

BBS Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor

Three new Christians!

**Update and appeal for
African Medical Project**

We remember John Diggle

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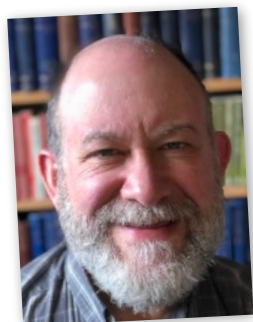
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Front cover and
above: BBS Family
Retreat at Bassenfell
Manor



MY PERSPECTIVE



Don't let
anything
steal our
joy

Joy or Happiness?

I'm leading a study for the British Bible School on the letter to the Christians in Philippi. We've called that study "More Than Happiness". As I have studied through the opening chapter it has struck me time and again that there is a difference between joy and happiness.

I hear people today who express that they are not happy. There is so much around us to be unhappy about: the parties during lockdown at No.10; the potential invasion of Ukraine by Russia; the pandemic which continues to take the lives of those we love; and the list could go on and on. There is much to be unhappy about.

Sadly, we hear frequently of those who have decided to end their marriages. Often these are people that we love. But why would you want to give up on something that has been so precious to you? The answer we usually hear is that one spouse is not happy.

But is life really about my being happy? Is our primary concern that we be happy? The problem with happiness is that it is fleeting and based on what is going on around us. I found this

statement that I think showed the difference between joy and happiness.

"How does joy differ from happiness? Happiness is

a fleeting emotion based on external circumstances. But true joy is different – it is something that comes from within – it's a deep abiding peace and sense of contentment and strength that is due to something internal." (<https://bible.org/series/knowning-jesus-knowing-joy-study-philippians>)

Happiness can come and go depending on what is happening around us. Joy is something that is due to something internal. Joy comes from the relationship with we have with Jesus, which is a sure foundation on which to build our lives.

I'm sure you remember this statement about Jesus: "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever*" (Hebrews 13:8). If our lives are based on Jesus we have something that is not going to change. This brings joy to our lives.

Think about the apostle Paul. For four years he was a prisoner, held in prison for simply teaching about Jesus. Yet despite his circumstances he wrote the letter to the Philippians which is a letter of joy. As a prisoner he could say, "*I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength*" (Philippians 4:12-13 NIV).

May we learn to live contented lives of joy because our strength is from Jesus and not based on what happens around us. Don't let anything steal our joy but rely instead on the one who died for us.

Jon

Almost every week I have someone ask me about a congregation in one place or another. On our website there is a directory which Christians can easily use – www.churchesofchrist.co.uk

For any wishing to make donations to various appeals we are happy to collect and send funds. Our account is HSBC 40-45-03 91058533 Please do let us know what you are putting funds in the account for.

Trevor



CONGRATULATIONS!

New Christians in Stockwell (London)



We would like to report and rejoice in welcoming two new brothers in the family.

On Sunday, 28th November 2021, **Orfeo Noordpool** chose Christ as his Lord and Saviour while his children stood nearby and watched as he was immersed.

On Sunday, 9th January 2022, **Stephen Alfrey** put on Christ surrounded by his wife and children and Christians from the Stockwell congregation.



The family at Stockwell look forward to helping them grow and loving them along the way.

Alan and Sarah Dod

New Christian in Cumbernauld

“There is no old and young in the church; there’s only Christians!”

~ *Graham McDonald*
16/1/22



Finlay McCready on the day he was baptised into Christ (16/1/22) with his new sister Mary Anderson (97)



BRITISH BIBLE SCHOOL NOTES

Online Bible Classes

We may well have only recently begun a new year, but what a busy few weeks it has been for the Bible School. We are already into the fifth week of our first round of Online Bible Classes for 2022, with classes on *Knowing the Unknown God* and Paul's letter to the *Philippians*. These classes are open to any wanting to join in with details on our website and Facebook page. You can catch up on the earlier classes on our YouTube channel.

Online Extension Programme

We have a good number of students enrolled on our first Online Extension Programme module for the year studying: *Understanding the Bible*. This is another of our introductory modules taught over a twelve week term. If you are interested in being a part of one of our assessed classes later in the year, do please keep an eye out for details.

