

# S\*ParkLife 24

Stanborough Park Church Newsletter  
Summer 2024

Lockdown News  
41



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## ◆ TYPICAL BRITISH BANK HOLIDAY WEATHER PUTS THE DAMPERS ON PARTY IN THE PARK!

The weather forecast wasn't good but then it's often wrong. Not this time! The event started off with sunshine but soon down came the rain and up went the umbrellas.

This time the church shared the event with the SEC Healthfest and ADRA along with local charities, the NHS, a chiropractor, pets corner, the normal food stands and Pat's Sales stalls. However, the vibe that accompanied the previous church 'parties' was lacking and, even though there was more to see, people were put off by the weather and either left early or didn't turn up at all. For the last hour or so the sun came out which brought out a few more people. Pat's stalls, usually very busy, saw little interest, the bouncy castles spent most of their time deflated, lying forlornly on the ground and even the food stands, though popular, were not overwhelmed.







Unusually girls were allowed to join the obligatory football game at these events, although one was consigned to the role of goalkeeper—surely the most important one in the game??!







Pastor James acting as M/C below. Those on the stage were probably the driest! Sharon Platt-McDonald (seen below with Pr. James) soldiered on with a health quiz with just a small number of children participating!



Carry on regardless! One group, showing true British disregard for the weather, decided it wasn't going to spoil the opportunity for a picnic. Alas, not many others seemed to follow their example!





## ◆ CHURCH MATTERS: NEWS IN BRIEF

**Pastor Terry** will retire from paid pastoral ministry at the end of this year. He states that it has been both a privilege and a pleasure to serve as a Pastor in the Stanborough Park Church.

**A Church Business Meeting was held on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June** focusing on reports on departmental plans moving forwards for 2024-25, rather than on historical activities.

**The June Teatime Concert** was held on Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, with an organ recital by Chingyan Lo.

**My Favourite Hymn** was held on Saturday evening, 13<sup>th</sup> July at 7:30 pm featuring diverse array of ensembles including handbells, chimes, orchestra and choirs

**Stanborough Park's own "Wacky Races"** was held at the Primary School on 30<sup>th</sup> June

**Pastor James** will be on Sabbatical from 27<sup>th</sup> June to 27<sup>th</sup> August inclusive. Pastoral concerns at this time should be communicated to Pr. Terry or the elders.

**The presentation "Understanding Micro Expression, The Hidden Enemy to Progression"** sponsored by our Women Ministry Department was held 13<sup>th</sup> July.

**What is TRUTH and How Do You Find It?** was the subject of a special programme addressed by author Duncan Bayliss on 15<sup>th</sup> June organised by the Faith and Science team.

**Congratulations** to the children and young people who took part in the Children's Concert and through the offering and sponsorship raised the amazing sum of £1,848,63 for the ADRA Children's Education project.

**The NEWSTART lifestyle** health programme continued with the theme of "Temperance" for the month of June, holding a temperance workshop on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Temperance involves abstaining from harmful substances, food, drinks, and behaviours that can harm your mental, physical, and spiritual wellbeing. Moderation in all things is a founding principle of the NEWSTART programme.

**Birthday greetings** to Mervyn Annable (80) and Las Shields (90) who celebrated milestone birthdays in June.

**Correction:** Rosemarie Plimmer reports that she spent a couple of years as a nurse at Masanga Hospital, which according to Google is in Sierra Leone, not Kwahu in Ghana. The information was obtained in good faith; sorry Rosemarie to add something unexpected to your CV. Always reassuring to know that somebody **actually reads** this newsletter!

**Off to begin new course/apprenticeship?** Please complete [this form](#) with your details, including your contact details, so that we can keep in touch with you.

**No good deed goes unpunished?:** Pat Walton accompanied the Soup Run on its final trip before the summer break and had her phone stolen.

**PASTOR SURRIDGE RETIRES:** SPC member John Surridge retired from his role as BUC Executive Secretary, which he has held since 2016, at the end of June. Those of us who remember John and wife Moira as SPC teens will be wondering where the years have gone — as probably are they!

Like Pastor Roy Burgess he spent much of his ministry in Wales (even learning Welsh!) where he eventually became Mission President, a role he occupied for 10 years.

He also spent time as the BUC Communication Director, which he claims "was as exciting as it was challenging, coming as it did near the beginning of the internet boom. Over the next ten years we developed websites, the BUC News channel — email and video, and a number of database systems." Since then he has used his skills in programming and databases "to develop a membership management system for the BUC, which has just been succeeded by ACMS, and a back-office system for pastors, which is still in use today as well as the FreeBible website."

