



Unión Bíblica

Scripture Union International

Ligue pour la Lecture de la Bible

NEWS

June 2009



Global Financial Crisis – a Unique Opportunity?

Partnering in the Pacific – read the article on page 3.

The world is currently in the midst of an economic recession which began in late 2007 and is likely to last all or most of 2009 (some predict longer).

I'm keenly aware that those who live in well-resourced countries like the United States have it easier than many in other parts of the world. But the fact is, all of us are struggling with the impact of declining resources and all of us are being forced to make hard choices.

At Scripture Union USA, for example, we've had to cut programs and staff, mostly because support from charitable foundations has declined. And yet, the current situation gives us some unprecedented opportunities in at least two ways.

First, **as followers of Jesus we have an opportunity to live out our kingdom values in a fresh way.** If my ability to praise God is too closely tied to the ups and downs of the stock market or the economy, what does that say about the nature of my faith? As the world frets over a lack of resources, Christians who can live lives of contentment and joy will stand out and make a powerful statement about the reality of the Good News.

But second, **as participants in the worldwide Scripture Union movement, the eroding economy gives us a unique opportunity to strengthen the work God has called us to do.** In part this will involve 'creative abandonment' of methods and practices that are weak or have passed their viability. When resources are abundant, it's difficult to make tough choices. When resources are scarce, we have no choice but to change. Tough times also free us up to move in new directions. How can the web make us a more effective and efficient ministry? What are some new ways to do Bible engagement and children's outreach? How can we work together as a global Scripture Union movement? Instead of destroying our ministry, financial stress can become the incubator for innovation, with positive effects for years to come.



I don't like struggling with declining resources any more than you do. But I've come to realise that, beneath the turmoil, God's hand just may be at work reshaping my personal priorities and the ministry of Scripture Union for the future.

Whitney Kuniholm
President, Scripture Union USA



Comments on the Global Crisis...

Thank God that the present worldwide crisis is bringing to an end short-term Shareholder values and mentality (wanting more and quicker profit) and restoring the long-term Stakeholder value (feeling responsible for customers, staff and shareholders). This change was not purposely made, nor was it a choice of better ethical behaviour. It was the result of the bankruptcy of greed – of wanting to have more and more and more.

There are six areas where SU should respond to the present crisis...

1. As Europe is no longer a Christian Region, the crisis of lost values has become huge. This is evident in all areas of society and in the collapse of the worldwide economy. But, every crisis is an opportunity. The growing importance of 'values' is a great opportunity for Christians and SU.

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SU International Week of Prayer
1-7 Nov 2009

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From the **International Director**

In this issue of SUI News, we focus on the current financial crises. In recent meetings with leaders of various Bible Agencies there were none whose organisations had not been affected by the downturn. It is at times like this that we pause to reflect. We thank the various leaders of SU Member Movements who have been willing to share their experiences and thoughts about this issue.

Earlier this year I read an article by Gordon MacDonald in *Christianity Today's Leadership Journal* that I found very helpful as I reflected on the impact of the crises on SU. In it he encourages the reader to continue in 'hope'. I take this opportunity to share excerpts from this article and pray you find it and the other articles in this issue helpful in these challenging times.

In times like these, fear (the antithesis of hope) is not far from any of us. It is a fear that can eat away at one's soul and render us powerless to be a source of courage for others...

Hope becomes operational through the daily-refreshed conviction that nothing that happens escapes the gaze of God. Which, of course, births the question: If he is aware of a situation in which so many people and so many organizations are struggling, what are his intentions?

In short, God intends that hopeful people put everything on the table and ask once again: What is at the core of the real Christian gospel that we may have forgotten during the days of prosperity?

Perhaps down the line the economic pressure we face today will let up. If that day comes, one wonders, will we who claim loyalty to Jesus be a better disciplined, a more generous, a more focused, and humbler people? That is my hope.

