, *"Our churches are not geared up for access; we need to make a change today."*

The department works closely with other SEC departments. This year has had a large focus on the Pathfinder department through leadership training and policy development. Closer links with the BUC and TED have been developed. The SEC Disability Director has recently been asked to be a part of the GC Special Needs Task Force to help effect change on a global level.

Other partnership work involved attending the NEC conference on parenting. This was a joint programme with the Disability, Children's and Sabbath School departments of the NEC. Seminars and workshops provided an opportunity for reflection and positive action planning.



## Making connections, Creating belonging

The vision of the Diversity department is to enable the membership of the churches in the SEC to create places of belonging for everyone through nurture and support for ministry and mission.

Belonging is a strong and inevitable feeling that exists in human nature. Belonging develops when people



feel they are valued and are able to contribute in some way no matter their ability. Without belonging, one cannot identify themselves clearly, thus having difficulties communicating with and relating to others and their surroundings. Belonging fosters good health. The department aims to nurture belonging by creating places and an environment where open, honest, and sincere conversations can take place, where differences can be understood and celebrated.

## Sustainability and development

In 2017, we launched the Regional Hubs for Ministry in Disability, Diversity, and Inclusion (RHMDDI). These Hubs consist of churches within an area that *"signs up"* to disability ministry in a variety of ways. They are supported by the SEC Disability and Diversity departments through churches, AREAs and Disability Coordinators with resources, advice, and training. They are led and coordinated by the SEC. Management and operation through the church Disability Champions and Disability Coordinators.

The HUBs have been running a regular disability-specific training course, including disability

awareness; involved in active ministry in the local community, forming effective and lasting partnerships with organisations involved in disability, and; empowering the members of the church and community with disability to be involved in mission and ministry in effective and creative ways.

The following areas offer examples of good practice.

RHMDDI Area 5 - Reading SDA church ran a programme, *"Hand in Hand,"* supporting the church and local community in Reading. RHMDDI Area 6A, 6D & 7 - BSL accredited courses have been running in these areas at the Willesden, Holloway, and Stanborough centers. (Area 5 will be starting a BSL course in 2018.) RHMDDI Area 6A - New Life SDA church has developed a sound team of volunteers with professional experience and interest in disability-associated areas. They will be running a programme to raise awareness of Autism in 2018.

## New initiatives

The first *"Homeschooling with a Difference"* conference, organised in response to growing concerns about wholistic schooling and the impact of disability, was launched in November 2017. This event aimed



to bring together homeschooling families and church leadership to identify where issues may arise, and to provide training for families living with disability and special needs.

## Plans for 2018, EEE Refresh and Reclamation

There will be further resource development, training, and support through the Regional Hubs for Ministry in Disability Diversity and Inclusion. There will also be further joint initiatives with SEC departments to be launched in 2018, including a health project and collaboration with Adventist Radio London.

Thanks to the leadership of the SEC for thier support of this ministry. Thanks also to my husband Nigel Nicholls, and sons Matthew and Christopher James, for their continued support and contribution to this ministry. I would also like to thank my secretary Ligia Buzac for her constant commitment to ministry and mission.



SOPHIA NICHOLLS

# STEWARDSHIP Department

The Stewardship Department has spent 2017 educating, engaging, and empowering local congregations in order for them to become "A More Resourceful Church" – a direct response to the SEC's strategy of Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere.

It was a blessing for me to celebrate Stewardship Emphasis Day in nineteen different churches around the conference, promoting faithful stewardship and generous living. These days were a time to empower and engage members in the local church to renew their life commitment to God. It also enabled me to share how living by God's principles will bring joy and happiness to every area of a disciple's life, and to highlight the importance of managing the best use of the 8T's of stewardship (Talent, Time, Temple, Treasure, Terra, Ties, Testimonies & Technology).

In most churches I visited, I spent the afternoon giving encouragement to members and local church

leaders on how everyone in the congregation, including children and young people, could be involved in the ministry of the church, using their God-given talents. I also hosted Q&A sessions which gave me an opportunity to teach members how Gift Aid can bring blessings to every local church.

During 2017, the Stewardship Department relaunched the children's tithe and offering envelope. During camp meeting, the first batch of these envelopes were distributed. Since then, envelopes have been requested by and taken to local churches, where children have enjoyed using them while also learning to be regular, systematic givers for mission.

The Stewardship Resource Pack, a bag full of different useful materials aimed at empowering

local church stewardship leaders, has now been sent to 58 local church leaders. It is always my prayer that local church leaders will make use of these materials to lead our membership in their search for a more generous life.

While it is not directly my remit to report on the tithe returns and the Gift Aid reclaimed by the South England Conference, I would nevertheless like to thank our church membership for returning faithful tithes and offerings which help finance the work of God here. Also, my gratitude goes to all individuals who have recently signed onto the Gift Aid scheme. The graph below shows where we are currently in relation to our response to becoming "A More Resourceful Church."

