

# Stalham Baptist Church

Sunday 6th September SBC News

This Week's Online Service

"What's love got to do with it? "

Actually Everything

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



## Welcome to this Sunday's Online Service

Barbara is leading and Ron is preaching, continuing the series on 2nd Corinthians. This week 2 Cor 12:11-15

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

Acts 19:11f, Lk 7:36f, Mt 6:33 Lk 19:9

### For Your Prayers

Please continue to pray that as a fellowship we can come to a decision about reopening SBC, or not, safely in the near future.

Please pray for the Ministers and Deacons as they try to steer SBC through the pandemic, please also pray for Diana as she analyses the responses to the questionnaire.

Please also pray for the children, teachers and support workers as they tentatively return to their schools in September under government guidance and pray for those parents who are anxious at being pressured to send their children to school when their child has underlying medical problems.

Please pray for the local businesses that had a surge in business during the summer holidays that they can stay viable as the holiday trade drifts away.

Also pray for those whose jobs are in jeopardy and fear that they may soon become unemployed and those who are going through the process of attaining Universal Credit that takes 5 weeks.

As we pray through the new Church Directory, please remember **Elaine and Steve Smith**.

### Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 29th August Henry asked "Please continue to pray for brother Roger who is going downhill and wife Ann and family. Thank you."

On Tuesday Victoria posted "Prayers for Poppy please. She began to leak protein again on Sunday just one week after finishing her treatment. Time will tell if this will lead to another relapse (it always has done in the past) I'm going to contact her nephrologist today to formulate a plan for her if she does not relapse. She is due to start school next Monday treatment dose dependent. Thanks as always xx."

Also, on Tuesday Jenny Payne requested "Could I please ask for prayers for my sister-in-law Gill as she has her second round of Chemotherapy today. She was quite unwell after the first, so are hoping this time will be a little better for her. Thanks."

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

### A Big Thank You

A big thank you to all those who responded to the questionnaire Ron, Jerry and the Deacons are very grateful to the fellowship for expressing their views on the matter of opening up SBC which will give guidance as decisions are made.

The numbers of responses was brilliant, way above the normal average for surveys,



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 the time that the Food Bank donations are being received. Jerry or Ron will be on hand to ensure all safety measures are met.

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).

### This Week

**Monday 7th**

Deacons meeting 7.00pm

**Wednesday 9th**

Zoom bible study 7.00pm

Contact Diana for a link.

**Love**

**Is not a because  
it is a  
no matter what.**

*Jodi Picoult Quotediary.me*

## Harvest Appeal

Our harvest service will be on Sunday 27th September when we will be supporting the BMS appeal which this year is called Operation Chad looking at the hospital the Shrubsoles work at. If you wish to support this year's appeal donations can be sent to SBC by Bac's Sort Code: 20-99-21 Account Number: 00821705.

marked BMS Chad Appeal or log on to <https://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/donate.php> for more details or deliver cash or cheques to Henry at 3 Windows Brumstead Road Stalham.

Also, if you wish to donate tins to support Foodbank, they can be dropped off at the church 10am -12.00 noon any weekday morning.

## Covid 19

In preparation for re-opening the church beyond private prayer the deacons would like to establish a 'Covid19' team. If anyone would like to volunteer to be a part of the team, please get in touch with Diana'.

## Church Reading Plan

Last week we looked at the first five chapters of the Book of Esther. This week we are looking at final 5 of Esther, chapters 6-10

## Weekly Prayer Focus: 6th September 2020

### Framlingham Community Baptist Church

Framlingham is a small market town in Suffolk, which most recently found fame as the subject of Ed Sheeran's 2017 hit single of 'Castle on the Hill'. Why? Because Framlingham has a castle and as it's his home town, Sheeran chose to pen a song about it.

Now it's the Baptist church's turn to hit the headlines, as our prayer focus for this week.

The church, which was the founder of the Greenbelt Festival in 1974, lays its cards on the table in its name

– **Framlingham Community Baptist Church** – underlining the small yet dedicated fellowship's commitment to being an outreaching church. It works in union with the other churches in the town to ensure that this happens.

Reduced activities throughout the summer have not necessarily meant inactivity, since online meetings continued via Zoom, and the important work of linking up people who needed help and those who could provide it continued – whatever the need and whatever the background of the person seeking help. People are looking forward to taking tentative steps back into gathered worship, with a couple of test events towards the end of August. These events will still be available via Zoom and online via the church's website afterwards.

