

# Stalham Baptist Church

Sunday 26th July SBC News

This Week's Online Service

"There is a battle taking place"

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

## Welcome to Sunday 26th July Online Service

This Sunday Maggie is leading and Ron preaching, continuing the series on 2nd Corinthians. This week 2 Cor 10:1-11.

"There is a battle taking place"

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 Reads

Col 3:1-2, 1 Kings 19:11, Mk10:42f, 16:21f, Phil 4:7f Eph 6:10f

### For Your Prayers

Please pray for Ron, Jerry and the deacons who have a Zoom deacons meeting on Monday at 7.00pm.

Pray also for the businesses that are still recovering from the lockdown and are responsible for many jobs in our community, pray that they will be able to stay viable as the economy picks up. Pray for those still anxious about leaving home to resume some of their pre-lockdown activities.

As we pray through the new Church Directory, please remember **Monica and Frank Payne**.

### A Prayer for a Breakthrough

Father, I ask You for a fresh vision for what breakthrough will look like in my life. Help me to pursue healing while I wait for my miracle. Show me how to rest right in the middle of the storm. Help me to enjoy the feast You prepare for me, right in the middle of the battlefield. I want my whole life to testify that there's a God in heaven who knows my name and who will get me safely home. Fill me afresh with the wonder of Your love and power. I am determined to win this battle with anxiety. Help me to discern when to rest, when to feast, and how to actively engage my faith as I wait for You to breakthrough. May my life display Your power. Do the impossible in and through me, I pray. Amen. ~ Susie Larson

### A Prayer for Strength When You're at Your Weakest

Lord Jesus, give me the strength to stick it out over the long haul—not the grim strength of gritting my teeth but the glory-strength God gives. It is strength that endures the unendurable and spills over into joy, thanking the Father who makes me strong enough to take part in everything bright and beautiful that he has for me. Jesus, give me strength in my weakness. Amen. ~ Wendy van Eyck

### WhatsApp Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 17th Sue St John said "Just received the results of little Millie's MRI scan yesterday. Such good news. Thankyou everybody brilliant prayers."

Also on Friday Doreen posted "Just spoke to Steve Slade, he says thank you for the prayers and sends his love."

Jenny Payne requested "Please could I ask for prayer for my sister-in-law, Gill, who learned today that she has stage 4 peritoneal cancer. (Secondary to breast cancer treated last year) She will have a consultation on Thursday to discuss prognoses and any possible treatment. Please pray also for my brother Paul, their daughter Louise and Steven, their son who is currently a serving naval officer and will not be able to return to the UK for several months. This is very distressing for them all."

On Wednesday Maria Marsh posted "Good morning everyone my friend in Hungary has just given birth to a little girl called Eve."

Eve was born five weeks early and is in intensive care and may need heart surgery. Please could you pray for Oana and Eve, thank you."



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](http://www.facebook.com/stalhambaptist)

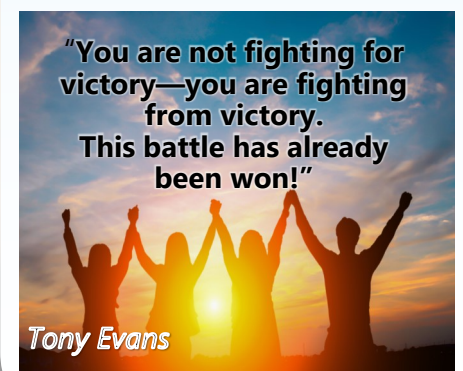
## FOOD BANK & OPEN FOR PRAYER

SBC is open Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 12 noon to receive donations for the food bank and for personal prayer.

Since June 15th people have been welcome to pray quietly in the church at that time the Food Bank donations have been received. Jerry or Ron will be on hand to ensure all safety measures are met.

Also, The Good News paper, bibles, books 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).



Tony Evans



## Food Bank

SBC is open Monday to Friday 10.00am to 12 noon for individual prayer and donations to the foodbank.

**During July the following items would be very welcome: Tinned Potatoes, Tinned Rice Pudding, Custard, Sponge Puddings, Jam, Squash, Deodorant - female Shampoo, Nappies Sizes 5 and 6, Laundry Liquid – non bio, Children's toothpaste and brushes for ages 4-11.11.**

We cannot accept any fresh food or items that contain alcohol.

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).

## Weekly Prayer Focus: 26th July 2020 Costessey Baptist Church

Nestled on the north western outskirts of Norwich is the small town of Costessey, which has been home to a Baptist church since 1798. Set in the centre of what is commonly called 'Old' Costessey, the



church has currently suspended its busy schedule whilst the national lockdown continues.

In 'normal' times, the church runs a weekly parent and toddler group, monthly coffee mornings and men's breakfasts and a popular Girls and Boys Brigade. Messy Church events are also run six times per

year in addition to Sunday services and midweek prayer and Bible studies.

