

Stalham Baptist Church

Sunday 17th May SBC News This Week's On Line Service "May the fragrance"



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Welcome to Sunday 17th May On Line Service

Ron will be leading and preaching, continuing the series on
2nd Corinthians. This week 2 Cor 2:14-3:6

"May the fragrance."

You can follow the service on the SBC website on Sunday

www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/. Then click on the icon pictured left.

Ron's Further reading

Acts 19 - Lev 1:1-9

For Your Prayers

Prayers please for **Gary Palmer** and family as it's his mum June Bolton's funeral on Monday. Also pray for all the volunteers working to support those isolated by the virus in our community by collecting shopping and medicines. Please pray for the businesses in and around Stalham that they will be able to navigate their way through the current crisis and remain solvent. Please pray for **Ron, Jerry and the Deacons** as they lead the church through this crisis please also pray for Monday's Deacon's meeting using Zoom, starting at 7.00pm.

Lord, give me the gift of hope, that I can then pass that on to those around me who struggle to see your light. May I use this time not to despair, but to see more of you. And that my heart will be open to the opportunities which come before me. Amen.

Lord, remind us that your Church is not the body, but the people. Though we can't meet in person, we can meet in spirit. I pray that we remain as united and passionate for you as when we first met, as when your Church first gathered in the book of Acts. May we keep our eyes on you, and each other in our hearts. Amen.

For more prayers go to [Eden](#)

Prayers for Health Workers

Please pray for frontline health care workers, we thank you for their vocational call to serve us. We also pray:

- ◆ God, keep them safe and healthy. Keep their families safe and healthy.
- ◆ God, help them to be knowledgeable about the diagnosis and treatment of this disease, as well as the changing protocols.
- ◆ God, help them to stay clear-minded in the midst of the surrounding panic.
- ◆ God, deliver them from anxiety for their own loved ones (aging parents, children, spouses, roommates).
- ◆ God, give them compassion for every patient in their care.
- ◆ God, provide for them financially, especially if they fall ill and are unable to work.
- ◆ God, help Christians in health care to exhibit extraordinary peace, so that many would ask about the reason for their hope. Give them opportunities to proclaim the gospel.

God, we trust that you are good and do good. Teach us to be your faithful people in this time of global crisis. Help us to follow in the footsteps of our faithful shepherd, Jesus, who laid down his life for the sake of love. Glorify his name as you equip us with everything needed for doing your will. Amen.

Written by Jen Pollock Michel. Taken from [20 prayers to pray during this pandemic](#)

If you are reading this newsletter as a PDF you can click on the red highlighted links and you will be taken to the relevant websites.

Don't forget you can also follow what's happening at SBC on twitter <https://twitter.com/StalhamChurch> and on Facebook www.facebook.com/stalhambaptist

FOOD BANK

SBC is open Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 12 noon to receive donations for the food bank or for anyone who wants to sign up to help in the community with food or medicine deliveries. It is manned by either Ron or Jerry. Also, The Good News paper and the Community Scene Magazine are available at the back of the church.

The [Food Bank](#) is open on Fridays in the Stables from 1.15 to 3.00pm. If you need help, or know someone in difficulty, either contact the Citizens Advice Service 0344 411 1444, the Food Bank on 07826376343, or contact Ron Skivington at minister@stalhambaptist.org.uk.

"Prayer is the
Christian's
greatest
weapon."
— Billy Graham,



Drawing from the book of James and the Psalms, Colin Sedgwick offers this reflection in these strange and unsettling times

James the brother of Jesus was nothing if not a practical man; his letter – just five chapters – is full of down-to-earth teaching. And nowhere is this more so than in these few verses at the end of chapter 4...

Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that' (James 4:13-15).

He's talking to people who are good at planning ahead. He seems to have trades people particularly in mind; but what he says is relevant to anyone who imagines they have a strong handle on the future: "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow!" Among other things, this is a warning against arrogance and self-centredness. It reinforces the teaching of Jesus in his story of "the rich fool" ([Luke 12:16-21](#)); it also echoes the words of various Old Testament passages, such as Proverbs 27:1: "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring".

But most of all, it reminds us that *the future is uncertain*. And I couldn't get it out of my mind as coverage of the coronavirus outbreak keeps unfolding.

