



PASTORAL NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

DR. EMMANUEL OSEI

Dear Friends,

I greet you in the name of our Lord.

Yesterday, following a rise in daily coronavirus cases in England, Prime Minister Boris Johnson set out a new "rule of six," limiting social gatherings to a maximum of six people. Places of worship are not affected by the new restrictions; and so, as we continue to settle into our new normal, I feel the need to share some updates with you.

Our special committee continue to work through the risk assessment forms that have been submitted by local churches. As the green light is given, churches can re-open and commence corporate worship.

On Sabbath 5 September we were privileged to witness Sabbath services taking place among the three Romanian Churches in Harlesden, East London, and Watford; as well as at the Plymouth and Liskeard churches in Area 1.

The SEC has also granted permission for baptisms to resume in local churches. Of course, these have to be well planned, with the necessary social distancing and health & safety precautions observed at all times.

Last week, under the leadership of Pastor Kwarteng-Ampofo, we witnessed the baptism of five candidates in the Lewisham church. What a blessing it is to see men and women take their stand for Jesus during these challenging times!

I have also been encouraged by the number of revival meetings and evangelistic campaigns taking place right across our Conference. However, I must remind all Pastors that you are responsible for your pulpits, even in this digital age. No preacher should be speaking to your congregation on Zoom or any other platform without your knowledge and the Church Board's approval. Be sure to request permission from the conference office before allowing guest speakers from different territories to present to your church. We have a responsibility to safeguard our members.

On Sunday, our Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Director, Dr Brighton Kavaloh, led out in a follow-up discussion surrounding mandatory vaccinations and the SEC's response to the government's initial invitation to consult with citizens on this subject, which is available here:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/9047/pdf>

A further consultation document, this time focusing on proposed changes to the Human Medicine Regulations (2012) designed to support the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, has recently been published by the Department of Health and Social Care.

We are inviting members to prayerfully read and respond to this consultation before it closes on 18 September 2020 at 11:59pm:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/distributing-vaccines-and-treatments-for-covid-19-and-flu>

DEPARTMENTS

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 TREASURER
 ADVENTIST RADIO LONDON
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 PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT
 RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
 SABBATH SCHOOL
 STEWARDSHIP
 TEENS
 WOMEN'S MINISTRIES
 YOUTH

Those members who missed Dr Kavaloh's important presentation can view it on the SECmedia YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/PAEGLKetPks>

With all that is taking place around us, may we continue to focus on the reason for the Church's existence, and our theme for this quadrennium, **Making Disciples: Building Communities.**

Secretariat Update

Reopening Our Churches in the SEC

In order to be approved for reopening, your church clerk will need to send a risk assessment, completed by your church board, to the Executive Secretary at dmccormac@secadventist.org.uk.

Full details and support are available at:

<https://adventist.uk/departments/executive-secretary/reopening-churches>

Please note that government guidance on restarting worship services is being updated regularly. The most up to date guidance can be found [here](#).

Treasury Update

Tithe Analysis

Please find below data of Tithe returns from January to July:

	TITHE	RUNNING TOTAL	2019 RUNNING TOTAL	COMPARED TO LY
Jan-20	1,193,406	1,193,406	1,186,621	0.6%
Feb-20	1,245,063	2,438,469	2,291,056	6.4%
Mar-20	953,128	3,391,597	3,980,671	-14.8%
Apr-20	870,631	4,262,228	5,136,195	-17.0%
May-20	1,164,743	5,426,971	6,462,382	-16.0%
Jun-20	1,089,216	6,516,187	7,736,522	-15.8%
Jul-20	1,009,277	7,525,464	8,950,521	-15.9%

We are still experiencing hard times, averaging reductions of £200k a month - £1.425m for 7 months - compared to last year's figures. Tithe returns have been dropping from May to July by around £80k per month. The drop at BUC level for the same period is 14.8% - around £2m across all Conferences and Missions.

Whilst we continue to see negative percentages in the majority of our churches as per the attached report, there are still churches that reflect growth in their Tithe. Newbold Church for example shows a 10.5% increase equivalent to £22k. When I enquired as to the possible reason for this increase, the Church Pastor had this to say:

"It is difficult to pinpoint anything in particular, however, after speaking informally with a number of folks, including our Treasurer, there seems to be a pattern which developed after I preached two sermons at the beginning of the year (one on tithe and one on offerings). However, this is anecdotal evidence. I still believe that it is down to people's hearts being opened to God and responding bravely to Him."

I do believe that if we actively and intentionally encourage our members on stewardship, through the work of the Holy Spirit, they will respond with open hearts and become partakers of the countless blessings of remaining true and faithful to Him.