From the article 'Beyond Pessimism or Optimism'. The full article can be found at: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/currenttrendscolumns/leadershipweekly/beyondpessimismoptimism.html> Gordon MacDonald is editor at large of *Leadership Journal* and Interim President of Denver Seminary



Janet Morgan
International Director, Scripture Union International

Comments on the Global Crisis... from page 1

2. One of the most painful outcomes of the loss of values is unhealthy and egoistic individualism. This is not only a problem for society, but has infiltrated the churches and Christian organisations. There is a danger for SU too, with our individualistic approach to the Bible. How can we better overcome this danger?
3. 'Quick' and 'instant' have become dominant. In German we use the words 'kurzlebig' (short-lived) and 'kurzsichtig' (short-sighted). This can be seen in the area of subscribers, volunteers, donors and camping habits. Rapid change is 'in'. What is in demand today is not interesting tomorrow. This is a big challenge for SU. We have to be flexible. Does what we offer meet the needs of our customers, or simply meet our own needs and convictions?
4. Volunteers do not automatically stay with us until the end of their lives. This means that we have to increase our efforts in training and offering attractive options for volunteers. They have to know what they get out of it.
5. Older donors are dying. How about finding younger donors? Should our approach regularly change?
6. Last but not least! Being short on money is difficult and painful, but it is also a chance to cooperate more, within the SU family, and with churches and other Christian organisations. I am convinced that there are many more possibilities in this area.

Peter Hoppler
Regional Director, Europe Region

SU Victoria sees both opportunities and threats in the global financial crisis. A key strategy is to diversify our revenue base. We have been heavily dependent on donations which we are committed to growing. However, it is difficult to grow the movement's work on donation income alone. We are developing a strong enterprise-based camping ministry, aiming to almost fully fund our camping programs from participant fees. We are also developing partnership ministries which are almost entirely funded at start up. All of this sounds very businesslike, but over it all is a real and strong sense that God will see us through. We have learnt to make a 'sacrifice of praise' (praising God when it's tough), which helps us remember that God is in charge, which gives us peace and perspective.

Dave Tolputt, Director, Scripture Union Victoria, Australia

If we believe that God has promised to supply our needs, we should prayerfully be: continuing to make our needs known, telling even more widely the story of God's work through **Scripture Union**; prioritising so that money is spent on activities we believe God is leading us into; remembering we are essentially a volunteer movement; recognising not everything we do is really necessary – perhaps just custom; and finding new ways to do old things.

David McCracken, Regional Treasurer, Britain & Ireland Region

SU in England and Wales has been asking, 'What does dependence on God look like in the midst of the recession?' We are keen to remain faithful to God because we know he is faithful to us. That means avoiding on the one hand being fearful, worrying about how we will close the substantial funding gap for our ministry; and on the other hand ensuring that we are not foolish, by failing to take appropriate action. We have increased our focus on prayer and have frozen some vacancies. We are trying to take carefully considered steps rather than having a knee-jerk reaction. We are prayerfully seeking God's leading step by step of the way.

Keith Cival, Chief Executive, SU England and Wales

During 2008 the world experienced the economic tsunami and many other terrible disasters, both natural and man-made. However, for **Hong Kong Scripture Union**, 2008 was a blessed year. Christians seem to have awakened from their deep spiritual sleep and have started to turn back to God. Our 2008 Annual Report may reflect this spiritual comeback.

Lucia Cheung, General Secretary, SU Hong Kong

A Partner is a Person...

Joint Ventures in the Pacific Region

Scripture Union's Pacific Region has a lot of ocean, a lot of islands, scattered people and unevenly-spread resources. Different people...same goals.

About 12 years ago, the Pacific Coordinator hatched a scheme for deliberate and structured partnerships between pairs of SU movements within the Region. Each movement would have a recognised partner in the Region, sharing resources and encouragement based on principles of mutuality, deliberateness, inter-dependence and two-way respect.

