

* * * SERVICES FOR SABBATH 10th JANUARY 2015 * * *

“Meet Your God” - Prayer Session 9:30 -10:00 - with Johnny Addai-Peprah

BIBLE STUDY HOUR: 10:00 am

Welcome	Priscilla Bhebhe
Opening Song	516 “All the Way”
Opening Prayer	Sandra Nel
Lesson Study	Elder Brenya Obeng
Mission Story	William
Closing Song	537 “He Leadeth Me”
Closing Prayer	Jane Manenji

DIVINE SERVICE: 11:15 am

Welcome & Announcements	Brenya Obeng
Opening Hymn	306 “Draw Me Nearer”
Opening Prayer	Brenya Obeng
Scripture Reading	Luke 15:4
Tithe and Offering	Margaret Owusu-Ayim
Hymn of meditation	569 “Pass Me Not”
Children’s Story	Mervyn Owusu-Ayim
Sermon	“God Is Searching” Mervyn Owusu-Ayim
Closing Hymn	473 “Nearer My God To Thee”
Benediction	Mervyn Owusu-Ayim

AFTERNOON PROGRAMME 2:30 pm

Youth – Ashley Kanyongo

Minister:

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Sunset Times:

Sabbath 10th January– 15:58 pm
 Friday 16th January – 16:09 pm

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* * * THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK * * *

A 2nd HAND FAITH – Acts 19:13-16; Education, chapter 1

There seems to be hand-me-down system operating in our house at the moment e.g. a piece of technology which I upgrade gets handed down to Claudette; clothing from Joshua lands in Jason’s part of the wardrobe, etc. This means that the person at the ‘bottom’ of the pyramid is not the original owner, just an unfortunate inheritor.

Something similar tends to happen in the spiritual world, in particular with our faith. While it is a necessary part of the growing up process for a parent to hand-down their faith to their children, this should only happen up to a point. A time will come when a person will need to do their own thinking and own their experience with God, because, secondhand faith doesn’t cut it.

A secondhand faith doesn’t connect one directly with God – it just imitates someone else’s faith. Our intuition fights against this, as it is in our nature to control the world around us – it gives us a sense of peace knowing that B follows A and C follows B; it is reassuring to know that if you apply formula 1 + 1, it will always = 2. The reality is that God is not a formula to learn, or a set of steps, which will always guarantee the same result. There is so much more to God than this and the saints of old will all tell us that a faith journey moves from a 2nd hand faith (handed down from our parents), more and more to an original, authentic, and most times unpredictable experience. It is this very uncertainty, which drives us crazy, and even as you read this, your mind will frantically search for examples to prove the opposite. To guide your thinking, please consider the fact that the older (read: more experienced) one became in the Bible, the greater the tests were, the more silent God grew, the bigger the questions (doubts?). And yet, those who were commended, were the ones that accepted to trust in the face of it all (read: even when it made no sense, it contradicted the formulas used before, and life was completely out of control). Perhaps these are indicators of our complete surrender to the One who far transcends our efforts to manage and control our faith, our practice and our interaction with others: less control, less knowledge, the less we are able to stand on our own two feet.

This has serious implications in the way we view and practice our faith, the way in which we view and assess other people, and the way we share our faith with others.

Here is an example of what happens when we try to use a formula without the personal knowledge of God (personal, as in, based on MY OWN discovery of God). In Acts 19:13-16 some Jewish exorcists who were not true believers in Jesus tried to cast out a demon using His name. They said, "I command you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." The evil spirit answered, "Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you?". The demon knew their faith wasn’t genuine but was an imitation. These exorcists saw Paul casting out demons so they copied the words he used.

