

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Faith of the European Saints

Elder José A. Teixeira, Portugal

Europe Area President

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is manifested in our choices, especially in the face of adversity. By holding to the iron rod, the faithful Saints in Europe are reaping the fruits promised by the Lord and becoming more spiritually and temporally self-reliant.

Moldova

Serghei and Mariana both found the restored gospel at age 19. After Serghei received a master's degree in law and Mariana served a mission, the Covali family chose to settle in their Moldova, where most of the young members had already emigrated to other countries. They live on his income, "so our home can be gospel centered—a safe place for the mother to teach gospel living.

"It was difficult with one breadwinner, but after testing our faith, God has blessed us with enough providence for our needs.

"My co-workers know I don't work on Sunday. At age 28, I led the Moldovan office of a foreign law firm. That came unexpected in that I had left for a mission after law school. I was afraid that in two years I would forget my studies and no one would hire me. But at 28, I realized that the Lord paid up tenfold. I was the youngest lawyer in the country heading a foreign law firm.

Now, at age 30, I feel blessed to have this position."

Czech Republic

Vaclav and Marina Sindylkovi joined the Church as newlyweds just before the fall of state socialism. They experienced trials and blessings raising five children in a country where two children are enough. Says Vaclav, "The gospel is the best we could give our children. In a society where financial survival requires two working parents, we value eternal relationships. With family time a priority, I chose work close to home, at lower pay. My wife is home creating strong family bonds. As full-time payers, we have always had enough. Our Church activity motivates the children to attend. But the real key to righteous prosperity is regular temple visits. The Spirit touches us to become more kind and loving to each other." Three of their children have now served missions.

Iceland

Eighteen-year-old Karoline Gunason of Iceland is preparing for a mission. She side-stepped the tradition of graduation-day drinking by refusing friendly offers. "There is no fun without alcohol," they chided. "Even though some people did not understand my reasons, I also



Elder
José A. Teixeira

had the chance to bear my testimony to others who listened." Karoline's testimony is that "courage, not compromise," affirmed by President Monson (see "President Monson Calls for Courage," *Ensign*, Apr. 2015, 5), creates missionary opportunities.

Italy

Brother Angelo Melone, diagnosed with lymphatic cancer, had the resolute faith to leave the hospital to attend church every Sunday during treatments. Angelo was healed through his faith. His courageous example influenced a young investigator to join the Church.

Later, Brother Melone was prompted to prepare his family for an oncoming earthquake in L'Aquila. On April 6, 2009, his home, a few kilometers from the epicenter, was destroyed. His family escaped with documents

and basic necessities. The night before, another car occupied his parking space, so he had parked further away. That car was completely destroyed, whereas his car was saved. His family and three other member families stayed protected in it while waiting for rescuers from the Church.

His seven-year-old daughter drew a picture of their demolished home: "The Melone house,

destroyed by the earthquake". He assured her, "The Melone home is built on the rock of the gospel and will never be destroyed." She took hope and smiled again.

These are just a few of the many testimonies of faithful Saints in the Europe area. I bear my testimony that, as we remain faithful, we can find joy even in the midst of challenges in life. ■

a few other local constituents, Bishop Pentreath was given a tour of the Houses of Parliament and then on to the Prime Minister's official residence in Downing Street. During the visit the Prime Minister himself came into the room. "As one of the guides was telling a story of the leather chairs instituted by Disraeli, who should burst through the door but the Prime Minister himself, saying something like, 'Who's been snooping around my home then.' I was so shocked, that I did the thing that felt most natural and stood up. I really felt as if I was in the presence of someone very special. He had real presence and was physically quite imposing," remarks Bishop Pentreath.

After touring No 10, including the famous grand staircase adorned with a signed photograph of each previous Prime Minister, the tour finished in the Cabinet room. Bishop Pentreath commented, "A great day that will live long in the memory. My overwhelming impression was just how hard our PMs and their families work for the country. Their time is not their own. As we were sitting in the 'white room', where Mr Cameron greets heads of state, we were told of the frequent receptions hosted by No 10 for various charities, many of them in the evening, which Mr and Mrs Cameron would be expected to 'pop in on'. It really is a labour of love!" ■

LOCAL NEWS

Head Teacher Visits No 10

By Jane Gough

COURTESY OF BISHOP PENTREATH



From L to R:
Rt Hon Ben Gummer MP and Bishop Jeremy Pentreath at the visit to No 10 Downing Street

