A Gift of Life

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After suffering from kidney failure for most of her life, Emma Selley finally found the perfect match for her much-needed transplant in her brother-in-law, Jacques du Toit, who selflessly gave up one of his kidneys to make this a reality for her.

Emma had need 276 dialysis sessions in the space of two years, but on Tuesday, 22 November 2022, she went in for her life-changing kidney transplant.

The two surgeries were both a success! The doctors were happy with the initial outcome.

Jacques' recovery was rapid and he was released to go home 3 days after surgery. He has since recovered well and resumed leading the Sunningdale PM congregation of Joshua Generation Church in January 2023.

Emma had some complications in the days following her surgery. The doctors were concerned, as there was swelling and more pain than normally expected. They suspected that there might be a leak somewhere as there was a high toxin reading, so she was monitored closely over the next few days. Her kidney continued to very slowly increase in function.

On the Saturday after her operation, Emma was taken off her renal diet for the first time in 38 years, and she was finally able to eat a forbidden favourite food of hers – avocado on toast!

Emma's very slow kidney function increase was attributed to the complexities arising from the unknown additional arteries the doctors discovered during the surgery. However, she was moved to the surgical ward one week after her op. One day, Emma felt to place her phone over her kidney (which she had named 'Nemo') and to play worship music "to" it. Her kidney function increased by 4% overnight (it had only increased by 1% per day).

After 15 days, Emma's kidney function was at 28% and she was released from hospital. She celebrated this with her very first milkshake ever.

Her kidney function has been steadily increasing since then, and is currently at the highest level that it has ever been in her life (almost at a normal adult level). Emma is still quite weak and bloated, but is definitely on an upward trajectory and loves her newfound dietary freedom. This transplant has also opened up broader horizons of opportunity for the Selley family, although Emma will only be able to travel long distances with Andrew from 6 months post-op. But after that, watch out world!

The family is very grateful to everyone for their faithful prayers, encouragement and support on this journey – thank you!