

A GENTLE ANSWER TURNS AWAY WRATH

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1

While volunteering at church recently with the 7–11-year-olds, we discussed the ancient wisdom of Proverbs. We learnt how they are principles rather than promises and then found some in the Bible, including Proverbs 15:1: **A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.**

I explained to the children how one of my colleagues has a real gift of communicating with people who are angry and defusing that rage with his kind and calm manner. As you may imagine, often at New Hope, support workers and service managers face people who are angry and this particular colleague excels at gentle answers which calm situations down. I know this because he has calmed me down when I have been frustrated!

People can present as angry for many reasons: it could be a learnt defense mechanism which serves very well as protection from harm or threats (actual and perceived), it could be a response to an injustice, frustration at the many barriers to accessing accommodation and health care, or it could be a result of physical or mental health challenges or drug and alcohol misuse. Whatever, the reason behind the behaviour, we seek to be gentle, calm, kind, and fair – deescalating the situation for the safety of everyone involved. We always seek to ask why as well, searching for the reason behind the reaction. Most of the people we help have experienced trauma and anger is a valid response to this.

Sometimes service users are angry with staff but often the arguments are between service users themselves. Pain, fear, frustration and disappointment can

culminate in anger and then one person's rage can provoke someone else – the wrath spiraling up and up, damaging more and more people as it grows. We need bringers of peace, Christ-like men and women, who bring gentle answers, kind words and the presence of the Holy Spirit, defusing the anger and changing the atmosphere.

Please pray this month for peace and protection for all our different locations: the Haven, the Sanctuary, New Hope House, the Manse, and the three HopeHomes. Please pray for the service users who struggle with anger and big emotions. Please pray for people who are scared and that fear leads to anger, please pray especially for people who are scared things will go well for them and then sabotage their own recovery. Please pray too for all our staff and volunteers as they seek to create environments which are safe, homely, welcoming and peaceful.

Our Cultivate service which provides mental health support and wellbeing, predominantly through horticultural therapy, gardening and nature-based activities, plays a vital role in helping people become more in tune with their emotions. Please pray for the Cultivate team as they work one-to-one with many individuals across New Hope, enabling them to grow and heal from past traumas. Please pray for the Restore and Recover match-funded fundraising appeal which takes place this month – raising money for Cultivate's essential work.



Rebecca Palmer
Fundraising and Communications
Manager

Mon

Outreach Plus and the Haven

Providing support, advice and practical humanitarian aid for people who are street homeless, sofa-surfing or worried about evictions.

Give thanks for the volunteers who help at the Haven and with street outreach. Please pray for more volunteers to join the outreach team.

Thank God for the food donations we receive on a daily basis from local companies and individuals – keeping our food bills very low!

Praise God for our partnerships with other charities and statutory organisations, enabling us to provide the best possible care for each individual.

Please pray for people who are entrenched in rough sleeping and choose not to engage with our support. Please pray for breakthrough and transformation.

Pray for a peaceful and safe atmosphere at the Haven.

Tues

The Sanctuary: Emergency Accommodation

Providing short-term accommodation and intensive support for 22 people who are homeless or are threatened with homelessness.

Please continue to give thanks for the new manager. Please pray for the recruitment of a new assistant manager. Ask God to provide the right person so that there is a strong, complementary management team.

Please pray for the recruitment of two new support workers.

Give thanks for the many donations we receive at the Sanctuary and for the corporate volunteers who regularly cook dinner.

Please pray for a peaceful atmosphere at the Sanctuary.

Weds

Recovery Services Accommodation (New Hope House and the Manse)

Two homes providing accommodation for up to 14 individuals who are in recovery from alcohol and substance misuse.

Give thanks for a peaceful atmosphere in the Recovery Services.

Praise God for the wonderful garden space and the activities which take place there.

Please pray for the staff. Ask God to provide good health, strength and resilience to the team as they support the residents in their journeys of recovery.

Pray the residents would remain committed to the process of recovery, engaging in all the opportunities provided.

Please pray for a resident who has recently lost his father.