Forty-five-year-old Jeremy Pentreath, head teacher, grandad and bishop of the Ipswich Ward, was recently honoured with an invitation to visit No 10 Downing Street. He was invited by his local MP, the Rt Hon Ben Gummer, after several visits by him to Bishop Pentreath's school and to a sacrament meeting at the Ipswich congregation. After joining

Two LDS Churchill Fellows Presented to Her Majesty The Queen at Buckingham Palace

By Jeannie Wills

In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the death of Winston Churchill, Alvin Crisp and Chris Wills from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints received invitations

to be presented to Her Majesty the Queen and Prince Philip at a reception in Buckingham Palace. Both men are recipients of a Travelling Fellowship by the Winston Memorial Trust.



Her Majesty shaking hands with Bro Wills, with Bro Crisp on the immediate left, at the 50th anniversary Winston Churchill Trust reception at Buckingham Palace

A representative selection of Fellows from each of the five decades enjoyed a memorable evening of renewing old friendships and meeting new Fellows, the highlight of which was being joined by five members of the Royal Family for informal conversations.

Previously Alvin Crisp of the Huddersfield Ward was awarded a Travelling Fellowship, having witnessed the severe injuries of a colleague in the Fire Service and travelled extensively studying the latest treatments for burn victims. He was employed as an Operational Station Officer with the West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority.

Alvin introduced a fellow member, Chris Wills from the Solihull Ward, to the WCMT, who was also awarded a Fellowship to travel in Western Europe in 1990 to investigate how the proposed unification of Europe in 1992 would affect the economy of the United Kingdom. Bro Wills

retired in January 2012 after working for the Church for over twenty years as the area support manager for Europe and Africa in what was then called the Audiovisual Department. At that time Alvin Crisp and Chris Wills were invited by the Trust's patron, Her Majesty the Queen, to a luncheon at the Guildhall, London, to mark the 25th year since the death of Sir Winston and the establishment of the Trust.

Since 1965, over 5000 British citizens have been awarded Churchill Fellowships, from over 100,000 applicants, to travel overseas to study areas of topical and personal interest. The knowledge and innovative ideas they bring back are shared, for the benefit of their profession, their community, and, in many cases, the nation. For many people, a Churchill Fellowship proves transformational, and they go on to achieve great things—effecting positive change within society. ■

Watford Interfaith Event

By Mhairi Mason

Last autumn the Watford Ward organised and hosted an interfaith discussion evening with the purpose of building relationships and understanding between faiths.

The topic, “Ways to Strengthen Families”, was chosen to highlight common ground between faiths, and was recognised as an important topic for many people. The evening was a great success, which many members of the ward felt was an inspiring event and a wonderful opportunity to learn more about other faiths and to consider the common ground that we all share.

Speakers participated from a number of faiths. These were: the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (known as Hare Krishna), The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the Unificationist faith, the Anglican faith and the Sikh faith. Each speaker spoke about ways to strengthen families from the perspective of their own faith.

Speakers were able to share insight with their own unique perspective. Some of the ideas spoken about during the evening were that God as our Father loves us unconditionally and God's grace helps us to be better individuals in our family relationships. Another speaker described the family as the school of love and the basis of society. We heard that faith strengthens and unites families and that the greatest responsibilities and the greatest joys are found in the family. We were reminded that the faith community in which we worship is our family and finally that our family is the world and that we should seek to serve all around us.

The secretary of the Watford Interfaith Group attended the evening and gave this write up:

“Just to say, the strengthening families interfaith event yesterday evening went very well. All the speakers spoke from their hearts and own experiences, and showed how their faith has helped them look after their families. This generous love can then be taken out into the world to strengthen all those we meet.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints extended the warmest of welcomes to everyone—it was a beautiful event. With many thanks to the participants. I hope we have more events like this!”

Since this event, members of the Watford Ward have continued to build interfaith relations as they were invited to attend Diwali with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and have taken part in a ‘pilgrimage’ around Watford, visiting different places of worship with the Watford Interfaith Group. ■



BY ANDY BLOMFELD

Left to right: Françoise Murphy (Unificationist faith); Bhagavati (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); bishop of Watford Ward, Owen Redmond (chair of the evening); Jared Levens, 2nd counsellor, Watford Stake presidency; Radha Mohan Das (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Ropinder Singh (Sikh faith); Mhairi Mason (organiser)

Missionary Success in Loughborough

By Julie Harrald

It is an exciting time to be a member of the Church in the Loughborough Ward, Leicester Stake, for missionary work has been flourishing. Within the last year there have been eighteen convert baptisms, with new members coming from China, Vietnam, various African countries and Romania, as well as the local area.