As Frank Holbrook suggests, "God has high

expectations for His special people to press together spiritually and to pull together financially to accomplish His global objectives. The times demand a personal renewal of our covenant relationship with God. The global task of the church and its tremendous need for adequate financial support is many times greater than the task of Israel to underwrite a single temple. With so large a challenge before us, let every minister and member enter wholeheartedly into the spirit of Nehemiah and Israel's commitment: "We will not neglect the house of our God" (Neh 10:39)." (Gospel Finance: Pulling Together, p. 9)

I continue to solicit your generosity in advancing the cause of God through the faithful stewardship of your life and everything that God has blessed you with.

## SEC Tithe & Gift Aid Returns 2015-2017

Year	Tithe Total as of Oct 2017		Gift Aid Total as of Apr 2017		No. of Donors - Nov 2017	Church Membership
	£	41,233,194.00	£	6,226,828.63	9,549	
2015	£	14,295,111.00	£	2,806,388.69	8,622	23,776
2016	£	14,679,586.00	£	2,515,607.73	8,920	24,500
2017	£	12,258,497.00	£	£904,832.21	9,549	24,797
<b>Goal (2015-2019)</b>	£	<b>65,000,000.00</b>	£	<b>15,000,000.00</b>	<b>12,000</b>	
<b>Total To Date</b>	£	<b>41,233,194.00</b>	£	<b>6,226,828.63</b>	<b>9,549</b>	
<b>Needed to Raise</b>	£	<b>23,766,806.00</b>	£	<b>8,773,171.37</b>	<b>2,451</b>	

Goal for No. of Donors is based on 50% of the Membership

TODD FRIAS

# YOUTH Department

## MILLENNIALS



"Millennials: We lost the genetic lottery. We graduated high school into terrorist attacks and wars. We graduated college into a recession and mounds of debt. We will never acquire the financial cushion, employment stability, and material possessions of our parents. We are often more educated, experienced, informed, and digitally fluent than prior generations, yet are constantly haunted by the trauma of coming of age during the detonation of the societal structure we were born into. But perhaps we are overlooking the silver lining. We will have less money to buy the material possessions that entrap us. We will have more compassion and empathy because our struggles have taught us that even the most privileged can fall from grace. We will have the courage to pursue our dreams because we have absolutely nothing to lose... Our hardships will obligate us to develop spiritual and intellectual substance." — Maggie Georgiana Young

I love this quote. It aptly reflects the daily experiences of millennials – experiences that often make them appear to be "snowflakes" in a world that has become increasingly cruel and unkind to young people, despite the platitudes that are offered by society and the church. It is with this in mind that we planned intentional programmes in 2017 to engage our millennials in meaningful engagement, so that they would continue to make a commitment not only to the Seventh-day Adventist Church but to God.

On the 28th January we held our first event of the year, "It's Time!" This special Day of Fellowship was attended by 2000 young people, primarily millennials, with a special "throwback" concert in the evening. Millennials often find themselves communicating more through social media than traditional media, and therefore the annual Youth Week of

We also hosted "Metamorphosis," a women's conference that was attended by 150. And our "Game Changers" project was held at the Holiday Inn, Gatwick over the weekend of October 13-15. Millennials love to participate in activities that are meaningful, and once again, our department was inundated with offers of help to assist Adventist Community Services with the annual Advent Shelter held from Christmas Eve until the 2nd January 2018.

## 2018, THE YEAR OF RECLAMATION

During 2018, in line with the SEC EEE Refresh strategy, the department will focus on the retention of its millennials, and also work with the departments to address reclamation of many of the young people who feel on the fringes of the church. As I talk with them, I know that they are committed to God and that their faith is intact. However, they feel under-utilised, undervalued, and often underwhelmed by the way they are treated by their local churches. Far from using their skills, they are often relegated to reading a Scripture passage or announcing a hymn.

When Robert Folkenberg was elected President of the General Conference in 1990, he challenged church members with the words, "Give young people a piece of the pie and maybe they will stay for dinner." Nearly thirty years later, the young people still seem to be starving, looking longingly at the pie. Some will even leave and have dinner elsewhere. It's time that we give the millennials a large piece of pie and then invite them to join us for dinner.

Prayer held between March 18-25 was conducted online. I was stunned but blessed that over 10,000 young people world-wide engaged in this week-long event.

Project 50\*7 called for intergenerational dialogue, with millennials being given the opportunity to openly express their concerns in a "safe" space to church leaders. The two-day event attracted over 400 people and provided key data with which to assist the department with its planning.

A major event for the department is the Youth programme at camp meeting, with its highlight on Sabbath having over 800 people in attendance. A month later, 46 young people spent seven days in Israel on a Bible tour, visiting some of the sites mentioned in the Bible.

ANTHONY FULLER

# WOMEN'S MINISTRY Department

With a focus on women's health and emotional wellbeing, we began the year with a February Tea Party at Balham Church organised in collaboration with the Area 6B Women's Ministries Reform Team. 90 women attended this event, which was relaxing and fun, but not just about tea and cakes; it addressed the important issues of anger, guilt, and rejection. Discussions around these topics were led by health professionals Marlene Levy and Leslene Peat-Brown, with group work facilitated by Dr Sarah Itam. One attendee said that "the presentations have equipped me with some information to address the issue of anger and guilt," while another said, "It is an eye-opener on the effects of anger, guilt and rejection. Really excellent."



