



# PASTORAL NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

DR. EMMANUEL OSEI

Dear Friends,

Christian greetings.

Last Sunday, 15 March, the Executive Committee of the South England Conference met. After much serious discussion we prayerfully considered the COVID-19 crisis that has become a global concern. With a heavy heart we took the decision to suspend all church services for the period of four weeks from Sabbath 21 March in the interest of safety for our members and our communities.

We could not wait for the British Government to decide on a lock-down on schools, sports events and other large gatherings. Since then of course they have taken decisions which impact places of worship of all faiths. We have done our part to help prevent the spreading of infection in our communities. The safety of our membership is paramount.

While the world is in panic mode, as Adventists the love and care that we demonstrate can shine as a beacon to others. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one for another."

Those members who are diabetics, cancer patients, asthmatics, and those with respiratory challenges, fall under the category of vulnerable members. In this age of modern technology, we must use the telephone, emails and social media to remain connected to each other.

We will closely monitor the crisis and will inform you when we will reconvene as a body of believers for fellowship and worship. Once again, this decision has not been taken lightly, but prayerfully considering the safety of our church and community members.

I do not want to cause panic among our church members, there is already enough hysteria around us but more importantly, I do not want us to trivialise this matter. This crisis is an opportunity for us as Adventists to shine. Pastors and Elders will already be discussing this matter, looking at how best they can meet the needs of their members. Although church services are suspended our churches can still function as storehouses from where we can give essentials to those in need.

**Please follow the link below to see my most recent update, and share it with your congregation members and contacts.** If your church has group forums such as WhatsApp and other social media networks, please also share this link with them:  
<https://youtu.be/gfPa0mfkyGc>

Two weeks ago, I wrote out to the churches inviting members to meet with me at the Advent Centre for prayer this coming Sabbath. In light of recent developments, I am cancelling this meeting. Instead, I will be leading out in prayer from the studio of the South England Conference and we will be inviting members to tune in from their respective homes and join us in this special Prayer Meeting.

## DEPARTMENTS

PRESIDENT

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

TREASURER

ADVENTIST RADIO LONDON

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

CHURCH PLANTING & GROWTH

COMMUNICATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES

COUNSELLING SERVICES

DISABILITY MINISTRIES

DIVERSITY MINISTRIES

FAMILY MINISTRIES

HEALTH MINISTRIES

HUMAN RESOURCES

MEDIA

MEN'S MINISTRIES

MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION

PATHFINDERS

PERSONAL MINISTRIES

PRAYER MINISTRIES

PRISON MINISTRIES

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

SABBATH SCHOOL

STEWARDSHIP

TEENS

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

YOUTH

Prayer Coordinator, Linda Mukwada, BUC Health Ministries Director, Sharon Platt-McDonald and SEC Health Ministries Director, Dr Chidi Ngwaba, will also join us in the studio.

**So, wherever you are this Sabbath 21 March from 5pm-7pm, please join us live for this special time of prayer for our nation and the world at:**

<https://secmedia.org>

Please take note of the changes to the following events, which have now been postponed, cancelled or moved online:

- **POSTPONED: Global Youth Day (was 21 March)**. More details on alternative provision on page 2 of this newsletter.
- **POSTPONED: Area 6 Stewardship Summit (was 22 March)**. More details in the attached letter.
- **POSTPONED: PARL BUTREC Seminar (was 24 March)**. Details on page 2.
- **POSTPONED: KCFS Training Roadshow (was 29 March & 19 April)**. Details in the attached letter and on page 2.
- **POSTPONED: Spiritual Gifts for Mission (was 4 April)**. Postponed until further notice.
- **ONLINE ONLY: Pathfinder Bible Experience NAD Division Level Finals (was 17-18 April)**. Full details at: <https://www.clubministries.org/urgent-pbe-2020-announcement>
- **POSTPONED: SEC Teens' Congress (was 18 April)**. Postponed until further notice.
- **CANCELLED: BUC Treasurer's Retreat (was 26 April – 3 May)**.
- **CANCELLED: SEC Adventurer Camporee (was 22-25 May)**.
- **POSTPONED: General Conference Session (was 25 June – 4 July)**. Details on page 2 of this newsletter.

### SEC Communication & Media

While church services are suspended, we will be streaming a live message each Sabbath from our SEC studio. The link:

<https://secmedia.org>

Worship streaming will start from 9:45am on Sabbath with Hope Sabbath School Class.

