



Happenings at Balham - May 2021

Making a Difference in our Community

And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so, he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Jeremiah 18:4

I had an interesting dream the other night. Normally, I would not remember my dreams let alone share it; but I got up in the middle of the night and wrote it down, because it had biblical significance.

I dreamt that I was in a car crash and both the driver and I got out of the car quickly, because we saw it was on fire, and feared it would explode with both of us in it. We went a distance from the car so we would be safe if it exploded, and phoned someone to come to our aid. We decided to go even further from the car so it was no longer even in our view. We waited, and waited, and waited, for our assistance to come.

When we decided to eventually go back to where the car was, we saw someone we knew working on the car. The car was no longer on fire. He had come with a replacement engine and did some other mechanical work, and presented to us what seemed like a new model. We had written off the car but, this mechanic had done some reconstruction work and presented what looked like a new model.

This rather strange dream brought my mind to the reading above in Jeremiah chapter 18. The prophet in vision was brought to the Potter's house and saw a Potter working on some clay that was broken, but the Potter made a new clay pot. Then, God told Jeremiah that is how He will deal with his people who were broken, due to their sin and rebellion but; rather than give up on them just like the mechanic in my dream, He reconstructed them and made them new again. God, like the mechanic didn't give up on what was broken and what others would have given up on. No wonder the prophet in Micha 7:18 says that God delights in mercy.

This reminded me of a parable Jesus taught in Matthew 13:44 who found a treasure in a field, and went and sold what he had to gain the treasure. The Bible doesn't describe the field, but using writer's license I can imagine that the field wasn't all that, and people may have been surprised that the man wanted to buy the field. But he saw something of value in it! It may not have been valuable to others, but it was to him. I once heard a preacher say 'the value of an object is determined by the one who is willing to pay the price'. So, to the merchant, the treasure was worth it, and he was willing to pay the price for the field to get the treasure. So, God sees us and He is willing to pay the price for us whilst we were yet sinners (and broken). He wants to restore us by dying for us (Romans 5:8). He saw in us what others may not be able to see. He saw infinite value, enough to go through the pain of separation from the Father, and He looked past the suffering, because He saw beyond that to the joy of receiving the lost treasure, namely us. He was willing to pay the price to restore us who was broken by sin.

Now let me ask you a question. Have you ever bought an item and when you went home you realised it wasn't any good? For example, have you ever bought a fruit or vegetable like an avocado and when you cut it it was rotten inside? Or, have you bought something mechanical and it failed? Or you bought something on ebay and when you received it, it was not as good as it looked? If so, why did you buy it? I want to suggest that the reason why you bought it, because you didn't know it was useless. The amazing thing is God knew what we were like and yet, He was still willing to pay the price for us. Hallelujah! He still valued us and the 'value of an object (us) is determined by the one (Jesus) who was willing to pay the price.

Back to my dream. The mechanic saw that the beaten up car still had value, and he was willing to pay the price in terms of his time to restore it, and present it back to me as new, even though I had given it up as lost.

That's the exciting thing about the gospel, it is all about Jesus willing to pay the price for something (or someone) that others have written off. So when you hear that people have written you off because of your sin, life of rebellion, your skin colour, your country of birth, your lack of education, your accent (add to the list if you choose), remember that there is a God in heaven who values you, has already paid the price for you, and wants to possess you as His very own!

What happened in April?

Communion

Preparation for this first online Communion service started back several weeks as we began to promote it as we had not had communion for about one year. A plan was put in place to ensure members received their communion packs before the day in question; this involved leader taking them to the homes of members or at least making sure someone else did, or members came to church to get theirs.

Members were encouraged to do their foot washing in their homes and come to the service of the emblems in a prepared state. The service was a little different from the norm, in that, there were several musical items shared by our guest, Paulette Prendagast and there were a couple of You Tube clips shared of music and drama. In all, we experienced one of the largest online audiences for our Sabbath service since the lockdown, and even though we weren't together physically, we still experienced a spirit of togetherness.

