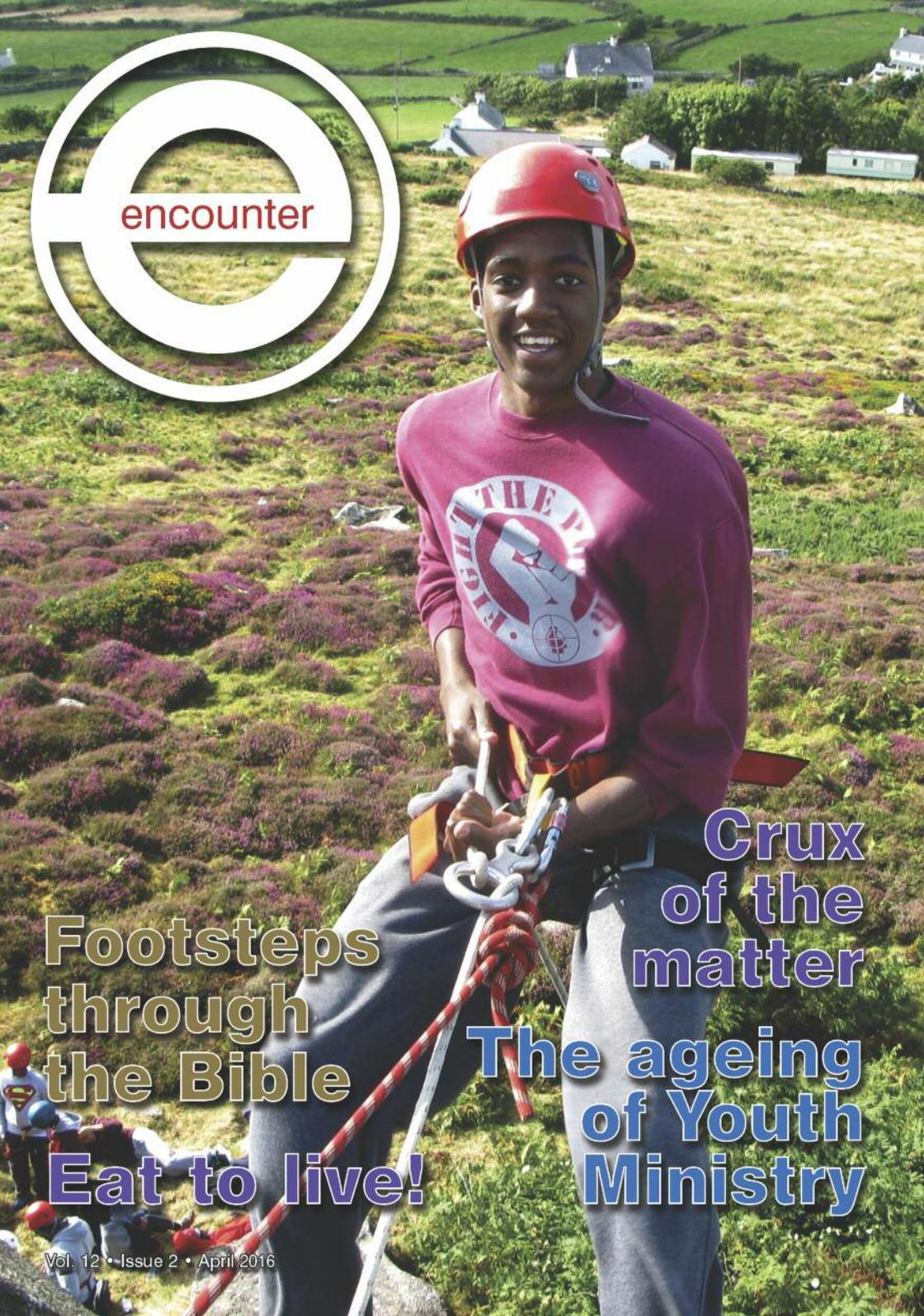


encounter



Footsteps
through
the Bible

Eat to live!

Crux
of the
matter

The ageing
of Youth
Ministry

Cover photo: Spencer Williams © Adam Ramdin, NEC Youth Ministries.

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Youth Dept, BUC, Stanborough Park, Watford, WD25 9JZ.
Design: Abigail Murphy

The purpose of **@ncounter** is to develop youth and youth leadership spiritually and motivationally, in faith and in service.

To contact us directly or for regional youth director contacts, please see the website for details or scan this QR code.

www.adventistyouth.org.uk



This issue's contributors:

Meet the Director



Jeremy Tremeer is the Welsh Mission Youth Sponsor as well as pastor of three churches in Cardiff. He shares more about himself in our spotlight section – about his love of the outdoor life and his joy at seeing young people connect with Jesus.

Dispatches



Nathan Stickland is the British Union Youth Ministries Director, and also our **@ncounter** editor! He wanted to share a thought that has been on his mind for some time now – catch Nathan's ponderings in our new section entitled 'Dispatches', where we'll be including articles, resources and news especially, but not exclusively, for youth and Pathfinder leaders.

Pathfinders



Fikayo Bright and **Fonah Thomas** are both members of the Stanborough Park Pathfinder Club. They are studying for their AY Silver Awards and needed to write and submit an item for publication. We were pleased to include their articles here, and if anyone else is working towards an award and needs to follow suit, please do get in contact with us at bucyouth@adventist.org.uk

@ncounter is a magazine for teens and young adults. If you are part of this age group then we are very happy to have contributions from you in future **@ncounter** magazines. Perhaps you want to write about a recent faith-sharing experience or you want to tell us about your time volunteering. Maybe you are a student in the field of science and you have come across some research which has helped cement your faith in the Bible. Or you may even have a topic close to your heart that you would like us to tackle in the Youth Issues section. Contact us – we'd love to hear from you! bucyouth@adventist.org.uk

Love it, hate it or think you could do better? Have your say about your **@ncounter** magazine. Fill in our online survey at www.adventistyouth.org.uk



This time of year is a clear time of endings and beginnings. A time to finish education, at least maybe for another year, a time to await results, a time to seek employment, and a time to explore or confirm the 'What next?' in your life.

You are not alone. Over the next few months within our church structure we have a number of meetings – sessions – when administrators and directors are assigned positions: some to return to current roles, and some to move on to new opportunities, to be replaced by the next leader with bestowed responsibilities.

I solicit your prayers for the appointments that will take place at these sessions. I also want to encourage you in your faith, in this changing world, not to change or waver in your commitment of faith and hope in Jesus. There are times and opportunities throughout life in which God calls us to stand firm in Him.

I find it interesting that in Exodus 14 Moses tells the people to stand still and watch, but God tells Moses to step forward.

'And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD . . ." And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward." ' (Exodus 14:13, 15, NKJV)

As you face change, dilemma, or decisions, enquire of God, but don't stand around; step forward and let God lead you to the 'What next?'