There was no shortage of problems of course:

- fears that economically richer people might be exploited by others seeing them as funding opportunities
- the balancing fear that economically poorer people might be patronised, imperialised or simply bullied
- the difficulty of busy people knowing and understanding others a long way away, whose world is very different
- communication is tricky
 - telecommunications are not always reliable, travel is expensive and difficult
- cultural nuances are easily misunderstood

The present Pacific Islands Coordinator, Sam Emery, has made a deliberate commitment to strengthening the partnership links.

Sam is well placed to do this, as a New Zealand Maori with extensive personal experience in the Pacific Islands, and finely attuned to the dangers of paternalism. He also sees clearly the benefits of people learning how to receive, and to give.

There has been progress. In addition to the stories in this issue, SU Victoria and Tasmania are planning to assist Solomon Islands through active participation, practical assistance, and funding, for the next year's HIV project. Tongans have been to New Zealand, and New Zealanders to Tonga, Queensland has actively assisted Papua New Guinea.

The fears that 'they' might not be sufficiently accountable or look after things properly, or that 'they' might make us conform to their standards and seek to control us, are best met by personal contact and developing trust. Sam Emery and Clayton Fergie (SUI Youth Ministry Coordinator) took a DVD to the Australian State Directors conference and greatly boosted the Directors' understanding of the possibilities for partnership.

It is still a work in progress. 'It is not plain sailing,' said Clayton Fergie. 'But I think the ball is rolling.'

Ken Edgecombe
Regional Chairman, Pacific Region

I was invited to the Pacific Region Conference in 1995 and fell in love with Vanuatu. By 2004 God was stirring me to consider what I was doing to redevelop the SU Vanuatu campsite. By 2007, after a lot of hard work by 40 volunteers and +AUD\$100K, the campsite had an official re-opening. What has emerged is a strong partnership between SU NSW and SU Vanuatu, with three annual SU NSW student mission trips, including 'Schoolies in Vanuatu' (a special holiday activity), plus countless local lives enriched and a reliable income stream for SU Vanuatu. We have much to praise God for!



Glenn Coombs,
CEO, Scripture Union NSW

Pijin Sunday School materials for the Solomon Islands

In July 2008, the Solomon Islands Pijin Bible was launched – the first significant document available in this language spoken by over 375,000 people. Wendy Rayner of SU South Australia is partnering with some Pijin-speaking Wycliffe/SIL workers, and Jon and Lyndell Paschke from SU Vanuatu. Together they are producing a year-long Sunday School curriculum, translated from the original books developed in Bislama (spoken in Vanuatu) into Solomons Pijin. Utilising local materials (e.g. fruit, shells, sand-drawing, basket-weaving), the lessons were developed by islanders for use in villages without access to western art and craft materials. These will be the first SU materials available in Solomons Pijin for children's ministry.

Wendy Rayner, SU South Australia



Wendy Rayner reading in Esia

Partnership Stories

Partnership Stories

SU South Australia's State Director, Mark Schultz, visited SU Fiji in early April 2009. The emphasis was on relationship rather than program. Some practical outcomes are also emerging: regular communication about celebration and prayer needs; developing SU Fiji's financial strategies and office equipment; mutual field trips for ministry and training; potential campsite development; and website development. Despite different locations and cultures, we share a mission. Our partnership will strengthen and grow each other's ministry.



Sisa, Sam, Mark and Chinese Church CF Team

Partnership Stories



AFRICA REGION

FCS Holds HVCT Workshop

The World Health Organisation website states that 'Testing for HIV infection has several potential benefits: from promoting prevention to improving access to care and prevention of mother-to-child-transmission', but notes that 'HIV testing should always be voluntary, conducted by trained staff with respect for privacy and confidentiality, and include pre- and post-test counselling'.

A seven-day workshop attended by 35 field staff on HIV Voluntary Counselling and Testing (HVCT) was held by the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) at the National Headquarters in Jos from 26 February to 4 March 2009. The workshop aimed to build staff knowledge and skills, to encourage them to establish HVCT centres in field offices and to train others.