Baptism

The closed doors of the Church during the lockdown have not prevented God from reaching hearts open to the gospel. People have still received Bible studies online. Sabbath school classes continue to thrive and the gospel is still being preached. The result of this and other personal work lead by the Spirit lead to a baptism of four persons in early April.

Each have their own story to tell and they have all answered pre-set questions so their story can be told.

Questions to Seon Wiggins

1) Did you have a Christian upbringing and if so, what denomination did you attend?

Yes, I grew up in a Seventh- day Adventist home and was an active member involved in the music department, pathfinders and youth evangelism.

2) Were you baptized before and if so when and where did this take place?

I attended the Kingsway Preparatory School in Jamaica and during its week of prayer programme I decided I wanted to live for God and so during a crusade being held simultaneously by the Macedonia SDA church I got baptized at the age of 10.

3) If you were brought up in Church, did there come a time when you left and if so when and why?

Unfortunately, I did become disconnected from the church. Collectively there were numerous influences at the time. Being 18 years old at the time, the transition into a young adult led to questions of who am I? What do I want out of life right now? Subsequently, whilst trying to gain an understanding of my identity and becoming more accepting of societal practices and norms. Regrettably, as I increasingly became engaged in

these secular activities my participation in church became less frequent until I was seldom in attendance.

4) Who or what was influential in you deciding to return or turn to Christ?

I cannot recall exactly who/what initiated the interest in returning to Christ. I found myself listening to Bible teachings and would discuss these with my Dad. Shortly after this the pandemic occurred and I also became very ill. With a strong presence of my mortality my thoughts were consumed with fear. Fear of leaving my children without a mother, fear of the struggles my husband would face as a lone parent, and fear of dying without having repented and accepted God. So, I prayed and asked God to give me one more chance to truly live for Him.

5) Why did you choose to be baptized this time around?

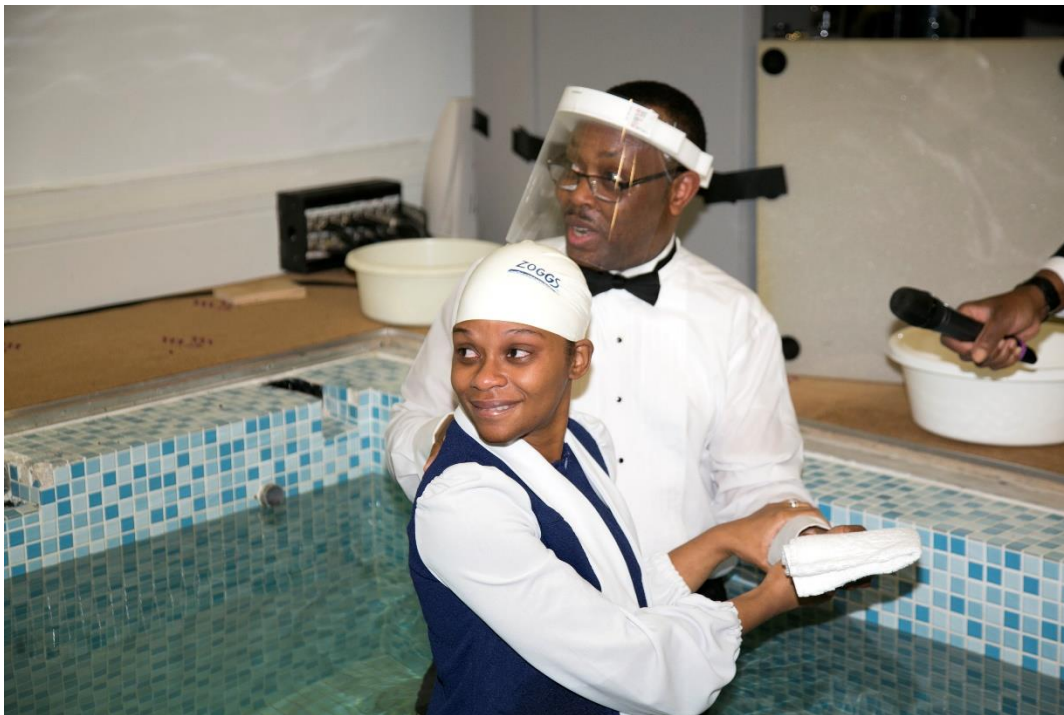
I chose to get rebaptized because God has spared my life for a reason. I have always felt God has something planned and purposed for me and so I wanted to fully commit to this renewed relationship. On reflection, my decision this time round is based on a thanksgiving for my redemption through Christ and furthermore, for God's shielding grace and protection even at times when I felt He was not there.