### Prayer focus

- That the CAP Money Course and the Christianity Explored Course would be able to resume as soon as is safely possible.
- That service to and within the community would continue with wisdom and discernment from God, so that lives will continue to be changed through the Good News of Jesus.
- That meeting again in person would not prove too challenging and that those who attend will be safe.

## Baptist Assembly Online 2020

The online Assembly for the Baptist Union of Great Britain will take place on **16 September** 2020 at 7pm. It will be an opportunity to hear about and pray for the work of Baptists Together. We will present the **Annual**

**Report for 2019** and provide updates on our work so far in 2020 and our plans for the future.

We will also cover some topics required under our **constitution**, including the affirmation of the appointment of the Treasurer and the Moderator of the Trustee Board.

The event will be hosted on Crowdcast. **To be able to participate in the event and vote, you will need to register in advance on the Baptist Assembly event page on Crowdcast.** However, if you just wish to watch the event it will be **streamed on this YouTube page.**

## Quotes of the Week

"So I am happy to give everything I have for you. I will even give myself for you. If I love you more, will you love me less?"

2 Cor 12:15 (ERV)

"Because, if you could love someone, and keep loving them, without being loved back . . . then that love had to be real. It hurt too much to be anything else."

— **Sarah Cross, Kill Me Softly**

"Human love is directed to the other person for his own sake, spiritual love loves him for Christ's sake. Therefore, human love seeks direct contact with the other person; it loves him not as a free person but as one whom it binds to itself. It wants to gain, to capture by every means; it uses force. It desires to be irresistible, to rule."

— **Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community**

"First we must understand that all of the world's deceptions flow from the belief that love is primarily for the fulfilment and comfort of the self. The world poisons love by focusing first and foremost on meeting one's own needs.

Christ taught that love is not for the fulfilment of the self but for the Glory of God and the good of others. True love is selfless. It gives; it sacrifices; it dies to its own needs."

— **Joshua Harris, I Kissed Dating Goodbye Study Guide**

"No longer can we parse our fellow humans into the categories of 'lovable' and 'unlovable.' If love is an act of the will — not motivated by need, not measuring worth, not requiring reciprocity — then there is no such category as 'unlovable.'"

— **Jen Wilkin, In His Image: 10 Ways God Calls Us to Reflect His Character**

"When you do your work without expecting anything in return, just for the joy of bringing happiness to others, that's when you'll realise it is not your hands which are doing the job - it is the hands of God working through you.

**Dr D P Shetty, heart surgeon to the poor, India.**

Taken from Ian Boughton's book **"Ya ain't a loser to ya quits tryin'"** Ian adds (This was a sentence in an article written by Dr Shetty, 'They Call me a Heart Surgeon', which I found by chance, back in 1999 or thereabouts. We recorded it as a story on a CD for Health Help International, and at the time I tried hard to locate Dr Shetty to tell him we had done so, but failed. Twenty years later, I discover that he is now regarded as India's most famous practitioner of heart surgery)



# South Wales Baptist Association

## Youngest Minister

Hayley Young is the Regional Minister/Mission Enabler at the South Wales Baptist Association. Aged 33, she is currently our youngest regional minister. This interview featured in the Summer 2020 edition of Baptists Together magazine, which had a focus on young adults

**Can you talk us through** your call to regional ministry? It was birthed out of a frustration. I felt God was calling people of my age. While Baptists are fantastic in their grass roots nature, I look around at some of the structures and there's no one like me. As I wrestled with this, I asked God, "Will you raise more people up into some of these positions?" And the response I heard very strongly was that He wanted me to go forward. I thought: I haven't got the right experience, I don't look like the others. Soon I saw that South Wales were looking. I was invited to interview. Sceptically I thought I was there just to tick boxes. But God really started moving in my heart that this was right. I had the sense it wasn't just about my gifts and calling, but to open doors so others can follow.

**So what's your** role at SWaBA? It's Mission Enabler. What's really exciting is that I'm coming alongside ministers and churches and seeing what God is already doing. I'm encouraging people to maybe try new things in new ways. There is a real openness. There are lots of challenges and big questions. How do we transform our services and congregations to meet the needs around them? We need to fundamentally question our theologies. I'm learning that Wales is very different. Baptist churches here tend to be traditional in the way they do things. Some churches are trying so hard. They have a heart for Jesus, and that's all they need. Part of me is feeling not ready and inadequate, but I'm relying on God more and I am excited for all that lies ahead.

