

# S\*ParkLife 12

(Aka Lockdown News 29)

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Stanborough Park Church Newsletter:  
December, 2022

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## ❖ RECORD-BREAKING NUMBER OF DONATIONS FOR TOY SERVICE

Christmas at Stanborough Park Church wouldn't be Christmas without the Annual Toy Service which begins our seasonal celebrations. This year, the 61<sup>st</sup> service, was held on 10<sup>th</sup> December and saw the **greatest number of donated items ever** according to Audrey Balderstone. So thanks to the generosity of church members and their friends we were able to provide even more toys and games for the children of families in the local area who are experiencing severe hardship this year.



According to representatives of local charities and school family support workers who attended the service - and were to be found selecting toys for their clients from the display after the service - the toys they took away would be gratefully received by families on their caseload who were otherwise unable to afford presents for their children and give them the sort of Christmas that would be enjoyed by their peers. After they left, the remaining toys and games with toiletries packs for mums were gathered together and delivered by Pat during the following week to benefiting charities and Children's Centres in the area in time for distribution before Christmas.



The service was founded by the late Alf Kelly MBE, who was dubbed 'Watford's Father Christmas' by the Watford Observer many years ago, and has continued without interruption ever since. Most of the toys were arranged at the front of the church the previous afternoon by Audrey Balderstone, displaying her customary artistic flair, and her team but during the service even more toys were placed in waiting sacks by the children in the congregation.



After Mr. Kelly's death this annual tradition was continued by Pat Walton, his daughter, who also runs our highly-regarded and well-patronised Welfare Service. Although Mr. Kelly used to deliver many of the toys personally, child protection rules and confidentiality mean that all must be handed over to local charities

and social workers to pass to their fortunate recipients. This included special bags prepared for mums, dads and other adults.

Advertising the event began early this year through the bulletin and 'S\*ParkLife'. The response was phenomenal with organisers saying that there were more toys donated than ever before! It was also lovely to see the church almost full to capacity again after the disruption caused by Covid closures. By the end of the following week there were 256 recorded viewings of the service through the Livestream broadcast on the church web site with more on the church's YouTube channel.



Attending the service was the Elected Mayor of Watford, Peter Taylor, who accepted the toys on behalf of the people of the town continuing the long-standing tradition of the Mayor (or Chair of the Council) attending the service. He has been attending the service since his election. A practising Christian himself he regards the service as a highlight of his year and in his acceptance speech told a couple of stories against himself including the time during a visit to a local school when some children mistook him for Boris Johnson - despite there being no physical resemblance!

During the service the children and young people played an active part. The Youth Orchestra accompanied congregational singing and played during the time when children brought their gifts to place in the sacks at the front of the church. Other musical items were provided by hand bell and hand chime ensembles and there were songs provided by Lydia Simplicio's young choir and Sang Bin Jung's Junior Choir.

Pastor Audrey Andersson delivered the sermon, drawing our attention to the fact that with the busyness and stress of organising Christmas it is easy to forget its real meaning. She reminded us of this in a novel way by reading J. B. Phillip's fable 'The Visited Planet' where an experienced angel takes an apprentice on a tour of the universe explaining the uniqueness of Earth, the planet where Jesus made His home for a season - and a reason.



One person to be found looking through the donated toys after the service was Tim Whittaker from the Watford and Three Rivers Refugee Partnership. He has been coming every year for some time and explained that his charity caters for 100 families with 80% of them having two children or more. Many of them are struggling to cope, he said, especially those with no access to public funding. The aim is to give them 'a little something just to keep them going'. Although his charity receives toys from two other local churches at Christmas 'the lion's share', he says, comes from Stanborough Park Church.



Also to be found sifting through the gifts were two family support workers from local schools, both of whom asserted that the toys they took away would make an 'incredible' difference to the families they dealt with and would bring 'smiles to children's faces' this Christmas. One of them, who works with a North Watford School, is a regular caller at the church's Welfare Centre and described organiser Pat as 'a wonderful human being who is always available and a pleasure to work with.'