During 2017, we also launched our Domestic Abuse Awareness Training course. Topics covered included defining abuse, the different forms of abuse, the impact of abuse on the family, and practical tips on how to respond sensitively and in a supportive manner to those experiencing abuse.

During the Easter weekend, all roads led to the Courtyard Theatre in North London for the first showing of "Asylum," a play written and directed by Mark Grey of Carmel Greystone & Agape Theatre. The play explored the issues of brokenness, healing, and restoration depicted through the lives of three women and their journey to freedom.

The Easy Sew sewing school was launched at the Balham and Luton Churches. Sewing is a therapeutic craft and a fantastic way of mentoring and building relationships with people, learning new skills, and rekindling old ones in a relaxing environment. We offer classes in soft furnishings and dressmaking. Those who completed the Level One and Level Two course shared their feedback: "The entire module was fantastic and the end product quite fulfilling." "It has helped me become more patient as I practice the fruit of the Spirit." "A high standard of completed work." "It's a good class, with support, encouragement, and value for money."

We decided to take the sewing school to camp meeting in June to introduce it in a one-off afternoon taster session. The response was exceptional. Since then the classes have grown. We are inundated with requests from the community and the churches. We hope to open two new schools in 2018.

Other programmes and events

included a three-day leadership course on effective communication. The "Woman of Virtue" programme was introduced to the South-East Ghana, Emmanuel, Bedford, and Balham churches. We partnered with Family Life to host a Singles Banquet in Camden, looking at the needs and issues of single people within our church. A community-based Women's Health Day was held at the Irish Centre in Tottenham. We are currently running the "Woman of Faith" programme (in conjunction with the School of Evangelism) for those interested in Leadership and Personal Development.

Local training for officers was conducted in Areas 5 and 7. This resulted in the establishment of two Women's Ministries Advisory teams to support the women in the area. In addition to the above, women's retreats, conferences, and prayer breakfasts were held all over the SEC.

We thank God for all our women, the Women's Ministries leaders, and their teams for creating opportunities for engagement in ministry.



MASLIN HOLNESS

# RALLY DAY

The SEC held its annual Pathfinder Rally Day, He is a Shield, on the 11th November at the Dominion Centre, Wood Green, with over 1500 Pathfinders and Adventurers in attendance. The guest speaker was Pastor E. Lawal Natufe, from the Ministerial Association of the Alberta Conference in Canada, who was accompanied by Pathfinder singer Breanne Coutain and poetic drama in the Sabbath School which was ably delivered by Alan Charles & co.



Other special music was provided by the first ever SEC Pathfinder choir led by Margaret Johns, Carolyn Daniel, and Sophia Nicholls. The choir was comprised of Pathfinders who responded to the invitation to sing for this event. There will be opportunities at other events for the formation of a standing Pathfinder Choir.

The afternoon investiture programme provided much delight and demonstrated the hard work of not only the children and young people, but also the dedication and commitment of the leaders, counsellors, and assistants of the various clubs around the country.

At the investiture there were 77 pathfinders who were invested. These included:

- 30 Pathfinders invested as Master Guides.
- 8 Master Guides invested having completed the Pathfinder Leader Award (PLA).

# PATHFINDER Department



35 Pathfinders invested having completed Level One to Level Three of the Teen Leadership Training programme (TLT). 4 Pathfinders invested having completed Level 4, the final level of the TLT programme for which they received a special award. They are the first Pathfinders to complete the four-year programme, having been in the first group who started the programme in 2013!

2018 is the Year of Reclamation. As part of the EEE Refresh initiative, the Pathfinder Department will seek to reclaim the many of our members who used to be Pathfinders and who no longer attend church. We will also continue to work for the retention of our young people through the Adventurer and Pathfinder programme for the Kingdom of God.

The day concluded with a concert delivered and hosted by the Pathfinders. Special guests on the day were Dr Emmanuel Osei, President of the SEC, accompanied by his wife Laura.



KEVIN JOHNS



# FAMILY MINISTRY Department



As a faith community, we believe that the family is the epicentre where we learn the fundamental skills for life. Family is where we gain the context from which the rest of life flows. However, family life in Britain is changing. Both adults and children are increasingly faced with the challenges of dysfunctional, fractured, or fatherless families. The church is no exception. Therefore, over the past twelve months, the Family Ministries department of the South England Conference (SEC) has sought to relay messages that influence family outcome, focusing on providing relationship and parenting education.

The responsibility of continuing in the role of strengthening and enriching healthy relationships has been a tremendous spiritual experience. As a young boy, I never dreamed that I would serve in the capacity of influencing families for the Kingdom of God.

During 2017, the department has focused on the development of healthy relationships. A healthy relationship does not mean the absence of problems. The central focus of a healthy relationship highlights the positives and minimises the negatives.