Enjoy your retirement John and Moira and maybe we will see more of you in the future — but beware you are now within the sights of the Nominating Committee!

**Watch an interview** with Pr. Surridge on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdcZWLmxgho> **Or read the interview:** [https://adventist.uk/news/article/go/2024-06-21/2028/?utm\\_source=BUC+NEWS&utm\\_campaign=b891433803EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2017\\_05\\_01\\_COPY\\_67&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_5a09e1f568-b891433803-143139986&ct=t\(Y\\_COPY\\_67\)&goal=0\\_5a09e1f568-b891433803-143139986](https://adventist.uk/news/article/go/2024-06-21/2028/?utm_source=BUC+NEWS&utm_campaign=b891433803EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_05_01_COPY_67&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5a09e1f568-b891433803-143139986&ct=t(Y_COPY_67)&goal=0_5a09e1f568-b891433803-143139986)

## ◆ BAPTISM – 22<sup>nd</sup> June

### **Roxana Dumitru**

I always felt a Presence guiding me. Over the years, despite many hardships, I triumphed and realised this Presence is my Heavenly Father. He helps me through life's trials. I want to fulfil a promise I made to Him long ago but kept avoiding. Today, I commit to being closer to the Lord, who makes the impossible possible and holds the key to eternal joy, life, and love. By staying close to my Father, I can experience these wonderful gifts.

**Miguel Rolo and Eva Sumal** will be baptised in Portugal and Slovakia respectively in August. They will be accepted into membership of the Stanborough Park Church on 21<sup>st</sup> September.



## ◆ FOCUS ON THE CHURCH SITE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**The Church Site Management Committee (CSMC)** was mentioned in the last newsletter in connection with the installation of the church ceremonial key in its present location. This committee is responsible for the smooth day-to-day operation of the church building, grounds and the Stanborough Centre. If you enjoyed the benefits of the warmth in the church last winter provided by the new heating system then it is thanks to this committee. The late Denver Annable's name has long been associated with the CSMC; during his time of involvement he acquired a wealth of background knowledge which he generously passed on to his successors.

The committee meets monthly, apart from December and August and consists of a Chair and Secretary with the Church Treasurer, ministers and representatives from the church departments most involved in the use of the buildings such as deacons, deaconesses, AV, Music, Communications and the Health and Safety Officer along with the Centre Manager and handyman.

Glancing through the committee's minutes for the last two years under the chairmanship of Bernell Bussue reveals just how extensive its role is, going far beyond just repairs and renovation of the church fabric. The areas covered included the following:

**Roof repairs/renovations/replacement**, especially to the flat roofs, leaking skylight and removal of a non-working ventilation system

**Gutters** – maintenance, clearing, repairs

**Surveillance** - cameras internal and external, concourse screens, external and internal lighting

**Security issues** – replacing vandalised windows etc, dealing with locks and keys and maintaining a key holders' list

**Plumbing, sanitary, toilet issues**, provision of disabled facilities along with those for first aid and nursing mothers—and organising a dedicated room for the latter, replacing water fountains and ensuring all sanitary and **drainage** facilities are working correctly and dealing with issues arising

**Heating system** – new system installed after quotes were sought and inspections undertaken

**Electrical issues** including all lighting and wiring, PAT testing

**Health and safety issues, organising first aid training and first aid roster**, assessing trip and fall hazards and dealing with them, **ensuring** facilities for **disabled users** are as they should be

**Fire safety matters** - fire inspections and liaising with local fire service officers and implementing their recommendations, ensuring all equipment up-to-date and alarm systems are tested as legally required, organising

church evacuation procedure, training fire marshals and providing the necessary hi-vis garments etc, organising fire drills required by current legislation

**Ensuring all cupboards are regularly checked**, kept tidy and cleared of unnecessary clutter – including cleaning cupboards

**Stanborough Centre redecoration and repairs, replacement of tables**

**Cleaning of all church rooms and Centre**, including appropriate deep cleaning under Covid protocols

**Lift repairs and maintenance**

**Grounds maintenance**, tree surgery, access roads, dealing with potholes and relining the car park (a temporary measure until funds are available to provide a more permanent arrangement), ensuring adequate, clearly marked disabled parking spaces

**Kitchen management**, repairs, replacement of equipment, associated cleaning and hygiene to meet official regulations, keeping track of food stored in freezers – clearing out food with expired storage dates (2 kitchens)

**All matters relating to the upkeep of the student flat**  
**Negotiating the contract with Playskills** for long-term use of two rooms catering for the needs of disabled under-5's and the subsequent necessary redecoration and adaptations for storage (this was paid for by the charity).