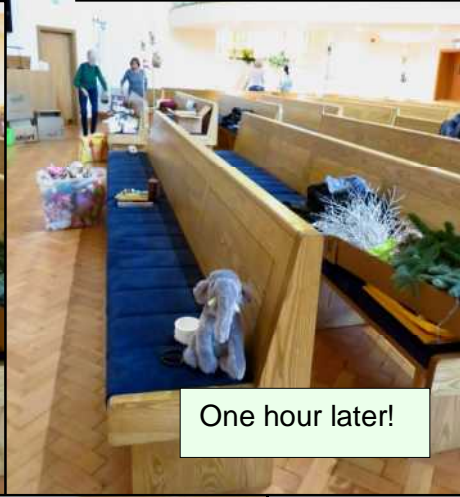
Toy Services links:

Photos: [https://stanboroughpark.adventistchurch.org.uk/photo\\_albums/4934](https://stanboroughpark.adventistchurch.org.uk/photo_albums/4934)

To read 'The Visited Planet': <https://ted.adventist.org/images/stewardship/The-Visit.pdf>

❖ **A PEEK BEHIND THE SCENES**

We only see the impressive finished product but just what goes on behind the scenes? After decades of covering the service for the media the editor set off to find out, trying hard not to hinder progress! Pat and Norah busy sorting, Michele and Farozia tackling the floral displays and Audrey dealing with the main display – and the editor performing vacuum cleaner duties! Have you ever wondered how those display ‘steps’ are created? Now you can find out the hidden secrets!



**Job done for another year - after 5+ hours of hard work!**

❖ DECEMBER'S FELLOWSHIP LUNCH



## ❖ INTRODUCING THE FELLOWSHIP LUNCH TEAM

December's Fellowship Lunch was held on 5<sup>th</sup> December. The editor went along to record the event for this newsletter. Fiona Cooper is the only member of the original team who is still involved. Husband James has proved to be a dab hand with the dishwasher! In a quieter moment the team was interviewed about how much work goes on behind the scenes to produce these popular events.

**How many are involved in the team and who are you?**

Currently between 5 and 6. Over the years we've had more including the legends of Denver and Lorna Annable, Joan Maxwell and Vi Hammond.

**How long have you been together/doing the task?**

Fellowship Lunch was started by Cecilia (Davison) over 30 years ago and Fiona was part of the original team.

**Do you have defined roles?**

Definitely. Fiona (Cooper) is Head Chef, Alison (Burgess) - Sous Chef, Audrey (Balderstone) - pocket rocket and chief motivator, Angela (Bussue) - tidier, re-purposer and recycler, James (Cooper) - washer-upper and Dave (Burgess) front of house.

**Who plans the menus?**

Fiona and Alison; then we run it past Audrey for the seal of approval.

**Who does the shopping?**

Like all things Fellowship Lunch, it's shared; shopping lists fly around the week before. As both Fiona and Alison work full time it can often be who has the flexibility to do what's needed.

**How long does it take to prepare the meals?**

It depends on the menu. Fiona and Alison often batch cook ahead.

**Do you start the day before and what time do you start on Sabbath?**

Yes and it's lovely to chat to those going out on the Soup Run when we're in the kitchen on the Friday evening. Our start time on Sabbath depends on the menu but Fiona will always be at church first on a Sabbath to turn ovens on etc. Alison joins once she's walked her dog!

**How long does preparation of the room take? Do you have a special team to do this?**

This is led by Dave (Burgess) and sometimes the deacons help. As Parallel use the room for their service it's all hands on deck to get the tables out and set for lunch. Denver used to sort out the jugs

of juice and make sure the bread was on the tables - now this is divided between anyone who offers! Usually a group of ladies who come help Dave to get the tables ready and looking tidy!

**Do you have a regular master of ceremonies?**

Dave Burgess has been our MC for a number of years now. Volker (Herkner) took up the microphone last month to cover when Dave was unwell so we feel the MC is in good hands.

**What about clearing up? How long does it take, do you have a team to help?**

The team like to chat with those who come and then sit and eat something. So clearing up can take a bit longer than we anticipate. We are always grateful to those who offer to do the hoovering or take over the clearing up while we eat.

**Does the amount you receive cover the costs or are you subsidised?**

Fellowship Lunch has always been a self-funding event. We used to create a 3-course menu and make a charge for it. At the moment and due to the financial crisis we are asking people to give what they can rather than ask for a set amount. The Church Treasurer has the Fellowship Lunch account, and the income goes into that. Fiona's budgeting skills and the blessings of the donations mean that we are often there or thereabouts with balancing the costs and income with any shortfall met from the Fellowship Lunch account.

