

BUC FAMILY

A Publication of the BUC Family, Children and Possibility Ministries

In this issue:

**Children, Communion
& Baptism**

Disability Etiquette

Events & Notices

**Safeguarding Our
Church Policy
Statement**

**Recommended
Reading**

Children, Communion & Baptism

Pr Les Ackie

There is an ongoing discussion in many churches regarding whether unbaptised children should be allowed to participate in the ordinances of the Lord's Supper. The question is complicated by the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual states that Adventists hold open communion. In other words, all who have committed their lives to the Saviour, regardless of their church affiliation, may participate when visiting during the celebration of the ordinances.

However, the Church Manual also states that children should be baptised before taking part in communion. In the absence of a clear biblical passage that directly addresses the question, it is necessary to examine the biblical principles and inspired commentary that apply to both baptism and the communion service.

The rationale for requiring baptism before communion is that baptism symbolises an individual's confession of sin, recognition of the need for salvation, and public acceptance of Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Baptised believers become united to the community of faith within the body of Christ. Paul writes, "For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17). It is therefore argued that those who have experienced the saving power of Christ come together to share communion with the risen Lord. While this reasoning is understandable, many feel uncomfortable with the idea that children who love Jesus according to their understanding are somehow excluded from the body of Christ. Ellen White reminds us that "The soul of the little child that believes in Christ is as precious in His sight as are the angels about His throne" (The Adventist Home, 279).

The Church Manual further counsels that while there is no stated age for baptism, every young child who expresses a desire to be baptised should be encouraged and instructed toward that goal. Research by George Barna has shown that many decisions for Christ are made between the ages of five and thirteen. This supports Ellen White's observation that early childhood is a period when the heart is especially receptive to spiritual influence.

When parents dismiss their child's sincere desire to make a public commitment to Christ, they make potentially disastrous decisions. It is often observed that children denied baptism when young can lose interest in making that commitment as they move into their teenage years.





The point is not that baptism itself seals a child's destiny, but that acting on conviction tends to strengthen commitment, while repeatedly delaying action can weaken it. Ellen White therefore counsels, "Do not speak of religion as something that children cannot understand, or act as if they were not expected to accept Christ in their childhood" (*Desire of Ages*, 517).

The General Conference Children's Ministries Department recommends that, where young children genuinely desire to follow Jesus but are not yet considered ready for baptism, a Service of Affirmation may be appropriate. Such a service publicly recognises the child's commitment and encourages continued spiritual growth toward baptism. It allows the church to celebrate and nurture the child's decision without replacing baptism itself.

The recognition of children's spirituality naturally raises questions about their participation in the Lord's Supper. Excluding children can appear to minimise their ability to appreciate spiritual truths. Ellen White wrote that children of eight, ten, or twelve years are old enough to be addressed regarding personal religion and, if properly instructed, can understand both their need of salvation and the way of salvation through Christ. Allowing children to participate in communion should not be presumed to be lowering the standard. Scripture assumes that participants understand the meaning of the emblems. Jesus instructed His disciples, "Do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19), which requires at least some understanding of His life, death, and saving work.

However, communion should never be treated casually. Parents demonstrate a lack of respect for the service when they give the consecrated emblems to children merely to keep them occupied. Paul emphasised the solemnity of communion when he warned against partaking in an unworthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). His concern, however, was directed primarily toward those who knowingly persisted in sinful behaviour while participating in the service. Worthy participation does not require perfection, but it does require sincere confession and devotion to Christ.

Like baptism, the bread and wine possess no saving power in themselves. Rather, they are outward signs of an inward experience. Participation expresses faith in Jesus and a desire to live for Him. Parents and church leaders must therefore make thoughtful judgments regarding whether a child possesses sufficient spiritual and personal maturity to understand that commitment.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Mark 10:14). Ellen White also observed that Christ's example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper and that, beyond cases of open sin, believers should be cautious about judging who may participate.

A strong argument can therefore be made that communion should not function as an adult-only experience. Instead, it can be a time when churches make gracious, non-judgmental provisions that affirm children's love for Jesus and encourage their spiritual development. One practical approach is to allow children and their families to decide whether participation is appropriate, based on the child's commitment to Christ and understanding of the meaning of the service. Such an approach seeks to preserve the sacredness of communion while recognising that children can possess genuine faith, spiritual understanding, and a sincere desire to follow Jesus. It respects both the significance of baptism and the responsibility of families and church leaders to nurture children in their walk with Christ.



