



global news

stories and news from Scripture Union around the world

October 2017

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“What is that symbol?”

I was once going through the check out in my local supermarket in Melbourne, buying a few things that I needed before I made my way home from an SU event. I had a small SU lamp badge on my lapel. The young employee at the checkout looked at it and asked, “what is that symbol, it looks familiar?” I told her that it was the logo of Scripture Union, but she didn’t recognise the name. I then asked her where she was from originally as I had noticed a non-Australian accent. She said she was from Northern Ireland and had been living in Melbourne for a few years. I asked if she had been part of an ‘ISCF’ group when she was in school (ISCF is what school groups were and are called in some countries). “That’s it”, she said excitedly. She then told me how helpful the leaders and the group had

been to her life and her understanding of the Bible. She hadn’t been attending church since she moved to Australia and the memory of the SU group was clearly prompting her to consider her faith again as she expressed the desire to go to a church service.

Just recently, in another setting, when I mentioned Scripture Union the eyes of the person I was speaking to lit up. He told me he had come to faith in Christ through SU and was disciplined by that ministry. It was SU that had been instrumental in shaping his faith.

In this issue of SU Global News we will read of lives that have been changed and faith nurtured through the ministries of SU. This is an opportunity in this special



year of celebration to give thanks to God for the many lives impacted as God, by His Spirit, has used SU people for the extension of His Kingdom. Let us pray that SU ministry will continue in the years to come, as it says in our Aims, ‘to be pursued in obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ and in reliance on the Holy Spirit’, so that in years to come we can look back and see how God has been at work in the lives of countless children, youth, and families.

Janet Morgan
SU International Director

A picture paints a thousand words

See a snapshot of our 150th anniversary celebrations around the world on pages 4 & 5.



150 SU Stories

Our first social media campaign started at the end of July – sharing one photo story everyday for 150 days. The photo stories will appear on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter each day, from 31

July to 27 December 2017 and will help show the diverse and exciting way that God is working across Scripture Union all over the world.

Look out for our posts and if you have photos of your ministry activities you would like us to share, send them to us by email to: rachelf@scriptureunion.global

We’ll be using the hashtag: #150Sustories.

Why not follow us on Twitter:

@SUnionglobal and Instagram: scriptureunionglobal

And ‘like’ us on Facebook: Scripture Union International



A Day in the Life of SU

As part of our 150th Anniversary celebrations, we encouraged every Scripture Union movement around the world to record snapshots of their ministry with children and young people on Monday 31 July.

We are collating these together to capture what Scripture Union global ministry looks like in 2017.



Scripture Union Global Assembly

The preparation team for the Global Assembly is excited to see the program coming together.

Some excellent speakers from both inside and outside Scripture Union will be contributing. Please pray for them and ask God to give them wisdom, insight and a prophetic perspective. Our prayer is that God might speak through

them to our hearts individually, as Movements and as a global community.

A number of participants are applying for visas for Malaysia, so we would value prayer that the visa officers are gracious, fair and helpful. In some countries funding is still an issue. Please pray that God will provide the necessary resources. The Assembly is a



great opportunity for all SU Directors, Chairs and key ministry leaders to come together, to listen to God, to celebrate His faithfulness, discuss urgent topics and learn from each other.

We pray that everyone might come with an open heart and mind to make the best use of the time.

Lives changed through Scripture Union

Over the last 150 years, millions of lives have been transformed and thousands of Christian leaders across the world have been nurtured through Scripture Union ministry. Communications Manager for SUI, Rachel Farmer, talked to five people with a long association with SU, about how they became involved with Scripture Union, its impact on their lives and their hopes for the future...



“It was exciting” – Paul Butler

As an 18-year-old about to head off to university, Paul Butler had a phone call that would change his life. He was asked to help with a church holiday club run by Scripture Union evangelist, Dai Lewis.

“My first impression was that it was fun. It was exciting. It was great to be able to share Jesus with children in a way that used arts and craft, drama and games and storytelling... At that time in 1974 holiday clubs were quite revolutionary.”

Later that summer he found himself helping out at a Scripture Union Camp, called Longbarn (pictured above).

He went on to be involved in Longbarn camps for the next 30 years.