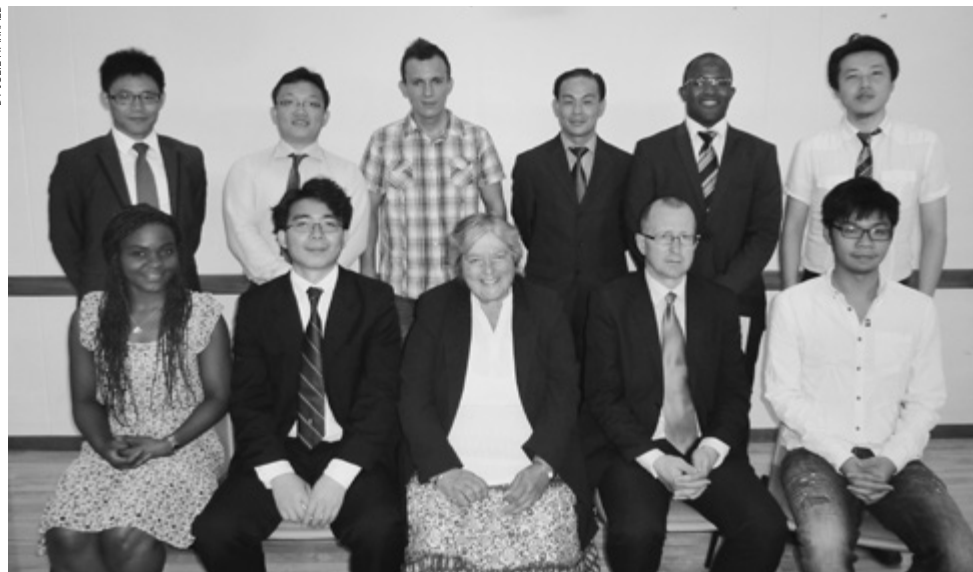
A few of these new members have had to return home

after completing studies at Loughborough University, but most are learning, growing and participating in the ward. The gospel is making a difference in their lives, and their testimonies are a joy to hear, reminding everyone of its truthful simplicity. One young man, Di Liu, said in a sacrament meeting talk, “When I told my friends and relatives that I had joined the Church, they all asked the same

New converts in the Loughborough Ward

question—‘Why? What difference does it make?’ Part of what I told them was about the Word of Wisdom and that I would not drink tea, coffee or alcohol anymore. They said that a doctor could tell me to do that, but I replied, ‘Yes, but a doctor can’t give me the power to do it.’”

Another new member, Hannah, arrived in the UK from Beijing in January 2014 to study for a PhD in business. She was baptised two months later, recognising church as a “warm, friendly, home-like place” and that prayers can help her with her university work. Her visiting teacher, Yanning Yang, can identify with Hannah, having also joined the Church while studying for a PhD a few years ago and afterwards having married and settled here, far from her family in China. She told Hannah that church gave her the strength to complete her studies and she learned that life has seasons. Her callings taught her to keep on trying at similar tasks until she succeeded, and prepared her



BY JULIE HARRALD

to focus on the things that God needed her to learn.

It is prayer, diligence and a united effort that have made the difference to the ward missionary work. Ward mission leader Russell Ford explained, “The bishopric called twelve ward missionaries of different ages and background, and since January 2014 they have been working ‘as one’ with the full-time missionaries, teaching with

them daily. To begin with we were teaching six missionary lessons a week with members present, and now we sometimes have members teaching with the full-time missionaries three or four times in a day. As a ward we *pray* daily for investigators, new members and our friends; we *invite* missionaries, investigators, new members and our friends into our homes; and we always *follow up*.” ■



Hannah and Yanning Yang—newly baptized members of the Loughborough Ward

BY JULIE HARRALD

NEWS FROM WALES

Church Representatives Invited to Historic Muslim-Sponsored Interfaith Event

By Martin Turvey

Celebrating the United Nations Interfaith Week 2015, representatives from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were personally invited by Mr Saleem Kidwai OBE, KFO, FRSA and General Secretary of the Muslim Council of Wales to an historic multi-faith dinner in Cardiff on Wednesday 4th February 2015.