Disability Etiquette

INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND OR SEE DIFFERENTLY

- Identify yourself and introduce him/her to others who are in the group.
- Offer your arm - don't take his/hers - if he/she needs to be guided.
- Guide a blind person's hand to a banister to help direct him to a stairway.
- Describe the setting, noting any obstacles.
- If you are giving directions, give specific, non-visual information.
- If you need to leave a person who is blind, let him know.
- Don't touch the person's cane or guide dog. The dog is working.
- If the person has a guide dog, walk on the opposite side of the dog. The same goes for a cane.
- Offer to read written information.
- If you serve food to a person who is blind, let him know where everything is on the plate according to a clock orientation.

INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

- When the exchange of information is complex, use an interpreter.
- For simple interaction, writing back and forth is okay. May use computer technology to help.
- Follow the person's cues to find out if she prefers sign language, gesturing, writing or speaking.
- When speaking, do not obscure your face.
- When using an interpreter, look directly at the person who is deaf.
- Talk directly to the person rather than the interpreter.
- Don't decide for the person.
- Before speaking, make sure that you get her attention.
- Rephrase, rather than repeat, sentences.
- When talking, face the person.
- Speak clearly.
- There is no need to shout.

INDIVIDUALS WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS OR HAVE MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

- Don't lean over someone in a wheelchair.
- Don't push or touch a person's wheelchair.
- Keep the ramps and wheelchair-accessible doors to your building unlocked and unblocked.
- When talking to a wheelchair user, sit at his/her level.
- Be sure that signs direct wheelchair users to the most-accessible ways around the facility.
- Don't ask a wheelchair user to hold things for you.

INDIVIDUALS WITH SPEECH IMPAIRMENTS

- Don't interrupt or finish the person's sentences.
- If you have trouble understanding, don't nod. Instead, ask him to repeat.
- Ask him to write information down or to suggest another way of facilitating communication.
- A quiet environment makes communication easier.
- Don't tease or laugh.

South England Conference

Nicole Gooden
Topic: **Holding It All Together: Faith, Family, and Resilience in Single Parenting**
12 June, 2026

Hannah Commodore
Topic: **When Smiles Disappear: Understanding Children's Depression**
19 June, 2026

FRIDAYS 7-8 PM

LIVE PODCAST

Dr. Rio Espulgar
Host

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Password: 803103

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66 The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.
— Proverbs 20:7 —

“Happy is the father who has won the affection and confidence of his children.”

SUNDAY 21ST JUNE

Honouring and thanking fathers for their love, leadership and faith.

Singles' International Day of Prayer 2026

PRAY, PRAISE, PROSPER

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Gus Nyberg **Christer Muloba**

27th June, 2026 10 AM

London Balham Seventh-Day Adventist Church
83 Elmfield Road, London, SW17 8AD

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ZOOM MEETING ID: 705 554 0588
PASSCODE: SEC MEN2025

7:00PM - 8:30PM

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

DR. SERGE ENGAMBA **ELDER DEVON BOYD** **ELDER KOSSI SINGO** **PASTOR RAY PATRICK** **PASTOR RICHARD JAMES**



SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE

Family Ministry

Leadership Training 2026

10 am-1 pm on Sundays



8TH OF MARCH FAMILIES ON MISSION: EQUIPPING TEAMS FOR FAMILY-TO-FAMILY EVANGELISM DR. RIO ESPULGAR COUNSELLING: WHAT IS IT? KOSSI SINGO	24TH OF MAY SINGLES' MINISTRY ANNELL SMITH CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN CHRISTIAN FAMILIES PR. JOHN FRANCIS
26TH OF APRIL MARRIAGE COURSE: A MINISTRY TOOL FOR ENRICHMENT AND OUTREACH DR. RIO ESPULGAR SUPPORTING FAMILIES IN CRISIS MARK AND SHARON SEMPLE	28TH OF JUNE LOVING WITHOUT AFFIRMING: IS IT POSSIBLE? MINISTERING TO LGBTQ-IDENTIFIED DR. HEZRON ADINGO LEADING WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE DR. LES ACKIE

ZOOM ID
880 8135 7517

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SECFMLT



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Janine Esbrand

Thursday, 25th June
25th
6.00pm - 7.30pm
On Zoom




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EVERY VOICE,

EVERY ONE



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BSL

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Guest Speaker
Elder Louanne Modeste-Sampson



All are

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"THROUGH EVERY SEASON" CHOIR DAY



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BIBLE STUDY - 10.00AM | FAMILY SERVICE - 11.00AM
LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

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OPEN FORUM

MONDAY // 06 JUL // 7:30PM

ONLINE

ZOOM MEETING ID: 705 554 0588
PASSCODE: SECMEN2026




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Winnie Nsimbi Roucou
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- MSc Global Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Founder & Company Owner of Dream Big Kids