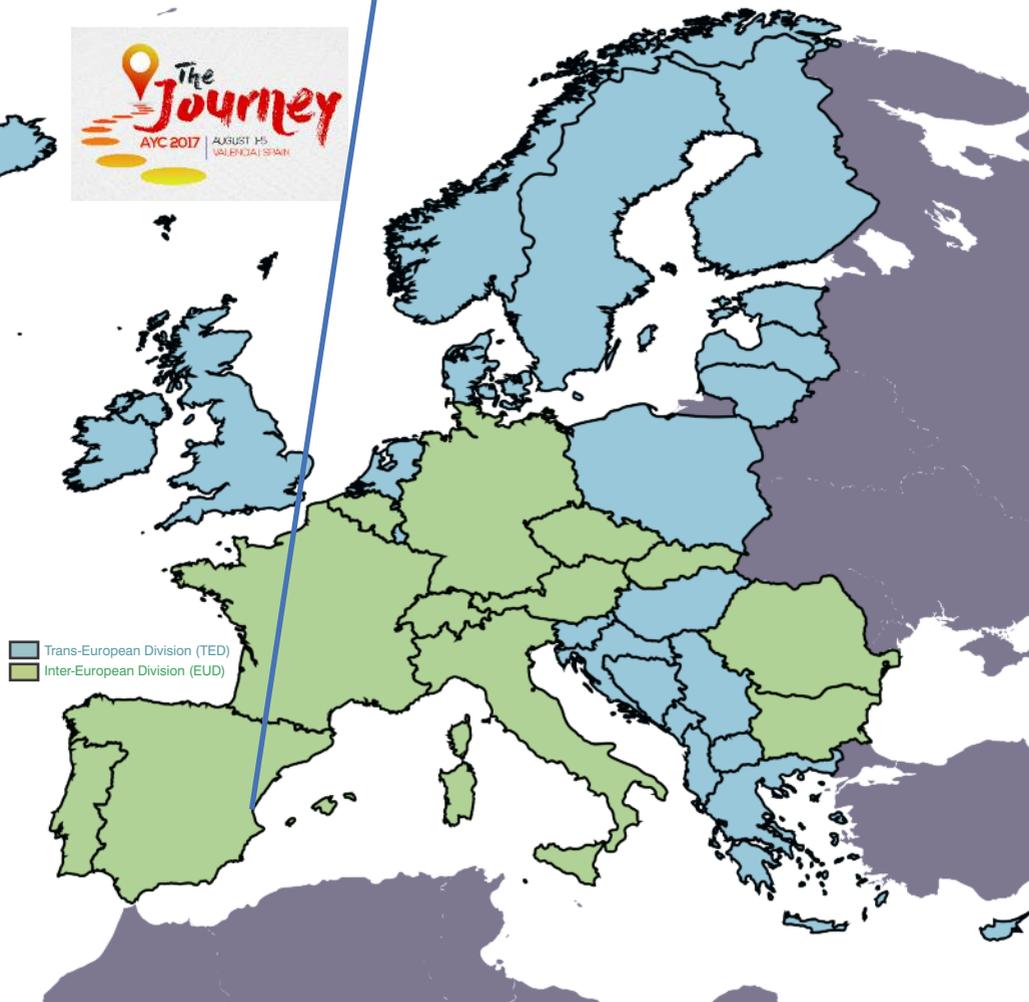
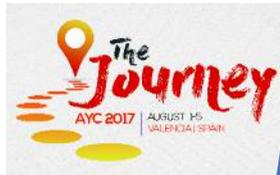
Nathan



Events

In 2017, there will be a European Youth Congress for youth aged 16-30. This is a collaboration between the **Trans-European Division (TED)**, of which we are a part, and the **Inter-European Division (EUD)**.

We are hoping that many of you will attend this event, which will take place in Valencia, Spain from **1 to 6 August 2017**. Valencia is right on the eastern coast of Spain with 7km of sandy beaches and average summer temperatures of 28-32° Celsius. Transport and accommodation options are being considered and we will let you know more in a short time. Meanwhile, take a look below to see which countries are in both regions – it's very likely that you might be meeting people from any of these countries at congress! It's a great opportunity to make new friends, to learn more about and share the love of Christ under sunny skies!



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Youth Issues

Making smart decisions for a smart pathway!

Sharon Platt-McDonald & Jaz Rodney-Sargeant

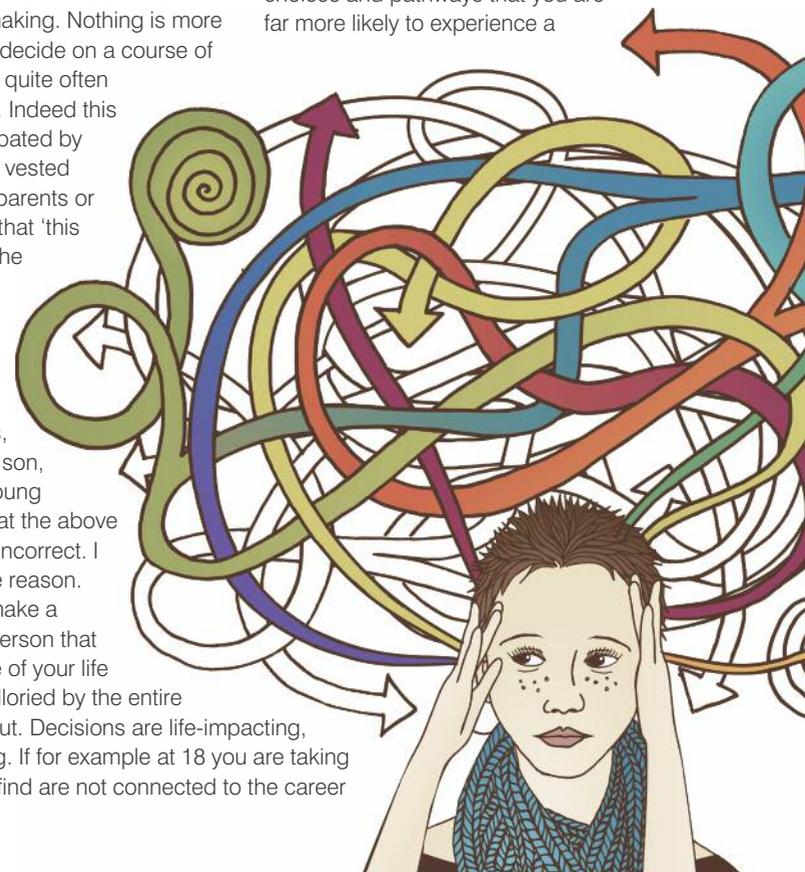
encounter 6

Continuing the Moving Forward series we welcome back Careers and Business Coach, Jaz Rodney-Sargeant, as she introduces her 'Smart Pathways' concept. We catch up with her in this instalment and hear about the latest developments with Smart Pathways and its efficacy for decision-making in key areas of life. Sharon

In our last discussion we talked about the new development of smart pathways and since then we've been busy creating further detail around the pathway strands, one of which we will share with you – that of decision-making. Now one of the hardest things a young person can encounter is the process of decision-making. Nothing is more painful than having to decide on a course of action, which for them quite often appears life-changing. Indeed this feeling is often exacerbated by peers, or adults with a vested interest (for example, parents or teachers), saying just that 'this decision could affect the rest of your life, so be absolutely sure as to what you are doing'!