In the absence of services, Pastor Peter Lillystone has produced weekly letters which include prayer information and a sermon. Services are also published on YouTube. Members are telephoned each week by one of the deacons and preparations are now being made for when the church can reopen its building for services.

### Prayer Points

- ◇ We give thanks that we were able to elect two new deacons just before the lockdown bringing our number up to four deacons, plus the church secretary. Pray that we will work well together.
- ◇ Pray for the deacons as they prepare for the reopening of church for Sunday services in line with Baptists Together and Government guidelines.
- ◇ Pray for the church to be an effective witness in our community.

### SBC Catch up Service

If you have missed any of the online services you can catch up on them by going to [www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/) where Greg has posted the services from 22/3/20.

You can also find any bulletins you missed by going to <https://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/publications.php>

You can find all the members and public information on the forum pages. Stewart has posted SBC's current financial position on the fellowship forum page.

## Bible Study

Join the bible study Zoom group meeting on Wednesday 29th at 7.00pm. Contact Diana for an email link.

## Quotes of the Week

"But since the adversary does not cease to resist, and uses many and diverse arts to ensnare them, that he may seduce the faithful from their faith, and that he may prevent the faithless from believing, it seems to me necessary that we also, being armed with the invulnerable doctrines of the faith, do battle against him on behalf of the weak."

— **Justin Martyr**, *Fragments of the Lost Work of Justin on the Resurrection*

*Born 100 A.D. Justin was an early Christian apologist. Most of his works are lost, but two apologies and a dialogue did survive. In his brief Second Apology Justin argues that the Christians are being unjustly persecuted by the Roman emperor, Antonius.*

*Justin was tried, together with six companions, by Junius Rusticus, who was an urban prefect, and was beheaded in 165AD.*

"Over the years, I have come to realize that the greatest trap in our life is not success, popularity, or power, but self-rejection. Success, popularity, and power can indeed present a great temptation, but their seductive quality often comes from the way they are part of the much larger temptation to self-rejection.

When we have come to believe in the voices that call us worthless and unlovable, then success, popularity, and power are easily perceived as attractive solutions. The real trap, however, is self-rejection.

As soon as someone accuses me or criticizes me, as soon as I am rejected, left alone, or abandoned, I find myself thinking, "Well, that proves once again that I am a nobody." ... [My dark side says,] I am no good... I deserve to be pushed aside, forgotten, rejected, and abandoned. Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the "Beloved." Being the Beloved constitutes the core truth of our existence."

— **Henri J.M. Nouwen**

"Men may spurn our appeals, reject our message, oppose our arguments, despise our persons, but they are helpless against our prayers." — **J. Sidlow Baxter**



# 'Padre, have you got a minute?'

**Baptist chaplain Jonathan Stewart, the youngest serving chaplain in the RAF, on ministering beyond the walls of the church**

"Padre, have you got a minute?" These words always cause me to smile inwardly. "Of course," I reply, with an external smile to match my inward one, even when in reality I have the burning issues of emails, meetings and the general mundane to do. This question is one that I can hear several times a day, and invariably one minute is not long enough to hear what is being expressed. However, I smile because it is a small reminder of the privilege of ministering beyond the walls of the church, where those who may have never set foot in a church building before turn to 'their Padre' to talk about the challenges that life, work and a myriad of other issues is bringing to them.

I have been a Chaplain in the RAF for the last four years, having felt called to it mid way through my NAMS (Newly Accredited Minister). I am currently based at the Royal Air Force College Cranwell which is the entry point for all officers into the RAF. The role primarily involves work with the officer cadets, with the majority undertaking a six-month course in which chaplaincy plays an integral role. We deliver lessons on 'Beliefs and values' which include topics such as respect, integrity and ethics, as well as running around in muddy



fields while they are on exercise, through to preaching at their graduation service. Of course, for me, this is just a temporary stop on the journey having previously been at RAF Brize Norton and a four-month Operational deployment in the Middle East. I am also currently the youngest serving chaplain in the RAF at the tender age of 33, meaning that as we explore what ministry to 18-35s' looks like, I am in a fairly unusual position!

This ministry beyond the walls reaches out to a generally unchurched and younger generation, where 95 per cent of what is done is outside of the church community. Or as one cadet said to me once "You don't really do the religious stuff do you, Padre?" However, I do find myself

still immersed within a community and one in which chaplaincy is placed in high regard.

I love reading about Paul's missionary journeys, but it is the account of Paul as a tentmaker that I find incredibly powerful. Though he exercised a public ministry within the Church, he also just sat with those outside the church, serving them, talking with them, not necessarily doing the religious stuff. But I imagine that within his work he still sought to share something of the hope he had in Christ. As a chaplain, I have found something not too dissimilar; institutional barriers are broken down as we are just asked by the organisation to sit with people, and to care for them, and out of that we get to share something of God's love for them.

Of course, we can see this in any form of ministry, but what I think is special and unique as a military chaplain is that we are so immersed in the organisation. We wear the same uniform as those we serve, we move around the country like they do, we deploy overseas as they do, we miss our families like they do. We become part of their story, because their story is our story.