**Stanborough Centre management**, bookings, cleaning, video conferencing, room use and set up, also bookings for use of main church building

**In addition there was the need to invite contractors for estimates and to be present to allow access for work and supervision of contractors, drawing up procedures, contracts etc.**

From the above it seems that committee chairmanship appears to be more like a full-time job rather than a voluntary one! So it is not surprising that Pr. Terry once remarked that whenever he turned up at church Bernell Bussue always seemed to be there already! The church has benefited from his efforts over the past two years. In view of the work covered during that period it isn't surprising Bernell has decided to relinquish responsibility to allow more time for travelling in his retirement.

Thank you Bernell, and the CSMC for your hard work and dedi-







◆ **ADRA CELEBRATES ITS 40<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY AT STANBOROUGH PARK CHURCH**

Sabbath morning, 25th May, saw many ADRA employees and associates gathered from far and wide as part of a special day-long programme with the theme 'Call to Compassion'. Representatives from Ukraine, Syria, Zambia, South Sudan, and Sudan, and ADRA International shared current data on the impact of ADRA's development and humanitarian work around the globe.

Music formed an important part of the programme and included: the award-winning *London Adventist Choral* led by Ken Burton, who delivered, 'The Lord's Prayer' and 'Rest' in the Worship Service with negro spirituals in the afternoon fundraising concert, which also included the male quartet, *Tessera* (Songs of Praise, *The Levites*, a British Zambian Choir, one of whose leading singers, is Brian Nsonga, a former Chief Financial Officer of ADRA-UK. The Ahn sisters, Jieun, Jiae and Jihee, also took part along with Gabriella Pedditzi, Sangbin Jung, Yui Hanada and Chemi Ishida; Amy Cornwall who sang a solo accompanied by Matthew Herman on the piano. Pianist Ian Redfern from St. Albans SDA Church also performed.

Two personal awards were given for outstanding contributions to ADRA-UK. The first was to Ruth Arthur for the legacy she continues in memory of her late husband, John, both of whom are former SPC members. John was involved in the set-up of ADRA as a non-governmental organisation and even suggested the name Adventist Development and Relief Agency which was universally adopted. He subsequently was awarded the OBE for his services to International Development. His story was featured in an earlier newsletter just after his death.

The second award was presented to Audrey Huzzey for the legacy of her late husband, David Balderstone. Audrey was a last-minute replacement for the children's story in which she showed the children the helmet and bullet-proof vest worn by David during his humanitarian aid trips to Bosnia during the Balkan War. They were necessary as David developed a reputation for coming under enemy fire.

When war broke out in Bosnia in 1992, David and others were keen to help ADRA-UK. Several friends purchased a cab and trailer. There was no money, so Audrey organised a Flower Festival to raise funds for transportation. "Over many years, we also collected many boxes of food, clothing, medicine, and goods. David often told stories of how our 'Boxes for Bosnia' helped families stay alive when food was scarce," she recalls.

She recalls one of the early trips. "It was a Friday evening, and we expected him home soon. He rang, and instead of saying when he would be back, he asked, 'How would you feel about me going into Sarajevo?' My heart sank. The fierce fighting around Saraje-

vo was on the news every day. All I could say was, 'We will pray for you every day.'" In December 2009 he packed his last truckload of shoeboxes for children in the former Yugoslavia and died the following month.

**His story, written by him, is told on the following pages. Audrey has been consulted and is more than happy for his story to be reproduced.**

◆ **FROM THE ARCHIVES:  
THE WATFORD OBSERVER: 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2010**

**Posthumous award for 'humble' man from  
Watford devoted to charity  
By Chris Hewett**

**A Watford man who dedicated a large part of his life to charity and the church was given a posthumous award recognising his work on Saturday.**

**Mayor Dorothy Thornhill visited the Stanborough Park Seventh-Day Adventist Church, in Garston, to present an Audentior award to the wife of David Balderstone.**

**Mr. Balderstone, 67, was born in Slough but lived and worked in and near Watford for most of his life and devoted a huge portion of his time, energy and - at times - finance to charity works. He passed away on January 16 after a long fight with cancer.**

**Mayor Thornhill said: "I found it quite emotional. He was a lovely, lovely man and I had a great fondness for him, he just got on with things and he was like that all the time. It was a great sadness that we could not give the award to him when he was alive."**

**Throughout his life Mr. Balderstone was closely associated with ADRA-UK, the Adventist Development & Relief Agency arm of his Church. Over the past four decades his involvement had taken him to various countries overseas, including Africa and Eastern Europe.**