The practice of Rapid Testing of HIV/AIDS was one of the major activities during the workshop. Testing kits and other materials were provided. The participants practised testing following standard operational procedures. Some participants were torn between fear, anxiety, curiosity and excitement. The training ended with prayer and participants committing to put into practice all they had learnt.

Some Christian organisations are actively encouraging people to go for voluntary testing as part of seeking to break the stigma of HIV.

Efe Omorebokhae, Media Officer, FCS



AMERICAS REGION

Scripture Union in Haiti

In early 2008, a Haitian pastor, Pastor Galilee Perilus, expressed interest in SU in Haiti. LLB (SU) Canada (French speaking) took up the challenge and began to explore possibilities with another Canadian Christian organisation. La Ligue pour la lecture de la Bible-Haiti (LLB Haiti) has now been officially registered, with a board of directors made up of local pastors and Haitian Christians.

Despite the challenges of unreliable transport services between Canada and Haiti, SU friends travelling to Haiti have managed to get French language SU Bible reading guides to LLB Haiti.

Pastor Galilee and others are visiting churches and meeting with pastors to present SU ministries. He has also started an evangelisation program in schools and training seminars for church leaders.



There is rapidly growing interest in SU ministry, hindered only by the lack of French language Bible reading material. Regular radio broadcasts may also be possible if financial resources become available.

Pastor Perilus has asked for prayer for reliable transport of French language bible reading guides from Canada to Haiti; finance for the development of LLB Haiti; God's direction for the future; and more volunteers to join LLB Haiti.

EAST WEST ASIA REGION

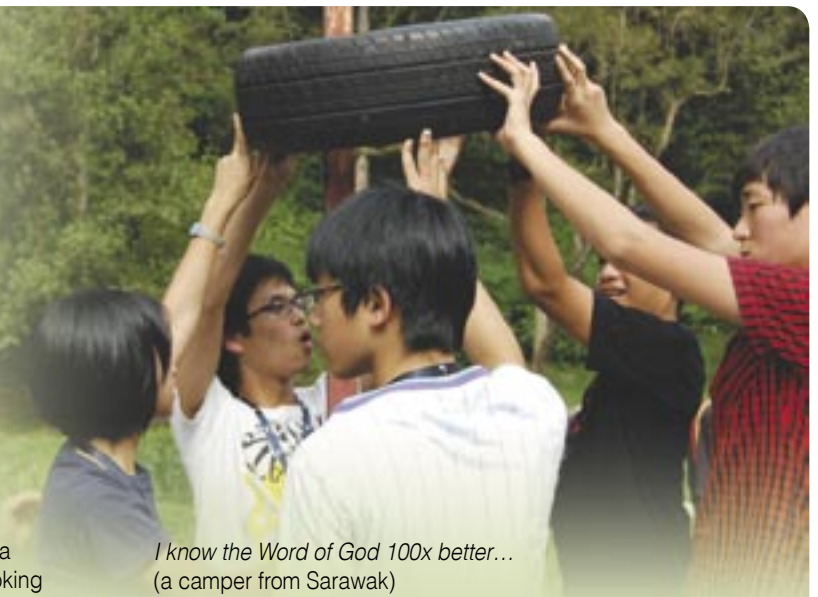
Many Faces One Function – 2008 International Students Camp

Planning for Many Faces One Function began in November 2007. D-day was 26 December 2008. Close to 50 students from Korea and Japan, and their leaders, landed at Kuala Lumpur International Airport in the wee hours of the morning. The blurry-eyed youths were huddled into two buses for a three-hour journey to the SUFES Campsite. Over the day campers from more than 10 other nations trickled in. One very special group, 11 local youths from Peninsular Malaysia, arrived. By the evening opening session, 130 campers in colorful national costumes had gathered.

There were three main components of the event. The main camp aimed to challenge the campers in mission and Christian ministry. The learning times were complemented by a host of exciting activities - simulation games, jungle crafts, cooking sessions and worship services in village churches.