Paul Butler, who is now the Bishop of Durham and President of SU England & Wales, believes SU camps play a vital role in developing faith. He said, “One of the things about camps and residential is that you create a temporary community. It is the creation of this temporary community that leads to so many people finding faith and growing and maturing in that context. I think camps and residential are a fabulous way of sharing faith and helping people grow.”

“Discipleship through Scripture Union makes a difference” – Betty Purchase

Betty (pictured below) first heard about Scripture Union when she was working for the American Baptist Churches. Her pastor husband told her, “It’s some old Bible Study group from England.” Betty said, “I’ve learned a lot



and seen SU in action around the world, since then and completely changed my mind. He changed his opinion, also!”

Reflecting on the organisation’s strengths she said, “Discipleship has been of extreme importance to me.”

“One of the appeals of SU was that as a child my parents became followers of Christ and tried to do ‘what was right’, however, no one had ever disciplined them. Scripture Union became the help I needed to focus on our family.”

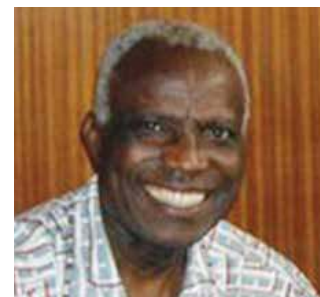


“It still is ‘tuned in to change’” – John Prince

SU author and long-time associate John Prince became a Christian at a Scripture Union camp in 1940 with the Battle of Britain raging overhead.

John served on or led 49 SU missions and his book on the centenary of SU in Australia was called *Tuned in to Change*.

John, now based in Perth, believes SU’s strengths lie in its army of volunteers and he said, “We felt then that SU was truly alive and kicking after 100 years and it still is ‘tuned in to change.’”



“It nurtured me to maturity in the faith” – Emmanuel Oladipo

Former SU International Secretary, Emmanuel, was just 15 years-old when a meeting with SU trainer John Dean steered his life in a different direction.

He believes SU has a vitally important ministry in building up youth and nurturing young believers through a program of Bible study, group meetings and camps. “I came from a Christian home but it was Scripture Union that clarified the basics of the faith for me and nurtured me to maturity in the faith.”

“The friendship, the way people befriended you” – David Blair

David (pictured right, working with SU in Hungary) first encountered Scripture Union through attending an SU camp as a teenager. “What was unique for me, was the friendship, the way people befriended you. I went (back) to the camp the following year and it was there that I really committed my life to Jesus.”

David has been involved with Scripture Union for over 60 years starting as a Schools Worker with Scripture Union England & Wales.



He said, “The great strength of SU over the years is the unique way it has brought together a commitment to Bible engagement, with the vision for reaching children, young people and families. Their Bible engagement resources are vital tools for people around the world.”



150th Anniversary

Celebrations around the world



Canada

Scripture Union Canada had a joint celebration this year as the nation of Canada is also marking its 150th birthday. Part of their anniversary celebrations included praying every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 1.50pm for 150 days.



Ireland

SU Ireland children created 150 for a special photograph and video as they gathered to celebrate at Greystones CSSM Beach Mission.



Honduras

Children and young people at a public school camp joined in the celebrations for SU's big anniversary.



Nigeria

As part of the week-long 150th anniversary celebration there was a joint rally and procession through the city of Calabar and children also joined in a competition to create God is Love messages.

Young people gathered for adventurous activities in Kinshasa as part of the 150-year celebrations in DR Congo.



Uganda

Scripture Union Uganda shared God's Word with students as they celebrated 150 years. Members of an SU Deaf Bible club are pictured taking part.



South Africa

Celebrating Scripture Union 150 years at Muizenberg beach with messages in the sand.



Day of Prayer, 2 June –

On Friday 2 June, friends and supporters of Scripture Union gathered to celebrate and to pray near to the place where the founder of SU, Josiah Spiers, held his first meeting for children and where Scripture Union was born.

The day, organised by Scripture Union England & Wales, included a morning of worship and ministry-themed prayer stations at St Mark's Church, Kennington, followed by three walks of Prayer and Praise across London.

Speaking at the event, SU International Director, Janet Morgan, said, "It is beautiful to see today the ministry of Scripture Union, true to the original vision, but looking so different around the world... On this special day we give thanks and we pray that just as our spiritual pioneers defied the conventions of their day and were faithful to God's calling to ministry with children and young people... we look forward from this day, with confidence and faith as we respond

Celebration events to mark Scripture Union's 150th year have been taking place around the world over the past few months. We can't include everyone's special activities and birthday celebrations in Global News, but below are a few highlights to show the variety of ways that people have decided to mark the year.