**Mrs. Balderstone, 64, said: "It was very moving because it is the third award he has received for his work posthumously. He was a very humble man and would have been highly embarrassed to be given the awards. He spent his whole life working for other people."**

**One of David's last legacies was his personal arrangement to pack some 8,000 shoeboxes last November for the needy children overseas.**

**Mayor Thornhill added: "I was delighted that I could meet him in November to help him load the boxes to be posted off to Africa. Even though he was very ill at that point, he was loving it."**

**During her presentation, Mayor Thornhill paid tribute to Mr. Balderstone for his charity work conducted both in this country and overseas.**





## ◆ DAVID BALDERSTONE:

This article was first published in the February 2022 edition of this newsletter. The 40th anniversary of ADRA seems a good time to publish it again as there are many new members who will not have seen it the first time and are unaware of the important role that David played as an ADRA volunteer. He went on many missions for the charity and was posthumously given an award for his charity efforts by the Mayor of Watford. He died 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 aged 67 after a long battle with cancer. His funeral saw a packed church; so many people wanted to attend to pay tribute to a man who gave so much for the benefit of others.

David became involved with ADRA-UK and its predecessor SAWS in 1969. He worked as a volunteer in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Nicaragua, Albania and the former Yugoslavia. (He also volunteered for Kish Poddar's STOP International charity.) In later years he worked as ADRA-UK's Transport Manager in a voluntary capacity, co-ordinating the loads of aid and their destinations, keeping the trucks in working order and sorting out the paperwork. He achieved a certain notoriety within the charity for the number of times his aid trucks came under enemy fire.

In 1996 he told of some of his experiences in his own words, reproduced below, for readers of ParkLink, a forerunner of Stanborough News.

I first became interested in helping people when I was a small boy going to Stanborough Park Church and listened to real-life missionaries telling real-life stories of their experiences in Africa and India. Of the wars, floods, homelessness and starvation of many people in the world.

My first chance to go abroad on a relief trip was in 1969 when I helped a team of five – two doctors and three relief workers – care for thousands of refugees in the Nigerian civil war. Within three weeks we were feeding some 20,000 people a week, got a small 30-bed hospital up and running again and had approximately 100 people working for us. I was there for three months and really enjoyed it, although a tragic time for so many who were dying around us. I went back again in 1970 for a short time.

The above were organised by SAWS the pre-

decessor to ADRA. These trips were the first time I had ever been held at gunpoint, had to avoid mines in the road and experience bullets flying around. To see and be able to help poor, distressed and starving people made it all worthwhile.

In 1989 I was asked to be a Team Leader for a one month period on a development programme for ADRA in Zimbabwe; a year later in Pakistan where we were building some classrooms and a toilet block and the year after that in Nicaragua finishing off a secondary/boarding school.

My involvement in Albania and Yugoslavia began about four years ago when I saw the desperate plight of so many thousands of displaced and frightened people.

I often wonder how my family here would manage if the total destruction of our basis of life, our home, business, community, town and infrastructure came upon us suddenly and they had only minutes or hours to prepare for life on the move and with only the clothes they stood up in and what they could carry. It's this thought that motivates me to help others.

I took my LGV licence about four years ago so that I could drive the trucks on long-haul convoy work. We take medical equipment donated by all sorts of organisations, hospitals, dentists. We take food, shoes and good second-hand clothes, blankets, kitchen equipment, garden seeds, toiletries etc. We have also taken building equipment for reconstruction work.

I make three or four trips a year. Each trip takes a minimum of one week. Sometimes more. In the early days of the conflict in the former-Yugoslavia when we had to come through the active front lines, it took sometimes nearly three weeks to get to Sarajevo and back.

I have now been to all sides of the war in Bosnia. I have delivered aid to all sides. I have seen the same suffering, heartache, bloodshed, the same destruction of entire villages, towns. I have seen people from all walks of life, from all backgrounds, reduced to distressed and bewildered refugees, not knowing what is to become of them.

**Does it involve any danger? Yes!** The worst time was inside Sarajevo when the shelling was on and bullets used to whine through the ruined houses and you never knew when the next one was going to come. One very bad time was when bullets hit our truck from a point some 3,000 yards away. We had to drive through this area knowing and seeing the



dust spirals as they hit the concrete at the side of the road and we had to go through the crossfire.

I keep going back because people need help and often it's only outside helpers who can give that help. I count it a privilege to be able to deliver the help and to meet the people in need. Meeting and talking with people makes it all worthwhile.