6) What would you say to anyone who are in two minds about giving their lives to Christ or returning to him?

To anyone considering the decision to give their life to Christ or returning to Him I would say, be receptive to God's calls and feed that desire for Christ and allow it to grow. Acknowledge your conflicting, thoughts of doubt, feelings of shame and unworthiness, fears and personal struggles and bring them to Him. Just as you are He says 'Come unto me' (Matthew 11:28).



An emotional Seon embraced by her husband just before her baptism



A smiling Seon who recognizes someone whilst in the pool

Questions to Shimmarie Riley

1) Did you have a Christian upbringing and if so what denomination did you attend?

I was raised in the Seventh Day Adventist Church in South London.

2) Were you baptized before and if so when and where did this take place?

I was baptized at 10 years old at a South London SDA church at the end of a campaign.

3) If you were brought up in Church, did there come a time when you left and if so when and why?

I moved my membership to a new church plant in my late teens. I had the most incredible experience with lovely people headed by an amazing Pastor. I loved every moment of the experience and I had so much hope for the future with the Lord. It came to a point when friendships broke down and I felt inadequate. I was meeting people outside the church and I thought that I would take my chances in the world.

4) Who or what was influential in you deciding to return or turn to Christ?

The Lord Himself is instrumental in ensuring my safe return. I did say to God that I was going to go out and 'enjoy' my youth and will return when I am about 35 years (what I perceived as old!). A lot has happened over the years and I have had crisis of faith to varying degrees, but I have always maintained a prayer life (albeit weak), read the bible, and remembered what I was taught as a child growing up in church.

5) Why did you choose to be baptized this time around?

I reached a point in my life where I could no longer deny the call of Jesus Christ, where I could no longer be static. I had turned my back on Christianity, and I was just not happy about what I professed to believe. I felt lost. I started to feel left out of the greatest club there is. Where the membership

is free to all that want it. Where the Head of the organisation has infinite power and glory. He promised that He would be there for me always. He promised to provide for me all things including love, peace, strength, success, hope and a future. He said that he would keep me from falling and protect me from evil.

I need Him in my life. I need Jesus back in my life and I want to serve Him. This is my purpose.

6) What would you say to anyone who are in two minds about giving their lives to Christ or returning to him?

Do you feel that God is woven into the very fabric of life? Can you feel Him in everything that is good and wonderful about this world? Nobody knows what God has in store for them. You have absolutely nothing to lose but all to gain. Life can only get better. And no matter what direction life takes; Jesus loves you. And it will always be for your own wellbeing and to the glory of God.



A slightly tense Shimmarie just before her baptism



Shimmarie just after her immersion: relaxed and smiling

Questions to Robert Henry

1) Did you have a Christian upbringing and if so, what denomination did you attend?

Yes, I had a Christian upbringing from a very early age; from my earliest childhood memory. The first denomination was Baptist, then in my early teens, Pentecostal.

2) Were you baptized before and if so when and where di this take place?

Yes, I was baptized in Jamaica at a Pentecostal church in 2012

3) If you were brought up in Church, did there come a time when you left and if so when and why?

I never really left church; I was always attending but for an extended period. I wasn't an active member of any particular denomination.

4) Who or what was influential in you deciding to return or turn to Christ?