As a professional working with young people for many years, and having a teenage son, I am here to tell any young person reading this that the above statement is blatantly incorrect. I say this for one simple reason. You cannot possibly make a decision as a young person that will change the course of your life forever. Before I am pilloried by the entire readership, hear me out. Decisions are life-impacting, but rarely life-changing. If for example at 18 you are taking the subjects you now find are not connected to the career

you want to enter, this will inevitably impact on potential entry to that field. Rarely will this 'affect the rest of your life'. It indeed presents the potential for anxiety, worry and fear that all is lost, but as a young person (certainly in the Western world) you have so many options, choices and pathways that you are far more likely to experience a



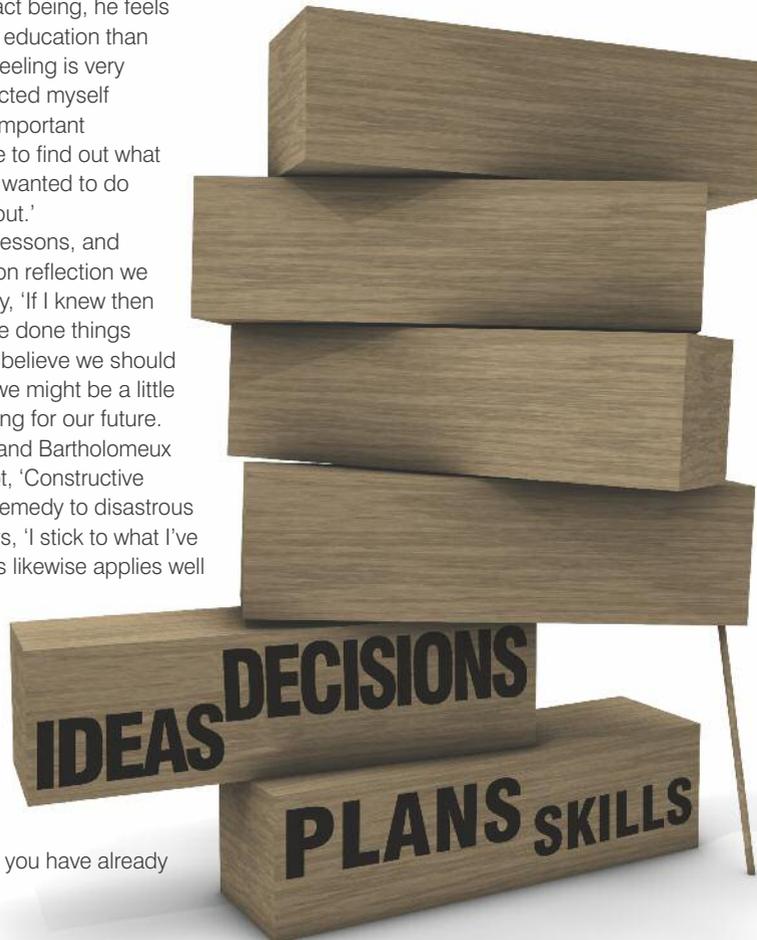
temporary impact, rather than a consequence which is life-changing.

In talking to young people around me, many testify to this very fact. In a recent consultation with one young man, now 19, he reported his devastation at not getting the results he had hoped for at college and as a result having to take an extra year doing a course which even now he feels is not exactly the pathway he wants to pursue. His story is, in short, one of: 'Well, parents, teachers and friends said, "Take a course, any course; just see if you can get to uni!" ' Not wishing to disappoint any of these trusted sources, that's exactly what he did: the impact being, he feels far less ready to enter higher education than he did two years earlier. His feeling is very much, 'I wish I had disconnected myself emotionally from these very important decisions, and taken the time to find out what I was really about and what I wanted to do and was truly passionate about.'

Hindsight teaches many lessons, and often really harsh ones. But on reflection we are almost always able to say, 'If I knew then what I know now I might have done things differently.' For this reason, I believe we should perhaps take a look at how we might be a little smarter in our decision-making for our future.

Design engineers Durfee and Bartholomeux present a noteworthy concept, 'Constructive thinking and efficiency, as a remedy to disastrous decision-making'. Durfee says, 'I stick to what I've made up and build on it.' This likewise applies well to one's career (and what might seem like life-changing decisions), in that you may be headed down a particular path and hit an unexpected fork in the road. In pursuit of your goal, you often don't have to start from scratch, but simply look at ways to build on what you have already

achieved. Evaluate what you've experienced and learned so far – and build the positives of that on the pieces, looking at your transferable skills or abilities to see where you really want to be. Granted, if you decide, having completed all your tertiary and higher education, that you really want a career with a specific set of requirements – for example, medicine or law, or distinct areas of the science-dominated fields such as aeronautics – of course that judgement can only be made in relation to what you have achieved thus far. You would have to realistically evaluate whether the desired ambition is actually achievable.



But first things first. Our best and most dependable roadmap is Jesus and the greatest life and career encyclopedia is the Bible. In Jeremiah 29:11 the Bible tells us not to worry because Jesus has a plan for every single one of us, a plan unique to each and every individual: ' "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" ' (NIV). This is further supported in Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV): 'Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.'

My advice, before you do anything – choosing subjects, preparing your CV, completing a job/application form, attending a job/career or higher education fair – is to talk to Jesus! It doesn't have to be a long and drawn-out intercession, just an acknowledgement of His promises and that you put Him first in all decision-making, and most importantly in decisions that are to determine your pathway in life.

Don't underestimate the power of God to help you in making choices – remember another great promise in Matthew 6:33 (NKJV): 'But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.' This is fundamentally what the

Smart Pathways to Life message is predicated on.

So what (you may ask) is the key to smart decision-making? For now, we will address just 3 of 10 questions and answer the remainder throughout the series.

1 Consider the 'honesty' check – Why am I interested in this Pathway? Who and/or what is my greatest influence? How much do I really know about this? Do I have what it really takes to successfully meet all the demands this places on me? Is this for me or my friends, parents, church or others?

2 Do the 'spiritual' check – Is God involved in this ambition? If not, why not? Are career and faith mutually exclusive? Where does God really want me to be in all of this? What ultimately is His purpose for my life?

3 Do I have a plan? Is it rigid or flexible? Is there a back-up? Have I researched enough? Investigated enough? Prayed enough?

In our next issue we will take you through some actions you could take after working through these questions, and provide further questions and resources to access for use in reaching your Smart Pathway to Life. For now remember the words of Joshua 1:9 (NIV): 'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.'

