

Stalham Baptist Church

Sunday 13th September SBC News

This Week's Online Service

"You don't believe me do you ?"

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

Maggie is leading and Ron is preaching, continuing the series on 2nd Corinthians. This week 2 Cor 12:14-21

You can follow the service on the SBC website on Sunday www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/ Then click on the icon pictured left.

Ron's Reads

Acts 2:42f, 5:1f, 6:1f Heb 3:12f

For Your Prayers

Please pray for the family of Joan Boyce [a long time lunch club helper] whose funeral is at Cromer on Thursday 17th September.

Please pray for those families that will not be able to meet up if they total more than 6 and those in the fellowship and community whose anxiety levels will start to rise again as the virus appears to be flourishing again.

Please As we pray through the new Church Directory, please remember **Geraldine and Terry Smith.**

Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 4th Jenny Payne asked "Please pray for Bob, we are on our way to N&N after being seen at the surgery. He may have a DVT or PE or generalized infection. Thanks."

Later she went on "Thanks for your prayers. Bob has a large DVT in his femoral vein. He's just waiting to discuss treatment options with the consultant and then hopefully, will be allowed home."

Jenny posted later "Thanks for all the prayers, we have been home about an hour. Bob now has anticoagulants (probably for at least a year) also to have a CT scan of his lungs to try to find the cause for the breathlessness. He's happy to be home and feeling well if rather tired. Thanks again for all your prayers, it certainly helps me cope Jx"

On Monday David and Eileen posted "Please pray for Jean Mollet who had a fall and is feeling sore."

On Wednesday Diana said "Hi all. Had my telephone consultation with haematology this morning. They will ring in 3 months and will also send me a request to take to GP for a blood test.. They say there is no need to do further scans unless there is a change to how my bone marrow is working which they will pick up from my bloods or if I start having symptoms. They said everything has responded to the treatment and everything had gone back to normal. Saying that some people do only need one course of treatment even though it's not cured and will eventually return it could be many years even then they don't always treat it - it depends. I have been left with peripheral neuropathy, a side effect of one of the drugs, mainly in my toes but there does seem to be a slow improvement. The consultant said nerve damage does take a long time to repair and may not return to normal. Your prayers were hugely important to me and I thank you for the support you all have given me. God Bless."

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

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.

This Week

Thursday 17th 7.00pm

Zoom prayer meeting. Please join with us as we continue pray for the way forward for the church. Contact Diana for a link.

*"You can believe in whatsoever you like, but the truth remains the truth, no matter how sweet the lie may taste."
Michael Bassey Johnson*

Church Opening

Ron, Jerry, and the deacons would like to thank all of you who returned the church questionnaire document. In total 85 questionnaires were issued; either through the survey monkey, email, or delivered by hand and we have had a return of 47. Some of those were completed as a couple or family so the reality is higher than 47 responses.

Although not feeling safe was an issue for some people when considering the return to church, the majority of respondents did not see that as a crucial issue if all safety procedures were in place and adhered to. However the feeling of the majority of respondents was that although they would love to meet back again in the church building, what we have in place at the moment through the on-line service, the CD's and printed copy of the sermon meets their spiritual needs in a non-restrictive way and this is preferable to having a service in church with the inevitable restrictions that will be placed upon everyone.

We have now discussed in depth the views that have come back and have decided that we will not set a date for resuming a church service on the church premises and the existing arrangements will continue. We will review that decision every time we meet, which is currently 2 weekly via Zoom, or at any time there is a change that might influence that decision. All reviews and changes will follow the BU guidelines. We will, however, be looking at different ways of doing things together as a fellowship, whether that be inside or outside of the church building. We will also be reviewing the use of our social media platforms, particularly Facebook, to reach out spiritually to those who connect with us.

We see this as an exciting opportunity to do church differently, and creatively and to further the Kingdom. Some of you gave your thoughts on this when you returned your questionnaire and we encourage all of you to pray and think some more on this. We are a family, and all are equally important not only in God's eyes but in our eyes as leaders of SBC and we really value your views.

"Innocence lost"

We still have 2 copies of Elsa Burts book which are available from Monica 01692 580947. A donation to the building fund would be appreciated.

Goodbye to Ruth

Ruth is one of those people that quietly serve the Lord and Church in her own personal way writes Alan Jarman. Volunteering to help in Sunday school, Holiday club and other children activities.

Also, in making refreshments, and arranging flowers decorating the church for various festivals and more. We shall miss her in serving our church and we thank her for all she has done.

