

# Stalham Baptist Church

## Sunday 7th June SBC News This Week's On Line Service "Pleasing Jesus"



**Pastor:** Rev. Ron Skivington 01692 582731  
**Assistant Pastor:** Jerry Otieno 07733837687  
**Secretary:** Diana Gordon 07951949128  
**Ministry Team:** The Whole Fellowship

### Welcome to Sunday 7th June On Line Service

Pat Dabbs will be leading and Ron preaching, continuing the series on 2nd Corinthians. This week 2 Cor 5:9-15

#### "Pleasing Jesus"

You can follow the service on the SBC website on Sunday

[www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/) Then click on the icon pictured left.

### Ron's Further reading

Luke 12:42-48, Rom 8:1, 1 Cor 3:12-15, 1 Sam 16:1f Acts 26:29 1 John 4:18

### For Your Prayers

Please pray for all those in the fellowship and community who are unwell and receiving treatment in these difficult times. Also pray for those who are still isolating. Please also pray for the children, teachers and support workers as they tentatively return to their schools under government guidance and pray for those parents who have decided that they believe this is too early and have decided to keep their children at home.

As we pray through the new Church Directory, please remember **Janet and Henry Nicholson**.

### Remaining Awake

Lord, Martin Luther King Jr wrote "One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. Today, our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change."

We pray Lord that as the current situation unravels we as a church stay awake and help our community spiritually and practically to adjust to the certain changes that will test us economically over the coming months at a time of a likely world recession driven by the virus. We also pray that we are awake enough to help heal social and cultural divides that manifest themselves in disproportionate treatment of people in the current crisis.

### Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 29th David posted "Please pray for Paul Child who has spent 10 hours in surgery." On Sunday he asked "Please continue to pray for Paul he is in much pain and his wife is unable to visit him." On Tuesday David posted Paul says "Gone a bit backward in a lot of pain, I'm in for the long haul I'm afraid. But folks prayers are keeping me going."

On Wednesday Pat posted "Our grandson Oliver (who is seven months) has started to have what appears to be fits. Natalie spent 8 hours at the hospital yesterday and they were not sure what was causing them.

A scan will be booked but she is concerned that it will take weeks to come through especially in the current situation and she is very worried. Please pray the scan booking will come through quickly and that this is not a major problem."

To join the ever-growing WhatsApp Virtual Prayer Room and Devotion WhatsApp site text Jerry on 07733837687. You will need a smart phone.

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](https://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](mailto:minister@stalhambaptist.org.uk).

**Speak Up**

**"You are not only responsible for what you say, but also for what you do not say"**

**— Martin Luther King Jr.**

## Eastern Baptist Association Weekly Prayer Focus

### 7th June 2020 Fakenham Baptist Community Church

Fakenham is a popular, growing market town in Norfolk. Meeting in the Fakenham Community Centre is the Fakenham Baptist Community Church. The fellowship took the decision to leave their old church building in January 2016. Building has begun on a new church in an area of new and developing housing.

The minister left in 2017. Now led by a team of 6 long standing members, with the support of a minister from another church the congregation comes from Fakenham and surrounding villages.

Although they have faced many challenges along the way, the fellowship rejoices in the faithfulness of God. They trust that they will be enabled to share the love of Jesus with community of Fakenham and the surrounding area.

Despite the current lockdown, Fakenham Baptist Community Church remains upbeat and connected. Members are phoning round each other frequently, e-mailing and postal contact for those without technology. Sunday worship, two life groups and leadership team meetings are held via Zoom. Video messages are being posted on the Church Facebook page. The ladies' group is using Facebook Messenger for continued support, encouragement and prayer.