I became ADRA Transport Manager about 2½ years ago. I have to co-ordinate the loads, destinations and try and sort out all the paperwork, try and keep the trucks up to scratch etc. We send out 8-12 loads a year.

I have helped with projects in Albania, the former Yugoslavia, Lithuania and Rwanda. The aid is always well-received. Our big truck is often emptied and aid distributed in a matter of hours. It's great to see the faces of people as they received often small things that make such a difference to them.

I find it difficult to spare the time from various business activities. It means I have to start my working day at 7 a.m. and often have to work until 9 p.m. at night, six days a week so that I can take time out to undertake these trips. I am fortunate that I have the back-up of business partners who are sympathetic to what I do and cover for me. I am also fortunate to have the support of my own family and friends.

I wish I could do more. I feel we must keep helping when we can. We need, especially, toiletries, food – especially dried food - seeds, cutlery, plates cups, shoes, blankets, underclothes, socks and men's clothes. Our biggest problem is finance. Each trip costs approximately £3,000 or £1 per mile. We often have a load waiting to go but not enough money to send it.

**The work I see going on and on, there is so much need in so many places.** I have been blessed in life with a happy family, good friends, a business and a peaceful country. I feel I should put something back while I am able to.

## ◆ AN EXCERPT FROM ONE OF THE DIARIES DAVID KEPT OF HIS TRIPS TO BOSNIA DURING THE WAR.

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September

We go to the warehouse. There are hundreds of people looking at about 10 lists up on each of the eight notice boards. These lists are the names of those who have received parcels. They then go to the desk and tell them that parcel no. ? is theirs. They have to show identification and are then given a slip of paper. They take that up to one of four very large rooms. All the parcels are on pallets and are numbered by computer. People are really pleased to get them.

I talk to some of the people who were working with me yesterday. It's surprising how many of them want to try out their English on me. One guy has worked in Iraq. Another has a sister-in-law in London. Others have worked in Oxford. Many are football enthusiasts. I see them start sorting out the parcels we brought. The man in charge of the computer who was a professor at the University has brought in some of his former pupils to help. They take names and addresses and number parcels. They are then put on the computer and the lists are printed out. Good system. While I was there one of the girls found a parcel addressed to her. Delight all round.

Meanwhile Bob has dumped the trailer and gone off to find an air valve. He was taken to a truck company yard where there were many trucks and many damaged. Bullets through the screens, bodies damaged.. etc.... They found him an air valve and it fitted perfectly. They will get paid in rations later. Bob gave them a carton of chocolates. We are very relieved because we didn't expect to get back to Zagreb on the compressor only.

We are taken on a tour of Sarajevo in a minibus belonging to ADRA. We pass new and badly damaged Parliament buildings; past so many newish buildings which have been shot to bits – half of them gone. Houses with holes right through, streets with accumulated rubbish and holes in roads. So many abandoned cars – many used as protection against snipers alongside walkways. We come up to the river and cross over – this area is dangerous because we are in clear view of any snipers hidden in the Serb part of town just up the slope. Our driver says they can see the ADRA sign on the truck so we should be OK. I feel rather exposed sitting on that side of the bus.

We cross the river again and drive at a great rate of knots along a clear stretch of road. We pass the Hilton Hotel. They still use the rear half of it. We go to the UNPF H/Q to see about our clearance with the liaison officer for tomorrow, Tuesday. It has to be left with them for 24 hours. In the background you hear the occasional sound of gunfire. The odd bullet whistles by. The people feel they are in a prison camp. In reality they are surrounded by an enemy in all the hills. The ordinary people want peace and to get on with their lives. Here at the warehouse Moslems, Serbs and Croats all work together. They get one good meal a day. Why can't the rest of the country work together the same?

More extracts from David's diaries will appear in future newsletters when space permits.



## ◆ FROM THE MESSENGER ARCHIVES:

### DEPRESSION

By Dr. Clemency Mitchell

Messenger dated 23 January 2009, Volume 114, number 2

This is the full version of the article published in the previous newsletter.

John\* recently lost his job and became increasingly depressed the longer he was unemployed. As an expressive person, he started questioning his friends and asking why God had allowed this to happen to him. He said he felt worthless. No matter how much I told him that things would work out, my words didn't seem to make a difference. He became very depressed and could not believe that God loved or cared about him. He found little encouragement when people said that they would pray for him. It seemed they did not know what to do or say that would really help.