**AUGUSTUS LAWRENCE**

## Marital Enrichment

The "Celebration I: Young Married Couples Enrichment" event was held in March 2017, specifically for couples that had been married for up to 10 years. It was an opportunity for young couples to spend quality time together learning how "to love and be loved, forgive and be forgiven, serve and be served, and to know and be known." The presenters for the weekend were Jonathan and Jodi Burnett and Augustus and Barbara Lawrence. Additionally, the Family Ministries department sponsored several other marital retreats and one-day marital conferences.

## Premarital Counselling

One of the goals of the department is to provide professional premarital training for all ministers, including interns. Thirty people received training in the Prepare, Enrich and the Parenting sessions. Throughout the year, several couples also received premarital education in preparation for marriage.



## Family & Lone Parents Camp

These camps are one week long and are held each summer at the SEC's caravan site at Chapel Porth, Cornwall. The Lone Parent Camp is run jointly with the SEC Children's Ministry Department. The creative spiritual focus, beautiful setting, and healthy fun for all the family make these camps extremely popular. However, due to the limited size of the site, applications consistently exceed spaces.

## Parenting Convention

Professionals including Dr. Jasmine Rhamie, Dr. Val Bernard Allan, Dr. Anne-Marie Stewart-Wright, and Waneta and Curtis Powell shared their experience and expertise on a range of aspects of parenting. The sessions considered parenting and children's health, successfully raising Black teenage boys, and the highs and lows of being

## THE JOURNEY SO FAR

a dad. There were smaller workshops on children's spiritual development, protecting our youth from gang culture, and the importance of establishing boundaries.

## Singles Ministry

Along with local churches hosting singles ministries programme, the Family Ministries Department held a special Single Adults banquet in London. Over 120 guests attended. Also, Solofest Ministries led by Annell Smith and her team conducted an inspiring singles programme at the Balham Church in August. The programme was well received by those in attendance, many of whom were single adults.

## Widows and Widowers Banquet

One of the special events during 2017 was the banquet held in honour of those whose spouses have died. This event was well received by the guests and plans are in place for a repeat next year.

## Fathers and Mothers Conference

"We Declare War" was the theme for the 2017 Annual Fathers and Mothers Prayer Conference held at the London Irish Centre, London. Special guest speakers included Pastor Freddy Russell, Dr Hyveth Williams, and Pastor Ayo Adesina. The programme gave fathers and mothers a wonderful opportunity to pray for their children.

## Visiting Local Churches

It has been a humbling experience to share the Gospel message of restoration in our local churches. Through sermons, seminars, and workshops, I was able to communicate the goals of the Family Ministries Department and provide information to support and strengthen healthy relationships.

## Going Forward

I am convinced that through the Power of the Holy Spirit, tremendous opportunities lie ahead for more service to be done for the salvation of many. The SEC, in keeping with the emphasis of the General Conference, has dedicated 2018 as the Year of Reclamation. As part of *EEE Refresh*, the department will actively seek out those who once used to attend our church and whose family members are still very much involved. Please pray that our efforts will be successful.

# TEENS Department



Our year started with the annual **Prayer and Faith Conference** from the 13th – 16th of April at Newland Park, with 150 people in attendance.

**Camp meeting**, from the 19th -24th June, was another special occasion in which we were honoured and encouraged by the interest and the desire of the teens to know more about God and His Word.

Once we left Wales, it was time for us to get ready for our next stop: **Student Camp**. This is a fantastic activity with a mixture of spiritual, social, and sport activities designed for university students. It took place from the 17th – 21st of July in Chapel Porth, Cornwall.

We took a little break to catch our breath and off we went to prepare for the **Extreme Teens Camp** which took place in Cornwall from the 21st – 27th of August. Our next stop was the **Summer Teens Concert**, on the 2nd of September at Newbold College. There the teens filled the house with praises, prayers, and songs to

the Lord, and once more they put their talents and abilities to use in God's service.

Our journey took us back to Newland Park for the second **Prayer and Faith Conference** for the year (24th – 27th October). We were expecting about 150 teens, but we had about 350 instead! Twenty-two teens gave their lives to the Lord and asked to be baptised.

We kept on running "with perseverance the race that was set before us," thus arriving at a new stop: **Compass, The Student Congress**. It was our first student congress and took place from the 27th – 29th October, starting just a few hours after the Prayer and Faith Conference was finished. Over 250 students and friends from the SEC and the NEC attended.

The **Teens Day of Fellowship** took place on the 9th of December in London at the Emmanuel Centre, and the 1000-plus-seater venue was full to capacity.

Besides these events, the Teens Department has been actively involved in celebrating Teens Days in the local churches throughout the South England Conference. It is noteworthy, however, that none of this would have been possible without the help of our dedicated staff. I thank them from the bottom of my heart for their hard work and commitment. As I look back on 2017, I have no doubt that the Teens Department belongs to God; He is in charge, He is the director, and we are his servants. I want to thank Him for His mercy, His help and His guidance. Without Him, none of this would have been possible.

God bless the TEENS!



**JUAN CARLOS PATRICK**

# Personal Ministries & Sabbath School

The Personal Ministries and Sabbath School departments of the South England Conference exist to train, equip, mentor, provide resources, and work with pastors to deploy the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in various facets of witnessing, evangelism and mission. The Sabbath School department is the primary nurture and retention unit in the church and must be supported to maximise its potential.