Campers were transported to a nearby town, Ipoh, for 'homestay'. They also visited a centre for the physically and mentally challenged. The final component was a Youth Carnival and Rally. More than 200 young people from the town braved the rain to join us. There were a dozen positive responses to a gospel challenge made at the rally.

We thank the Lord for a wonderful International Students Camp!



I know the Word of God 100x better...
(a camper from Sarawak)

This camp made me know I am not a hot Christian and how small I am. I feel the greatness of God...
(a camper from Japan)

Through the home stay, I learned to give unsparingly. The family in which I stayed was so good to me. They gave me what they have gladly. I live in Japan, but I never give. I felt pain in my heart!
(a camper from Japan)

SOUTH ASIA REGION

Vacation Bible School – Jiri, Nepal, October 2008

About 200km east of Kathmandu, Jiri is the gateway to Mt Everest. There are hundreds of churches in this area, but discipleship and sound teaching has become very urgent. Much is done for adults, but little to teach children about the Bible.

The Vacation Bible School (VBS) camp was attended by 220 children and 30 teachers. Most of the children walked a whole day, many travelled for two days, and one group walked three full days to the camp.

The children were very excited to learn from the Bible. One girl said, *I was able to learn the word of God deeply. I was able to see God very closely. My life after this will be totally different from what it was before. I will be fully committed to God and His work.* A boy from Intermediate class said, *My life will not be the same again. I will teach my mother, friends and neighbours the word of God that I learned here.*

One volunteer teacher said, *I came to know the Lord more closely. Before I came here I was not able to teach the children properly but now I am able to learn and teach the children too.*

We like to express our heartfelt thanks to those made the camp financially possible. We also thank Himalayan United Christian Fellowship Nepal who helped advertise the camp and prepare the venue, and the Jiri Shalom Church who helped buy and prepare food. We give all glory and honour to our Lord Jesus who led us to reach so many children and adults with his love and words.

Dhruba Nepal, General Secretary, Scripture Union Nepal



EUROPE REGION

SU Serbia

In January 2008 a club for young people with disabilities began in Vrsac, with 15 teenagers attending every Tuesday. Holiday clubs for the teenagers and their friends are organised at the lake near our city, and we also participated in the Sport Fishing Competition for Disabilities. We provide archery training and one of the young people won two medals at the sports competition of Serbia in March.

Working with these children has made us realise how little they have. We invited them to attend the SU conference in March in a local Baptist church, and they came with their parents. We focused on taking responsibility for our choices, as David and Joseph did in the Old Testament.

We would like to teach them more about Jesus and we dream about an SU camp for young people with disabilities. SU volunteers from Vrsac are very eager to help realise this vision.

Please pray... that God would continue to work in and through us; that God will reveal his will for us; that there will be financial support for each participant; that future outreach and ministries will be a blessing to the communities we work with.

Olga Dega, Director SU Serbia



FORMER SOVIET REPUBLICS AND ISRAEL

Pirates and Police

'Treasure Island' was the theme of four SU camps in Tajikistan last summer. The camps were held in a mountain valley in a national park. The location was idyllic, with a cool river and fresh mountain air. However, everything had to be brought to the site in a 4x4 vehicle, while the campers had a 6 km walk from the nearest tarmac road, and the facilities were very basic. So SU is planning to develop permanent facilities on a piece of land that has been bought in a more accessible place.

The campers were the crew on the good ship 'Rainbow' and had many adventures, including raids by pirates and police. With the help of a map of the island showing where the treasure was hidden they dug up two chests – one full of sweets and one containing a Bible, the greatest treasure of all. The pirate raid was part of the plan, but the police raid was a rather unpleasant surprise during the second camp. The local police thought that the camp shouldn't be there and wanted to close it down – even though all the necessary permission had been received in advance.

Tajikistan is traditionally a nation where another religion is dominant and most of the campers come from families of this faith. While respecting their beliefs, team members rejoice at the changes in young people's lives.