Guest speakers at the event were Shaykh Dr. Asim Yusuf, a Muslim, and Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, Ephraim Mirvis. He is believed to be the highest-ranking Jewish leader to attend a Muslim sponsored event in the United Kingdom.

Also in attendance were Ms. Lesley Griffiths, Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty of the Welsh Government, along with a number of other distinguished guests.

Speaking on the subject “The Need for Faith in the 21st Century”, Shayk Dr. Yusuf commented, “We all want to be happy. The purpose of life is to acquire that which brings comfort and satisfaction,



From L to R: Martin and Judith Cook and Saleem Kidwai OBE, KFO, FRSA

COURTESY OF MARTIN COOK

and we are created to desire that which is infinite.” Talking of the need to overcome selfish desires, he went on to say that the natural thought is often, “The things I want for myself I should also want for you, but the things I want are of limited resource and I would rather I have them than you.” Shayk Dr. Yusuf emphasized the need to overcome this inclination and reach out to others.

Mentioning that Jews and Muslims are all descendants of Abraham and Sarah, Chief Rabbi Mirvis identified that we all “share faith in God, cherish family values, recognize the sacred nature of marriage and the sacred nature of the Sabbath. We need to celebrate what we have in common, and respect with dignity our differences. The path of Abraham is ours; we should reach out with tolerance and compassion to one and all.”

The host, Dr. Saleem Kidwai, stated that with freedom of speech also comes the need for a

maturity to respect that which is held sacred by others.

Representing the Church were Martin Cook, national director of public affairs, with his wife, Judith; Martin Turvey, multistake director of public affairs for the southwest and Wales; Julie Jones, the Church’s representative on the Wales Interfaith Council; Keith and Valerie Bishop with Julie Harrald, national public affairs council interfaith specialists.

Speaking after the event, Julie Jones remarked, “Tonight has been a wonderful evening. It was a privilege to attend and see so many people from different religions engaging with each other. We need more defining moments like these that look at the common good we have together and build upon them. There is enough opposition out there, and we need to show the world that religion is a commitment to peace, love and harmony and this outweighs the different beliefs we have.” ■

Branch President Addresses NASUWT

By Theresa Williams

Calvin Williams, a schoolteacher and president of Milford Haven Branch in West Wales, recently had the opportunity to address delegates of the NASUWT, the UK’s largest teachers’ union, at their annual national conference, held at the Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay. President Williams, who is the president of the union in Wales this year, spoke on the importance of teaching our young people and preparing them for the world of work.

Later, President Williams was also able to question the Welsh Education Minister. President Williams said that he was

**President
Calvin Williams**



COURTESY OF THE WILLIAMSSES

honoured to hold such a position in the organisation. He was also mindful of counsel from our Church leaders to be active in the local community and use these opportunities to set a good example of our Church membership and spread the happiness which we gain from our beliefs.

President Williams, whose eldest son, Gareth, is about to go on a mission, said that as a result of his role, he’d had many opportunities to start gospel conversations with colleagues and friends whilst representing the union across Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. ■

'Love for All—Hatred for None'

By Tracey Prior

This is the motto of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Association UK AMWA, who held a seminar on Saturday 7th March, with the theme 'Muslim Women in British Society'.

The Cardiff event is the second in a series of planned events aimed at promoting greater peace, tolerance and understanding within British society.

Along with charity, faith and civic leaders who attended were the Rt Hon Jenny Willott MP and Police Sergeant Louise Lucas. Also in attendance was Sister Julie Jones, who represents The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the Interfaith Council for Wales.

There are approximately 30,000 members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, and the talks at this women-only seminar tackled head-on the subjects of integration, diversity, radicalisation and the role of Muslim women.

Mrs Saiha Maaz talked of the

continuing efforts being made to teach the peaceful message of Islam, particularly to their youth, hoping that this knowledge will help to guard against the rising phenomenon of extremism. As part of this education, they are encouraged to serve in both the community and in charitable endeavours. Saiha happily reported that radicalisation isn't a problem in their branch of Islam and emphasized that such activities are in opposition to their original, peaceful doctrines.