Candy Layson, SEC Treasurer

Systematic Giving of Tithe & Offerings

For help and support in returning tithe and offerings while churches are closed please email info@secadventist.org.uk or visit:

<https://sec.adventist.uk/departments/treasury/tithes-and-offerings/treasury-coronavirus-covid-19>

Communication & Media

Presidential Update: 10 September 2020

Kindly share with all members of your congregations. We encourage you to schedule this video update in your online Sabbath services for the benefit of those unable to access the link directly:

<https://youtu.be/XEg7FrJ7FYQ>

60 SEC News

Watch this week's 60 SEC News now:

<https://youtu.be/IDpYY-zvQts>

SEC COMMUNICATOR Magazine

How should our church respond to the issue of racism? How can we promote social justice and racial harmony? Please read & share:

<https://seccommunicator.com>

Local Church Services Online

Links to sermon archives and livestreams:

<https://sec.adventist.uk/departments/media/live-streaming-media-channels>

Cornerstone Counselling Service (CCS)

Do not suffer alone in silence. Counsellors and trained listeners are available to support you:

- Call the dedicated listening line from 8am to midnight, seven days a week on 0330 133 2495;
- For counselling appointments, call the office on 0207 723 8050, from 9.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 12 noon on Fridays;
- Email connect@ccscounselling.org.uk;
- Visit our website to chat online and for emotional support resources: www.ccscounselling.org.uk

ADRA-UK Update

COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities

Please read [this document](#) and take any necessary action, e.g. reviewing your current risk assessment, so that every community hub is adhering to the rules, including keeping 'test and trace' contact details of service users and volunteers for 21 days.

Adventist Radio London

Weekend Schedule

Friday 11 September - Sunday 13 September

Join us again this weekend as our presenters lead the conversations that matter as part of our live broadcast schedule:

<https://adventistradio.london>

Ilford Central Worship Service & Discussion

Reaching Families for Jesus

Saturday 12 September

(11.30am-1pm & 3.30pm-5pm)

Pastor Augustus Lawrence shares how discipleship begins with the family.

Zoom Meeting ID: 825 3549 3761

New Life Evangelistic Programme

My Brother's Keeper in Times of Crisis

Saturday 12 - 26 September

Weekdays (7.30pm-9pm) & Sabbath (11.30am)

Featuring Pastor Ray Patrick and singing evangelists Paul Lee and Tara Goddard.

Watch online: <http://www.newlifesda.org.uk/newlife/campaign>

Women's Ministries Zoom Meetings

Women's Inspirational Power Hour

Sunday 13 September (10am-11am)

<https://zoom.us/j/92949533383?pwd=VWpJWk14cDdxQTdlWURCdmFBZ2h0dz09>

Zoom Meeting ID: 929 4953 3383

Password: PASSWORD

'On Display for God!' - Judith Makaniankhondo

The Upper Room Experience

Sunday 13 September (7pm-8pm)

<https://zoom.us/j/99463168779?pwd=NnhuakozeStkNEV3eTQ2Y0pmMmhjZz09>

Zoom Meeting ID: 994 6316 8779

Password: 343222

Pastor Nerine Barratt is 'Digging Deeper.'

Prayer and Fellowship Drop-In Morning

Wednesday 16 September (10am-11am)

<https://zoom.us/j/95381710013?pwd=N2NvdzVoQ1henJnbEp6TENYzA2QT09>

Zoom Meeting ID: 953 8171 0013

Password: 015975

'Living Disease Free' - Sonia Barnes Locker

Men's Ministries Zoom Meeting

Real Men Real Talk

Monday 14 September (7.30pm-9.30pm)

Men of all ages from across the SEC and beyond are invited to join us via Zoom.

<https://zoom.us/j/94932254130?pwd=TGJVMzB1WVczNzJmRUdzRGJ6azFKdz09>

Zoom Meeting ID: 949 3225 4130

Password: Men1978?

For more information contact Devon Boyd on dboyd@secadventist.org.uk or 07956 383222.

Newbold Diversity Lectures

Tuesday 15 September (7.30pm)

Dr Gifford Rhamie presents "The Racial Pandemic of Ignorance: Black Lives Matter".

Watch the livestream on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/newboldcollege>

or join the conversation on Zoom:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/3715973426927/WN_61D1QJolTk6XHflhm1gz7w

Stanborough Press

Virtual Open Day Sale Weekend

Friday 18 September - Monday 21 September

A range of special offers and discounts will be available online, over the phone and in our shops. Please circulate the link below:

<https://youtu.be/Ha-mmVK7DNs>

Plus, join us LIVE on Sunday 20 September at 2pm, for presentations from key Adventist speakers; including Mark Finley, Brenda Walsh, Carlton Byrd, Louis Torres, Willie & Elaine Oliver and many more:

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/secadventist/videos>

For more information:

- Call 01476 591700 (Monday to Thursday),
- Email sales@stanboroughpress.org.uk, &
- Order online via our website: www.lifesourcebookshop.co.uk

**Balham Worship Service & Presentations
Healing Generational Trauma**

Saturday 19 September (11am & 4pm)

Pastor Leslie Ackie and trauma specialists from the Cornerstone Counselling Service share their insights on the subject of generational trauma. Poster attached.