**Finally, what motivates you to do this?**

To give those who are on their own, and those who like and need the fellowship of others, the opportunity to get together on a Sabbath for a good meal, some chatter and to meet in our church community. The greatest blessing for us is to see people chatting together and to hear the bubble of conversation and laughter.

Cecilia Davison was one of the original team. She recalls that these were the days before The Stanborough Centre was built so the lunches were held in the Williams Hall and meals were prepared in its cramped galley kitchen where trays were piled upon trays as space was in short supply.

**'How we used to manage it in the tiny kitchen I don't know! Washing up was done by hand in the sink, often with 100 attending,' Fiona recalls.**

Cecilia remembers one occasion when Dr. Gallivan, the Senior Elder, stood up to thank the team for producing such a good meal under such cramped conditions. In the pre-Stanborough Centre days the Christmas meal was held in the Primary School in order to accommodate the increased numbers wishing to attend.

Moving to the new kitchen in The Stanborough Centre, with its increased space, must have been quite a shock!

## ❖ **CHURCH MATTERS: ANNOUNCEMENTS and NEWS IN BRIEF**

- **Hot and cold drinks will once again be served** in the Cedar/sycamore Room after services.
- **A Christian Karaoke Night** was held by the Young Adults on 26<sup>th</sup> November. They hosted their first **Vespers** at 7pm on 25<sup>th</sup> November.
- **The results of the consultative planning meetings for the church** are being analysed by the Pastoral Team. Findings will be presented to the Board and a way forward will be planned. Continue to pray for this process so that we can be more effective in evangelism and nurture.
- **Church car park:** the relining has been completed. Efforts have been made to improve parking by marking out spaces on the hard areas of the car park for the vehicles of those using church premises. Vehicles may park at the very top of the rear car park as closely as possible to the boundary. Please park considerately within marked bays and not in roadways (clear access required for emergency vehicles), giving priority to those who need to park close to the church. Two new spaces have been created, designated for wheelchair users. **Please do not use the disabled spaces if you are not a 'blue badge' holder.** Once the car park is full, please use the overflow car park at the BUC. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation in this. *Church Management Committee.*
- **Unsupervised children are causing damage in church.** Everybody is welcome at Stanborough Park Church and, whereas we always endeavour to keep the church as clean and well maintained as possible, any unnecessary damage, however caused, is not acceptable. Please could all parents and guardians be aware of what their children are doing when in church.
- **We have a student placement from Newbold** with us at present in the form of **James McMahon** who will be with us until the end of April. **A further placement** from Newbold in the form of **Adam Best** will be with us from 28<sup>th</sup> January until May 2023.
- **Baby Florence McMahon** was born Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December. Our congratulations to proud parents James and Stefanie!
- **Lorraine and John Cooper** send warm Christmas greetings to their Stanborough friends, with heartfelt thanks for your love and prayers over recent months.
- **Pathfinder Bible Experience 2023:** the team is studying the book of John. The test dates:
  - 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023 – Area level test
  - 11<sup>th</sup> February 2023 - South England Conference level test
  - 11<sup>th</sup> March 2023 - National level test (BUC)
  - 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – TED level – in Greece!
- **Development Fund Update:** the outstanding SEC Loan at 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 is £232,249. (The HSBC loan has been fully paid off). The two loans totalled £1,030,212; £797,963 has been repaid on the loans since then.
- **Ministerial leave:** Pastor Terry will be on annual leave from 23 - 30 December. Pastor James will take his leave from 25 December - 3 January. Please contact the elders in the absence of the Pastors.
- **Young Adults:** Sabbath School, as always, is held in the Maple Room. As we enter a new year we are looking to expand and grow the Young Adults ministry so if you would like to be part of this please speak to Jackson Bright or Alexandria Davis. We are having a Thanksgiving Vesper to celebrate the end of our department's first year. All welcome.
- **Stanborough Prayer Ministry** welcomes all to join the Prayer Team to read and meditate for 40 Days from 6am to 6:30am. Zoom ID 8316619709; PW: 777
- **Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting** is held in the Armstrong Hall as well as on Zoom at 7pm. Meeting ID: 519 552 6863; Passcode: pray3r
- **ADRA desperately needs your help this Christmas.** Please support by following the link ADRA UK - Just Giving Page for 2022 Link to donate: [www.justgiving.com/page/audrey-balderstone-1652806487047](http://www.justgiving.com/page/audrey-balderstone-1652806487047) Alternatively, you can place a donation in the special 'DO GOOD' envelopes available at church. As well as helping those abroad ADRA, through the 'I AM URBAN' initiative, is helping those in need in the UK..
- **Indonesia ADRA Appeal - donate now to help people in crisis!** On Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2022 a 5.6 magnitude earthquake shook the Cianjur region in West Java causing buildings to collapse while businesses were operational and children in school. Please help us to help the people of Indonesia who are affected by this dreadful event. [To know more](#) and [donate click here.](#)
- ❖ **NEWS in BRIEF:**
- **The Pathfinders experience a fire drill - for real!** Having successfully completed their assessments at their end of year meeting, were celebrating with a party. No sooner had they sat down to enjoy their meal – and some were still walking to the tables clutching their plates -- than the fire alarm sounded. After a moment of stunned silence the leaders swung into action and the children left their meals **and calmly filed out of the Williams Hall, making their way to the fire escape leading to the car park.** Their behaviour was exemplary and all fire procedures were followed correctly. (Mrs. Dunton who had just arrived was ushered out of the building.) Fortunately, it turned out to be a false alarm – those cooking in the kitchen had managed to trigger the fire alarm!
- **Congratulations to Audrey Balderstone and Pr. Jim Huzzey on their recent engagement.**