Shemama-Tul-Amber gave an overview of ancient Islamic society and, in particular, the achievements and emancipation of Muslim women, explaining that the oppression of women, which we see in various places in the world today, is at odds with the purest ideals of their religion.

Mrs Nasira Rehman, National President AMRA, went on to talk about the need for people of all faiths to be willing to work together. She said, "For there to

be peace on Earth, there must be peace at home." She discussed the many roles of a woman, especially within the family as a daughter, wife and mother.

Jenny Willott, MP for Cardiff Central, stated that "it is really important to have meetings like this, which brings people together and helps to dispel a huge amount of ignorance. There is far more that binds us than sets us apart." ■

Adam's Remarkable Journey

By Linda Coulter

In the early hours of 24 August 2014, 16-year-old Adam McIlwrath had an asthma attack and collapsed. He stopped breathing, and as a result, his brain was deprived of oxygen and he ended up in a coma and on a ventilator. Doctors said it was unlikely that Adam would come out of the coma, but if he did, he would have severe brain damage. A week later, the family were told that nothing more could be done for Adam. However, hope was found when Adam was taken off the ventilator and managed to breathe on his own. By the next morning, though, his condition had deteriorated and his parents were told to prepare for the worst. The youth of the Belfast stake, members and nonmembers continued fasting and praying for Adam, and after receiving a blessing, Adam showed signs of improvement. Six weeks later, he was transferred to a hospital specialising in brain injuries. He could only communicate by closing his eyes tightly for 'yes' and blinking for 'no,' and his parents were told that he would never speak again. However, Adam received a blessing in which he was told that he would speak again, not in his time, but in the Lord's time.

Left to right, standing: Mrs Faiqa Saadat, Mrs Saiha Maaz, Julie Jones, Mrs Shehla Noman, Tracey Prior, Shemama-Tul-Amber. Sitting: Rt Hon Jenny Willot MP, Mrs Nasira Rehman.



BY NUSRAT AHMED

During one hospital visit, Sister Janet Potts started singing a favourite song, 'Army of Helaman', to Adam. To her amazement Adam started to sing softly along with her. Two days later he spoke his first words. Defying the odds against him, Adam spoke in November and he was allowed home in January of this year.

Just after Adam's accident, Lucy Keery and Stephen Murphy of the Portadown Ward set up a page on social media—"Today I thought about Adam McIlwrath and . . ." Here are just a few comments the youth posted.

Paige Hunter

"Today I remembered the time at one of my first 'Fab Fridays' (seminary activity), I was sitting alone because at the time I had very few friends in the stake, and the first person to greet me, with a big smile on his face, was Adam. Today at school I saw a girl from my year sitting on her own, so I did as Adam had done and talked to her. It turned out she was having a bad day and I was able to help. I am thankful for Adam for being a good example in my life."

Holly Keery

"Today I thought about how Adam is improving so well. If it wasn't for prayer and fasting, Adam probably wouldn't be here. I am so grateful to my Heavenly Father."

Robert McIlwrath (Adam's dad)

"Today I thought about how miracles begin by asking for Heavenly Father's help."

During his time in intensive care, Adam had a wonderful, personal, spiritual experience which has changed his life. He is determined to walk again.

Where is Adam at now? Physically, Adam has a long way to go, but he can talk and he can stand



COURTESY OF THE MCILWRATH FAMILY

Adam McIlwrath

unaided briefly at physiotherapy. Mentally, Adam has a positive attitude. He goes to all the stake youth activities, where he enjoys getting involved and being with his friends. He is determined to walk again (he says the thing he wants most is to get back out on his skateboard), and he believes that he will serve a mission.

Spiritually, Adam's experience has strengthened his testimony of Heavenly Father and the Saviour Jesus Christ. He shares his testimony each fast Sunday, now that he is attending church again.

Through apparent tragedy and difficult times, Adam's miraculous journey and his family's faith and example have been an inspiration to so many. Hope and faith in the Saviour Jesus Christ continue to be an anchor and strength to Adam and his family. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE

The editors, **Jason Watling** and **Debbie Twigger**,

invite all news stories, articles and photographs to be sent to ukiensign@ldschurch.org. Stories should be in Microsoft Word, 350–500 words, with photographs in jpg format, around 3–4mb in size. Please submit stories for the News section as close to the event as possible.

The signed written permission of all participants in the photograph, as well as the photographer and author, is required for the Church to use the article.

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