She will be a real blessing in her new church. So, we as a church wish her every blessing, a speedy completion of sale of her home and into her new home.

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 Shrubsole's 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. 10 a.m. to 12 noon.)

Leprosy Mission

The **leprosy Mission Autumn/Winter catalogues** are now available at the back of the church (open Mon to Fri Orders sent via Barbara Reynolds (Stalham Baptist's "trading partner") will save you postage, make a donation towards church funds (in many cases 20% of your order) and enable the leprosy mission to assist folk with this awful disease. You pay the same prices seen in the catalogue. Please either send your order to Barbara at Cameo Cottage, Church Lane, Potter Heigham, NR29 5LR, pop it in the box in the church or leave a message on my ansaphone 01692672120 (excuse the singing!) Happy Shopping!

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

This week we are looking at the first five chapters of John.

Foodbank

During September the Food Bank requires:
Tinned Potatoes-Tinned Rice Pudding-Custard
Sponge Puddings-Jam-Cuppa Soup
Crackers/Rice Cakes-Snacks, inc Crisps and Popcorn
Shower Gel-Household Cleaning Products

Many thanks to all those who continue to donate.

Weekly Prayer Focus: 13th September 2020

Burnham on Crouch Baptist Church

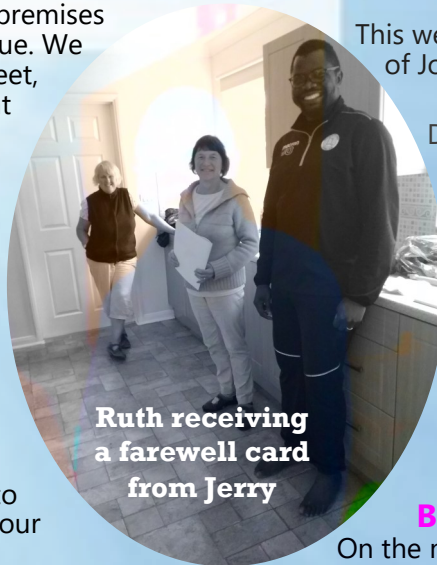
On the north bank of the River Crouch is the town of Burnham on Crouch. Famed for yachting, Burnham has a very strong community feel. The Baptist Church is located in the south of the town, on the High Street. The fellowship at Burnham has been served by Karen Smilley since 2018. Karen is a Minister in Training since 2018, which means that she has to balance ministry with her studies at Spurgeon's College.

When the restrictions due to the pandemic came into place, [Burnham on Crouch Baptist Church](#) moved to online services. As the restrictions have begun to ease, they have introduced the idea of "Garden Services". Members value the opportunity to meet and worship together, in small groups, in each other's gardens. For those unable to meet in this way, the online option is still available. The fellowship has sought to make a missional response to the COVID pandemic. Identifying loneliness as a major issue for many, they launched "Walk and Talk" at the end of August. Twice a week members of the church and local community meet together and, as the name suggests, walk and talk.

Burnham on Crouch Baptist Church continues to seek ways to build their links with the community and, looking beyond the current crisis, are hoping their Community Garden project will be launched in the coming year.

Please pray

- For Karen as she tries to balance the demands of ministry and study
- For the launch of the Walk and Talk group.
- Pray that good links and good conversations will be had with members of the local community
- For the Community Garden project as the fellowship plan for the launch after Christmas



Ruth receiving a farewell card from Jerry

I wanna be loved by you

In the midst of a health pandemic and worldwide protests against racism, Baptist minister Tony Ashley reflects on what God could be possibly saying to us about these very fragile and uncertain times

Our world has dramatically changed and the adjective 'unprecedented' is now a common by-word amongst all. Unsurprisingly, through social media and other platforms, spiritual 'fake news' - outlandish prophecies and predictions that seem almost plausible to the unsuspecting recipient who is filled with the fear of the unknown - is rife. Is this the end of the world? Is God punishing us? Where is God? Is there a God? Why doesn't He do something? If we are honest with ourselves, we can admit to asking one or more of these questions.

For those who are from the BAME community, Covid-19 has relentlessly targeted this particular social group; and yet BAME's have also been dealing with racial shortcomings and the pain and grief which have been kept in the closet for as long as possible. As offensive as it may sound, could there be a simile between Covid-19 and 400 years of racial oppression?

For most, our minds are flooded with frantic questions as we do our utmost to navigate through the ordeal of the Covid-19 pandemic with hundreds of thousands succumbing to this disease and billions reeling from the side effects. It is fair to say that no one is exempt, and recovery will be nothing less than a long and arduous road ahead.