• The Larch Room is

out of action during refurbishment/redecoration until the end of the first week in January.

- **Congratulations to Naomi (Burgess) and Mike Phillips on the birth of Elijah David on Boxing Day**, the same day as great-grandmother Sheila's 97<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- **Audrey Balderstone retires!** Thankfully not from church life but at the end of a six-year stint - first as Vice Chairman and then as Chairman of the area branch of the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (three years as each). Following its AGM in November her committee took her to lunch and presented her with 'a beautiful hamper full of very useful goodies' despite her insistence that she didn't want a gift. What will she do with the spare time this creates?!!!
- **Barbara is irreplaceable?** Barbara Hankin's name has appeared in the current edition of a local news magazine. Following her retirement as a long-standing lollipop lady outside Leavesden Green Primary School her post still hasn't been filled as there have been no applicants. Local councillors are working to reinstate the crossing. She is much missed by the locals.



**New crossing patroller needed outside primary school**

Written by Garius Morgan

Abbots Langley residents are being urged to apply to become a school crossing patroller. County councillor Tim Williams and Watford borough councillor Richard Wenham have joined forces to re-establish a crossing patrol outside Leavesden Green JMI School.

Following the retirement of long-standing lollipop lady Barbara Hankin, local residents are being encouraged to take over the role.

Barbara retired last year, having been in the job since 2005, but a replacement has yet to be found. Cllr Wenham said: "Barbara played such a valuable role by being the lollipop lady for so many years."

Cllr Williams added: "Being a school crossing patrol person is a very rewarding role and is appreciated by parents and pupils alike."

Anyone interested in the role can reach the Active and Safer Travel Team on 01992 556816.



A new patroller is needed outside Leavesden Green Primary School



❖ **PRAYER CORNER - please pray for:**

- Morgan Charles as he recovers, that he will soon be out of hospital.
- Horace, Carles and Xavier Gaynor who are mourning their young daughter Gabrielle's death.
- Our members who are hospitalised.
- Families who are facing challenges from cancer, COVID, other health issues and recent bereavement.
- Our country as we will be experiencing severe industrial unrest over the Christmas period.
- A resolution to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine; especially for Ukraine's citizens experiencing very cold weather without their electrical facilities.
- God to protect the children from Strep A disease and for the families of the children who have died from it.
- The Families of the four boys who died after falling into a frozen lake in Solihull.
- The families of the two tragedies in Jersey – fire and the boat collision.
- Alain Fidelia's neighbour's daughter (19-year-old) whose cancer has returned.
- The Requests in the Prayer Box.

If you have private Prayer Requests, please place them in the Prayer Box or email [Stanboroughprays@gmail.com](mailto:Stanboroughprays@gmail.com).

## ❖ FOLLOW-UP from the Last Newsletter:

This article (**below**) in the December newsletter brought in an unexpected email from Pastor David Neal, TED Communication and Media Director.