Evening Lectures Online

This past Saturday we held the first of our Evening Lectures Online for 2022.

Patrick Boyns spoke on *Tel Lachish: Where Archaeology Met the Bible*. If you missed it and would like to watch the recording, do please let us know. We are planning to continue with these every two months, on the last Saturday of the month, so do look out for future events throughout the year.

Weekend Family Retreat

"A weekend of fellowship, laughter and sweet friendship. This is what makes life blessed and awesome."

Away from home, and perhaps the highlight of the month was our Winter Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor in the Lake District. Although we were slightly down on numbers this year, about fifty of all ages spent a delightful couple of days at what has become one of our favourite venues.

The weekend's theme was: *Born to be King* and formed the basis of our three main sessions and the Saturday evening activity. Earlier in the day the younger element enjoyed an archery session which seemed to have hit the spot.

As always we thank all of you who continue to support this work through prayer and contributions. May God bless us all in his service.

Patrick Boyns
britishbibleschool.com



"Absolutely fab weekend physically spiritually and mentally. Great seeing everyone and meeting new family members in Christ."

"Fantastic and uplifting weekend spent with special people."



APPEALS

OXFORD

The congregation in Oxford is looking for help from Christians willing to help with preaching and church growth. The small congregation would ideally like someone able to work with them on a full-time, or at least part-time, basis. Realising this may be a long-term goal they would also appreciate brothers visiting on an occasional basis to assist in teaching and preaching. The congregation has its own place of worship. For initial talks please contact Kyle Hill – Kylejameshill1985@hotmail.com.

Thank you for those who have a heart for Pakistan. Funds for help with the building work may be channelled through the CW. We also encourage those who can help with support for Naeem. Thank you.

Trevor

PHILIPPINES

Typhoon Update

Once again, thank you for helping us with another disaster relief. Your monetary contribution has helped us provide roofing materials, food, and water to families affected by super typhoon Rai in five different provinces. Although our work is far from over, due to the vastness of destruction, we appreciate your love and compassion to my fellow Filipinos.

In many other places, electricity and communication have not been completely restored. It has already been more than a month since Rai struck.

PAKISTAN



Our church building has been damaged because of recent heavy rains and water come in the side of the building. We need your prayers and support to repair it. We would be very thankful for any help you can give

Please keep us in your prayers.

Naeem Sabir



Storm damage in Pakistan



Typhoon damage in the Philippines

APPEALS

We ask that you continue to pray for these families and for those of us who seek to serve them. May you be blessed in every way. For God's glory!

Gigie Carranza



Christians receiving help in the Philippines



Christians receiving help in the Philippines

AFRICA MEDICAL PROJECT

Greetings! We hope you are having blessed year so far. We pray that you are all keeping safe and well at this difficult time. We would like to thank congregations and individual brethren for their generous contributions these past few years to support the Africa medical project.

Your contributions have paid for the shipment of boxes of medical items to Ghana, Nigeria, and Yemen. These donated items are being used to provide low cost-care for people who might otherwise struggle to pay for their medical treatment.

The items are being delivered to a whole range of hospitals; including specialist centres, large municipal hospitals, village hospitals, small district hospitals and even designated healthcare centres in villages with very limited resources where, for example, a poor farmer's wife would go to give birth.

Some of these items included ECG machines/ electrodes, defibrillators pads, pericardiocentesis kit, chest drainage kits, pacemakers, pacemaker leads, temporary external pacing boxes, heart monitors, reloadable vascular linear stapler, airway management devices, test tubes, stomach tubes, safety needles, abscess drainage kits, knitted baby clothes, baby wipes, sutures, radiation lead coats, exercise treadmill machine and lots more. Some of



Christians receiving help in the Philippines

Thank you to everyone who has given to the Philippine Typhoon relief. We are still able to send more through the CW or please send directly to Gigie. I understand that at least £3670 has been sent.