Studying scriptures with Brother Mark Gray, Sister Joy Alexander, Brother Weston and my wife Sharon. I believe that the truth became more apparent to me and so I saw the need to reconsecrate my life to God. This was very important because I now have a better understanding of my role in the relationship with God. I met Weston in the first quarter of 2019 and we started have discussions about becoming "squeaky clean "as Christian. Consequently, the Holy Spirit impressed upon my heart to take this step.

Why did you choose to be baptized this time around?

A few Sabbaths ago my wife and I had a conversation about me getting baptized but there were issues that I was still contemplating. The following day I called Pastor Akakpo just to have a quick conversation about a totally different matter; his first words to me during that conversation were, "Robert I am praying for you and I can't wait to baptize you ". I laughed in amazement because I knew then that the Holy Spirit was saying, now is the time.

5) What would you say to anyone who are in two minds about giving their lives to Christ or returning to him?

The only thing that this world has to offer is sin, shame and disgrace and in the end, eternal damnation. Jesus Christ came and offered to us eternal life, if you accept Him today, he will come into your lives and make a difference. I have tried Him and He is all together wonderful. Your friends and families will forsake you when the storms of life hit, but, our heavenly father will be there always, even until the end.



Standing cool. Robert with Bartholomew just before baptism



Yes, I have done it! As Robert come out of pool after his baptism

Questions to Jasnett Lindo

1) Did you have a Christian upbringing and if so, what denomination did you attend?

Yes, I was raised SDA, and attended Plaistow church and later Walthamstow Church.

2) Were you baptized before and if so when and where did this take place?

Yes, I was baptized as a teenager.

3) Who or what was influential in you deciding to return or turn to Christ?

The Holy Spirit ministered to my heart; I've always continued to pray despite not attending church, thanking God for blessing me and asking for his continued guidance, I knew the believers in my family would always pray for me and that my Grandmothers prayers continue to be answered though she's resting, waiting for the first resurrection. One day, a few years back, I felt encouraged to begin reading the Bible, so I did. This was when my feelings began to change. I read my late Grandmother's Bible which is full of her markings, this was enough to minister with the Holy Spirit.

4) Why did you choose to be baptized this time around?

At the start of the year, I decided that 2021 is the year that I would be baptized

5) What would you say to anyone who are in two minds about giving their lives to Christ or returning to him?

Keep your mind on the Lord, don't watch people, because people make mistakes. I would always think to myself that 'I'm a good person, I live a

good life' but that's good, but it's not enough to be saved, if you know better. Jesus Christ suffered and sacrificed His life so that we have the opportunity to be forgiven for our sins and be born again in Him, renewed and have eternal life. Our main focus must be to keep the Lord at the centre of our lives and to live by keeping His commandments in a way that is pleasing to Him, covered by his grace.



Jasnett smiling just before her baptism



An even bigger smile from Jasnett after her baptism

Women's Health and Beauty programme

The Health Ministries department recently held an online session for Women on health and beauty which was open to all ages. I asked the leader, Mary Akakpo, what was the purpose of the programme and she stated that:

Physical beauty is a gift from God and as a result, God wants us to be faithful stewards in looking after our bodies. Therefore, the objectives or purpose of this programme is to encourage women to gain a better knowledge and understanding of the practical skills of hair care, beauty care, and body care.

The Presenters were Jacqueline Crawford, (Medical Missionary) Natural Skincare, Haircare, and body care products (practical). Elizabeth Faucher-Picart, (Beauty Therapist) skin biology, anatomy, facial massage, fine lines, anti-ageing, and body care.

The responses received were very positive. Comments included: 'It was very informative and very useful. We thank the Lord for providing us with such key knowledge.'

There is plan to have a second session sometime in the future.