For more stories and photos of celebrations, see our anniversary section of the website <https://scriptureunion.global/news/150th-anniversary> or go to our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/scriptureunioninternational/>

France

A 15 day tour of western and southern France, called Anim Tour, was organised by SU France in a joint celebration of SU's 150th and 500 years since the Reformation. The idea was to go back to their roots and to evangelise on the beaches, in hospitals, prisons and churches.



Slovakia

Following in Jesus' footsteps, children at SU Slovakia's Bible camp celebrated by creating 150 from their shoes.

India

Children at a girl's camp in North Chennai decorated the words 'God is Love' in the sand as they gave thanks for God's faithfulness.



Hong Kong

SU Hong Kong marked the anniversary with a special event, which drew some 320 supporters together from all ages. Part of the event included a dramatic presentation of the history of SU using sand painting and drama.



Australia

Campers in SU New South Wales spelt out the message 'God is Love' as they marked the anniversary at a specialist camp, called Worthy 2, for those with high personal care needs.



Fiji

SU Fiji celebrated the 150th at their National Leaders' Training in Suva. Pictured right are the oldest and youngest volunteers cutting the 150th birthday cake.



Pakistan

Children, local church leaders, SU staff and volunteers celebrated and in Lahore there was a children's party.



Sri Lanka

A service of Thanksgiving was held with Church leaders, pastors and supporters. Hearing-impaired children are pictured performing a dance during the service.

celebrating 150 years

with obedience to the movement He called us to all those years ago."

One of the walks went to Islington, where Janet led people on a tour to where the first Scripture Union meetings were held in 1867. The group were able to visit the old school room, now a nursery school, where the first larger meetings of the Children's Special Service Mission (CSSM) were held (pictured). The group had time to pray and reflect on the lives that have been changed from that small beginning.

Two other groups walked and prayed in other London locations. One travelled to Victoria where there are many embassies nearby and prayed for key countries around the world. A third group stayed close to home in Kennington Park praying for local issues such as social justice, young people at risk and sports ministry. Parts of the day were filmed and broadcast live on Facebook and can be viewed here:

<https://www.facebook.com/scriptureunionew/>





Young volunteers join street clean-up in Fiji

A street clean-up rally organised by Scripture Union in Northern Fiji, united young people in helping their community in practical ways.

Scripture Union Fiji's National Director, Nacanieli Tikoduadua explained, "For over 15 years, we have not really had any growing presence on the ground in this part of Fiji. We had Bible study groups in a few schools but nothing concrete or structured."

When a team from the main island went over in May 2016 things began to change as they visited schools and reintroduced SU and its work with young people. "One of the first things we did on that visit was to recruit some teachers and university students as a Schools Working Group to keep the momentum going.," explained Nacanieli.

This new group helped organise a one day clean-up and youth rally in July. The volunteers set up the day with permission from the Town Council, school heads and police department. According to Nacanieli,

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Big Bible Challenge now in Thai language

Children in Thailand can now enjoy *The Big Bible Challenge* in their own language thanks to SU Thailand who have completed the translation into Thai. The website www.thaibigbiblechallenge.com enables parents, Sunday School teachers, children, pastors, and Bible coaches to get the most out of *The Big Bible Challenge*. Bunga Kornvinai, SU Thailand's Chairperson, said, "Workshops have been arranged and well received in Bangkok as well as in North, South and North Eastern regions of Thailand and it is now part of our Train the Trainers Program. We are grateful to God and Scripture Union International for *The Big Bible Challenge* enabling us to take an adventure through God's great story."



'Training of Trainers' grows Bible guide writers

In July, an intensive, dynamic and in-depth training course was held in Kenya, for trainers of writers and editors of Africa's English language Bible guides. Twenty-one participants from 13 nationalities spent 11 days together in this ground-breaking opportunity to come together and learn new insights into ways to use and develop SU materials and train our writers and editors.

