

The History of the ADRA Appeal:

In 1913 hundreds of British Seventh-day Adventists took to the streets to collect for World-Wide Advent Missions for the first time. They took magazines such as *The Watchman*, which produced a special 'Harvest Ingathering' edition, and offered them to people in return for a donation. Harvest Ingathering was started by Jasper Wayne in Iowa, USA. In 1903 he mistakenly received a double order of some denominational literature, and started distributing it in return for funds for missions. The response was favourable, so he shared his idea with the president of the Nebraska Conference.

In 1908 the General Conference recommended that all churches adopt the programme called 'Harvest Ingathering'. The money raised went mainly to global mission work: sending missionaries to places unreached by Christianity; building churches, schools, hospitals and orphanages, as well as community programmes within the donor countries. In 100 years of Ingathering, hundreds of millions of pounds have been raised towards expanding the evangelistic and humanitarian work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world.

Ingathering: The Early Years

During the early years of Harvest Ingathering just a few hundred pounds were raised, but within ten years this increased rapidly, and annual targets of around £2,000 were set to the British Union Conference.

1924 Harvest Ingathering Appeal

'If we had more money, we [would] have missionaries we could send out who would do faithful work. Large sections of Africa have never even heard of Christ. We must send them this Gospel message. The same is true of other parts of this Division. We are greatly in need of more mission funds during the last months of 1924. We thank our brethren for what they have done and we hope that their gifts may increase yet more.'

The Missionary Worker, 1924.

Collecting for missions was not unusual. Other missionary societies had been doing so for many years, so people were not unfamiliar with the request to support foreign missions.

1932 – an Ingathering Account

'Students from Newbold unknowingly worked some territory in London that had already been worked by one of our churches, [members of which] had called it "bad" territory. Yet one student gathered well over £4 per day for several days there! His card showed good donations from a Mother Superior, and from a Christian Scientist, while a hospital matron collected £14 from her staff! Is any territory ever "finished", and is any courage ever unrewarded?'

The Missionary Worker, 1931. (In 1931, an individual target of £2 was set.)

1933 – an Ingathering Account

'We decide to work the shops in Barnsley. I enter a gentleman's outfitters and approach the gentleman in a "half-crown" way to the best of my ability. He replies, "Sorry, I can't afford a penny, things are pretty bad here." I keep on smiling, and at last he says, "Of course you don't believe me, and doubtless you think I am not interested in religious things, but I am very interested in the book of Revelation. Last Thursday, I went over to Manchester and searched the second-hand book shops for something to help me understand that wonderful book. Do you know," he said, "I get up at five o'clock in the morning before the children awake and study that book." 'What do you think happened? Why, of course, I sold him a copy of Daniel and the Revelation, and also got a shilling for Ingathering. A few minutes before that he had stated he couldn't afford a penny.'

E. E. Craven, The Missionary Worker, 1933.

Harvest Ingathering used to go on for months at a time, but in 1942 they started reducing the time for Ingathering reporting, 'having only seven weeks to do the work'.

1944 – Ingathering during the War

'At the present time we estimate that about 2,000 of our members are within the "flying bomb area" and many of them have suffered severe damage to their homes. However, in spite of the upsetting

influence of these wartime conditions, our work has been pressed forward with faith and vigour. It is fully expected that 1944 will close with a record income for home and overseas work.'
British Advent Messenger, 1944.

In 1961, 277 church members raised over £76,000 for missions.

1966 – Ingathering is rewarding

'Ingathering can be fun, interesting, and very rewarding. What has changed my attitude from that of my previous dread of meeting the people? Just that people have been so willing.

'Instead of thinking only of the needy people we are helping, I became interested in the givers, and found a diversity of individuality at each knock of the door.

'In a short period I met the following: a dear old lady of 86 with a wealth of wisdom and sweetness who couldn't open her purse because of arthritic joints; needless to say I found her an easier purse, an old one, but received with such gratitude! She is now on my visiting list. 'Next, two little girls playing by themselves at dressing up. I suggested they could be King and Queen dispensing gifts to poor subjects who needed help. They responded with pennies from their money box and played even "happier" after.

'A commercial traveller had never given to charity and never would: "So much money goes on administration." We talked and I showed him my auditor's account. He was impressed and gave. I laughingly told him I had indeed won a victory. "But only on your balance sheet," he said!

'And so on, every knock an adventure and still two more weeks of fun and work. With the love of God and our neighbours in our hearts, surely we receive great blessings.'
Public Relations secretary, Wood Green Church.

In 1963, the fiftieth anniversary of Ingathering, over £80,000 was collected.

By 1980, a cumulative total of over \$289 million had been collected globally.

In 2002, after decades of collecting for the charity World-Wide Advent Missions (WWAM), the members of the British Union Conference started collecting for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency – ADRA-UK. This was essentially an organisational change, as much of the money raised for WWAM in the previous years was already delivering projects through ADRA.
Messenger, 2002.

In recent years' members and churches have become more creative in their fundraising, and wonderful events such as fun runs, concerts and sponsored bike rides take place each year. However, for the past six years' funds have hovered around the £600,000 mark. While it sounds like a lot, it works out at around £20 per member, and due to inflation the actual value of this money has decreased. *Imagine if every member raised £50 this year! We have a wonderful history of fundraising behind us; let's ensure it continues, either through door-to-door collecting or through other fundraising activities. Whatever you do, please don't 'do nothing'. The money you raise **does** make a difference.*
The Messenger, March 2013 – special ADRA edition 100 years collecting for people in need