Please pray

- The fellowship will remain connected to God, each other and unified as a church during this time as the Church seeks a new Minister
- For finance in the continued development of the new build so they can serve their community not only in the future but now.
- For the resolution of issues around the new build

### SBC Deacons Meeting

The Deacons have been holding twice monthly meetings on Zoom which have worked well. At the last meeting discussions were held regarding SBC coming out of lockdown. The government guidance is a little sketchy at the moment but at times government has moved very quickly on matters and it is important that some contingencies are ready to be put in place if churches are given short notification of change.

Please pray for Ron, Jerry and the Deacons as they try to navigate SBC into a "new normal."

### Zoom Meetings

The next call to prayer meeting is on Thursday June 11th at 7.00pm.

As before Diana will email links to the meeting.

The Stables Bible Study Group continues to meet via Zoom every two weeks. The Next meeting is on Wednesday June 17th. Anyone wishing to join contact Diana.

### Big Thank You

A big thank you to Simon at A.G. Meale & Sons Wayford Nurseries for supplying and erecting some beautiful hanging baskets around Stalham Baptist Church they look very lovely.

### Another Big Thank You

Yes, another big thank you to all those spending many hours each week creating the online service. They are reaching out to so many people and are comforting in this time of stress.

They also unite Christians who may well in normal times attend their own local church. We are all one in Jesus.

## Quotes of the week

"Another way that you love your enemy is this: When the opportunity presents itself for you to defeat your enemy, that is the time which you must not do it. There will come a time, in many instances, when the person who hates you most, the person who has misused you most, the person who has gossiped about you most, the person who has spread false rumours about you most, there will come a time when you will have an opportunity to defeat that person. It might be in terms of a recommendation for a job; it might be in terms of helping that person to make some move in life. That's the time you must do it. That is the meaning of love. In the final analysis, love is not this sentimental something that we talk about. It's not merely an emotional something. Love is creative, understanding goodwill for all men. It is the refusal to defeat any individual. When you rise to the level of love, of its great beauty and power, you seek only to defeat evil systems. Individuals who happen to be caught up in that system, you love, but you seek to defeat the system." **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

"Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anaemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love." **Martin Luther King Jr.**

"I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant." **Martin Luther King Jr.**

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." **Martin Luther King Jr**

"I can retain neither respect nor affection for government which has been moving from wrong to wrong in order to defend its immorality" **Mahatma Gandhi**

"The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority." **Martin Luther King, Jr.**



## 'I can't breathe'

**Justice Enabler Wale Hudson-Roberts of the Baptist Union of Great Britain reflects on the death of George Floyd – and how Baptists might respond**

You might have thought that, more than 50 years on from the assassination of Martin Luther King Jnr, the world would have moved on with respect to racism – but clearly, it is not so. King's words speak as clearly into the present moment as they did into North America in the 1960s.

"We have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. In a sense, we have come to the nation's capital to cash a cheque. When the architects of our republic wrote those magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all would be guaranteed the unalienable Rights of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on that promissory note insofar as the citizens of colour are concerned. Instead of honouring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad cheque, a cheque that has come back marked insufficient funds.

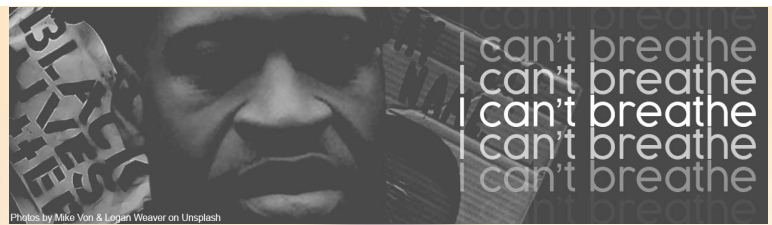
And so, we have come to cash this cheque, a cheque that will give us on demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of NOW. It would be fatal for the nations to overlook the urgency of the moment."

