



Inform | Engage | Inspire

EMAIL NEWSLETTER OF THE  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE UK & IRELAND



## Guidelines for *BUC News* & *Messenger* Reporting and Photography

Everyone wants to make *BUC News* and *Messenger* look good in terms of pictures, and interesting in terms of reporting. So how is it done?

### Photography

The appearance of *Messenger* and *BUC News* is very much down to the standard of photography sent in. We can improve your reports in the editorial process, but we cannot improve your photography.

1. Only submit contrasty colour photographs.
2. Beware of cheap digital cameras - at least 5 megapixels are needed for good resolution.
3. Avoid using mobile phone cameras. While getting better, they have a very small lens, lack sensitivity in low light and are often not suitable for print.
4. Do not embed pictures in a Word file. Send them in jpeg format and use the highest resolution that your camera will offer. (Please note that some software will reduce image size for emailing. Please be cautious to ensure that your email or software programme does not do this.)
5. Include a list of captions if you want people to be identified.
6. Exposure. Many of the photographs sent are under-exposed. For indoor flash pictures the built in flash on your camera is almost always insufficient. Use a dedicated flash gun if you can. If you have to use a camera with a built in flash you must get within about 1.5 metres of the subject. Avoid the fill-in flash setting on your camera if you are inside. Outside in the sunshine it can help to flatten harsh shadows on people's faces.
7. Photographs, like reports, need to be interesting. Try to vary the composition of your photographs. 'Action shots' are preferable to 'firing squad pictures' (photographs of groups of people all facing the camera).
8. Use only "optical zoom" on your camera. Cheaper cameras with digital zoom reduce the picture quality.
9. For the *Messenger* send digital pictures to: <[dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:dbell@stanboroughpress.org.uk)> or post prints to: Pre-Press, Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL.
10. For the *BUC News* or the BUC Picture Gallery send digital pictures to: <[bucnews@adventist.org.uk](mailto:bucnews@adventist.org.uk)>.
11. Large files of collections of several pictures are best sent by "zipping" the photos with a programme such as WinZip or in Window 7, place all the photos you want to send into one folder. Right-click on the folder, select 'Send to' then 'Compressed (zipped) folder'. Then send using the free website: <http://mailbigfile.com>. This avoids jamming up email inboxes with large files.

### What is news?

Before we begin to report for *Messenger* or *BUC News* we should ask the question: What is news?

1. Most readers are church members from congregations other than your own; do not write reports or details that will be of interest only to members of your own congregation.
2. Do not report events that occur in all churches (unless, that is, something striking occurs). For example, reports on harvest festivals, Christmas events, visitors' days and Ingathering are only of interest if something very special happens.
3. By all means report every baptism. However, do make your report interesting; single out some special aspect of the baptism that will recommend it to the attention of the readers from other congregations. Usually the most interesting thing about a baptism will be a remarkable conversion story.
4. Do not report anything and everything; but do not allow important events to go unreported.

### What is interesting?

1. People are always interesting. Reports can be made interesting by introducing details about individuals. Readers are interested in ages, backgrounds, conversion stories, why a particular individual became a pastor, etc.
2. Children are always interesting. Regrettably, however, the only news reportage we receive featuring children is when they appear in an investiture. Pathfinder activity could make interesting reading, but investiture reports tend to degenerate into lists of names and tabulated achievements. Let's aim to find interesting stories about what the children are doing both inside and outside the church.
3. Try to connect the church with one of the 'live' issues of the day. For example, the war against terrorism, abortion, green issues, areas of the world experiencing political/social/economic upheaval. If you discover that your pastor, Sabbath school superintendent and AYS leader rarely touch on 'live' issues, have a chat with them.
4. News gathering. News will not fall into your lap. You will have to find it. Watch the active people in your congregation. Make contacts in all departments of the church and attend church board meetings. Interview people. Take notes. Do not report for *Messenger* once a quarter; report each event as and when it occurs.

### What is not interesting?

1. Under no circumstances should you adopt a "blow-by-blow" method of reporting. Readers are not interested in the hymns you sang, the Sabbath school lesson you studied, who pronounced the benediction, etc.
2. You are not writing the minutes of a meeting; you are focusing on interesting aspects of things your church is doing, and recounting stories that will rivet the attention of the reader.

### What is essential?

1. Clarity. Short sentences help to carry the reader along. Plan your piece; have an outline before you begin to write. Reread and, perhaps, rewrite your article before you submit it. Remember: you are not writing for its own sake - you are communicating. Use words to convey a message.
2. Keep the reader's attention. Your opening sentence should lure the reader into your piece. Tell a story; don't just stack the facts.
3. Avoid Adventist jargon phrases which turn readers off.
4. Highlights only. When reporting the events of a special day be selective in what details you include. The report need not begin with comments on the weather or Sabbath school. It could, for example, begin with a quotation from the sermon, or a quoted reaction from a member of the congregation, or biographical details with regard to the speaker.
5. Get your facts right. Make sure that the spelling of all proper names is correct. If you are providing a list of names (for example, baptismal candidates) use a uniform style - either Christian names and surnames throughout or initials and surnames throughout.

### How to submit your report

**Messenger:** Either email your reports to: <[editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk](mailto:editor@stanboroughpress.org.uk)> or post them to: The Stanborough Press Limited, Alma Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9SL.

**BUC News** Email: your reports to <[bucnews@adventist.org.uk](mailto:bucnews@adventist.org.uk)>.

Remember: If a particular report or photograph does not make it into print do not take it personally and get discouraged. Try again. You, along with the Editor, have the responsibility to make the magazine interesting and appealing.

### Subscribe to BUC News

BUC News is a free weekly email newsletter produced by the Communication department of the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. It contains news, a list of coming events, and also some small ads relevant to the Seventh-day Adventist Church community. The newsletter is sent out every Friday about noon.

At the present time over 3,200 people around the world are receiving BUC News. Simply subscribe by visiting <http://adventist.org.uk> and then enter your details at the bottom of the screen.



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