Thanks for sharing this story, which brought back very happy memories of wonderful ministry moment while working at Stanborough. How Aleta's ministry has developed reminds me that from acorns grow mighty oaks. As the Lord used her talent and giftedness then, He continues to do today.



As I remember - getting Aleta to Stanborough was a tough call, because a couple of weeks before she was due to arrive not all the finance to support her ministry was in place. SPC had agreed to provide 50% of the finance and I believed that it would not be difficult to secure the other 50% of funds from the SEC, given that I was also working part time as Youth Director for the South England Conference (SEC). However, this did not materialise and at the time felt quite disappointed, but the request was made in the context of SPC making a much larger request from SEC towards the church development. However, to my surprise and joy, Stanborough School came to the rescue, agreeing to provide the further 50% required, in return for Aleta sharing her gifts and talents with the school. And praise the Lord the plan worked.

I think the highlight of Aleta's stay for me was the Easter orchestral concert with the orchestra made up youth and teens from church, school, and community. We were able to pull it off partly due to a memory about my time at Newbold College. I had been a member of the college orchestra for a few years and knew that somewhere on the campus was a filing cabinet full of manuscripts and scores galore! With the help of Sandra Rigby, all was placed on loan for our use, with the additional bonus of two timpani. I was thrilled - an

incredible resource to give the orchestra a confident sound. However, I do remember being cross-examined at an Elder's meeting about the arrival of the timpani! It was Pastor Roy Burgess who was able to explain the role and purpose of timpani in an orchestra - an intervention for which I am forever grateful.

Thanks to some help from Google it was possible to find out more about what happened to Aleta after she returned to Australia. She has obtained a Ph.D. and is Director of the Avondale Conservatorium - acting as Musical Director for their many recordings, and has had her work published. She says she was delighted to be contacted and having read through some past newsletters she said that she 'read with great interest and much nostalgia the memories of when I first arrived at Stanborough Park as a student missionary in my mid 20's all those years ago.

'I loved working with the Stanborough Park Orchestra (and eventually the Choir too) so it was such a great relief when Ji Eun Ahn and her sisters said yes to me handing them the role of directors of the orchestra and choir at Stanborough and what wonderful results are evident over time. God's hand was definitely in this all the way through.

'Stanborough Park is a very special place in my heart. It's where I first lived, worked, got baptised and even married. I really found myself, my calling, my purpose in life whilst in England and based at Stanborough..... I'm proud to be an integral part of Stanborough's unique history.'

Aleta conducting Haydn's 'Creation'



## ❖ REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

- **COUNSELLORS/INSTRUCTORS** are needed in the Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs. Please contact Davide, Bukky, Megan, Ophelia.
- **SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS** are needed for the Children's Sabbath School. Please contact Paula or Yetunde
- **FIRST AIDERS REQUIRED to serve on Sabbath mornings** at the church. We are trying to set up a rota system so one person would be serving about once a month. If you are interested in helping in this way or know of anybody who could be considered please let the pastoral team know.
- **THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT** would welcome offers of help with the church's web site, social media or writing up stories. Contact [news@stanboroughchurch.org](mailto:news@stanboroughchurch.org) / S.Parklifeneeds@gmail.com.





## ❖ CHRISTMAS OUTREACH AT TREMONA CARE HOME

Florence Allen visited Tremona Care Home in Watford with a group of singers where they presented a carol service for the residents. However, the residents' lounge was festooned with bunting supporting the England Football Team whose players were, as it turned out, about to play their last World Cup match – no concessions to Christmas there! Later a lady was seen excitedly telling some residents that she knew where the singers came from, sharing her memories of attending our Seniors group with other residents from the retirement flats opposite the church and insisting that the church's members were 'lovely people'!

(N.B. The wearing of face coverings is still mandatory in a health-care setting.)

### Florence Allen, the group's leader, has written an account of the visit.

On Sabbath 10<sup>th</sup> December 10 persons from our church visited the Tremona Care Home at 3pm. The team led by Florence Allen included Pastors Terry Messenger and James Shepley; Gabriel Collins, Florencia Jiminez, Angeline Pinky, Nitish and Nancy Khetavah, Cynthia Mambile and June Coombs (photographer). On our arrival Florencia and Gabriel shared copies of the programme and Christmas cards to those who were present.