Men's Health programme

Pastor Sam Davis (former president of the SEC) lead out in this session challenging the men to take better care of themselves. He stated that many men didn't like going to GP for checkups, or seem willing to spend money on their health, but would rather spend on other things such as cars, watches or phones. He stressed the need to go and have our prostate checked especially in men over 40 years old, but few seem to do so, and the rate of this cancer was greater in Caribbean men than of men of other nations. He shared reasons why we may be reluctant to do the checks that were needed.



Pastors Davis stated that one of the reasons for our failing health was our diet, and there was a causal relationship between diet and disease. Even though we don't live in the Caribbean, many of us were attracted to certain foods which lacked nutritional value, and were in fact harmful when there were healthier alternatives.

The general tenure of the session, which was very interactive, was that God had given us our bodies; we should look after it and encourage others that we influence, to do the same.

Day of Prayer and Fasting

The Church were challenged to start their fast from Friday at 3pm. Divine service provided the opportunity for the preacher to share the word on prayer and fasting as well as set the platform for the second session after a short break. After the short break there were opportunities to praying, giving testimonies and Praise. This ended at 3pm when our fast was officially finished. The day was rounded of by the AYS evening of Prayer where several persons were selected to pray intersperse with a few bible readings.

Coming Up in May 2021

8th: Health Ministries day

9th: Business meeting @ 4pm - discussing re-opening of Balham Church

Weekly Services

Sabbath School at 9.30am: these will be held in individual classes either by zoom or conference calls, each with their own login details.

Regular Divine service - Sabbaths at 11am will be a recurring booking so the login details will be as follows:

Tel 020 3051 2874

ID: 8529 6223 863

Passcode: 241887

This will also be shown on YouTube - Balham SDA Church media.

Bible study: Sabbaths at 4pm will be a recurring zoom booking and the login details are going to be the same each week and will be as follows:

Tel 020 3051 2874

ID: 8529 6223 863

Passcode: 241887

Wednesday night prayer meetings@7.30pm

This currently takes place on **the last and first Wednesday of the month**. We will be using a recurring zoom booking so the login details are going to be the same

Tel: 020 3051 2874

ID: 856 6559 0847

Passcode: 911949

Youth meetings

There are three main meetings organized by the Youth department and they are happy for us to join them.

Wednesdays 7pm - Live Wednesdays - On Instagram - @BalhamSDA

Fridays 7pm - Youth Bible Study (every week) - On Zoom - ID 4711472888

Sabbaths 5pm - AYS (every other week)- On Zoom - ID 471147288

President: Pastor Emmanuel Osei's update



The latest messages from the President can be found on the link below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIHEd2kQKw4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4ddNSUuif0>

From the Pastor's desk: Group leaders were appointed and asked to report each week to Pastor on the number of members contacted and whether they had stated specific needs.

Week ending (28/03) -27

Week ending (03/04) - 35

Week ending (10/04) -28

Week ending (17/04) - 29

OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

The following books can be found on the word search grid below. Circle the letters that make the word. The letters must be in straight lines, vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. Words may be spelled either forward or backward.

GENESIS	KINGS	SONG OF SOLOMON	OBADIAH
EXODUS	CHRONICLES	ISAIAH	JONAH
LEVITICUS	EZRA	JEREMIAH	MICAH
NUMBERS	NEHEMIAH	LAMENTATIONS	NAHUM
DEUTERONOMY	ESTHER	EZEKIEL	HABAKKUK
JOSHUA	JOB	DANIEL	ZEPHANIAH
JUDGES	PSALMS	HOSEA	HAGGAI
RUTH	PROVERBS	JOEL	ZECCHARIAH
SAMUEL	ECCLESIASTES	AMOS	MALACHI

M C R O M A D A H A I M E H E N D
 A L E V I S K U K K A B A H A S E
 L E X O A N I E Z E K I E L L O U
 A V C H R O N I C L E S A E H N T
 C I H O Z I G C R O M E O U A G E
 H T A P E T S E G D U J O M C O R
 I I I R A A H O S A M O S A I F O
 H C M O E T A G E N E S I S M S N
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 A A J B E A I N U M B E R S N M E
 H C P S A L M S S L E I N A D O S
 C H G S E T S A I S E L C C E N I
 E A O B A D I A H A N O J A S P S
 Z M I A G G A H A I N A H P E Z M

Great Controversy to Wandsworth, London

There is a brother who lives in SW London who needs help. So far he and his team have given out over 5,300 Great Controversy Books. They are now needing help to purchase more books to give out.