#### Attitudes

Depression and other mental illnesses are taboo subjects for many Christians. We often give the impression that if we had more faith we would never feel really down. Reinforcing this idea are songs such as 'Always cheerful, always cheerful, sunshine all around I see; Full of beauty is the path of duty, cheerful will I always be.' (NAH 647)

Our cheerfulness can be encouraging to those around us, but it can also cause people who are down to feel even worse. As Solomon says, 'Singing to someone in deep sorrow is like pouring vinegar in an open cut.' (Proverbs 25:20, CEV.)

What can we do when the growth of sadness in ourselves and others becomes uncontrollable and unbearable?

Depression is a real and normal experience for many Christians. David was regarded as especially close to God but was still able to write psalms despairing that God cared for him. Psalms 22, 42, 88 and 102 give expression to some of the classic symptoms of depression. Could it be that God wanted these verses in Scripture to challenge our fear of depression and force us to face its reality, even for those who are after God's own heart?

#### Talk about it

We need to re-examine our beliefs about the expression of emotion. These psalms teach us some very clear messages:

- Experiencing depression is normal.
- It is right to talk to God about our frustrations and feelings about him.
- It is good to speak out to others about the despair we experience.
- God never promises to remove the threat of depression from us. Verses such as 'My peace I give to you' (John 14:27b) must be set next to verses like 'Why, O Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me? . . . Darkness is my closest friend.' (Psal88:14,18b.)

#### Be open

The psalmist calls for us to be open and honest about our emotional states. We must work together to create a culture of 1 Corinthians 13 love for each other, as it is perfect love that casts out our fears of being vulnerable with one another (1 John 4:18).

We need to know how to help those around us feel safe about expressing their emotional vulnerability. We can do this by:

- Telling our own stories of past emotional swings and depression to friends.
- Recognise that each individual's experience of depression is very different.
- Understanding and discussing the whole range of happy and sad emotions expressed in the psalms.

#### Helping sufferers

How can we as a community of believers help someone who is suffering from depression?

- Listen to, and stay with, the experience of the depressed friend. 'Listen before you answer.' (Prov. 18:13.)
- Allow our hearts to hurt with the friend in pain – 'If one part suffers, every part suffers with it;' (1 Cor 12:26a). 'Mourn with those who mourn.' (Rom. 12:15b.)
- When offering encouragement, think about how the other person might be hearing what you say. Could you be 'pouring vinegar on the open cut' of their emotional pain? How can you put into action a 1 Corinthians 13 kind of love that helps to cast out their fears?

#### Here are some of the things I learned about depression when I was a GP.

Mild to moderate depression is very common, may last a long time, but normally gets better eventually, whatever the treatment. Most mental health problems can be treated by GPs and only the more serious ones need referral to specialists.



Medications have their place, but more important are support and encouragement that come from the sympathetic ear and the unhurried consultation.

I also learned that depression and anxiety states with all their variations usually begin not so much as diseases that come out of the blue, but as mental reactions to events, relationships and beliefs, or are due to physical factors such as fatigue, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, and such personal poisons as alcohol and caffeine.

I learned about the two great resources that Adventists have for dealing with anxiety and depression. The first, which they share with other Christians, is their faith in God and the Bible which tells us: 'In his divine power he has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who has called us by his own glory and goodness.'\* This includes the weapons we need to fight anxiety and depression. This doesn't mean that other help may not be needed as well, and that's where the second Adventist advantage comes in – our scientifically verified health and lifestyle message.

### Mind cure

I learned to value the counsel of Ellen G. White in all areas of health, both mental and physical, particularly as it is stated in The Ministry of Healing – that timeless physicians' handbook. As a doctor, I strongly advise anyone who has mental or emotional problems to read and follow the encouragement and advice in the 'Mind Cure' chapter. Key principles are:

- the healing power of God's Word
- the importance of gratitude and praise
- the power of the will
- the danger of centring attention on self
- the healing power of helping others and
- the need for a healthy lifestyle.

Medicalisation is one of the problems with our materialistic society. Many think that happiness is their right, and that material things or relationships will provide it. When these fail, their unhappiness is considered to be a medical problem, but feeling depressed is by no means always a disease. It can become a disease when it seriously interferes with our functioning, but the boundaries are seldom clear. It can begin as an understandable reaction – say, to a bereavement – or can descend suddenly, for no apparent reason. It's the same with anxiety states which often overlap with depression. Both can have physical as well as mental causes and both can be chronic or acute.

[nhs.uk/depression](https://www.nhs.uk/depression)

How do we know if we or the person we want to help is clinically depressed or just unhappy? The NHS website is very helpful. Go to [nhs.uk /depression](https://www.nhs.uk/depression) and you will find a checklist of psychological, physical and emotional symptoms of depression. There is also a list of physical conditions that may cause depression.