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EVENT DETAILS

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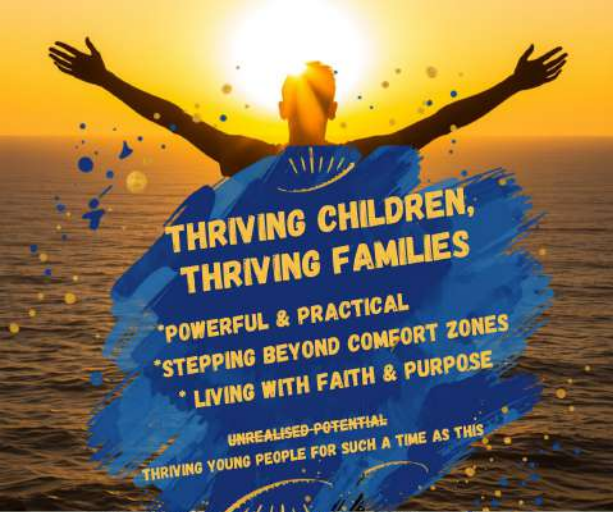
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Guest Speaker

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THEME: My Children
are Going Higher
They are Unstoppable

They are above only and not beneath
(Deuteronomy 28:13)

They run through troops and leap over walls
(Psalm 18:29)



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Isaiah 43: 19

Date:

Friday 18th September to Sunday 20th September 2026

Venue:

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Daventry Road, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 6JT
Tel: 01327 220676**

Theme:

From Conflict to Connection



For bookings, please telephone Sharon Mattis on 01923 232728, extension 533, or email: smattis@secadventist.org.uk, and a booking form will be emailed to you to complete.

Alternatively, you can simply scan the QR code and book electronically.