Crux of the matter

12

Dear Pastor,

I am a young member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and proud to be so. I am involved in church life and genuinely do want to help to spread the Gospel message to those in my community.

The media is bringing cases of historic child abuse in religious institutions to the fore at the moment, with the Oscar-winning film *Spotlight* an example. Although in our church, mercifully, we have never experienced anything on that scale, there have been some cases of abuse in the past, which saddens me. What is the church doing to make sure that our places of worship are safe for church and community families to attend?

Your question is a very important and valid one. While there is much I could write in response to your concern and worry, I will keep it succinct and brief due to space allowance. You will be proud to know that your church from the highest organisational level, General Conference (GC), has released statements which you can google and read for yourself decrying all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence. The church must respond to abuse and family violence within both the church and the community, because to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate and potentially extend such behaviour.

So what is the church doing, especially as it relates to the UK? The British Union Conference (BUC) has prepared a policy document called 'Keeping Our Church Family Safe' (KCFS). This document has helped guide the church to understand that to assist in child/adult protection we need to establish:

- A robust safeguarding structure
- A safe staff selection/recruitment approach: this would include statutory checks such as those offered by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) or Access NI, all subject to regional variances
- Good management of those working with children and vulnerable adults (clear understanding of roles and accountability)

- Training of those working with children and vulnerable adults in working safely, following good working practices: this would also incorporate how to respond to concerns or disclosures and the caring of those affected by abuse.

You will be pleased to know that our KCFS policy has just undergone a major review and revision and you can see this for yourself if you visit the BUC website (www.adventist.org.uk) and go to the Executive Secretary page and scroll down until you see KCFS policy December 2015. Having received guidance from professional organisations such as the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), we want you to know that our commitment to child and vulnerable adult protection is further illustrated by the four major changes in the policy.

1. In the past the policy was just a child protection policy but has now been extended to include vulnerable adults.
2. The 'one size fits all' policy no longer is applicable as we have discovered that while the policy may be generic, procedures differ in the regions of the UK (for example, Scotland, Ireland and Wales). This has been taken into consideration in the new policy.

3. The new title for the person responsible for overseeing the relevant statutory checks is now the 'Disclosure Clerk' (formerly Child Safety Representative).
4. The most significant change is the introduction of a 'Designated Safeguarding Person' to be elected in each church. This role is a very important one within the safeguarding structure of the church. They ensure that our KCFS policy and guidance are followed and provide the support, guidance and training to staff, volunteers or church members. They are an important reporting link between conference/mission and the BUC safeguarding sub-committee who are responsible for submitting an annual report to the BUC Executive Committee on safeguarding/protection matters.

So, in conclusion, does having a KCFS policy keep our children and adults safe? Not entirely. Does having a DBS, PVG, Access NI, or Garda check keep our children and adults safe? Not by themselves. Does making sure

we choose the right workers keep our children and adults safe? It does go a long way to helping.

The key, however, to being proactive in the protection of children and adults is in the implementation and application of good working practices which will, in addition to everything outlined above, protect not only the children and adults but those working with them.

Each church within the British Union needs to adopt these safe working practices and put them into action. In that way, we will have gone a long way to making sure people who do not have the best intentions towards our vulnerable members do not slip through any cracks or loopholes in the system.

And if you do see anything suspicious, please don't be afraid to approach a trusted adult or your Designated Safeguarding Person to talk it over with them in confidence.

I hope that this brings peace of mind to you, knowing that your church is doing all that it can to minimise the risk of harm to our children and adults.

◦ Pastor Cyril Sweeney
BUC Family & Children's Ministries Director



Eat to live Food bowls

Food bowls are quick and easy! They're a student's answer to throwing delicious foods together: everything from noodles to burrito, rice or grain bowls. The key to this easy and nutritious way of eating is that all the food fits in a bowl. The four main ingredients are a grain base, a vegetable base, a protein-rich plant food and something to add taste.

- **The grain base:** This could be rice, noodles, pasta or quinoa. Experiment and try new ones – most are readily available in your local supermarket or discount food store.

- **The vegetable base:** This could be greens or colourful vegetables steamed, roasted or raw. You can add a number of portions of vegetables to the bowl for more nutrition.
- **The protein-rich plant foods:** They include pulses or nuts, beans or legumes, which can be easy to cook, such as mangetout or green beans, or you can use tinned or frozen pre-cooked beans such as edamame (soya beans or peas). You can also make delicious dips such as houmous or lentil and walnut dip.
- **The taste ingredient:** The final addition to a food bowl is something tasty. This can include any of the onion family such as garlic, spring onion, onions, sun-dried tomato or olives or fresh herbs. Or you can make a simple creamy dressing.



◦ Angelette Müller



TOP TIP! A herb planter kept on your kitchen windowsill is a cheap way of always having fresh herbs to add to a meal.

Examples:

- **Burrito bowl:** Mexican flavours such as cumin, oregano, onions and paprika, with four main ingredients: mashed avocado, chopped tomato, steamed sweetcorn and sautéed black beans with some sliced onions.
- **Noodle bowl:** Think miso soup. Cook wholegrain noodles (3-4 minutes), then add a tablespoon of miso (fermented soya or rice paste) to water and pour in a bowl. Chop a spring onion and add chopped healthy watercress: it will wilt in the boiling water. Then add a handful of edamame beans, a bean of your choice or tofu.

Get adventurous!

For more adventurous food bowls, try a breakfast bowl that is really like a superfood smoothie with lots of nutritious toppings (so you do need a blender). Blend together a variety of fruits such as a banana and a few strawberries with milk (you can use oat milk,

almond or coconut milk to keep it low-calorie). You can add dried fruits such as dates to sweeten the bowl. Then sprinkle with seeds, desiccated coconut or nuts. You can add some sliced fruits as a topping.

Food for thought

It sounds really big – but: we are ‘designed to be a counterpart of God’ (Ellen White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 45). How would this thought influence your eating?

I often ask my nutrition clients the question:

‘If you were holding something “priceless” how would you look after it?’

I invariably get answers like, ‘Very carefully,’ and when I ask, ‘Why?’ They often say, ‘Because it is precious,’ or, ‘Because if you break it you can’t get it back.’

Then I ask the question, ‘How do you look after you?’

We are ‘fearfully and wonderfully made’ (Psalm 139:14, NIV).