Out of this, I believe, trust grows and those who start the conversation with 'I am not religious but...' suddenly have the confidence to open up about their deepest concerns. Even though often I can't make a practical difference to their situation I have the chance to listen, and allow them to be heard. For some it seems as though they have never had that opportunity before, to have someone to listen. They might have hundreds of friends on social media but the most 'real' conversation they have had comes in a wet Lincolnshire field.

I have noticed that for a number of these young people they struggle to make relationships that are deep and lasting, but they are yearning for something more. One of the most common reasons they tell me for why they joined is that they want to be part of something bigger than themselves, and they want to make a difference in the world. The military offers them that chance, and hopefully chaplaincy points them to something even deeper still.

The RAF Chaplains' Branch vision is to serve the RAF community through 'Prayer, Presence and Proclamation' aiming to achieve this by showing value, giving hope and a reason for existence beyond what we now see. This is something that on a daily basis I really get to do and I count it as a privilege that we are allowed the freedom to support the men and women of the armed forces, to bring something of the eternal into their, so often, temporary realities. My hope and prayer is that as the men and women of the armed forces serve their country both at home and overseas there will always be a place for chaplain's' to walk that journey with them. When the worst happens, and history shows us that this happens more often than any of us would like, chaplains will be there to walk arm in arm, to encourage and support them, and ultimately point them to a relationship with the One who loves and cares for them above all.

**Jonathan Stewart is a Baptist chaplain based at the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell, Lincolnshire and was writing for the [Baptist Times](#).**



# Open Doors

have their fellowship secretly, constantly being watched, and their phones tapped. They're facing violence, discrimination

## Iran: Twelve arrests. Three cities. One day. July 14th 2020

Iranian authorities have made 12 arrests after infiltrating a secret meeting of 30 believers. Please pray for and with our Iranian brothers and sisters.

Iranian Christians request prayer after Revolutionary Guard agents arrested at least twelve Christians in three different cities on 30 June.

It is believed an informant gained the Christians' trust, infiltrated their network and accompanied Iranian security in order to identify particular individuals and raid a meeting in a private home.

At the home of a Christian convert in Tehran, where about 30 Christians had gathered, 10 security agents raided the meeting. Whilst filming the raid, the security agents were initially respectful but, once the cameras were switched off, the mood abruptly changed, and they reportedly became abusive.

### Elderly sisters arrested

The Christians were taken to a nearby parking area where a list of names was read out: Joseph Shahbazian, an Armenian-Iranian Christian, Christian converts Reza, Salar, Sonya, and elderly sisters, Mina and Maryam. Those present from that list were handcuffed, blindfolded and taken away. The security agents also confiscated the mobile phones of all others present and made them provide contact details. They then went to the houses of those on the list from Tehran and Karaj, searching for Bibles, other Christian literature and electronic communication devices. Three more converts (Arash and two men called Farhad), also on the list but not present at the gathering, were arrested at their homes, which were searched.

"According to the reports of witnesses," says a report by Article Eighteen, "Some of the Christians were beaten, as well as some of their non-Christian family members."

In a related security action, also on 30 June, agents called three Christian converts (Sohrab, Ebrahim and Yasser) in Malayer, Hamedan Province, and summoned them to the Revolutionary Guard intelligence office for questioning the next day. However, all three were arrested before they could turn themselves in. They were detained, then released on bail of 30 million tomans each (around £1,200) on 2 July.

Occasionally, there is hope. Three Iranian Christians, who were serving 10-year sentences, have recently had their [prison time reduced after an appeal](#).

### Ordinary people

Christianity is seen as a Western influence and a threat in Iran, which is number 9 on the Open Doors World Watch List 2020. Mojtaba (above), an Iranian Christian, says: "During the last 40 years, under the authority of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Christians have been forbidden to practise their faith. They've been forced to

and persecution. More than 10 church leaders have been murdered. Hundreds of ordinary people have experienced solitary confinement and prison. I was arrested twice. My house was raided, I was separated from my family, spent over 60 days in solitary confinement, experienced harsh interrogations, was imprisoned for over three years, and was forced to leave my country and become a refugee.

"However, in the midst of this darkness, there is a beautiful message from ordinary people who have been oppressed, broken, and made hopeless by the situation, but found their true freedom, salvation, joy and identity in the resurrected Jesus, who is alive today. These people choose to not be selfish or silent but instead share this message with others and accept all the consequences. I, myself, as a converted Christian, during my detention, I had this great testimony in my heart that the pain and suffering I have, today in prison, is not at all comparable with the pain of being without God. The sweetness of Jesus' salvation will always overcome the bitterness of persecution."

As a result, the church is growing – [and is sharing Christ's love during this Covid-19 crisis](#).

Open Doors is supporting the church in Iran through partners to share God's love practically through emergency aid, also providing advocacy for those in prison, trauma training, and the distribution of Christian literature online.

For more information about OpenDoors go to <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