**Celebrating the Journey: 25 Years of God
Leading Women's Ministries**

Sunday 4 October - Saturday 10 October

SEC Women's Ministries director, Jacqueline Otokpa, hosts this national celebration featuring Heather-Dawn Small and Raquel Arrais from the General Conference, Clair Sanches-Schutte (TED), Sharon Platt-McDonald (BUC), and Beulah Plunkett (NEC). Further details to follow.

Teens' Ministries

Virtual Prayer and Faith Conference

Monday 26 October - Friday 30 October

Teens from across the SEC are invited to our first Virtual Prayer and Faith Conference, which will be streamed via:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SECTeensMinistries>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr4yt6H4pUo7bVMkqTjBSBg/videos>

Please share the attached poster with your young people.

Virtual Teens Day of Fellowship

Saturday 5 December

(10.30am-12noon & 5pm-6pm)

SEC Teens Ministries in association with BUC Youth Ministries present this highlight on the annual calendar of events for young people. More details coming soon.

BUC Food Hygiene Protocol

General awareness and adequate training in regard to food hygiene, is essential for all individuals involved in the preparation,

delivery and serving of food, for both members of our church, and the wider community. This has always been a legal requirement, however, in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the attached guidance has been issued for all individuals and entities providing food as part of their church events and community activities.

Prayer Focus

"It's Alright Jesus, I Still Believe in You" - A Personal Testimony

"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

Deuteronomy 31:8 NIV

Maxi put on a lovely dress for that Sunday morning. Her seven-year-old fingers struggled to pull the zipper up. She could not quite make it all the way. Kneeling by her bed she prayed a simple prayer: "Dear Jesus, please pull my zipper up, amen."

Throughout the day Maxi forgot about the zipper but then something made her feel the back of her dress. The zipper was up! Excited and full of joy she ran to her mother: "Mummy, I believe in Jesus now, I believe in Jesus!"

Her mother responded: "Why do you believe in Jesus?"

The answer came with such confidence and conviction: "Because I asked Him, and He pulled my zipper up."

Maxi's mum smiled and patted her daughter: "I pulled it up for you," she said.

Undaunted, Maxi ran to her room, got on her knees, and prayed: "It's alright Jesus, I still believe in you!"

Little did Maxi know that this was to be the prayer of her life walk. When she faced racism and isolation in her job, when faced with miscarriages, a broken marriage, hurtful acquaintances, multiple sclerosis, breast cancer. Nearly forty years later when things in her life have gone so terribly wrong, Maxi continues to pray: It's alright Jesus, I still believe in you."

Where are you in your personal prayer life of faith? What life experiences have instilled in you a consistent faith and trust in God? Is it alright when a loved one dies, or you lose your job? Is it alright when finances are low, or families fall apart? Yes, for those who put their confidence and trust in the Lord, it is alright.

Moses fell into the pit of anger and didn't do as the Lord commanded; God's grace

allowed him to view the promised land. Abraham fell into the pit of taking matters into his own hands; God's grace still blessed him with the son of promise.

Samson fell into the pit of stubbornness and arrogance; God's grace allowed him to silence the arrogance of the Philistines.

Mary fell into the pit of prostitution; God's grace allowed her to anoint His feet with perfume.

Cain fell into the pit of murder and God's grace put a mark on him so that he would not be killed.

Is it alright? Yes, whatever the pit you are in, by the grace of God it is alright.

Never doubt God, not for one second. He is before all things, in all things, works through all things and gives hope beyond all things. If you want sunshine and keep getting rain; if you want comfort but just get more pain; if you want peace but trouble is the score, tell Him, "It's alright Jesus, I still believe in you."

"Never a trial that He is not there,
Never a burden that He doth not bear;
Never a sorrow that He doth not share,
Moment by moment, I'm under His care."
SDAH 507.

WMSM, 09.09.2020, D.21

Our prayer focus this week:

- Pray for a faith that will never falter however severe the adversity.
- Pray for forgiveness of the times we have taken matters into our own hands when trust should have been our action.
- Pray with thanksgiving for the life God has given you and ask Him to make it a daily testimony of His grace.
- Pray to have a strong faith believing God is ahead of us in everything and we need not be dismayed.
- Praise the Lord for never leaving us or forsaking us.

SEC Prayer Line

Join us for a Spirit-filled hour of prayer every morning from 6am.

Dial in: 0330 088 1937

Telephone Access Code: 619764#

or **Join the Meeting Online:**

<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/mukwadalinda>

Online meeting ID: mukwadalinda

Warmest regards,



Dr Emmanuel Osei
President
South England Conference