We continue to encourage brethren to help with the latest Philippine disaster; to aid on a regular basis Naeem Sabir in Pakistan and also Davison Ndlovu in Malawi, who needs more support after congregations are no longer able to support them.

Please contact me for more information.

Trevor

APPEALS



A GE T2100 Exercise treadmill equipment donated by the Cardiac Research team at Aberdeen Royal infirmary to Komfo Anorkye Teaching Hospital, Ghana, to help with the diagnosis of heart disease.

these items are older models no longer needed in the UK, others have reached their expiry date but are still viable and safe to use.

Your continued financial help is needed to sustain this project. Currently, there is only about £20 left in the “Africa Medical Fund” account. The amount raised just before the pandemic was used for paying for the cost of shipment over the last two years, since we were unable to arrange for group training workshops because of Covid restrictions. Several boxes of medical items are waiting to be shipped to the various countries and the cost of shipping items has of course recently increased!

We are needing to raise at least £5,000 to cover shipment costs for current and future shipments as well as ECG and defibrillator support training workshops, which we hope can be arranged soon.



Neurology Department, Korle-bu Teaching Hospital, Ghana. A GE Dash 4000 haemodynamic monitor, Philips Heartstart XL defibrillator, Defib PADs and airway management devices donated by Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Donations from congregations or individuals to make this possible will be greatly appreciated.

Wherever possible the distribution on the ground will be led by individual Christians or congregations who can deal directly with those in need so that this work will be seen to be in the name of our Lord.

I am leading this project but the congregation in Aberdeen is managing the funds.

We would be grateful for donations to help this project.

There is potential for this work to expand even further and we'd be interested to hear from individual Christians or churches interested in learning more and perhaps working with us in the future.

For further information please contact:

Julius Donkor: 07495 154255 jdonkor@gmail.com

David Murray: 01651 842864 / 07850 029091
dgm@ifb.co.uk

Julius Donkor



Several district hospitals and healthcare centres in the Kumasi region of Ghana have benefited immensely from items donated by Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. Items included baby knitted clothes, paediatric electrodes, surgical gloves, FFP3 mask, needles, syringes, delivery packs, paediatric airway management devices, surgical tools for delivery, diabetes testing kits, blood pressure monitors, and many more.

John Diggle (Stapleford)

While we rejoice in Christ, it is with sadness that the congregation in Stapleford, Nottingham, announces the sudden death of our beloved John Diggle on the 2nd December. John was loved and highly respected by every member of this church, and that love and respect extends to many other congregations and Christians throughout the United Kingdom, as well as in many other parts of the world. John has been a massive influence on the Lord's people in many, many places.

John was married to my sister Cherry in 1976 (in Lubbock, Texas), enjoying 45 years of marriage. They have one daughter, Hannah Green, and three grandchildren. Hannah and Ben have been living and working in various countries of Africa, currently Botswana. John was very proud of Hannah and dearly loved his three grandchildren. It was his and Cherry's plans to spend Christmas with their Botswana family, but sadly John's death occurred three days before they were due to leave. We all send our love and condolences to Cherry, Hannah, Ben, and their children.

A Man Who Prepared His Life

John was the son of John and Winnie Diggle of Heanor (Derbys.), both of whom died several years ago. Their influence on John was massive. He was an extremely intelligent man. He studied and obtained his degree in dentistry at Manchester University in the early 1970s. In time, John set up in dental



practice in his home town of Heanor, serving not only many people in the town but also many Christians in congregations throughout the Midlands. It was as he was completing his studies at university that I first met John, and we became friends from the very start – with no idea just how close that friendship would become!

While John was a dentist by profession, I believe it would be true to say that he loved even more his study of God's Word. John was an avid student of the Bible, and this love turned him into an exceptional teacher of the Word. He spoke regularly on Sundays at our worship services and from time to time in leading Bible classes. Everyone said how much they both enjoyed it and learned from it. Be it his studies or his lessons from the front of the building, a lot of deep thinking went into it, but John had the ability to turn the most difficult of subjects into everyday language that his listeners could comprehend. Just a few weeks before his death, he completed an excellent study of the book of Revelation.