Among the many speeches delivered that day, it was this speech that galvanised the 250,000-strong crowd. His charge was that those in power had issued a bad cheque – making a mockery of the Constitution's historic guarantee, "In God we trust." King claimed that those who controlled 1960s America had 'defaulted' on the promises in the Declaration of Independence – despite continuing protestations that the Constitution applied equally to all Americans, both black and white. The last line of this quotation certainly has an ominous ring: *"It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment."*

King had thrown down the gauntlet, inspiring and empowering Americans to protest for justice. Activist groups seized on the spirit of the moment, emboldened by King's protests in Washington, pushing for crucial changes to the Civil Rights and Voting bills.

Despite attempts at containment by the authorities, the very fact and sheer boldness of the March on Washington sent a chill down the spine of those who served on Capitol Hill. *Life Magazine* claimed that, as the date of the March neared: "The nation's capital was suffering its worst case of jitters since the First Battle of Bull Run" – and with good reason, for despite the potential for massive commercial gains, 80 per cent of all business revenue was lost, hospitals postponed elective surgery ready to accommodate casualties, and the Pentagon had 19,000 troops at the ready protecting the outskirts of the District of Columbia. The March on Washington occupied the secular temples of power and disabled the conduct of commerce – just as Jesus had done long before in the Jerusalem Temple.

In Jesus' day, the Jerusalem Temple was not only the centre of religious life, but also the hub of national government, the beating heart of the nation's economy, its central bank and treasury, and a depository of massive wealth. It was from the Temple that there was issued pronouncements and decisions that impacted the



lives of every single person in the land. In Mark's Gospel we see Jesus, not only attacking the money changers and dove sellers but, for a short time at least, suspending all commercial operations. Mark leaves us in no doubt that Jesus was angry. 'A den of robbers' was the scathing expression Jesus used in his condemnation of the Temple merchants – reclaiming for another time that most bitter attacks against the Temple, the declaration of judgement on the Temple in Jeremiah 7:15. That historic judgement had found its moment a second time in the days of Jesus. Initiatives for protest begin with God. God graciously permits us to participate in his reign by means of protest; time and again we are commissioned to challenge the structures of power reflecting the 'image of God' that we bear. As large swathes of North America – now joined in solidarity by protests in the UK, Germany and parts of the Middle East – challenge continuing institutional racism in their land, responsibility falls again on all who are made in the divine image to participate in advocacy. In 2020, the straw that has broken the camel's back has been the death of George Floyd.

Back in the 19th century, Sam Sharpe (like King, a Baptist) also committed himself to protest. His protest began peacefully, but later turned into Jamaica's largest ever slave rebellion. The uprising lasting for around 10 days and soon spread throughout the entire island of Jamaica, mobilising as many as 60,000 of Jamaica's enslaved population. The protests contributed to the eventual passage through the UK Parliament of the 1833 Slavery Abolition Act, culminating in the abolition of slavery across the British Empire in 1838.

King and Sharpe should remind Baptists that protest is an essential part of our inheritance. Surely our various traditions and theologies all demand that we also speak out and stand in solidarity with black and brown communities still experiencing institutional racism in North America – as indeed in our own country where in the aftermath of the institutional racism presented in spaces such as the Hostile Environment, Grenfell Tower fire, the Windrush Scandal, and more latterly Covid 19, many people of colour can barely 'breathe.'

Covid 19 has shed an intense light on these injustices, both in North America and in the UK, where the death rate from the virus of the BAME community is significantly higher than that of the white population. Right now, white Baptists are being challenged once again to join a 'holy insurrection', going beyond merely hashtag activism, and putting their white bodies on the line – like King, Sharpe and Jesus. As Baptists Together our tradition should fly in the face of superficial platitudes about racial justice, often from the comfort of our homes, churches and Baptist Associations. Rather, it should commit white Baptists to participate in sacrificial protest with your black and brown sisters and brothers around the world. God is no neutral observer in matters of justice, racial or otherwise. God sides against injustice, with countless numbers of people of colour in this country and, everywhere, where people cry out in pain: "I can't breathe ..."

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