### Here is a summary of the symptoms:

- persistent low, sad mood
- feelings of worthlessness and that life isn't worth living, even thoughts of suicide
- lack of energy with or without slowing down of movement and/or speech
- loss of interest in things you normally enjoy
- poor concentration and memory
- increased anxiety and irritability
- disturbed sleep, especially waking very early
- appetite change – either decreased with weight loss, or increased, especially for high-calorie foods like chips and cakes, with weight gain.

Any of these symptoms that persist and are unexplained need to be dealt with, and there are lots of simple things we can do for ourselves that may be effective. If several of these symptoms persist, and if they don't respond to our efforts, we need help.

### Lifestyle factors

Now about the Adventist health message and the lifestyle factors that profoundly affect mental health:

**FOOD** – The 'normal' high-sugar, high-fat British diet affects mental health in two ways – the high sugar intake encourages symptoms of anxiety and irritability and the high fat content clogs the circulation, making it harder to get the oxygen and nutrients to the brain cells. It also lacks the B vitamins and omega 3 fats that are especially important for brain and nervous system function. For optimum mental and physical health, diets should be based on a wide variety of whole, unrefined plant foods.

**POISONS** – anything that artificially stimulates or depresses the brain should be avoided, as they all, in the long term, contribute to anxiety and depression. Alcohol, tobacco and 'recreational' drugs are obviously bad, but caffeine is important too. I've seen quite a few acute anxiety states cured within days, simply by cutting out the coffee.

**EXERCISE** is very important in the fight against depression and is now accepted by many as the most effective treatment for mild to moderate depression. Vigorous exercise has a powerful anti-depressant and calming

walk, and if it's in a pleasant place with a good friend, even better.

**SUNLIGHT**, even in winter, lifts the spirits and stimulates the production of endorphins in the brain. These are natural antidepressants and tranquillisers, so sufferers should make every effort to get regular outdoor daylight exercise.

**SLEEP** – adequate sleep is vital, but remember that lying quiet and relaxed in the dark will give you almost as much rest as sleep, especially if you use your willpower to displace negative thoughts with positive ones. Think about Bible promises and songs of praise – they have genuine healing properties.

**SABBATH** – a regular weekly rest day is as important as regular nightly rest – another big Adventist advantage. We need the time it gives us away from everyday work and worries, time for the healing activities of worship, thanks-giving, praise and enjoyable socialising.

**ORDER AND REGULARITY** – this is vitally important in the prevention and treatment of all mental and emotional problems. Our brains and bodies need regular times for eating, sleeping, exercising, worship, work and relaxation. The power of the will must be activated, not only to control negative thoughts but to practise a disciplined lifestyle.

**TRUST IN DIVINE POWER** is certainly the most important factor. Praise, whether sung aloud in joyful hymns or just repeated in thankful thoughts, has a powerful influence on mood and mental activity. Choose to start each day with thanksgiving and praise. Even though emotionally one may feel anything but thankful, thinking, saying or singing thankful words generates healing endorphins.

As Christian believers, we wonder how individuals can avoid depression, especially as they get older, if they have no religious faith. If this life is all there is, and if there is no superhuman source of guidance or protection, why would anyone not be anxious? On the other hand, with the Lord as our Saviour and the Bible as our guide, however we feel now, we can know that there is a way out, and that our depression and anxiety will not last forever. 'His grace is sufficient.'\*\*

### Frequently asked questions

Q: What about medical help for Christians with depression and anxiety?

A: Sometimes medication is needed to get people to the point where they can start to use their will.

Q: What if you are already on medication, perhaps have been for ages? Is it worth changing your diet and lifestyle?

A: A resounding YES! It is always worth improving one's diet and lifestyle. In fact, whatever the illness, improved lifestyle will help you to recover more quickly.

Q: What about psychotherapy?

A: Most of the hundreds of different types of psychotherapy have serious weaknesses – they centre attention on self, the problems and the past, failing to emphasise the power of the will or the need to put the past behind us and move on. Therapies emphasising self-discipline and learning new habits of thought and behaviour are the most likely to help. The Bible, our personal prayers and worship should be part of our therapy.

Q: Where can we find out about medically reliable Bible-based help?

A: I have found *Depression, the Way Out* by Dr Neil Nedley very helpful. Dr Nedley is the newly appointed director of the Weimar Institute and he has a ten-day reversing depression programme which can be followed at home.