**How did you come to** faith – and how and when did you sense the call to ministry? I was brought up in a non-Christian household. But when I was 17 I really started questioning things. I was studying history and religion, and during that time I visited Auschwitz. You can't go to a place like that and not have a load of questions. I looked at Christianity and other faiths. One day on the way to college, I passed a Baptist church. I just wandered in and spoke to the minister.

There was something about him and the way that he responded to my questions that seemed different to anything else I had experienced. I wanted to find out more. By the time I went to university I was part of a congregation. At this time I just felt God calling me into pastoral ministry. A sermon at the time challenged me: you have to use the gifts that God has given you now. I prayed a lot, fasted a lot. I spoke to Christian friends who said it was a great idea, but that I was too young. I spoke to non-Christian friends who told me to go for it now.

**What happened** next? I just started pushing those doors. I did an internship year with a Baptist church, and started going through Ministerial Recognition. One of the things I was asked was: "Do you think you need more worldly experience?" Having become a Christian aged 17, I already felt I had a lot of worldly experience! I said, "I don't want to grow in worldly experience, but in Godly experience." As part of my study at Spurgeon's, I was placed at Hayling Island, with (fellow Baptist minister) Jacky Storey. When she was called into regional ministry, I stayed, and just flourished. I've had some difficult situations. Some because of my gender, some because of my age. I've had some comments about my role, that it's tokenistic. But the more you work with integrity, and the more you follow Jesus, people will come round to you.

**You have a** passion for seeing Millennials and Generation Z released into church leadership. Can you talk more about that? Millennials and Generation Z have the same gifts as others, such as being gifted teachers, anointed preachers. But we also have a unique ability to speak into a rapidly changing culture. We can speak with a prophetic voice. One example of that was the Living Lent campaign from the Joint Public Issues Team. The amount of millennials who took part was great. Whenever someone comes to faith, we can speak to their generation. We know what it's like growing up in these times. We should be releasing more people into that. When that investment is made, society should be able to see there's people like me, and think "I can relate to that". There's an excitement about what millennials can offer the church.



**Can you tell us** about the Cardboard Testimony in 2015? What are your reflections on it? Hayley made a film called Cardboard Testimony to tell her congregation and wider community she was HIV positive, following an attack two years previously. She used words on sheets of cardboard to get the message across. The testimony was picked up by many national news outlets. I needed to tell the congregation. Lots of people

have questioned the method, but I didn't want anything to be misunderstood, and wanted a tangible reference point. There was also a recognition that our church was wider than those who come on a Sunday morning, so this was for them too. It was a couple of weeks before the national media picked it up. I think they were tipped off. I was suddenly thrust into a media whirlwind. I had no training for this! But God was in it, and it was very humbling. It gave me a wonderful opportunity to share the gospel. There wasn't much to say about HIV, so most of the interviews were actually about my faith and how it sustained me.

And it has opened doors. I've had the privilege of speaking to groups that would never engage with the church; we have HIV and there is a connectedness.

**And how about the time** you got to share a stage with Bishop Michael Curry, on the very same day he preached at the Royal Wedding?

The local ecumenical partnership contacted me about being part of the service, alongside the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. I'm not a traditional minister in any sense, so I thought it was a sign of God's sense of humour.

I'm also not a royalist and had not watched the wedding. But I noticed how Michael Curry was trending on Twitter.

To be with him, hear him speak, at the end of a week when Christians had been praying for non-Christians to know about Jesus; there was just this big sense of joy. God's people worshipping together, being together.

This interview appears in the Summer 2020 edition of Baptists Together magazine

## Prayers For The Environment

### In Solidarity with All Creation

*Oh how beautiful are your ways, O God, the works of your creation. Raise our consciousness to know and feel deeply in our hearts our connectedness to all that is.*

*Instil in us the gift of being co-creators and sustainers of life. Teach us new and unsuspected ways of living so that current and future generations can walk humbly in beauty, love all compassionately, and live justly in solidarity with all creation.*

*Loving and gracious God, give us the courage to seek this transformation of self and society and the strength to see it through. Amen*

**School Sisters of Notre Dame Green Team**



## Prayers for Our Earth

*All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.*

*O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.*

*Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.*

*We thank you for being with us each day.*

*Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.*

### **Pope Francis**

*O God, You visit the earth and water it, You greatly enrich it; The river of God is full of water...The pastures of the wilderness overflow, The hills gird themselves with joy, The meadows clothe themselves with flocks, The valleys deck themselves with grain, They shout and sing together for joy.*

### **Psalm 96**

Taken From Social Justice Resource Centre