PRESENTERS
**Dr Les and
Irma Ackie (BUC)**



PRESENTERS
**Pastor John and
Delivon Francis (NEC)**

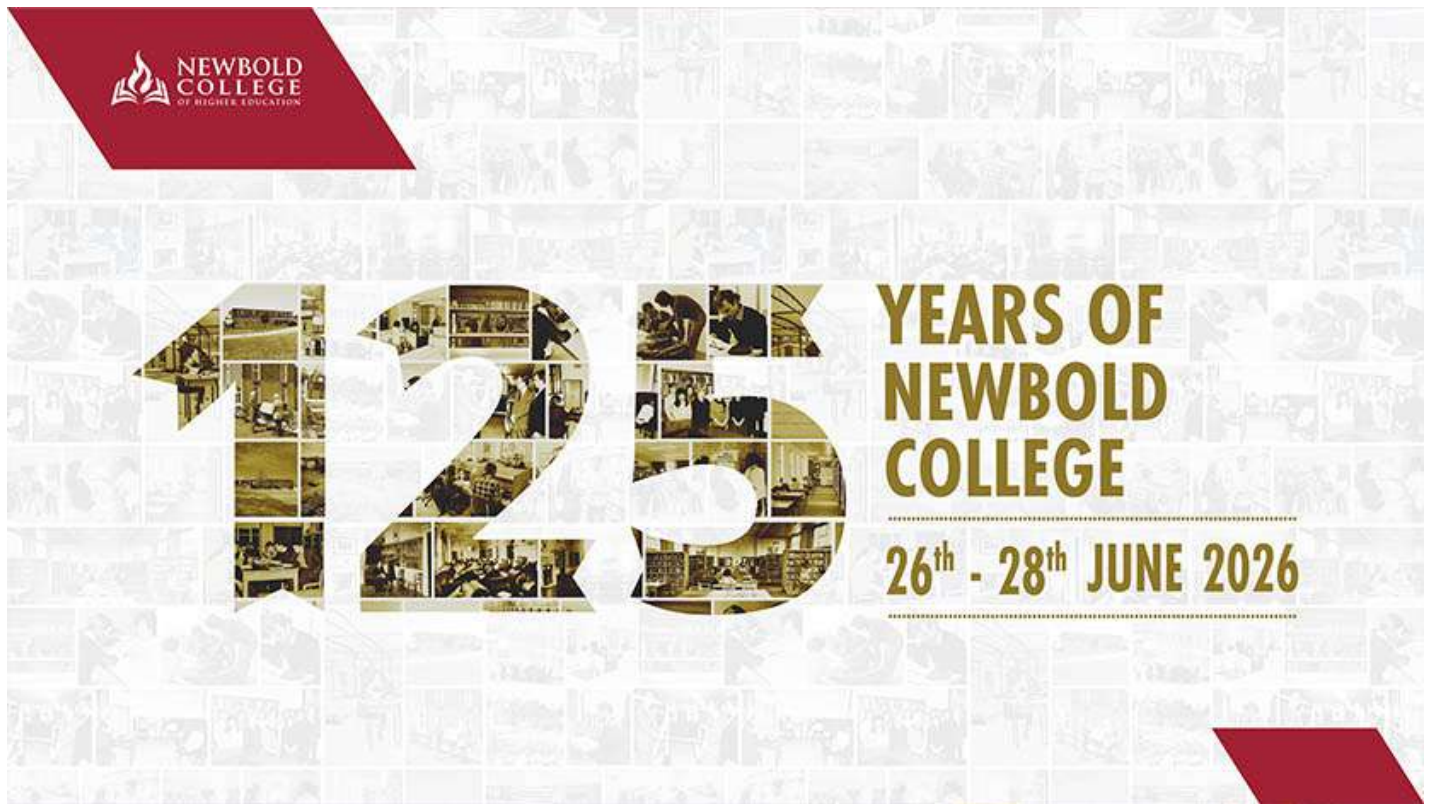


HOSTS
**Dr Rio and
Maybelle Espulgar (SEC)**



Transformed by
Christ to Excel





[Newbold College 25th Anniversary](#)





Just a Thought

 Les Ackie
  @lesackie

Follow for brief reflections on healthy relational principles, in the areas of communication, conflict resolution and emotional wellbeing from a biblical perspective.




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"I am not living,
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 it happen.

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

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 Do not suffer in silence
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Please contact our co-ordinator **Dee Kyriacou** who will assess your needs and assign you to a counsellor for support.



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Adventist
Family Ministries

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WILLIE AND ELAINE OLIVER

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- Smart Tools
- Strong Families
- Spirit-Led Ministry



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The Seventh-day Adventist Church values every human being as part of God's creation. We are committed to safeguarding all children and adults at risk who take part in our services and activities.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Seventh-day Adventist Church commits to:

- Promote a safe environment for children and adults at risk of harm
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Provide compassionate care and support for survivors of abuse
- Ensure that those working with children and adults at risk are trained and supported
- Raise awareness of safeguarding responsibilities throughout all church programming and provisions
- Work collaboratively with safeguarding agencies
- Follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised best practice in order to protect the vulnerable
- Implement, maintain and regularly review the procedures outlined in our safeguarding policy



Safeguarding is Everybody's Responsibility

[Click here to download safeguarding posters for your local church](#)

Useful Links

[AdventSource](#)

[Adventist Possibility Ministries](#)

[Adventist Single Adult Ministries \(ASAM\)](#)

[Adventist Special Needs Association \(ASNA\)](#)

[BUC Family Ministries](#)

[BUC Safeguarding](#)

[Care for the Family](#)

[GC Children's Ministries](#)

[GC Family Ministries](#)

[In Discipleship](#)

[Prepare Enrich](#)

[TED Children's Ministries](#)

[TED Family Ministries](#)

[TED Possiblity Ministries](#)

[Through the Roof \(Disability outreach\)](#)

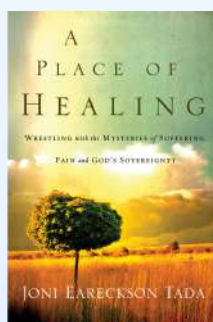
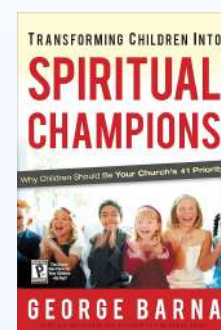
[Women's Aid](#)

Recommended Reading



Mini Habits: Smaller Habits, Bigger Results. Stephen Guise presents a strategy of using 'mini habits' to overcome your brain's natural resistance so you can easily add healthy habits to transform your life. A mini habit is a very small version of a positive new habit you want to form. The Mini Habits system works because it's how our brains are designed to change.

In **Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions**, George Barna states that churches must equip parents to enable them to rear their children to be true disciples of Jesus rather than just church members. No one can deny that our culture is opposed to Christian values, and the influences bombarding our children's moral development can be deadly. It's therefore time to wage a spiritual war to develop children into spiritual champions!



A Place of Healing. In this eloquent account of her current struggle with physical pain, Joni Eareckson Tada offers her perspective on divine healing, God's purposes, and what it means to live with joy. Over four decades ago, a diving accident left Joni a quadriplegic. Today, she faces a new battle: unrelenting pain. The ongoing urgency of this season in her life has caused Joni to return to foundational questions about suffering and God's will.

BUC Family, Children, Possibility Ministries & Safeguarding



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