After the Welcome and Introduction by Florence Allen, Nitish did the opening prayer. We were thrilled with the responses from the residents and staff as they joined our group singing: "The First Noel", "Silent Night", "O Come All Ye Faithful" and "Go Tell it on the Mountain". There were smiles and applause as Gabriel sang, "Away in a Manger". More pleasantries as Florencia Jiminez gave a joyful rendition of "Joy to The World" and Yours Truly, "O Holy

Night" ably accompanied by our guitarist Angeline Pinky.

Pastor Shepley inspired everyone with his short presentation on "The Reason for the Season" as he reminded us why the birth of Jesus was very important. Pastor Terry Messenger encouraged the audience with his encouraging closing remarks and closed with a prayer.

The staff thanked us for our performance and was further thrilled when we left Christmas cards and some goodies for the staff and the absent residents.



When we were leaving one of the residents detained Pastor Messenger to share her fond association as part of a visiting group to the Stanborough Park Centre.

We thanked God for orchestrating our visit and we plan to do some more in the near future.

**Soloists Florence, Flo and Gabriel**

## ❖ THE YOUNG ADULTS OF STANBOROUGH PARK CHURCH: Year-end Report

It all started with a Sabbath School group where a few young adults discussed the Bible. From then, we grew as a group, establishing a committee and a series of goals we want to achieve in the future as an official department of the church.

Our proudest achievement so far has been the incredibly successful Step by Step Concert. The concert took place in September, hosting various types of singers and musicians, and, thanks to the help of everyone involved, we raised money for our Young Adults group as well as for the Herts Young Homeless charity, an organization that we hope we will continue to grow a connection with.

As a group we run the Youth Soup Run, something that has proved important to us as we are able to give back to the community and get a hands-on experience. Social events such as the bowling and games night have allowed us as young people to open up to one another and be more comfortable in sharing thoughts and beliefs when it comes to religious topics.

Our Bible study has been going steady for a few months, using both online and in person platforms so that everyone can benefit from it. In the next year we hope to make it more of an event so that people can come after work, enjoy a light meal and open the Sabbath talking about God amongst friends. We never miss an opportunity to combine fellowship and food, hence why our potlucks are always great fun. Good food, good company ... what more could one want?

Going forwards we hope to be able to bring more people in our group, and form closer bonds, but for now, to celebrate how far we have come and Christmas we will be going to Winter Wonderland as well as the SEC Christmas Banquet on the 18<sup>th</sup> December. We look forward to seeing what the Lord has in store for us in the future.

Submitted by the Young Adult secretary

## ❖ CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

Christmas Eve saw two special services in the church, both of them were well-attended, including by many from the local community. Traditional carols, the orchestra and handbell ensembles as well as solo performances featured in both services as did Pastor James's sermon on the theme of the reason for the season. His wife and daughters played a part in the morning service, giving a new meaning to the term 'Family Service'!



The traditional evening candlelit carol service with readings and congregational carols was well received. It included a special rendition of 'We Three Kings' sung by Pastor James, Roger Murphy and Gabriel Collins, suitably costumed, each singing a verse as a solo.

The carol service ended with an appeal for funds for the Soup Run, the welfare service and the introduction of a 'Warm Space' service in January as part of the local authority's scheme for providing shelter for those unable to afford heating their homes as a result of the cost of living crisis. This raised a generous £776.14. Sadly, this service was not livestreamed so is not available for viewing.

Many members had invited friends and relatives to the services and many non-SDA's were amongst the congregation. According to Amanda Powell many members of the community who attend the Seniors Club were to be found at both services.

- ❖ **Why are Christmas carols so called and when did the tradition start?** According to Wikipedia **carols**, now specifically hymns on a Christmas theme, were first referred to as such in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century when the word, which is of uncertain origin, had a more general interpretation. They were first sung in churches during Victorian times.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas\\_carol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_carol)



## ❖ CHURCH HISTORY: From the Archives – the Construction of the Stanborough Centre

Unfortunately there are no photographs of its construction. Does anyone have any to share?

Last September saw the 21st anniversary of the official opening of The Stanborough Centre.

When Pastor Boyle became our Senior Minister back in 1991 the church building looked very different – there was no Stanborough



Centre. For years there had been talk on the Church Board of the need for an extension. Many will recall that the Welfare Department had managed for many years in a demountable unit shared with the Pathfinders (subsequently burnt down by arsonists in 1996 and previously operating from the lower room in the tower), the Seniors were regularly complaining about poor kitchen facilities and having to make their way up a long flight of stairs to the Williams Hall and it was considered unacceptable that some of the children's Sabbath Schools were still based in rooms at the school requiring them to make the journey down to the church in all weathers between services - a practice which had continued for decades.