Please pray for them as they continue to think about their relationship with God. Please pray also for wisdom and sensitivity for the team as they lead weekly activities. Thank God with us for the piece of land that has been bought to use as a permanent campsite and pray that activities can be run there without problems from the authorities.



Exploring Cooperative Publishing in SU...

In June 2009, SU International will bring together a small group of people to begin the process of exploring possible areas of cooperation in SU publishing.

Following an informal meeting at LSDC in November 2008, participants felt there was significant opportunity for a new cooperative approach to publishing within the SU global community, particularly in the light of increasing ministry delivery via the internet and the wider availability of technology.

Over the years there has been increasing concern about: the fragmentation of publishing processes; the lack of an information portal; limited availability of some publications; the need to build technological capacity in Movements dependent on print; and lack of global strategic development.

At the initial meeting, participants will begin to: identify areas of potential collaboration; consider an approach to building a global profile of SU publishing; address issues that exist; and identify future opportunities.

We pray that this initial meeting will capture the energy that currently exists and achieve a first step toward collaboration for the benefit of SU ministry – a collaboration that makes the best use of the resources God gives us.



SU International Week of Prayer
Sunday 1st — Saturday 7th November 2009
Join with the worldwide community of Scripture Union in this special week of prayer. Prayer guide, presentation and sermon outline will be available from www.su-international.org

New Bible Engagement Research from Scripture Union USA

Ever since Annie Marston first established Bible reading groups in England, Bible engagement has been a central part of Scripture Union's ministry.

Over 130 years later, Bible engagement has become a hot topic among Christian researchers. Over the past few years, Scripture Union USA has completed two studies in an effort to sharpen the effectiveness of their Bible ministry.

The first study, conducted in partnership with the American Bible Society, had two main components: an analysis of behavioural research on habit formation; and marketing research on the Bible reading habits of Americans. The two most interesting findings were:

- **Un-Satisfieds** 39% of Americans (82 million people) are 'unsatisfied, infrequent Bible readers'. That is, they expressed a strong desire to engage more with God's Word.
- **Habit-formation** Analysis of behavioral research from other habit-formation industries (dieting, exercise, smoking cessation) provided a new paradigm for helping infrequent and non-Bible readers to form a satisfying Bible reading habit.

In the second study, The Barna Group, the premier religious research organisation in the US, conducted an outcomes study of

The Essential 100 Challenge program (an SU USA program that enables entire church congregations to read through 50 Old Testament and 50 New Testament passages together over a 20 week period). Data was collected from both pastors and participants. The highlights were:

- **Pastors** Over 90% said The E100 did an 'excellent' job of helping their congregants 'get a good overview of the Bible'. 80% said the program was 'excellent' at 'making reading the Bible a regular habit' among their congregants. 75% said The E100 was 'excellent' at helping people to 'better understand the Bible', 'improve their relationship with 'God' and 'increase the frequency of their Bible reading'.

- **Participants** 66% said they completed E100. People engaged with the Challenge for an average of 24 weeks. Almost 75% said their participation had increased their desire to read the Bible more consistently. About 75% said their participation had increased their interest in growing in the Christian faith.

The outcomes of the study were shared at the recent Forum of Bible Agencies meeting of the Scripture Engagement Group. We are grateful for this opportunity to learn from the experience of SU USA.

(For more information on The Essential 100 Challenge, go to www.E100Challenge.com.)



Shaping for Service

For a number of years the Leading Staff Development Course has provided professional development to National Directors and senior SU leaders. Is it time for the Global Training Strategy to impact the more 'grassroots' levels of SU?

In November, in Nairobi, SU International will partner with Scripture Union Africa to conduct a pilot of *Shaping for Service*: a 5 day training program for SU practitioners. The course focuses on 4 themes: Rethinking God's Word and Mission; Rethinking Scripture Union; Rethinking Ourselves; and Rethinking Leadership

It will be a time to stretch our thinking, challenge our attitudes, learn new skills, assess our effectiveness, enjoy fellowship and fun – but most importantly, listen to God together.