## First Quarter

During the first quarter of 2017, Schools of Evangelism, Leadership, and Missions continued in Bristol, Ipswich, the Hyland House School site, and Balham. The combined attendance at these schools totalled just over 160. The combined cohorts offered by the School of Evangelism total twenty. The beauty of this programme is that it caters for everyone. It is the catalyst to drive the initiative of total membership involvement.

During the months of January to March, there were four Super Sabbath School days. The churches experiencing this beautiful programme were Bristol Central, Croydon, Cambridge, and Bournemouth. The Super Sabbath School days were established to help the congregation understand the importance of Sabbath School and give visitors a taste of the value the church places on the four pillars of Sabbath School, namely Bible study, fellowship, community outreach, and world missions. While at Croydon, the Sabbath School was organised



into action units. The functions of the action unit are as follows:

Organising the current classes into smaller units of 8 – 10 people. By making the units smaller, maximum attention can be given to each member helping the nurture and retention of each one. Members are encouraged to bring visitors to the unit. Once the unit gets larger it can be split to form another one; hence, church growth happens. Finally, every member would have a great opportunity to participate in the life and ministry of the church, since every unit should have a community mission element.

March 10 – 12, 2017 was our massive South England Conference Sabbath School retreat under the theme “Nurturing the Present – Discipling the Future.” There were over 100 in attendance at the serene Kents Hill Park Conference Centre in Milton Keynes. Drs Allison Thomas and Nadine Joseph Collins, our two international educators, did a

fantastic job in helping the attendees to understand the nuances of making Sabbath School a place of learning and nurture. Kathleen Hanson, BUC Education Director, took the attendees through the intricacy of teaching the Sabbath School Lesson using illustrations, planned lesson outlines, and through understanding the learner. Malika Bediako, the SEC Children’s Sabbath School Director, facilitated learning by guiding the teachers through a practical and participatory course of Sabbath lesson studies that will disciple children for the Kingdom of God.

Dr Brighton Kavaloh blessed us with his message and study of how the legislations in Parliament may cause some change in the way Sabbath School is conducted in the future, and we will await these developments. Pastor Anthony Opoku-Mensah shared very spiritual and thought-provoking devotionals, while Christine QuonQuon, Anthea and Leon Barclay, who continue to be part of the team, allowed God to use them to minister to us in music. At the end of the programme God was given the credit and everyone resolved to go back and make Sabbath School better.

## Second Quarter

The second quarter started with a Super Sabbath School day at the Hounslow Cornerstone church. This was followed by another at the Micklefield church in High Wycombe. Super Sabbath School days were held also at Wood Green, Central London, Welling, Southall, Hackbridge, and Luton North churches. These programmes were well received and executed, and the churches made a commitment to excellence in Sabbath School. In addition to this, Sabbath School teacher training was conducted in Wrexham, Wales by invitation of the Welsh Mission, and also in Willesden, North Wembley, and Southall.

The Core of Adventism is an annual evangelistic/nurturing programme of collaboration between the Union and the churches and districts in the various Conferences and Missions that make up the BUC. This year, during May 6 – 13, the South England Conference had some fourteen churches participate in this much-needed programme where our churches are taken back to the fundamentals of our doctrinal beliefs. Many of the congregations were able to baptise precious souls into the Kingdom of God. This annual event has grown exponentially over the years and has become an evangelistic/revival tool.

The month of June is a special month in the SEC – it’s the time for camp meeting, and for the Hyland House site of the School of Evangelism, Mission and Leadership, it means the excitement of graduation. The site saw its largest graduation to date – over 130 people representing some eighteen cohorts. We give God praise.

One of the worst disasters to hit England happened on the night of 14th June when the Grenfell tower block went up in flames with the sad loss of many lives. This tragedy enabled the counselling unit of the



School of Evangelism to mingle with the survivors and their families, offering support and working with them in a practical way. Their training certainly was put to work in a meaningful way.

## Third Quarter

The third quarter began with the ground-breaking and historic graduation for the School of Evangelism at the Ipswich site for Area 8. Making history is special, and so the graduates, encouraged by the rhythms of the Pathfinder band, marched proudly in their new graduation gowns, heads held high to receive their certificates of achievement at the Area 8 Day of Fellowship held on Sabbath 1st July 2017. Some had travelled hundreds of miles every month to make this day a reality. These graduates will now go back and make a difference for Christ.

Super Sabbath School days and Sabbath School teacher training



events were held at the Peckham, Northolt, Ilford Central, Gloucester, Watford Town, and Reading West churches, as well as the Leeds Central and Birmingham Ladywood churches by invitation of the North England Conference.

## Fourth Quarter

The Fourth Quarter saw a repeat of many of the activities mentioned above but also included a revival series with the Stratford church and numerous preaching appointments. I was able also to personally lead 20 souls to be baptised through conducting Bible studies, preaching, evangelistic series, and personal witness. God must take all the glory and praise.