Thurs

Tenancy Sustainment Team and HopeHomes

TST supports people who have recently moved into their own accommodation and our three HopeHomes provide long-term accommodation for 13 individuals.

Give thanks for donations of household items and pyjamas for our service users. These are so helpful and we love to be able to bless people in this way.

Thank God for a local decorator who has done a make-over at one of our HopeHomes.

Please pray for a new support worker who will slot into the team and commit to building a career with New Hope.

Pray for befriender volunteers to support service users as they adapt to independent living.

Please pray for the two members of staff working on the Complex Needs project in Three Rivers as they navigate moving service users onto independent living. Please pray for the people who will then move into the Complex Needs accommodation and begin their own journeys.

Please pray for suitable employment for HopeHomes residents as they seek new jobs.

Pray too for housing applications made by HopeHomes residents. Please pray residents will be able to find suitable, future homes.

Please pray the HopeHomes residents would engage more in training and volunteer opportunities.

Fri

Cultivate

Horticultural therapy and wellbeing

We give thanks for the progression of the growing season, the warming of the soil, the unfolding of growth and the vibrant aliveness of nature.

Thank God for the planting of hanging baskets and decorative containers at the Haven, the Sanctuary and Recovery Services, bringing uplifting colour and the fascination of diverse plant forms to enliven our services.

Give thanks for the one-to-one programmes and engagements, such as an art project in which the four seasons are related to the recovery journey, the growing of strawberries, runner beans and gooseberries, the progression of a mosaic tiger piece, and restoration of a wooden carved sign.

Praise God for the different outings we have gone on recently: a bowling trip, visits to garden centres and planting in Cassiobury peace garden.

Please pray for those we are working with who are in the midst of recovery. Pray those we support find greater self-compassion, understanding and for the awakening of their creative potential.

Pray for closer collaboration with all the New Hope services and partner organisations as we progress through the year.

Please pray we find new and varied avenues of engagement for those within New Hope services.

Sat

The Hub (H) and Chaplain (C)

'The Hub' is our working title for a proposed new building which will incorporate both the current work of the Haven and the Sanctuary. New Hope's chaplain provides spiritual and emotional support to staff, volunteers and service users.

Please pray for the Fundraising and Communications Team as they work on organising a launch for The Hub. (H)

Give thanks for the people who have volunteered to be on a fundraising committee for The Hub. Please pray for the work of this committee. (H)

Please continue to pray for the funds needed to create this new building. (H)

Praise God for the opportunities to worship and share the love and truth of Jesus

throughout New Hope with staff, volunteers and service users. (C)

Thank God for the Bible studies which now take place twice a week in the Sanctuary. Give thanks for the openness and hunger the men have to read and understand God's Word. (C)

Please pray for the Chaplain's role within New Hope House since the Alpha Course has finished. Please pray for God's wisdom and direction as she goes in to the home. Please pray she will follow God's lead in who she speaks to and what she does. (C)

Thank God for the conversations had over walks and coffee with two separate men within New Hope who have experienced God and are turning their lives around. (C)

Sun

Watford Shop (W), Croxley Green shop (CG), and Head Office (HO)

Thank God for another opportunity for match-funding. Please pray for the Restore and Recover fundraising appeal which launches this month. (HO)

Give thanks for this month's Christians Across Watford Day of Prayer. Please pray for New Hope staff who will be leading worship and prayer. (HO)

Give thanks for our new cleaner who has joined the staff team. He is working across all the New Hope services ensuring that all our locations are spotless! (HO)

Praise God for Polly, who is our volunteer shop manager in the Watford shop. Thank God for her many years of faithful service and pray He would bless her. (W)

Please continue to pray for some of the volunteers who are going through difficult times. Give thanks for the life of a volunteer who recently passed away. (W)

Thank God for the many regular customers who buy items to support New Hope. (W)

Please pray for a family who is returning to their home country soon. They have regularly benefited from coming to the shop. (W)

Give thanks for the strong support of the local community in Croxley. (CG)

Please pray for good health for the volunteers. (CG)

Read our newsletter from 14th May

RESTORE & RECOVER



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