- 1-31 Drug Awareness Month BUC
- 7 Reach the World: In the Community GC
- 7-14 Core of Adventism BUC
- 13-15 BELA 4 NEC
- 13-15 YM Leaders' Weekend, Areas 7 & 8 SEC
- 13-15 MIT Weekend SEC
- 21 World Day of Prayer for Children At Risk BUC
- 22 Tough Mudder NEC
- 27-29 YM Leaders' Weekend, Area 6 SEC
- 27-30 Adventurer Camporee NEC-SEC



- 1-7 Youth Camp SEC
- 6 Global Mission Evangelism GC
- 7-14 Earliteen Camp NEC
- 7-24 Conference Jamaica Pathfinder Camporee NEC-SEC
- 9-17 Summer Camp IM
- 13 Reach the World: Church Planting GC
- 13 Teens Summer Concert SEC
- 14-21 Youth Camp NEC
- 20 Education Day BUC
- 22-28 Extreme Teens Camp SEC
- 27 'EndItNow' and Lay Evangelism Emphasis GC



- 4 Mission to the Cities Challenge Sabbath BUC
- 4 Reach the World: Sabbath Services GC
- 5 Big 6 NEC
- 6-12 SEC Camp Meeting SEC
- 10-12 Wilderness Camp NEC
- 11 Women's Ministry Sabbath BUC
- 12 MG First Aid 2 NEC
- 12 Aberdaron Team Two Castles Run NEC
- 19 MIT Assessment SEC
- 19 Newbold College Graduation TED
- 20-26 NEC Camp Meeting NEC
- 24-26 MIT/PLA Weekend SEC
- 26-7 Jul Youth Summer Camp in Greece SM
- 30-2 Jul British Union Conference Session BUC



- 1-4 ASC Students' Training Retreat NEC
- 2-4 MIT/PLA Weekend SEC
- 3-10 Family Togetherness Week BUC
- 4 Stanborough Press Open Day BUC
- 9-11 MG Training Weekend 4 NEC
- 10 Youth Day NEC
- 10 Mission Promotion – World Mission GC
- 11 Sports Day IM
- 12-17 School of the Prophets NEC
- 17 Pathfinder Rally Day GC
- 18-24 Make a Difference Week BUC
- 23-25 PLA Training 2 IM
- 24 Power of 36,000 BUC
- 30-2 Oct SEC Youth Congress SEC
- 30-3 Oct BELA Assessment NEC



- 1-3 MG Training Weekend 3 NEC
- 2 Day of Fasting & Prayer BUC
- 3-10 Special Needs Camp in Aberdaron BUC
- 5 PEACE 4-month programme begins NEC
- 9 World Mission Promotion GC
- 10 Athletics Day NEC
- 16 Reach the World: Media Ministry Promotion GC
- 16 NEC Rally Day NEC
- 18-22 Student Camp SEC
- 21-24 North England Conference Session NEC
- 23 Children's Sabbath BUC
- 31 Welsh Mission Session WM
- 31-7 Aug BUC Pathfinder Camporee BUC
- 31-7 Aug Junior Camp NEC



- 1 Day of Fasting & Prayer BUC
- 2 Irish Mission Session IM
- 8 Pastor Appreciation Day BUC
- 8 Student Day of Fellowship BUC
- 14-17 Youth Retreat incl. Youth Day of Fellowship (17th) SM
- 15 Adventist Heritage & Spirit of Prophecy Sabbath GC
- 22 Creation Sabbath GC
- 24-28 Prayer & Faith Conference SEC
- 28-30 Youth Weekend IM
- 29-5 Nov Week of Prayer GC



Assyrians: the worst villains or the greatest heroes?

18

'Dad, in the Bible I read about the Assyrians as really mean people. . . .'

'I have seen the news lately, and it looks like there are still some of those Assyrians, alive and doing a mess in Mesopotamia.' Well, Ben, I am sure that you still have in your mind those images that you saw at the British Museum when you were very young. Mountains of heads, impaled people, and other images of torture are featured in the Lachish panels that are at the museum. However, that is just part of the story; let's go back to London to do more research.

Not mess-oh-potamia!

In the halls of the British Museum there are amazing collections of ancient artefacts. You can travel back in time as you wonder over so many inscriptions, bowls, and household utensils. The 'cradle of civilisation' is in Mesopotamia, and no, it was not a 'mess'. 'Mesopotamia' comes from the Greek language. Westerners called the area, 'land between rivers', an allusion to the mighty rivers Euphrates and Tigris, which cross over today's countries of Turkey, Syria and Iraq.

Those rivers were named in memory of the rivers that crisscrossed the Garden of Eden: in Genesis there is a reference to a land called 'Ashur' (Genesis 2:14, NIV). However, the pre-Flood topography and geography are totally different to current maps (most likely the Garden of Eden and those rivers were in today's Caribbean – if you ask your mother, Ben!). After the Flood, an area north of what we know today as Mesopotamia was known as the land of the Assyrians.

The book of Genesis presents the nations that thrived on the world after the Flood. Since the children of Noah had settled in the area close to the mountains of Urartu ('Ar-rarat'),

it's no coincidence to find important settlements in that area and land described as Mesopotamia (south of Urartu). Those settlers used the names of two of Eden's rivers and also the name of Ashur.

Archaeology of the Assyrians

In the archaeological record we find a group of people who identify themselves as the people of Ashur (Assyrians). They were part of the Akkadians, Semites (descendants of Shem, Noah's son) who took over the areas controlled by the Sumerians. The Assyrians thrived in the northern part of Mesopotamia, while the Babylonians controlled the south. Assyrians were so powerful that most of the time they eclipsed the more famous Babylonians.

If you could read the Assyrian chronicles at the museum, you would be grossed out by their descriptions. Similar to the Nazis, they documented the systematic torture of their victims during warfare. They skinned, mutilated, and impaled those who dared to stand before their armies. However, that is just part of the story, because that was 'normal' in ancient warfare. Even if they glorified it and used it as propaganda to create terror among their subjects, it was common to treat your enemies in similar ways.

Moreover, life under Assyrian rule allowed commercial networks to thrive and deterred small kingdoms or tribal entities from creating anarchy under what some have called 'Pax Assyrica'. There is archaeological evidence of industrial initiatives that were possible under Assyrian hegemony. They did not mass-execute people, neither did they consider themselves to be superior to others. Assyrians resettled nations and incorporated

them into their society with different notions of the modern constructs of 'ethnicity' or 'race'. I know, still they were villains, 'mean' as you describe them.

Assyrians and the Bible

The ones who suffered the most were peoples who challenged them or did not return tax to the Empire. Hezekiah was one of those kings who decided to challenge the Empire. He was a central character in one of the most amazing stories of the Hebrew Bible. In the halls of the British Museum you have some of the elements and evidence of this story. There are Sennacherib's inscriptions regarding the conquest of Judah and even some 'posters' of their attacks and the very arms they used. But we will talk about that some other day (read Isaiah 37; 2 Chronicles 32:21; and 2 Kings 18-19).

The book of Isaiah is not the only bad press that the Assyrians got. Jonah had not placed them in good light years before, while Nahum and Zephaniah prophesied their final blow almost a century after Isaiah. Assyrians remain in the biblical record as synonymous with cruelty and ruthlessness.