Deputy Director of SU Kenya, Daniel Karanu, who attended the training explained, "Although participants were at different levels of experience in terms of writing devotional materials, the training took everyone along at their own pace thanks to the experienced and well organised team of facilitators. The workshop emphasised foundational matters, like our identity as an SU family, as well as looking at hermeneutical and writing skills." SU Rwanda's Family Ministry Coordinator, Ezéchias Ntirenganya, said, "The training was very inspiring. I'm now confident to train other writers and editors."



Faith questions tackled through Irish film

An eight part video series tackling the tough questions of faith like suffering, faith and science, the credibility of the Gospels, the resurrection and the history of the Christian church has been produced by Scripture Union Ireland.

The NUA film series is the first of its kind and took three years to complete. Beautifully filmed in three locations, Ireland, Israel and the USA, the series is ideal for churches, youth groups or university groups. It could be used as a follow up to Christian enquiry courses like Alpha or just to show to friends and discuss. Executive Producer, Jonny Somerville said, "More than anything, NUA is a fresh learning experience. It comes from many years spent with young people, listening to their questions. We set out to help young adults dig deeper as they explore faith and spirituality."

Jonny said, "Our heart is for NUA to be a blessing to all the SU movements. Our friends in SU USA and Canada have begun to start the process of rolling NUA out in their countries. We have

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SU Global Team



Monika Kuschmierz, currently Regional Director for Scripture Union Europe, has been appointed as Scripture Union International's new

International Director. She will take up the role in November, when Janet Morgan, who has held the position since 2004 retires.



Claire Gelder has been appointed as Administrator/ Executive Assistant for the Global Team. Claire will be supporting the International and Operations

Directors and the Global Team with particular support for Community Groups. She has worked for a Christian agency in Japan for 16 years and speaks Japanese. She will be based in the UK.



Annette Osborne has been appointed as a part-time Children's Ministry Consultant with the Global Team. Annette is based in New Zealand and is on the staff of SU

New Zealand a role which she will continue part-time. A former primary school teacher she says her job combines some of her favourite things like the Bible, training and working with children. In her new role she will be developing and sharing resources and training opportunities, as well as networking with children's ministry leaders.



National Movements

Gideon Mbaakaan Chimmin has been appointed as the National Director for the Fellowship

of Christian Students (FCS) in Northern Nigeria. He has many years experience working with FCS and is also the Chairman of the FCS Literature and Publication Board. Gideon's wife Bridget, died in 2010 and he has five children.

Damian Wharton has been appointed as the new General Director of Scripture



Union Northern Ireland. Damian has been involved in Christian ministry for over 20 years. He has worked with the national team for British Youth for

Christ, eventually becoming Director of Mission. He has also been a youth pastor for a church in Worcester and worked for Spring Harvest leading their youth and student ministry.



Metsing Moholane, from Mazenod in Lesotho, has been appointed as Acting National Director for SU Lesotho. Metsing is an experienced youth leader, who

joined SU in 2004 to oversee a team of 10 trendsetters who taught HIV & AIDS Lifeskills in schools. He went on to work in the Youth and High Schools department, which he has led since 2008. He aims to increase the annual number of children reached by at least 20% this year, as well as expand the financial base of the movement. He is married to Thandi and they have one son.



Guillaume Duvieusart is the new Director of LLB Canada (French). Over the past years, he has led the Francophone Sector of the Canadian Bible

Society. Guillaume is a lecturer in theology, an experienced publisher and has extensive business experience. In addition, his pastoral and ministerial journey in Canada and abroad will enable him to approach and serve LLB Canada's Francophone faith community creatively and effectively. His desire is to see LLB Canada become a key player in the field of Bible Engagement.



Christophe Ayiboe Komivi has been appointed to head up Scripture Union Togo. He has served as a volunteer since 2003 in the SU camps where he

has led activities. He also set up a Bible

club in the school where he was working. He has a university degree in English and is married with four children.



Michael Staples has been appointed as CEO of Scripture Union USA. Formerly National Director of Field Ministries, Michael joined SU in 2004. He has more than

25 years experience as a missionary, educator, community development director and volunteer mobiliser. Michael has a doctorate in Leadership and Organisational Development and has served as both a teacher/trainer and as a ministry leader of children and youth throughout Africa, Asia and the US, including a 14 year tenure as a lecturer in a leading Christian university, and as a Chaplain for the US Civil Air Patrol. He aims to draw the team together to help pass on a clear message of hope to children across the US.