The pilot will be accompanied by a Trainer of Trainers Course (2 days before and after the Sfs Course) to equip some of our most experienced African staff to adapt and implement the program in their national movements and beyond in 2010.

Wendy Strachan
International Children's Ministries Coordinator



**New Regional Director
South Asia Region**

Ravi Navaratnam

Chairman, South Asia Region

Ravi Navaratnam was inducted in Colombo on 24 January as SU South Asia Region Director. Ravi has been on staff with Ceylon Bible Society since 1994, most recently as Head of the Department of Communication. He has also been volunteer Chairperson of the SU South Asia Region since 2005.



**New National Directors
Africa Region**

Mrs Felicidade Chirinda

National Director, SU Mozambique

Mrs Felicidade Chirinda, an ordained minister with the Presbyterian Church, was appointed in February 2009. She is excited to work with SU because of her passion to read the Bible contextually, and to work with children and young people, especially in regard to HIV and AIDS.

Europe Region

Cristi Maritan

National Leader
SU Romania



Cristi Maritan has worked for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in Romania, and has been involved in organising camps and social activities. He is keen that Romanian children and young people learn about the Word of God through SU camps and regional conferences.

Kirsi Smeds

National Leader
SU Finland



Kirsi Smeds has been working with SU Finland since 2004. Before her

appointment as National Leader, she served as the editor for adult notes. Kirsi and his husband Sakari have two children. Kirsi is very thankful for many good Bible teachers in Finland and wants to focus on developing Bible work with young people.

Jean-Pierre Frère

National Leader
SU Belgium



Jean-Pierre has worked in printing and with Focus on the Family. Since the late '80s he and his wife have been part of an SU Belgian team ministering to families. Jean-Pierre's immediate goal is to visit churches to make SU's ministry known. He also wants to make contact with the Dutch speaking part of Belgium (Flanders).



South Asia Region

Rev. Pankaj Kumar Sahu

National Director, Scripture Union India

Rev. Pankaj Kumar Sahu was inducted on 30 January at Chennai as the new National Director for SU India. He has been working with SU India since 1975 and takes over from Stephen Abraham. Pankaj and his wife Kabita have two sons, Suman and Sujjan.

Condolences

Misha Logachev

We were saddened to hear of the sudden death in early January of Misha Logachev, leader of the Moscow SU team. Misha was an integral part of development of SU ministry in Moscow and he will greatly missed by SU colleagues and friends. Our prayers are with his wife, Lena, and their 3 children.



Augustine Faruara

The late Augustine Faruara served SU Solomon Islands for a total of 14 years, joining National Council in 1994, appointed Vice-Chairman in 1995 and Chairman in 2003. Augustine resigned in July 2008 due to poor health. He was a very humble and dedicated leader who has contributed much to the development of SU, particularly in the troubled years 1999 to 2003. Heartfelt condolences are extended to his wife Betty, and his children and grandchildren.



**SU International
changes in staffing**

In the next twelve months SU International will be seeking to make several staff appointments.

**Leadership Development/Bible
Ministries Coordinator**

Due to Pauline Hoggarth's retirement in November 2009, we will be seeking to appoint a person to coordinate Leadership Development and Bible Ministries. This new combined role will fill the training needs related to the Global Training Strategy – 'Equipping for Service'.

**Business & Development
Manager**

We will be seeking to appoint a new person for this role as Ross Henshaw leaves SUI staff at the beginning of 2010.

**Communications and Fund
Development Officer**

A new role is being created in SUI in response to growing communications and fund development demands. Initially, this new staff position will be part-time.

More information about the roles, responsibilities and process for appointment will be sent through the Regional Directors in the next 8 months.



**'Leaders On The Go' Conference,
Australia, May 2009**

This conference, for leaders of leaders in children and family ministries, was first designed ten years ago by current and past SU staff. It continues to reflect the values of the SU movement and to draw on the expertise of current and past SU staff and volunteers. The full SU NZ team participated alongside SUI staff, Australian SU staff, volunteers and other committed children and families workers.