◦ Pastor Efraín Velázquez

President of the IAD Adventist Theological Seminary

However, the Assyrians accepted the Bible and Christianity in the first centuries after Christ. The same determination that they had before to spread their empire, they channelled to spread the Gospel. Under the Zoroastrian Sassanids, they were able to send missionaries to India, China and islands in the Far East. The Sassanids required them to cut their relationship with Rome, so there were communities that continued to worship on Sabbath for centuries.

The rise of Islam limited the freedoms of the Assyrian Christians. However, they resisted the mass conversions that were enforced in the Christian Middle East. They even thrived under the Umayyads and the Abbasids. Assyrians translated Greek works into Arabic and contributed to enrich Islamic art, philosophy and science. But the imposition of taxes, Sharia law, and sporadic events of genocide diminished the population of Assyrian Christians.

The last bloody chapters experienced by Assyrian Christians seem to have been lived a century ago, at the end of World War 2. The brutality that their ancestors had inflicted on other peoples fell upon them again. Nevertheless, they remained in their ancient homeland of Ashur and Nineveh.

Today, after almost two thousand years of reading the Gospels in the plains of Nineveh, there is silence. Churches have been burned down, women enslaved, and men murdered. I am sure that the brave Assyrian determination still lives on. The Assyrians in exile have vowed to return; the light shall shine from the East again. The Assyrians are my heroes: their resilience, courage and resolve inspire us all.



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Name:
Jeremy Tremeer

Age:
47

Place of birth:
Scarborough, England

Living in:
Caerphilly, Wales



Job title:

Minister at Cardiff/Cardiff North/Ystrad Mynach churches and Welsh Mission Youth Sponsor

Hobbies:

Skiing, mountain biking, football, cooking

Pets:

A cat called Itchy. Scratchy went missing a while ago :(

Most inspiring Bible text:

Jeremiah 31:3

*"The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying:
"I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with unfailing kindness." ' (NIV)*



What was your life like growing up?

Unsettled. I was an RAF kid, which meant my family was on the move every three years. When I was 3 or 4 years old, we lived in Singapore for two and a half years; I lived in Germany for a few years too during my teen years. We also lived all over the UK, including Scotland.

Favourite memory as a youth?

Scoring a winning goal in a crucial match for my school football team!

Where did you study and why did you choose that particular (those particular) subjects?

University of Manchester – Human Communications. It was a degree aimed at special education and looking at how people communicate when they have disabilities.

Why be a pastor/work in youth ministry?

I felt called to be a pastor when I was living in Japan and had only been a Christian for two and a half years. I just felt this compulsion to follow God and to dedicate the rest of my life to serving Him.

Worst/funniest experience in youth/pastoral ministry?

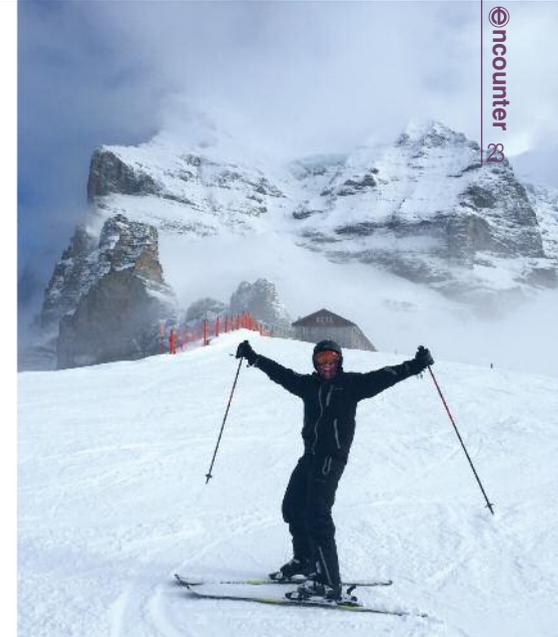
When I asked one of our youth who does Muay Thai to show me how he kicks his sparring partners.

Your vision for youth ministries in the Welsh Mission:

There is nothing greater than having a personal encounter with the living God. My vision for youth ministry is to provide a way for our young people to have that experience for themselves.

Your most standout moment as the Welsh Mission Youth Sponsor:

Whenever I see our youth worshipping God with a smile on their face.



The ageing of Youth Ministry

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I remember sitting in a restaurant with two colleagues talking about what age is encompassed by youth ministry. To get a broader perspective, one of my colleagues called the waitress over. She was at most in her early 20s. When asked what age she thinks of when someone says 'youth', the waitress answered, 'Teenagers.'

'The UN, for statistical consistency across regions, defines "youth" as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.'¹

A survey by Kent University that asked people of various ages at what age youth and old age start and finish concluded that, 'On average, the youngest respondents (15 to 24 years old) judged that youth ends at 28 and old age starts from 55, whereas the oldest age group (80 and older) judged that youth ends after 42 and old age starts at 67.'²

On one internet search I found, Tim Davies says, 'Youth as an age group – the simplest definition of "young" would be people defined by their age. But definitions of "youth" as an age range vary across the world. In the United Kingdom, talk of "youth" would usually mean 13-19-year-olds, possibly up to 25-year-olds. In other contexts, the age range might be "children and young people" of 0-18, or sometimes even "children" would refer to 0-18, and "youth" would mean 18-30. Knowing which age group we are referring to is important.'³

From a UK legal perspective, youth has

definite age bands. 'What age range do youth courts deal with? Youth courts deal with charges against young people aged 10-17. Those aged 10-13 are classified as "children", 14-17-year-olds as "young persons". Children under the age of 10 are deemed by law to be incapable of being guilty of a crime. Civil care or supervision proceedings such as child safety or child curfew orders or making the child a ward of court may be used for this age group.'⁴

Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there is often reference to two young boys kneeling in a field in Michigan, praying for how they could share their faith with their friends. The reference is given on the world Adventist Youth Ministries website.⁵ I find it interesting, though, that this reference to two boys, aged 14 and 16, is for the Young Adults (22-3+) age section of Adventist Youth and not for the younger age range.

In fact, the General Conference (GC) website lists the Adventist Youth sections as Adventurers (6-9), Pathfinders (10-15), Ambassadors (16-21), and Young Adults (22-31+). While there might seem to be some overlap with Children's Ministries, the GC website seems mainly to refer to Children's Ministries in relation to Sabbath School lessons.

At a meeting in Dublin

for all the pastors of the Irish Mission, all confirmed to me that their definition for Youth Ministries in their churches is for those in their tweens (9-12) and teens (13-17). This confirmed my experience, and observation, that I believe youth ministries in our church organisation has slidden up the age range so that there is a risk of a disconnect between our local churches' actual youth, and the activities of our administrative Youth Ministries Departments.

Experiences of the past

If Youth Ministries has a reference to two boys in a field praying for strength in service and faith-sharing – that is, two earliterate boys – where has our Youth Ministries been in the last few decades?