Taking someone else’s faith \ knowledge \ experience and substituting it for ours is a poor attempt at a faith life. It lives us disconnected from God and others, while leaving under the wrong impression that we are doing the right thing, and Jesus had some severe words to say about this at the end of Matthew 25. May I suggest that you spend this year answering Jesus’ question: “Who do people say that I am?” Begin with the honest answer, which admits that you do not yet know for yourself (indicative of 2nd hand faith): “Some say John the Baptist, and others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets” (Matt. 16:14). And when He will push you further by asking: “But who do YOU say that I am?” do not give up, but work hard at figuring it out for yourself.

Here are some of the choices available: genuine vs. 2nd hand faith; connected vs. disconnected with God; reflectors of other people’s thoughts vs. thinkers. And while hand-me-downs are reasonable in families, 2nd hand faith doesn’t cut it with God – at least not for long and definitely not for mature people. And while it is risky to relinquish all control to God, anything else, amounts to rebellion, and we all know how well that ended.

Love,
 M

* * * ANNOUNCEMENTS * * *

* **Welcome.** We are delighted to welcome you to Dundee Seventh-day Adventist Church; especially if this is your first visit. May our time together be blessed! We extend a warm invitation to all to join us for a bring-and-share meal immediately after the service.

* **"Agape Feast"** every Sabbath! We will have a variety of bread, spreads, fruit, nuts and salads, etc. Please plan to join us and all contributions are greatly appreciated!

* **Huge Thanks** to all the unpaid volunteers who, during 2014, contributed to the quality of Dundee SDA church activities. Thanks to the teams who provided, prepared and served wonderful meals, thanks to the teams who kept the church spotless – even the loos! Thanks for the lovely music, for all the repairs and maintenance, for the gardening and for the beautiful flower displays. Thanks for all the stimulating 'Thoughts' in the Bulletins. Thank you each and everyone! "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." Luke 16:10. "A faithful man shall abound with blessings." Proverbs 28:20.

* **Betsy Christie** is now recuperating from a fall in Royal Victoria Hospital, Jedburgh Road.

* **Teens Bible Study** – will resume meetings on **Wednesday 14th January** at 18:30 pm.

* **Adult Bible Study** – will resume meetings on **Thursday 15th January** from 18:00 – 19:00 – please arrive on time to avoid missing out!

* **Church Board Meeting:** on Monday 19th January at 18:00 in the church.

* **Church Library** Would you like some books to read? There's a good selection on the bookshelves in the Fellowship hall. Just write your name on the borrowing sheet and return the books promptly so others can enjoy them.

* **Lost Property** There are a number of items: scarves, etc. in the small corridor – owners please reclaim them.

* **Toddler Group, Tuesdays 10:00 – 12:00.** The number of children attending is now in the 30's and there is a great need for help in meeting their parents/carers and befriending them, as well as helping in the kitchen. Please consider coming along to lend a hand.

* **Online Bulletins** at: www.adventistdundee.com. Email announcements and items for the Bulletin to: John Walton on or before Wednesday (Email: jcw@st-and.ac.uk)

Forthcoming Preachers:

10th Jan – Mervyn Owusu-Ayim

17th Jan – Pastor Marcel Ghioalda

25th Jan – Victor Pilmoor

31st Jan – Pastor Marcel Ghioalda

7th Feb – Pr. Bernie Holford

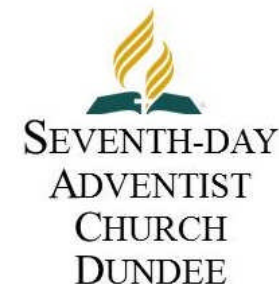
14th Feb – Pr. Marcel Ghioalda

21st Feb – Pr. Bob Rodd

28th Feb – Pr. Marcel Ghioalda

Forthcoming Events:

19th Jan. Church Board Meeting



BULLETIN FOR 10th JANUARY 2015



May we take this opportunity to wish you all a most blessed and peaceful festive season. May you feel the presence of Jesus in your life at this time as well as throughout 2015.

Guided by God's sufficient grace
Relying on God's free gift of grace
Acclaiming God's abundant grace
Calling all to live by God's merciful grace
Enlightened by the sure word of God's grace