*Go to [DrNedley.com](http://DrNedley.com) for more information.*

### A final note of caution:

A healthy lifestyle will help medical and other treatments to be more effective. If you are taking regular medicines, whether for mental or emotional problems or for physical conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes or other chronic problems, do tell your medical advisers about any major lifestyle changes you are making, as they may change your need for medication.

\* Dr. Mitchell points out that John is a pseudonym

\*\* 2 Peter 1:3, 4. \*\* 2 Cor. 12:9.





## ◆ CHURCH MATTERS: ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ADRA:** Thank you to all who have returned coin cards, boxes and donation envelopes for the ADRA Annual Appeal raising over £14,364.31. **Please continue to support ADRA** during the year by taking an ADRA box or coin cards for your home or by donating to the [Just Giving Page \(click here\)](#).

**Naomi Phillips** (nee Burgess) would like to wholeheartedly thank everybody who so kindly donated towards her triathlon fundraising in memory of her beloved Papa, Pastor Roy. £3,369.17 was raised for the PSP Association, which will help to fund research into PSP to one day find a cure.

**The church membership list** needs regular updating to verify contact details and aid communication with members and membership retention. Michele Thompson, Pat Walton, Audrey Huzzey, Annalisa Molteni, Thiago Santos, Dave Burgess and the Pastoral Team will assist church clerk, Michele Thompson with this task.

**Help wanted: The Children's Sabbath School** is looking for help with teaching, activities, storytelling, and safeguarding/registration, especially in Kindergarten (4-6), Primary (7-9), and Juniors (10-12). With enough volunteers it's likely you could only be on the rota every 6-8 weeks. Please see Natalie Davison or Keila Pedditzi if you can help.

**Thank you** for the condolences, prayers and well wishes to the family of Joseph Cudjoe, whose father, Pastor Daniel Cudjoe, was laid to rest on 27<sup>th</sup> June in Reading. Our condolences and prayers go to this family.

**Gabriel Colins** enters his Masters Programme in Theology at Newbold, and **Eliam Arias** returns to Mexico to finish his fourth year of Theology at Montemorelos University this autumn. They would appreciate any support towards their course fees. You can help via their [gofund.me](#) pages below or by contacting them directly: [gcolinsgabriel@gmail.com](mailto:gcolinsgabriel@gmail.com) (Gabriel) and [edrei7.110@gmail.com](mailto:edrei7.110@gmail.com) (Eliam). <https://gofund.me/ea0136f5> - Gabriel <https://gofund.me/43df2267> - Eliam

**Sami** – one of our missionaries, will continue to be with us until the end of September

**Please be reminded that no photography/videoing should take place in our services** unless it is official – Church Board policy.

**The Meriden Foodbank** is looking for volunteer drivers who can help on Fridays with food deliveries. Please contact Annalisa Molteni on 07425785763.

**Paula Carrillo** has resigned her post so Thiago de Santos will take over the Communications Department lead role.

## ◆ REGULAR EVENTS

- **Discipleship/Nurturing classes** are being held every Friday 7:30pm via Zoom. Intended for those who have been baptised over the past three years these sessions will seek to build up and solidify faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are interested please speak to one of the pastoral team.
- **Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting** is held in the Sanctuary with available Zoom facility Meeting ID: 721 857 1482; Passcode: pray3r or [click here](#). If anyone wants to pray for their children contact the SPC prayer leaders on 07988045461
- **Women in Prayer/Prayer Ministry:** every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sabbath of the month 3.00-5.00pm. every morning 6am-6:30am Zoom ID 8316619709 passcode 777.
- weekly on Zoom - Fridays 6pm Zoom ID: 831 0985 5836 Passcode: Fprayer
- **Men's Ministry Prayer Meeting** held every Tuesday 9pm on Zoom ID: 519 552 6863 & Passcode: Pray3r
- **Prayer for the Children** is held on the first Sabbath of each month. If you would like to add your child contact Prayer Ministry leaders Marlene and Bella on 07988045461
- **Women Ministry Outreach:** staff at Auburn Mere Residential Home have extended an invitation to Stanborough Park Church to visit with the residents every Sabbath for an hour between 14.00 and 16.00. Contact Milimo or Esther if you would like to take part.
- **Badminton Club:** Come and join our friendly badminton club on Mondays at the Stanborough Secondary School gym. Programme starts at 5:30pm, finishing around 7:30pm. All abilities welcome. Any questions contact Arto Keshishian.
- **Tuesday Meetings** resume 6<sup>th</sup> August.

## ◆ THE LAST WORD:

**Houses and wealth are inherited from parents but a prudent wife is from the Lord.**

Proverbs 18:13 NIV