A number of churches will also be streaming their own Sabbath messages (filmed without the presence of a congregation):

- Newbold [click here](#)
- Croydon [click here](#)
- North Wembley [click here](#)
- Lewisham [click here](#)

A more complete list of SEC churches with live streams and sermon archives is available here:

<https://sec.adventist.uk/departments/media/local-church-streaming-media>

### 60 SEC News

View this week's episode online at: <https://youtu.be/th0kxt3z098>

### SEC COMMUNICATOR Magazine

This quarter focuses on the subject of 'Making Disciples'. News stories from around the conference and the usual SEC directors' updates are also featured: <https://seccommunicator.com>

### SEC/BUC Health Ministries

#### COVID-19 Update

In these challenging times, I'm wishing you good health and peace. After having discussions with our SEC & BUC Presidents, both Sharon Platt-McDonald (BUC Health/Communities/Women's director) and I are in agreement with the presidents that, for now, we do not encourage any home visits. Yes, we will need to check on our members, especially the most vulnerable, but no visits. If someone is unwell, they must be advised to call their GP or 111 if it is serious. Although, of course, we want to help, even if you and the person you are visiting are well, you could still be carrying the infection without knowing. As well as the Presidents statements, please look out for regular video updates from myself regarding the changing status of Covid-19, answered questions & health advice. Also, in collaboration with ADRA-UK, the SEC and BUC will soon produce guidance as to how we can help our communities and our members in this time of need.

May God bless you,

Dr Chidi

SEC Health Ministries Director

#### Health Update Video: Boosting Immunity

The link below includes an interview with Dr Neil Nedley discussing how to boost your immunity:

<https://youtu.be/vKJvOYp3D3Y>

#### SEC Treasury

A number of members have expressed concern about the giving of tithes and offerings during this uncertain period. Please see the attached message on **ELECTRONIC GIVING** by SEC Treasurer, Candy Layson, and share this video: <https://youtu.be/MY6iWvsM8Nk>

#### General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Session 2020

I was notified today by our Trans European Division that the forthcoming General Conference Session has been postponed. **The tentative alternative dates are 20-25 May 2021**. Please note that the rescheduled event is likely to be much smaller, without the usual exhibitions.

#### SEC Youth Ministries

##### Youth Week of Prayer (21-28 March)

To commemorate this year's Youth Week of Prayer, we are streaming a live message on Sabbath from our studio by SEC Youth Director, Pastor Anthony Fuller. Join him from 11am at:

<https://secmedia.org>

and start the week's journey together on the topic 'forgiveness'.

Readings and additional resources are available from:

<https://youth.adventist.org/Resources/Week-of-Prayer>

#### Keeping the Church Family Safe (KCFS) Church Leaders Training Roadshow

All KCFS training has been suspended until May. There will be an update on rescheduling in mid-April. Work has already begun to look at developing the training on line as a long-term project.

#### SEC Stewardship Department

As I'm sure that you will understand, the 'God First' SEC Stewardship Summit Sunday 22 March (10am-4pm) is cancelled. Please see the attached letter from the Stewardship Director, Pr Todd Frias.

#### SEC Public Affairs and Religious Liberty To Be or Not to Be: Implications of Post - Brexit Gender Recognition Act Reforms Tuesday 28 April (10am-3pm)

Please note that this BUTREC event originally organised by the BUC Ministerial Association for Tuesday 24 March has now been rescheduled for April. For further details please contact Faye Weekes at the BUC office on 01923672251 or [fweekes@adventist.uk](mailto:fweekes@adventist.uk).

#### SEC Children's Ministries

##### International Women's Day Writing Competition

##### Deadline for entries: Monday 30 March

Girls from across the SEC are invited to share their thoughts on how their favourite female Bible character might influence non-Christian women in today's world to want to get to know Christ. Details are attached. A small prize will be awarded to the strongest entries from each SEC area.

#### Adventist Radio London

##### Friends of ARL Appeal

Adventist Radio London would like to thank all our 'Friends' who have pledged to support our radio ministry through your generous donations.

To further assist you in your giving, we are pleased to announce that our on-line giving facility is now up and running.

To set up your gift details please visit:

<https://adventistradio.london/become-a-friend>

Every gift is thankfully received and goes towards helping to keep this radio ministry live on air as we broadcast the gospel of Jesus to London and beyond.

##### ARL Mission Offering Day

Although churches will not meet on 4 April, please continue to set aside contributions for this very important ministry.