I am not suggesting we should be in a field, but have we been providing for the 14- and 16-year-olds? It may be evident in camp meetings that 'youth' has aged, and 'teens' have taken over the original territory of youth. The youth meetings seem to be for the young adults, and the teens seem to be for the gap in between children at primary school age, and the young adults.

I realise this might be a matter of semantics, but if we now refer to youth as those aged '22-31+' we are in danger of creating a vacuum for the tweens and teens, a vacuum that could leave these young people void of care, teaching, and experiences of salvation and service.

◦ Nathan Stickland
BUC Youth Ministries Director

This could in part explain the exodus of young adults who, when faced with the opportunity of not having to go to church, don't, because they do not have a feeling of value for the church, for God, or from church members.

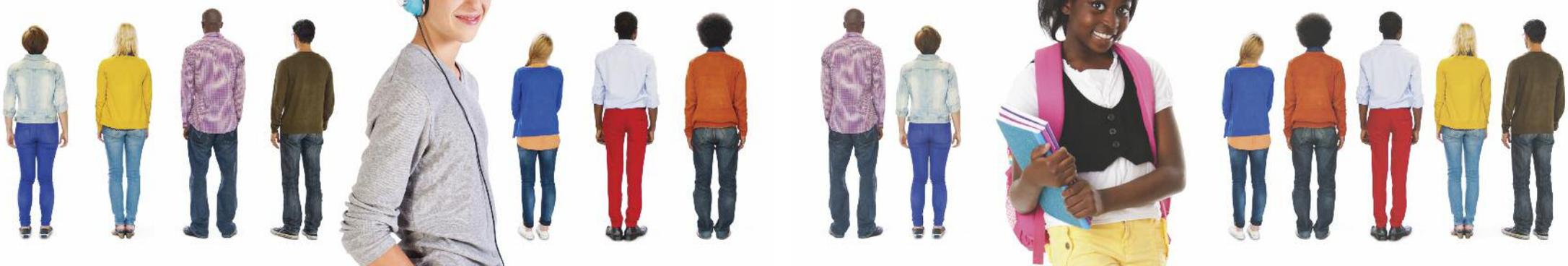
Reclaiming the value of youth

I have read two articles in Christian magazines which both state the flaw in past decades of aiming to create youth churches or services. Both articles recognise the importance of intergenerational church life; to have old and middle-aged people involved, helping, and participating in church life with young people. In the Inter-European Division (EUD) their Church of Refuge model is based on intergenerational church life.⁶

'Research shows that what a child learns to believe by age 13, he is likely to die believing.'⁷ This statistic was taken from the Barna Institute, a Christian research body. If this is true in the Adventist Church, then Adventist Youth Ministries is set up to take the blame for young adults leaving the church. There is a need for intergenerational continuity from childhood, through the young person's transition between lower and middle school ages (tweenagers), into their teenage years, through further education, and into adult life.

Now and onwards

My appeal from observation is for us to



restore the work of youth ministry and ensure it does not drift further into becoming a reference to only Young Adult Ministry, important as that also is. We need to strengthen our families so that Children's Ministries is not just about Sabbath School, but about a strong family spiritual life that is supported by the local church, which purposefully includes all young people in the activities, services, and outreach of the church. With this experience given to young people, and the value offered to them, when they move away to study they are more inclined to engage in their now-local church because it is a way of life; they come to the new church with experience to offer.

While I recognise the breadth of terminology of Youth Ministries, ranging for six-year-olds in Adventurers to thirty-year-olds with children in Adventurers, I wish to reclaim the name and purpose of Youth Ministries.

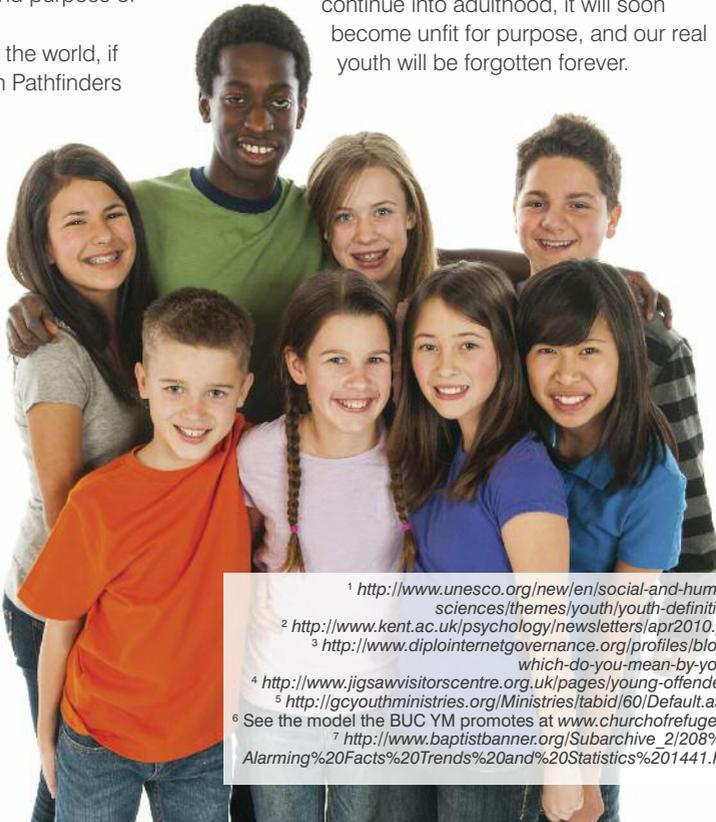
In some parts of the world, if teenagers are not in Pathfinders there is nothing for them. This is wrong. If Pathfinders is for you and your church, then fantastic. But if it isn't, it shouldn't matter. There needs to be involvement and opportunities for teenage youth to a point that if the teens aren't at church, the church suffers.

If our youth ministries are about catching those young

adults who happen to make it to their adulthood, then we have lost the game and must take the blame. If we allow youth ministries to be a pseudonym for young adult ministries, we run the risk of creating a gap years wide, a barren time for real youth to be maligned and lose their purpose in church life.

I find it no wonder that young adults are rising up and saying they want to be an army of youth who aspire to excellence in service to God. These young adults, who are no longer youth in the teenage sense, are looking for what has been missing in their church life experience. Let's not allow the ageing of Youth Ministry to prevent us from growing this army of tweens and teens into young adults with spiritual experience, ready to serve God through service to mankind, and be confident in their faith to be bold for Jesus.

If we allow the ageing of Youth Ministry to continue into adulthood, it will soon become unfit for purpose, and our real youth will be forgotten forever.