Like many of us, I am used to making plans and expecting them, generally speaking, to happen. But suddenly that is just no longer the case. Sports events I was looking forward to... meetings I expected to attend... people I was hoping to see... responsibilities I was due to fulfil... little treats I felt I was entitled to... suddenly all these things are shrouded in uncertainty. And I don't like it very much!

In all my life, this is something I have never experienced before. A few days ago people over 70 were asked to "self-isolate". I vaguely thought to myself, "Oh well, yes, I suppose that might be a good precaution to take". And then I thought, like a four-year-old told he can't go to the park, "Hang on a minute – that means *me!* Boo-hoo, not fair". Again, I didn't like it very much...! Two main thoughts came to mind.

First, this is exactly how it has been for untold millions of people down through the centuries – and how it still is for vast numbers today. Those of us who have enjoyed the luxury of filling our diaries in confident expectation that those entries will be fulfilled are in a very small and privileged minority. Without in any way making light of the present crisis, that thought helped me to get it into perspective. This is a time for clear, calm faith in God – and for practical action to respond to what's happening, especially for those most at risk. And *not for feelings of self-pity!* I have no *entitlement* to that luxurious way of life I have unthinkingly enjoyed.

My second thought was to wonder just how much, in reality, God is generally involved in my planning. It isn't wrong to plan, of course – I don't think James is suggesting that. Indeed, it may be irresponsible *not* to. But it is wrong to plan as if we are the lords of our own lives. If we are Christians, we aren't: *Jesus is Lord* (as we perhaps rather glibly sing). And that means that if we make our plans without reference to him we are saying one thing with our lips but something else with our actions. Which means we are hypocrites. As James puts it: we ought to say, "*if it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this and that*". We are not to take anything for granted.

Like everyone else I very much hope that the present emergency will be short-lived and more limited in its effects than we are being led to fear. Our chief thoughts must be for the sick, the frail, those who suffer with depression and other mental health issues. Of course. But having said that, I think it's right to add this: surely, in the long run, it's no bad thing for us all to be reminded of the uncertainty and shortness of life. Still more, if a situation like the present one has the effect of driving us afresh into the arms of God, that can only be good. I started with a no-nonsense word from James. Perhaps it's appropriate to finish with a reassuring word from the psalmist... "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging... *The Lord Almighty is with us*" – Psalm 46. And something like this seems a reasonable prayer to pray...

Dear Father, please help me in this difficult time to be a trusting believer, a calming presence, a responsible citizen, and a good neighbour. Have mercy upon our world – and in the coming weeks may many make that life-changing journey from fear to faith as they reach out to Jesus, who died and rose again. Amen.

For more opinions/reflections from The Baptist Union GB click [here](#).

Ron's Article

Ron wrote an article for SBC's Easter Community Scene Magazine that is delivered around Stalham and wider afield which has been reproduced by Network Norfolk a Christian web site. In the article Ron reminds us that God is able to cope with all the situations which trouble us. Click [here](#) to read it.

Thought from John White.

John 20 vs 19. "Jesus Appears to His Followers." The day was Sunday, and that same evening the followers were together. They had the doors locked because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them. He said, "Peace be with you!" (ERV) Locked in for fear, does not lock out fear! BE YOU LOCKED IN OR OUT, it's no barrier to Jesus. Blessings John.

Quotes of the week

"I am progressing along the path of life in my ordinary contentedly fallen and godless condition, absorbed in a merry meeting with my friends for the morrow or a bit of work that tickles my vanity today, a holiday or a new book, when suddenly a stab of abdominal pain that threatens serious disease, or a headline in the newspapers that threatens us all with destruction, sends this whole pack of cards tumbling down. At first, I am overwhelmed, and all my little happiness's look like broken toys. Then, slowly and reluctantly, bit by bit, I try to bring myself into the frame of mind that I should be in at all times. I remind myself that all these toys were never intended to possess my heart, that my true good is in another world, and my only real treasure is Christ. And perhaps, by God's grace, I succeed, and for a day or two become a creature consciously dependent on God and drawing its strength from the right sources."

— C.S. Lewis

"And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history—money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery—the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy."

— C.S. Lewis

Material sent to publicity@stalhambaptist.org.uk or telephoned to David Child on 07799 262645 may be used in any of the church's print or electronic media. Deadline for the print edition of the Bulletin is Wednesday 7:00pm.

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