**LifeSource Bookshop: Website Launch**

In such frantic and uncertain times and in the midst of this crisis, Stanborough Press and its retail outlets are all still functioning. We are happy to encourage members that they have a good supply of dried and tinned foodstuffs and a wealth of spiritual food as well. Members will now also be able to purchase Adventist books and other resources online from the website for the new-look Life Source bookshop. Please see the attached for more information:  
[www.lifesourcebookshop.co.uk](http://www.lifesourcebookshop.co.uk)

**ADRA-UK Annual Appeal**

Please note that the ADRA-UK Appeal has been extended until **31 August** allowing church fundraising to be extended and to give time to work around any challenges being faced in the next few weeks. **Please note that there will be no door-to-door collection this year (this includes front-facing fundraising initiatives such as collecting at train stations or in front of shops).**

**SEC Women's Ministries**

**National Women's Day of Fellowship Sabbath 6 June**

Women across the nation, join us for a unifying experience as we celebrate our restoration in Christ. A day of spiritual restoration, fun, food and an opportunity to fellowship with women from across the British Union Conference. This National Women's Day of Fellowship promises to be an enriching time of heart-warming testimonies, uplifting worship, vibrant praise as we glorify God for His trans-formative work in our lives.

For more details and to book your place visit:  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/national-womens-day-of-fellowship-tickets-96897100837>

**SEC Women's Ministries & Possibilities Ministry Update**

Please find attached an update from SEC Women's & Possibilities Ministries Director, Jacqueline Otokpa.

**SEC Prayer Ministries Retreat**

**Friday 31 July - Sunday 2 August**

Kindly promote the SEC Prayer Ministries Retreat. The theme is 'Abiding In His Presence' and the keynote speaker will be Pastor Samuel Telemaque.

**Church Without Walls Annual Retreat**

**Friday 31 July - Sunday 2 August**

This Seventh-day Adventist online prayer ministry has its annual retreat coming up! If you would like to join us online, the dial number is 0330 390 2113 and the access code is 206594#.

**Venue:** Kents Hill Park Training & Conference Centre, in Milton Keynes.  
**Cost:** £148 sharing; or £168 for your own room (can be paid in instalments up to the end of May).

**Children:** are welcome and are free up to the age of five or £95 if they are 6-11 years.  
**Contact Details:** for further information please call 07883 038 662 or 07733 364 911.

**SEC Family Ministries**

**Couples Retreat**

**Friday 30 October - Sunday 1 November**

Featuring special guest speakers, Dr Stephanie Knight & Dr Charles Wesley Knight. Spaces are limited so book yours now - you won't want to miss this! Full details and an application form are available on the SEC website:

<https://sec.adventist.uk/events/event/em/2020-10-30-couples-retreat>

**Job Vacancies**

**Newbold School**

**Permanent Class Teacher (Years 5 & 6)**

For details please contact [headteacher@newboldschool.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@newboldschool.co.uk)

**Stanborough School**

**Part Time Computer Science Teacher**

**Boarding School Assistant Dean for Girls**

**Boarding School Assistant Dean for Boys**

Interested applicants please contact the P.A. to the Head Teacher for an application pack; email [kgittens@spsch.org](mailto:kgittens@spsch.org) or call 01923 673268.

**Cornerstone Counselling Service (CCS)**

CCS has a team of counsellors and trained listeners ready to support emotional and mental health needs of members and their local communities. Call 0207 723 8050 or see the attached poster.

**Urgently needed!!**

Additional trained listeners and counsellors to support isolated and lonely members of society who might be affected by social distancing. Contact Thembe Mapingire on 07861259449 or email:

[connect@ccscounselling.org.uk](mailto:connect@ccscounselling.org.uk)

**Prayer Focus**

Psalm 91:14-16:

*"Because you love me, I will rescue you. I will protect you because you know my name. When you call to me, I will answer you. I will be with you when you are in trouble. I will save you and honour you. I will satisfy you with a long life. I will show you how I will save you."*

During these difficult times, please find comfort in knowing that God has promised to rescue us and deliver us. Also, he has given us the promise that if we call upon him, he would answer, and he has promised yet again to be with us in trouble. Therefore, rest assured that God is with us in all this, let not your heart be troubled, claim his promises, continue in prayer for those affected by Covid-19, bereaved families, and those in isolation, those who are unable to travel for various reasons, and praying for everyone affected in one way or another, especially the uncertainties surrounding our Schools and financial challenges, the confusion surrounding our Politicians and shortages of the essential commodities, while we take good care of the instructions given to us by the NHS.

Let's use this time to draw near to God and he will draw near to us. The Lord will see us through. So friends, do not be troubled, trust in God and in his promises. He said in Revelation 3: 11-12, *"I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name."*

I encourage you all to join the SEC Prayer Line for a Spirit filled hour of prayer every morning at 6am-7am on 0330 9981259; access code 355114#

Warmest regards,



Dr Emmanuel Osei  
 President  
 South England Conference