They are fund raising themselves, Advent Books have donated some books but more help is needed.... Can you help to sponsor? We want to **send at least another pallet of 2,660 Great Controversy Books.** Let's help this brother and his team. We need to get these books out to every home.



Funds Needed: £2,050
2,660 GC Books

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Sponsorship
Jonathan@adventbooks.org
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Bank Info
Sort: 165710
Acc No: 5436 5867
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Bank: Cater Allen
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“wandsworth”





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"I am not living,
I am just surviving."
**Together we can make
it happen.**

Often, it is not the initial experience that
creates the overwhelming pain,
but the lack of support.

Do not suffer alone
Do not suffer in silence
CCS is here to support you
Together we can win your struggle.



BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE

HOSTS THEIR

Inaugural VIRTUAL MEMBERS' CORE OF ADVENTISM 2021

THEME:
CHRISTIAN LIVING:
COVID-19 & BEYOND

DATE:
1 - 8 MAY

TIME:
7:00PM - 9:00PM NIGHTLY
11:00AM & 2:00PM SABBATHS

CHILDREN'S CORE OF ADVENTISM
7:00PM - 7:30PM

SABBATH AFTERNOON

zoom ID: 944 2924 4349
PASSCODE: 084128
(1ST MAY ONLY)

ALL OTHER MEETINGS

zoom ID: 864 8773 2051
PASSCODE: 930405

STREAMING LIVE



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ORGANISER
DR KIRK THOMAS
Evangelism Director



DR JEFFREY BROWN
Presenter



SHARON PLATT-MC DONALD
Presenter



DR GINA MILLER
Presenter



DR LESLIE ACKIE
Presenter



PR IVANA MENDEZ
Presenter



PR JONATHAN BURNETT
Presenter



PR JEFFERSON MELKI
Presenter



DR ANTHONY KENT
Presenter



CAMILIA BRAN
Singer



TIFFANY CAMPBELL-DAILEY
Singer



DR DANIEL DUDA
Presenter





ADVENT CENTRE SHOP REOPENING

From Sunday 9th May 2021

Sundays: 11:00am–3:00pm

**Open every Sunday.
Closed on all other days until further notice**



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WATFORD SHOP REOPENING FULL TIME

From Tuesday 4th May 2021

Monday: 12:30pm–5:00pm

Tuesday: 12:30pm–5:00pm

Wednesday: 12:30pm–5:00pm

Thursday: 12:30pm–5:00pm

Friday: 10:00am–2:00pm



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ZOOM DETAILS

ID: 846 9944 5437

PASSCODE: 137949

We meet on the Last Thursday of
Each month at 7.00pm-8.30
Visionofhope@balhamsda.org.uk

83 Elmfield Road
Balham
London
SW17 8AD

Vision_hope_info_@yahoo.com

Returning tithes and conference offerings during the lock down

Click or copy and paste the link for instructions

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

The Bank details are as follows:

Name: South England Conference

Sort Code: 40-45-28

Account no: 1101 4153

Please indicate your gift aid reference when making the payment to the conference so the Church can receive a recompense from the Government.

Alternatively, if you would like your tithe to be collected, please see Pastor Akakpo.

Local Church offering during the lockdown

For those who want to contribute to the local Church budget, note the details.

Our Bank: Barclays Bank Account name: Balham SDA Church

Account number 00150142 Sort code: 20-21-78

In the reference section of the online banking, please indicate whether this is for General Budget or COVID-19 or the recently set up Hardship **Please contact Clinton Monfries on 07958 217715 for more information.**