I end this brief report by thanking the SEC administration, staff, pastors, and workers for the tremendous support and faith shown in me during my tenure. A special thanks to Sister Mavis Bramble for commitment to the department and its backbreaking work. I know that Dr Michael Mbui will pick up the reins and by God’s grace lead the evangelistic work of this mighty Conference with zeal, enthusiasm, and Spirit. *Go SEC!*

*Kirk Thomas is now the Evangelism Director of the British Union Conference*



**KIRK THOMAS**



# MEN'S MINISTRY Department

I took over the role of Men's Ministries Director on the 1st March 2017 after the position became vacant due to the resignation of Dr Chris Levy. I would like to pay tribute to the work that he spear-headed since his election at the end of 2015. My role is part-time and is a non-stipendary position where I work around 10 hours a week.

The purpose of Men's Ministries falls in line with the SEC's **EEE Refresh** strategy. It is to get men to reclaim their roles in the home and the church. One way we will attempt to achieve this is through getting men to talk - to find someone whom they can trust, or to join a supportive network of other males so that they can share their concerns, learn from each other, and pray for each other. I have found that, in line with research, men and women speak different languages, which provides much humour for many and, in some cases, conflict for many. We want to become "bilingual" so that we can communicate with our queens and princesses while being sensitive to their nuances, without losing our manhood.

One way we can do this is to encourage every congregation to have a working Men's Ministries department. Over the past year, I have worked with the Willesden church to host a men's conference. I have also visited the following churches, preaching and providing them with some of the tools to strengthen or start a Men's Ministries department - Chelmsford, Willesden, Battersea, Ilford Lane, Croydon, Lewisham and North Wembley

On the 19th November, we celebrated International Men's Day by hosting a men's breakfast at the Advent Centre. The event, with special guest speakers Dr Augustus Lawrence and Pastor Bobby Bovell, attracted around 50 men. We were also



blessed by the music of Paul Lee, Daniel Costin, and Sean Mitchell.

## Plans for 2018

The next year will be one of innovation. We plan to offer workshops on Domestic Violence and also Men's Health. We are talking to the Women's Ministries department to hold a conference to enable both sexes to understand each other better. In September 2018, we will hold our second Men's Conference, in partnership with the Willesden church. And as part of the Year of Reclamation, we will seek to encourage men to reclaim what society has taken from them and work with young men and millennials. We will continue to make regular visits to local churches and to keep our stakeholders abreast of the work that we are doing, and in order to provide a platform for resources and discussion, we are looking to start a Facebook page.

Please pray for the department as it works with the men not only in our congregations but in our communities.



DEVON BOYD

# PRAYER MINISTRY Department

## Let Us Pray

*"We give You all the glory. We worship You, God, because You are worthy to be praised. We praise You for leading forward the ministry of prayer throughout 2017 within the South England Conference".*

A tremendous experience was had by all during the twenty-one days of fasting and prayer which ran from 07-29 January 2017 and included the GC Ten Days of Prayer. Each day we met from 6am-7am on the prayer line to give praise, seek forgiveness, testify of the goodness of God, and petition His help.

God inspired the prayer line to be continued every Wednesday at the same time throughout the year. One attendee was asked to work on a particular Wednesday morning. The person enquired what time the shift was due to start. "Normally at 7am; however, on this occasion the shift would begin at 8am," came the reply. In addition, the paid hours would commence from 7am. God made it possible for this person to keep their appointment and join the prayer line.

The hand of God was evident at the SEC Day of Prayer hosted in Hampstead SDA church on 27 May 2017. We felt the same presence of the Lord at the

SEC camp meeting early-morning prayer meetings under the ministry of Pastor Juan Carlos.

Through our guest speakers at the "God Restore" prayer retreat, Dr Richard de Lisser, Pr Steve McKenzie, and Simba Muhau, many experienced spiritual, emotional, psychological, and physical healing. The presence of God was felt throughout our times of worship and prayer. As people spoke of their healing, it was evident God was with us.

The prayer ministry has faced challenges to be faithful. Regrettably, some prayer activities went amiss throughout the year because of time constraints and other commitments.

Training was given during the quarterly prayer symposiums that equipped prayer coordinators with relevant skills to develop their ministry in local churches, and I am grateful for the numerous invitations to preach and teach about prayer.

In 2018, as part of the **EEE Refresh** initiative, the Prayer Ministries department will be supporting the Year of Reclamation through intentional prayer activities that can involve each member.



VERONICA WILLIAMS

# CHURCH BUILDING & PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

I was elected to the role of Church Building and Property Development Director in November 2015 on a part-time basis, along with the responsibility for the Hampstead SDA Church. However, in February 2016, the Executive Committee decided that due to the mounting workload, the role demanded 100% of my time and since then I was taken on a full-time basis.

During 2017, the department has been extremely busy; we have pursued the purchase of several buildings, we were instrumental in starting a new build, we renovated and refurbished several properties, and we also provided churches with grants to upgrade their buildings.