Moise Gnouma Tolno has been appointed as the new Director for SU Guinea Conakry. Moise became a Christian in 1992 and has been writing Bible notes,

which has included drafting notes for cadet readers. He took part in the Training of the Trainer sessions run by SU. He has a Master's degree in Cultural Animation and is married with one child.

Other appointments include **Alex Machiya** who is the new Director for SU Zambia.



Farewells

In January, we said farewell to **Mark Brown**, SU USA President. Mark has had a long association with SU. After trusting Christ as a teenager at a

beach mission in Australia, he later served as National Director of SU New Zealand. Mark originally joined SU USA to develop Bible ministries particularly with digital and social media. He is now the CEO of the West Houston Assistance Ministries in Houston, Texas, a Christian organisation that provides food and support for housing, employment, and education.



Consultation on Working with Children with Disability

A Manual and Guidelines on working with children with disabilities is just one of the outcomes from a Consultation on working with children with disabilities, held at the SU campsite, Le Rimlishof, in France in May 2017.

Over the last few years, a number of movements have been extending their ministry so that it intentionally includes families, children and young people with disabilities. Building on this experience and with a vision to extend this work to other SU Movements around the world, nine staff and volunteers from Serbia, Uganda, Canada, Australia (NSW), Estonia, England, India and France came together to share about their wide range of experiences and ministry models, facilitated by Global team

members, Wendy Strachan and Becky Swamickan.

Participant Jan Simmons from the UK said, "Drawn together by the immense passion and dedication for our activities, we very quickly became a cohesive force with common goals and a shared enthusiasm for extending and enhancing the ministry to those with disabilities."

The Manual will offer help and advice for any movement which wants to develop this area of ministry. Jan explained, "The manual will provide a definition of disability, a cultural and biblical perspective, a view of disability through the families' eyes and some guidelines about what to consider and how to begin to plan such a ministry. It will include models of the ministries



already running and sample teaching ideas, team training and registration documents."

The manual will be launched at the Global Assembly in November 2017 where attendees will have the opportunity to attend a breakout session on the topic. A special grant has enabled the Manual to be translated into other languages and any Movements interested in developing this ministry, should email Becky Swamickan (beckys@su-international.org).



Bible Engagement Basics Book

A new book on Bible engagement by Scripture Union Canada's President, Lawson Murray aims to help readers connect with God's Story. Lawson says the aim of *Bible Engagement Basics* is to help people find meaningful encounters with Jesus Christ and to have their lives progressively transformed in Him. Each chapter looks at a different aspect of Bible engagement and provides clear and helpful tips to help a reader read, reflect, remember and respond to God's Word.

Available from: <http://scriptureunion.ca/bookstore-1/books-adults/bible-engagement-basics> and Amazon.

Young volunteers join Fiji street clean-up – from p6

SU Fiji hadn't conducted a major event on this particular island since 1982. He said, "The rally was attended by students from about 11 high schools, several youth groups and we had a team of high school students from New Zealand who joined us for the day."

Last year's visit helped grow the number of students attending the annual camp from five to 32. The hope is that at least 50 young people from the island will attend this year's camp in November, which will also include about 20 young people from Papua New Guinea. An invitation has also been extended to young people from any of the SU movements of the Pacific Islands.

Faith questions tackled through Irish film – from p6

also begun translating NUA into Spanish and French and hope to partner with many other SU's to include many other languages."

NUA is a resource that SU Ireland wants to give freely to all other SUs globally. Johnny hopes to discuss opportunities with people from other movements at the Global Assembly in November.

Trailers of the films can be viewed here:

<https://vimeo.com/nuafilmseries/trailer>

Email Jonny Somerville, the host of NUA, at jonny@scriptureunion.ie for more information



Please pray for these key events...

November

- 6-10 Global Week of Prayer
- 10-14 Global Assembly, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 15-16 Various Community Group meetings, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Giving to Scripture Union

We are grateful for the prayer, financial and other practical support from so many around the world who join us in ministry partnership. If you would like to give a gift to any of the ministries mentioned in this edition of *Global News*, or to any other SU ministry around the world, it is easy to do.

Australia: Scripture Union International Council, BSB: 032-523, Account No: 213677

UK: Scripture Union International Council, Sort Code: 405 240, Account Number: 00006064

From other countries, by credit card, or by other means, please see: www.scriptureunion.global