

Happenings at Balham - October 2016

Making a Difference in our Community



If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful for the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. James 2:15-17 (KJV)

In a recent Evening Standard edition (Tuesday 20th September 2016), the headline was 'Wasted Food: We Have the Answer'. The newspaper had set up a charity to deal with the hunger experienced by the poor in London whilst highlighting the millions of tonnes of food that were being thrown away by supermarkets, restaurants and other organizations. The newspaper identified a problem and need and was willing to meet that need. Then they came up with an action plan to solve the problem.

The Bible has an interesting story in Mark 2:1-12, where there was a paralyzed man who needed healing. His friends saw his need and were willing to do something about it. They brought the man to see Jesus but there was a barrier. Jesus was as surrounded by people crowded in a room so they figured the only way to get to Jesus was through the roof. So they cooperated with each other, carried the man up onto the roof, bore a hole and let him down. As Jesus, filled with compassion, saw the man and his faith, he healed him.

Now this story could have had a very different outcome. Suppose the man's friends decided to come together and discuss the situation. Suppose that one of them said "I would like to help but I don't have the time, I do have a life you know!" Or what if another one said, "Why can't someone else help him?"

Or perhaps someone else said, "This comes under my department, why are you undermining me and trying to take over?" Another could have said, "Why don't we send out multiple emails to all the church leaders and see what people think?" Or "Why don't we call a church Prayer and Fasting session and see how God guides us." Or what if they said, "Why don't we deal with this on Sabbath when it's a bit more convenient?"

I'm sure any one of these responses would have resulted in the man staying paralyzed and not being healed. As someone once said 'When all is said and done, more is said than done.'

In the key text above, the writer asked the salient question. If your brother or sister needs help

what is the point of talking about it and then doing nothing? It's easy to come up with nice words or even an analysis, however when there are pressing needs and God has put it in our power to address them, we should do just that. If we are to be a church making a difference within the church and the local community, we need God to put within us a heart full of compassion, a willingness to get our hands dirty and make a sacrifice for those who need our help. We need to ask God to direct our thoughts and our actions and then by his grace, we should just follow the words of the Nike slogan and 'Just Do It'.

Looking Back at September 2016

Afternoon of Prayer: Once again, a good number of members stayed behind for the session after Divine Service and then we fellowshiped with a shared meal. A further session of prayer and testimonies finished late in the evening, which left us tired but spiritually refreshed.

Communion: Some people used to see this as a 'service to be missed' but fortunately more and more people at Balham are realizing the importance of attending Communion. The whole morning was dedicated to the Communion service along with singing and testimonies and was enjoyed by all.

Sanctuary Series: Our Pastor, Michael Mbui, started a three-week series (Sabbaths and Wednesdays) exploring the aspects of the Sanctuary and the messages of Salvation that are contained in this service. This will continue until mid-October.

Power of 37,000 Day of Free Literature Distribution: This is a Conference initiative inviting the local churches to hand out literature to family and friends and the local community. As is our custom, Balham participated in this programme that included meeting people and singing on the streets.

OneLife Campaign: This evangelistic collaboration between the SEC and 3ABN was held at several churches around London. Many of our members attended the services at the Brixton and Croydon churches and invited their non-Adventist friends and relatives.

Dates for Your Diary

September 25th - October 15th: Sanctuary series This series takes place on Wednesdays and Sabbaths as Pastor Mbui presents messages highlighting how the Sanctuary service teaches important lessons about our salvation

Sabbath October 15th: Baptism, 5pm. We plan to celebrate with those who have chosen to give their lives to Christ and get baptised.

Sabbath 22nd October: Community Services Day This programme provides an opportunity to highlight the work carried out in this important area of church life as we aim to become more relevant to our local community.

Sunday 30th October: Soul Food 5pm -8pm. An evening of music, words, food and fellowship aimed at reaching our friends and local community. Hosted by gospel jazz band Quintessential and guest artistes. Free tickets can be obtained through the Eventbrite website.

See www.soul-food.org.uk for more details.