¹ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/>
² <http://www.kent.ac.uk/psychology/newsletters/apr2010.pdf>
³ <http://www.diplominternetcgovernance.org/profiles/blogs/which-do-you-mean-by-youth>
⁴ <http://www.jigsawvisitorscentre.org.uk/pages/young-offenders/>
⁵ <http://gcyouthministries.org/Ministries/tabid/60/Default.aspx>
⁶ See the model the BUC YM promotes at www.churchofrefuge.eu
⁷ http://www.baptistbanner.org/Subarchive_2/208%20Alarming%20Facts%20Trends%20and%20Statistics%201441.htm

BUC student day

day of Fellowship 2016

Leicester Central Seventh-day Adventist Church
 Corner of London/University Road, Leicester LE2 1EF



Join us on Sabbath 8 October for a day of fellowship especially for further education students from around the British Union. Meet other students and share student-life experiences. Come on time for a full day of worship and discussions, and to find out more about the 'how to' of Campus Ministries. Not forgetting the free lunch for all those who register.

Be inspired by our guest speaker, Elder Johnny Wong, and benefit from his experiences and background in setting up several campus church plants in Australia and Hong Kong.



Full details on the website:
www.adventistyouth.org.uk

Lunch is FREE. Booking is essential.

10am - 6pm

Sabbath 8 Oct '16

All England Student Camp



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Students

Campus Ministries is growing – an SEC story

With an uncommon service, the University of Hertfordshire's Adventist Society (UHAS) relaunched its society by hosting an 'open mic' night on Friday 22 January, for students from different religious backgrounds to attend and express their worship to God through song and poetry. Facilitated by a small team, the event was hosted by current president, Nathalie Boakye, alongside her team, Monique Castello (secretary), Jarmain Chidawaya (treasurer), Cleo Kamere and Abigail Kabirou (regular attendees). Set in a comfortable classroom (w125), the event welcomed around 20 students and non-students who engaged in an AYS-style song service and later a discussion led by Seimone Manuel Gunter (Area 7 Youth Federation), embracing the evening's theme of: 'Create in me a pure heart'.

However, to promote the Adventist Youth community, who other than Jermaine Wong was best to call on as the guest speaker, to give a creative sermonette at the open mic event. Through a couple of touching yet thought-provoking poems, the young poetic preacher was able to creatively preach to the mixed congregation, engaging the theme and key text for the night, 'Create in me a pure heart', which was taken from Psalm 51:10-13.

Above all, Jermaine was able to engage everyone by breaking the Scripture into little sections to help us understand the deeper meaning of the words, and also by bringing in real life examples, highlighting the ways in which we as young people are able to develop our walk with Christ and essentially creating a pure heart through our changed ways.

At the moment the society is trying to encourage membership in order for the

organisation to continue to run on campus. Therefore, we urge any existing students to join via the Student Union, through our £5 membership fee. Fortunately, the event took place the same day as the University's Freshers' Fair, where hundreds of university students were able to sign up to different societies.

Overall, the aim of the society is to provide regular biweekly meetings, not only for Adventist students and staff, but also to minister to those who have yet to hear about the word of the Lord and to encourage a deeper relationship in their Christian faith through the emphasis of the Adventist belief. The style of worship will vary from theme to theme each week, to engage with students across the university. This will be led by visiting guest speakers and preachers within the South England Conference. In future we aim to host a large campus ministries event with the Area 7 leaders and other campus ministry societies at other universities in the area.

Special thanks to Jonathan Barrett (Welwyn Garden City church pastor), St Albans Church, Pastor Dejan Stojkovic (Teens Ministries) and Seimone Manuel Gunter (Area 7 Youth Federation) for all your support in getting the society relaunched.

Student contacts around the UK & Ireland:

IM – Pastor Adam Keough

North England – Pastor Adam Ramdin

Scotland – Pastor Claudiu Popescu

South England – Pastor Dejan Stojkovic

Wales – Pastor Jeremy Tremeer

Visit www.adventistyouth.org.uk

for lots more student info.

The benefits of being a Pathfinder

◦ Fonah Thomas

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Pathfinders is a worldwide organisation of young people within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which I am proud to be part of. Pathfinders provides a fun experience where you meet with your friends every week and take part in enjoyable, biblical, educational and sometimes physical activities. Every Sunday I look forward to getting dressed in my Pathfinder uniform; adjusting my woggle on my bright yellow Pathfinder scarf; feeling part of a family as I walk through the doors and smiling as I greet everyone.

Being a Pathfinder has helped to nurture my confidence and build strong relationships between my counsellors, fellow members and myself. Attending a range of camporees has not only taught me camping and survival skills but also enabled me to make new friends from a variety of different churches, while feeling exuberated. I enjoy being involved in various activities that benefit the community: in particular, sharing leaflets about God, helping out at Pat's Sale or even washing a church member's car.

Pathfinders also offers a range of honours to complete, and these have helped me develop various skills: for example, the first aid honour, the drilling and marching honour and even an endangered species honour.

Lastly and most importantly Pathfinders has brought me closer to God as I learn more about Him through our requirements and see Him through the actions of my counsellors and the Director. Pathfinders have benefited every aspect of my life, indirectly and directly, and I plan to continue attending until I have finished the Master Guide programme – and even beyond that, to become a counsellor of my own class.

Why I'm looking forward to the BUC Camporee

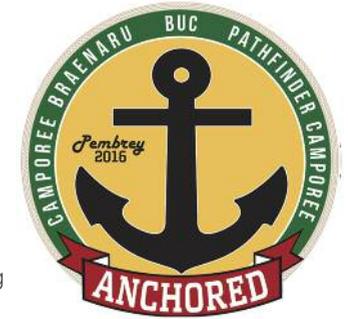
◦ Fikayo Bright

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@ncounter

BUC Camporee this year I believe will be fun. I was able to attend the last one in 2012 and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I was able to make new friends and learn new things.

This year the BUC Camporee will be held in Wales and I am quite excited because I have only been to Wales once for camp meeting. This year I will be going as club staff and I will be able to experience things differently now that I am older. I hope to see many familiar faces as well as new faces. I think that this camporee will benefit not just the Pathfinders, but the counsellors as well. I have heard many rumours of what is to be expected, but I know that no matter what we do it will be fun because we are with friends and family.

I remember at the last BUC Camporee my friends and I made a promise that we would all be at the next BUC Camporee because of the amazing time we had there, and sure enough we are all going, which makes me very happy. I would love to invite lots of friends, although they cannot make it. If any of you have any friends that love big social gatherings or like camping, this is definitely the place for them. It will be very enriching for them as well as yourselves. I believe that going to BUC Camporee is not a waste of money, but rather an investment in furthering your life skills and also getting a closer relationship with God.



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©BUC Youth Ministries • BUC Camporee 2012

These articles have been written and submitted as part of their work towards the authors' AY Silver Award.



BUUC

Pathfinder Camporee

DATE: 31 JULY – 7 AUGUST 2016

VENUE: PEMBREY COUNTRY PARK, WALES

THEME: ANCHORED

Guest speakers:

PASTOR RICHARD REID, WAHROONGA, NSW, AUSTRALIA

PASTOR JONATHAN BURNETT, SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE, UK



FINAL TICKET PURCHASES: 31 MAY 2016

WWW.ADVENTISTYOUTH.ORG.UK



Youth Ministries