Our activities included the following:

- Purchased the current Southend church.
- Started a "new build" of the Maidenhead church after a number of years of fundraising.
- Purchased a building in the Isle of Wight which has planning permission to convert it into a church building, community centre, and three flats, with the possibility of reviving the work on the island.
- Put in a bid for the Chingford church. The offer was accepted and legalities underway.
- Put in an offer for a church for Bracknell Ghana. We are waiting for its completion.
- Renovated the three-bed flat at the Advent Centre and assisted with the redecoration in Welwyn in South London.
- Contributed to the renovation works at the Norwich church and provided contractors.



Refurbishment work on the roof of the Beckenham church, and replaced the floor in the main hall and created a mezzanine floor. Put in a bid for a property in Houndsfield Road, North London on behalf of the Edmonton, Cuckoo Hall Road church. Renovated both the male and female toilets in the Advent Centre.

Grants were also given to help various churches including the Reading Ghana church, and funding has been given to the Tottenham West Green Road church to extend their building, with planning permission expected soon. There is also a planned maintenance programme in place to assist all congregations. Plans for 2018

In line with the **EEE Refresh** initiative, the Church Building and Property Development Department will ensure that all churches comply with Health and Safety standards in order that our churches will be healthy, happy, and healing spaces. We want all our churches to have an overview of the SEC's building outreach plan. On the 1st February, we plan to host "Except the Lord Build the House." This event is specifically targeted at pastors, building committee chairpersons, local church elders, deacons, and caretakers—those who make the decisions regarding the physical plant. The event will look not only at the practical and legal aspects of building churches, property development, and maintenance, but will address the spiritual aspects of a process that is often fraught with challenges.



STEVE MCKENZIE

# EDUCATION Department

## EVENTS UNDERTAKEN 2017

More than ever in our history, this is now the climate to promote Adventist education!

With the introduction of new aspects of the education curriculum and legislation promoting "Fundamental British Values" (the legislation surrounding new requirements for teaching lifestyle and citizenship to children), Christian teachers are under pressure to teach moral and social theories that may compromise their Christian beliefs. Thus, this year has been a tremendously busy one for our Education Department. Working closely with our Religious Liberty Department, we held several seminars regarding current educational affairs and how they affect parents, children, and teachers. We continue to tour our churches with these seminars in the hope of making our membership aware and proactive in current educational legislation.

During May, we launched the Adventist Teachers Association. The ATA is a network formed to help parents, teachers, and other educators who are not in Adventist schools.

- For teachers - to join a group of like-minded ambitious Christian educators and help them shape and build successful careers in education.
- For parents - to get inside insights into the school system and help to support their children's transition through education.

• For local church youth/education leaders - to hear about quality education and career-related activities that will engage and support church youth aged 15 – 23.

Throughout the year, Education Day programmes were held in churches across the SEC. These were very well received. We showcased Adventist education and our talented pupils, and shared educational advice with our members.

The Education Department continues to work closely with the Head Teachers of our SEC schools, providing training and offering professional support. We share "good practice," ensuring that our schools continue to uphold Christian values and promote high educational standards. Parents continue to testify to the benefits of educating their children in our Adventist schools—education which prepares their children for today's world and the world to come. Our schools continue to be

beacons in their local communities.

The department is working with churches who run supplementary schools, homework clubs, and parents who are involved in homeschooling. We are also visiting our youth at university and organizing career fairs.

In the strategic framework of the SEC's vision, "Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere," with 2017 being the year of restoration, the SEC Education Department had a mission to rebuild, repair and renew all aspects of education within our church. We will continue to work with our mission of reclamation in 2018, with our new emphasis on **EEE Refresh**.



GINA ABBEQUAYE

## SEC Staff Update

The quarter ending 2017 brought many changes to the leadership team at the South England Conference. Dr Kirk Thomas, outgoing Personal Ministries and Sabbath School Director, has taken up the position as British Union Conference Evangelism Director. In September, the Executive Committee met and after much prayer and consideration voted to invite Dr Michael Mbui, former pastor of the Balham, Ebenezer Community, and Mitcham Community churches to replace him.

Pastor Simon Martin, outgoing Church Growth and Church Planting Director, has taken up the position of Discipleship Coach in the Trans-European Division. This is part of a key strategy to develop and enhance the skills of ministers, elders, members, and administrators across the Division. The Executive Committee invited former Newbold Church Senior Pastor, Wayne Erasmus, to serve as the Church Growth Director.

Dr Michael Hamilton leaves the Willesden and Northolt district to serve as the Director of Adventist Radio London. This vision was made possible with the support of the General Conference and Adventist World Radio, who provided funds for a DAB Licence. Outgoing Media Director, Pastor Vili Costescu, will serve as the full-time minister of the Hampstead Church, and Communications Director, Pastor Sam Davies, leaves the Tottenham West Green Road church and will add Media to his directorial portfolio.

## Ordination of Pastor James Shepley

James Shepley was ordained at the Area 2 Day of Fellowship in Cheltenham on the 23rd September 2017. Guest speaker Pastor Simon Martin, former SEC Church Growth Director, used Spurgeon's quote as he admonished James to be faithful to the call of ministry and said, "When God calls you to be minister, do not stoop to be a king."

*"For me, what made the ordination so special was the presence of many loved church members, family, and friends,"* said Shepley.