An extension was considered to be essential both to meet the church's own domestic needs and to enable it to extend its outreach into the local community more effectively. Many plans had been drawn up over the years and endless discussions taken place on the Church Board. However, it was Pastor Boyle's drive, enthusiasm and vision that finally brought it about.

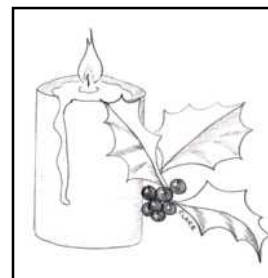


The foundations were laid beginning a lengthy building process. The members chose the names of the rooms giving them all names of trees in view of the church's woodland setting. The success in actually realising the project owes much to the late Denver Annable who was responsible for overseeing it.



Finally the big day came; 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2001 witnessed the grand opening ceremony. By now Pastor Boyle had retired and Robert Vine was the Senior Minister who presided over the occasion.

The Mayor was invited, seen here with a young Colin Donaldson, and the ribbon was cut by Mrs. Doris Clarke, our oldest member (above left).



**Pictures for colouring-in.**

**A selection of resources for children on a Christmas theme can be downloaded from the church web site.**  
[https://stanboroughpark.adventistchurch.org.uk/document\\_groups/5516](https://stanboroughpark.adventistchurch.org.uk/document_groups/5516)

❖ **THE TIME IS FULFILLED: a Christmas meditation by former Messenger editor David Marshall written in 1982**

Show the world a great man and they will begin to 'account' for him. 'He is a creature of his Time'. 'The Time called him forth.'

Does the man make the age or the age the man? Or are great ages and events made by a God who brings together the Time and the Man?

The age into which Jesus was born called loudly for a Man. Josephus wrote that the Jews believed that 'about that time one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth'.

When Jesus began His ministry His first words were, 'The time is fulfilled'. Prophecy was becoming reality. A long providential ordering of history had reached its culmination. A Time and a People had been made ready.

As to the Time, there was the Roman Peace and there were the Roman roads to speed the Gospel. The decay of Greek philosophy had left a vacuum and Rome had nothing with which to fill it.

As to the People, there were the Jews with their great expectation and their high standard of ethics. Through trade they were to be found in every centre of population; their synagogues would be the spring-board for the Gospel.

But wait.

The Roman peace was built on ruthless dictatorship, persecution of dissident factions like Christianity. The decline of Greek thought had bred gross superstitions, a maze of mystery cults. Men said it was a god-forsaken age. Yet God prepared it. So much for the Time.

The People? Israel's faith burned low. There was Pharisaic hypocrisy. Sadducees compromised, collaborated and sacrificed piety for power. Jews in Alexandria, Corinth, Rome and Ephesus were a byword, despised.

God prepared a time. It was a godless time. God prepared a people. They seemed a faithless people. Yet the many-splendoured thing occurred then, at that Time. Through that People God did the unimaginable thing.

Eternal God turned to a peasant home in Nazareth. The Babe's first visitors were shepherds, execrated by rabbis. His followers would be 'not many wise, not many

noble'. The leaders of His Cause would be 'unlearned and ignorant men'.

To our eyes the Time and People prepared of God were unpromising. That is because His preparation was in the hearts of men, humble and meek.

When His thin cry pierced Bethlehem's midnight, the swaddling clothes were ready, lovingly prepared. But His first days and nights were spent outside in a manger. The inn door was shut, tight. The Time called for Him, and did not want Him.

And there He was, tiny, vulnerable, supine - embodying 'the fulness of the godhead'. In that form there came together Time and Eternity, Visible and Invisible, God and Man.

'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us' not in flaming sun or flashing lightning, not in the roll of a fearful thunder, but in the peal of bells. God does not split the atom to bring us to the seat of His power, but in the simple features of a human countenance He shines. The Time and the People were made ready. But the doors of human hearts only human hands can open.

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❖ **THE LAST WORD**

**The item below was found on the same page as this editorial. It seemed appropriate to include it in view of the reluctance of many to return to church - as featured in the current edition of the Messenger.**