Memories of John Diggle

Mission Work

John's love for God's work was well-known throughout the country and in other parts of the world. He was a popular speaker and he preached at many congregations all over England. But, his love for God's work spread to other countries as well.

India – He made several trips to India to speak the word. India became a country that he loved.

Honduras – In more recent years, he spearheaded the mission trips that the Nottingham congregation (along with Christians from Loughborough) conducted in Honduras (2 trips: 2013 and 2015). On these trips, young people learned to build houses for homeless people, feed people who lived on the city dump, people who went around shoeless or with mere pieces of leather as shoes. To meet this need and thanks to John's influence, "*Soles for Souls*" was begun and sufficient money was raised to purchase hundreds of pairs of shoes for those who lived on the dump the first trip and enough to give shoes to every person in a village close by the second trip.

Malawi – Our third mission trip was to Malawi in 2018 and, although he wasn't able to go on this trip personally, John was a big encourager and organiser for every aspect of the trip. He may not have been there in person, but he was definitely there in spirit.

John was keen for the next mission trip to be to India, and it would have taken place last year (2021) had it not been for the pandemic. John saw the value of our young people taking these trips to help churches in Third World countries. Each one helped the people and the Christians in these countries, but they were also a big help to the young people who went. Every young person who went said that it was a spiritual, life-changing event for them. For some, it brought them to the Lord and a desire to serve Him, as well.

Barnabas

In many ways, John was the 'Barnabas' of the Stapleford congregation. He was an encourager

(Acts 4:32). He encouraged our young men to involve themselves in teaching the Bible, giving them guidance on a one-to-one basis and through classes for young men. Through these they were able to know their Bibles better and were better prepared to present lessons from God's Word. He was always one of the first to thank and congratulate our young men when they gave lessons. Every person in the congregation received constant encouragement from John.

Memorial

Cherry made the decision to make that trip to Botswana as planned, which I believe was the right decision. She had lost her husband, but they also had a daughter who'd lost a father and needed her mother to be there. Cherry returned shortly after Christmas and Hannah and the grandchildren arrived the day after.

Cherry had also made the decision to not have a funeral service for John, so days after his cremation, a memorial service was held at the Stapleford building on 8th January. It was a memorial and a time to celebrate and remember the life of someone who had been a vital part of this congregation. Derek Adams organised the service and I know I speak on behalf of Cherry in thanking him for doing such an excellent job. It truly was a service of joy and thanksgiving. Numerous people spoke, including Ken Mullan, Philip Bullock, Iniobong Charles, Jake Adams, Joel Adams, Hannah Green, and myself. Among the many comments that were made are the following: "I consider John to be a remarkable man whom I loved dearly. He was a man who made the world a nicer place."

"We will miss John's teaching; it challenged people. He was loved and respected by the church."

"His studies with me made the Bible make so much sense to me."

"John was a person who was interested in people and genuinely loved them."

"John was selfless. I loved that man to bits. He educated, he encouraged, he was a listener and an

Memories of John Diggle

example. He was a father figure to the church. He encouraged people to have an opinion.”

“He was a teacher, a mentor, and a friend to me. He loved the church. I still hear his words in my head. He was the embodiment of the ‘fruit of the Spirit’.”

“My dad was an open-minded man, a man who loved learning. He read, he learned, and he understood. He was intelligent, educated, and willing to learn new things.”

“He lived his life in the strength of the faith he had in God. We owe him a debt.”

That, I believe, says it all. We thank God for John that he was a part of this congregation and a part of our lives. He will be sadly missed. We keep his wife Cherry, his daughter Hannah, her husband Ben, and their children Jemima, Bunty, and Ted in our prayers. We know that God has taken them into his care.

Bob Eckman

Invitation to Great Barr Bible Seminar

Date: Saturday 5th March 2022.

Time: 10.00 am (Zoom opens from 9.45 am)

Theme: ‘The beginning of all things’

We are planning two 45 minute lessons.

There will be group discussion, Q & As and a Bible Quiz.