June

SUI: ExCo, Team/ExCo & International Team Meetings (8–12)

Africa: National Director Conference (21–27)

July

Africa: Leadership Training in Jos, Nigeria (28 July – 1 August)

August

Pacific: SUA General Assembly (21–23)

September

SUI: ExCo, Team/ExCo & International Team Meetings (21–25)

October

Britain & Ireland: General Directors' Meeting, Luton (13)

Africa: Regional Team Meeting, Nairobi (21–24)

Africa: Regional Executive Committee Meeting, Nairobi (25–28)

November

East/West Asia: Camping Ministry training and consultation in Peninsula Malaysia (4–9)

Americas: Regional Leadership Meeting (6–9)

East/West Asia: Camping Ministry training for the public in the Philippines (11–13)

Europe/B+I: New Staff Training Course, Marienheide, Germany (10–14)

SUI: Shaping for Service pilot, Nairobi (13–23)

www.su-international.org

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BRITAIN AND IRELAND REGION



Ovoca Manor – ‘Investing in the Next Generation’

Ovoca Manor is situated in 17 acres of woodland overlooking the beautiful Vale of Avoca in Co Wicklow. The property was purchased in 1938 by Mr and Mrs Jack Densmore who established a trust which states that the *property should always be used for the spiritual and moral improvement of young people.*

In 1978 the Trust offered the Manor to Scripture Union for £1 on a 21 year lease. Over the next 25 years, through the sacrificial giving of many SU supporters, and the dedication of the Centre Manager Herbert Harper and his wife Jean, and many thousands of volunteers, Ovoca Manor is now a vibrant facility. It has a host of outdoor activities and is used by SU Camps, church and youth groups almost every weekend of the year.

God has done amazing things in the lives of thousands of children, young people and families through Adventure Club camps for Primary Schools, Family Week Camps, Special Needs and mid-week retreats. Many have shared how their faith in Christ was started or nurtured during their time at Ovoca Manor, some in dramatic life changing ways.

In 2009 two milestone events occurred. Herbert and Jean Harper retired after 26 years of dedicated service, and Nathan and Fiona Norris and their two children, Harry and Kate, arrived in the Manor. We thank our sister movement, SU England and Wales, which released Nathan to be the new Centre Manager.

Ovoca Manor is a special place to connect with our Creator and encounter the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to ensure that the next generation of young people and children can share the same experience, so we have embarked on an ambitious €1.5 million euro Extension Project. God has already proven faithful in providing over €400,000 towards this cost.

Please pray that the Lord would meet all our needs and that the work begins in the next 1-2 years. Pray especially for the staff and volunteers, and that the many thousands of young people who come to Ovoca Manor encounter the Risen Christ.

Jim Donnan, General Director, SU Irish Republic

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Partnership Stories

Vorzel Bible Forum

The snow at the Open Bible (Scripture Union Ukraine) camp at Vorzel was melting as 20 delegates met for a Bible Forum in March. Delegates came from Britain, Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Latvia and Ukraine.

Andrei Cherniak, Former Soviet Republics (FSR) Coordinator, led the forum with Pauline Hoggarth, International Bible Ministries Coordinator, providing the main input. A key purpose was to help staff and volunteers to think about the state of Bible engagement in their overall ministry.

Pauline introduced the theme, examining the current situation in Church and Society regarding the Bible, using well chosen case studies to earth our thinking. Her three morning Bible reflection times, together with Andrei's evening *lectio divina* sessions, ensured that we didn't just talk *about* the Bible.

This provided more than enough stimulus for the brainstorming sessions where we thought creatively about ways in which the Bible can become more central to our ministry in the FSR. With so many exciting ideas proposed, the challenge now is to find ways of implementing the most important – a task taken up at the April FSR Staff Conference.

Emlyn Williams, Regional Director, Britain and Ireland Region