The newly-ordained minister credits his walk with Christ to the influence of his wife, especially when they worked for ADRA as both volunteers and employees, which involved stints in Madagascar and Burkina Faso.

Hélia is the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of ADRA-UK and she and James have three lovely daughters: Sarah (16), Joanna (14) and Naomi (9).



Dr Michael Mbui



Pr Wayne Erasmus



Dr Michael Hamilton



Pr James Shepley

## EEE Refresh

Evangelism, Everyone, Everywhere (EEE) has been the SEC's emphasis from September 2015 until the next session in 2019. The focus for 2018 is Reclamation, and SEC President Dr Emmanuel Osei is putting a heavy emphasis on making the churches relevant, not only to the local communities where churches are based, but also for the retention as well as reclamation of our members. An aspect of this is the EEE Refresh initiative, which is geared to utilise and engage the millennials, an important demographic of the church family which is missing in many congregations.

Osei's mission is to invite young people on board and *"tap into this wealth of resource"* to create a new generation of leaders. The goal is to work alongside millennials, allowing them to take the lead and giving them responsibilities, for after all, *"this church began with young people leading."* The conference has already started this movement by inviting young people to sit on the Board of Directors.

With EEE Refresh, Dr Osei is looking forward for a fresh start within the conference.



## £6200 raised for the Watford Peace Hospice

The Stanborough Park church handed over a cheque for £6200 to the Watford Peace Hospice on the 4th November 2017 during their main church service, having raised these funds from their *"Soli Deo Gloria"* (To God Alone be the Glory) themed flower festival, held in July this year. Gemma Shorten, the Hospice's community fundraiser, who received these funds, commented that the organisation was

*"astounded by how much had been raised"* and calculated that the money would fund an inpatient bed for eleven days.

## NORTH Wembley Luv Gospel 2017 Festival

North Wembley Community Seventh-day Adventist Church launched its weeklong festival Luv Gospel 2017 on Saturday 11 November.

With performers including the 2017 Eden Awards Winner Phillipa Hanna, winners of BBC's Songs of Praise Choir of the Year 2016/17, and The Voice Contestant 2017's Israel Allen, the event brought together music and spiritual reflections by a visiting pastor, New York's Pastor Philip Wesley II. This programme was envisioned by the church's music director, Michael Agyei-Asare, who had an old dream of bringing some of the UK's best gospel artists together. Special guests on the closing Sabbath included Councillor Bhagwanji Chohan, the Mayor of Brent Area.

## SEC Men's Ministry Growth

With the appointment of Devon Boyd as Men's Ministries Coordinator earlier this year, the conference has already seen programmes such as concerts, seminars, and retreats take place, helping men become Christ-like leaders in their home, church, and community.

For the celebration of International Men's Day in November, men from around the conference gathered at the Advent Centre, London, for a popular event combining a real feast of a breakfast with talks focusing on fellowship and relationship building.

The purpose of the department is to connect men of all ages to God, the Bible, and other men for the purpose of growing and making supportive connections.

# DEVOTIONAL

As I am writing this, I am over 4,000 miles away from home. I am missing being with family and connecting in the myriad of little ways that make life sweet. Fortunately, technology has enabled a connection of sorts. Is this a picture of how things are between God and humanity? The good news is that enforced separation was not acceptable to God, so the most wonderful reclamation mission was conceived. Jesus wanted us to come home and went to incredible lengths to ensure that this was a reality.

*"... God... settled the relationship between us and him, then called us to settle our relationships with each other. ...God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God's work of making things right between them..." 2 Corinthians 5:19-20 (MSG)*

How, then, can we say we love God and not love our fellow human beings? How is your church family doing at connecting people to God and helping in the healing process of

reconciling with each other? Families are a vital part of the healing process. Families must be there for each other in times of sickness or health.

Philip Yancey tells the story of a drug-addicted prostitute who was asked if she had gone to a church for help. She replied that she felt bad enough already. Going to a church would only make her feel worse. Sadly, that is how many feel about the church.

For the South England Conference, in keeping with the world church, this is the Year of Reclamation. Is your church the right place for those who long for something more, something better, and something real? Each Seventh-day Adventist church congregation needs to be a place where people come for healing and restoration. They need to be safe spaces where people can be "real," so that they can flourish in body, mind, and spirit. The church family is not to be a courtroom filled with judge and jury, but a place for restoration and reclamation. The church is a hospital for spiritual healing and with God's power working in us, this can be a beautiful reality.

Ask yourself, "What one thing could I do differently this year to provide a safe place for people who feel that this is no longer a safe place for them to be?"

*"Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathise with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing." 1 Peter 3:8-9 (NLT)*

Christ's mission should be our mission. May our church be a home away from home.

Let us say to ourselves, "If [I've] gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if His love has made any difference in [my] life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to [me], if [I] have a heart, if [I] care— then... agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don't push [my] way to the front; don't sweet-talk [my] way to the top. Put [myself] aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting [my] own advantage. Forget [myself] long enough to lend a helping hand." Phil 2:1-4 MSG (Italics supplied)



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