“The universe in the beginning” (Genesis 1) – Graeme Morrison (Corby)

“God’s grace and lovingkindness from the beginning of time” (Psalm 136)

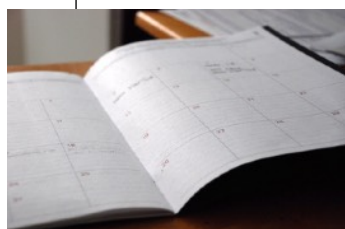
– Mike Glover (Aughton)

Invitation to Great Barr Church Quarterly Psalms & Prayer

Date: Saturday 12th March 2022

Time: 7.00 pm (Zoom opens from 6.45 pm)

(For details contact Sola Adeosun –
sola.adeosun@gmail.com)



DIARY

February

3rd – **British Bible School Evening Class:** “More Than Happiness – Exploring the Letter to the Philippians”, 8.00 pm on Zoom, each Thursday. Teacher: Jon Galloway. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

7th – **British Bible School Evening Class:** “Proclaiming the Unknown God”, 8.00 pm on Zoom, each Monday. Teacher: John Griffiths. For details see our Facebook page or website: www.britishbibleschool.com.

14th -20th February – **Advanced Bible Study Series in Gemünden, Germany.** Space this year is limited to 30 people due to Covid restrictions. Hotel rooms will also be available in the village. ABSS I (Monday-Friday) and ABSS II (Friday-Sunday). Contact: Paul Brazle (brazle.paul@gmail.com).

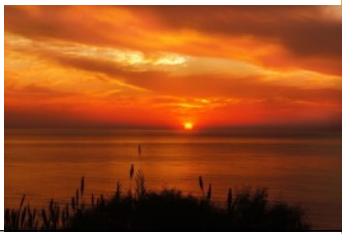
March

5th – **Great Barr (Birmingham):** Bible Seminar – “The beginning of all things”, 10.00 am on Zoom. Contact: Sola Adeosun (sola.adeosun@gmail.com).

12th – **Great Barr (Birmingham):** Quarterly Psalms and Prayer, 7.00 pm on Zoom. Contact: Sola Adeosun (sola.adeosun@gmail.com).

September

5th-15th – **Trip of a Lifetime to the Bible Lands of Israel & Jordan.** Contact: Ian Starrs (jes22ian@msn.com)



THE FINAL WORD



The beauty of the love of Jesus

"Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love it would be utterly scorned." (Song of Solomon 8:7)

Some Christians are almost ashamed of this book but The Song of Solomon is in the Bible. It is romantic and almost slightly erotic as it tells the love story of a man and a woman.

Theologians in the 1800's were convinced that this was talking about the relationship in human terms of Christ and the church. Such was thought and is indeed the mystery of Christ's love for his followers. When Paul in Ephesians 5:25ff tells us that Christ loves the church making her holy, clean, radiant, without stain, without wrinkle and blameless. Such beauty and love assures us of our Beloved Jesus.

We are not part of a fellowship with Jesus based on rules and regulations nor are we in an *ad hoc* situation whereby we are in or out of favour. He is mine and I am his. Here is love divine, perfect

splendour, holy intimacy. Here the King of kings encircles us with tenderness, with words of gentleness and whispers of better things to come. Many waters cannot quench this kind of love, nor can rivers wash it away.

We do however live in a world filled with its own pleasures; the romance of Heaven is wiped away into recreational pleasure and sexual gratification. We are no different from those thousands of years ago who rose up to play and caused the society and worship of God to be sidelined into selfishness. God forgive us.

Romance between a man and a woman is God ordained and secures a holy liaison. The result of true careful and honest love produces Christian character that can face life with all its ups and downs with genuineness and hope.

The human relationship is nothing like that of Christ and his church but those of us who are in love can make the best of both. Old age or infirmity should not rock the boat of those in true love,

waters cannot quench love nor do rivers wash it away. Love is far more valuable than any possession or wealth stored in banks.

*Hold the passions of our hearts
O God, in the sacredness of
your heart. We do not
understand all that is love or
lust within us. Hold our hands
in the beauty of our
relationship with you and raise
our minds to true and
wholesome love to those you
have given us. Amen.*

Trevor