Added to this mix, we have been psychologically, spiritually, morally and sociologically challenged after witnessing the life of George Floyd being intentionally and without remorse extinguished by a police officer in the US. This has ignited worldwide protests against racism through various forms and means whilst people of colour identified with his literal and symbolic plea: "I can't breathe"; it has compacted altogether with white brothers and sisters finding themselves awakened by the sounds of muffled and deafening silence of historical and everyday accounts of racial injustice that their counterparts have endured. The road of repentance and forgiveness is a marathon that must be run.

These are only two tips of the 'socio-iceberg'. As world leaders and governments bravely attempt to deal with a plethora of global and local issues which can only be described as both a melting and boiling pot; the Church has been called into action and entrusted with the challenging task of serving its members and communities creatively and holistically within all the constraints imposed due to Covid-19. Church leaders and members have had the privilege and yet onerous task of coping and adapting with the ever-changing demands and

expectations of 'unprecedented' ministry.

Undoubtedly, we have raised many questions during our private and collective reflections about life, God and purpose as we see a surge in many trying to make sense of reality and our own mortality bubbling up to our spiritual surface. The old adage 'tomorrow is not promised' stares everyone nakedly in the face, leaving us confronted as we do our utmost to appear brave and courageous. Many of us are mourning and will be mourning for a long time following the unexpected loss of our loved ones. Our grief is compounded by the removal of traditional practices of saying farewell to our departed loved-ones with isolation adding to the weight that has to be borne.

Amidst all our frustrations, worries, disillusion, justifications and anything else we care to add to the list; what could God be possibly be saying to us about these very fragile and uncertain times? Is there something that we can learn from Him and this simile? Certainly, but I assert that this is not a moment of epiphany and clearly nothing new. Maybe God is revealing to us the relevancy and importance of the greatest commandment, which is to love. Think about it. Love and compassion have been evident in both situations more than we have known in our lifetime. Those words that Jesus spoke in Matthew 22:37-40 still reverberate profoundly today:

"...Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

We may not think that this is what we need to learn, let alone hear at such a time as this. We may desire a simpler remedy to our world's complex situation that is immediate and easy to explain to non-Christians. However, the greatest commandment to actively demonstrate God's agape love is our greatest challenge for as long as we all shall live. Surely, love is supposed to encompass everything we as Christians live and breathe. Admittedly, this is work in progress and we are still under construction in many areas.

The greatest commandment applies to both of these life-changing situations. We demonstrate 'loving God' by being led by the Holy Spirit as Christ's disciples and we demonstrate 'loving our neighbours' by not just showing tolerance; but by submitting to full acceptance and companionship with all we come in contact with regardless of gender, language, race, class, age and culture. Our very own Baptists Together ['culture values'](#) supply us with a solid foundational structure for practical application on loving God and our neighbours. Hopefully this is not mere rhetoric but the very thing we do to demonstrate who we are as a body of Christ. Simply put, we all need God and we all need each other.

It should be noted that there has been an unprecedented amount of love and solidarity

demonstrated throughout this pandemic. Amazingly, the same can be said about the campaign against racism. Be it short lived or long lasting, we have the opportunity to learn about the fruits of our labour in loving each other and God during dire situations. Is it truly possible that God is teaching us the power of His love in an era that will be etched into this world's unforgotten history? Is it possible that we are beginning to harness the power of love to embrace our community and world? One thing is for sure, God's love does give us a peace that goes way beyond our understanding. Maybe that is why so many new people have embarked on the road to Christianity recently. Not only have they experienced God's love... they have experienced yours.

Tony Ashley is the minister at Stoke Newington Baptist Church in North London and an accredited Pastoral Supervisor

He can be contacted at stokenewingtonbc@gmail.com

This reflection appears in the Autumn 2020 edition of Baptists Together magazine



In light of the murder of George Floyd and the wave of anti-racist protests, Baptists Together and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) have organised a number of events over the coming year, including a series of Racial Justice webinars. The aim of these webinars is to resource churches, associations and colleges to theologically engage with racism and advocate against racism in church and society. These include [COVID-19 and BAME \(29 Sept\) Dr Chi-Chi, Dr Vivienne Lyfar-Cisse and Wale Hudson-Roberts](#) and [The Sam Sharpe Lecture 2020 \(12 Oct\) Bishop Wilton Powell OBE](#)



Monday - Discipleship is more than programmes
Tuesday - Discipleship is relational
Wednesday- Discipleship happens where God places us
Thursday - Discipleship in Lockdown makes new connections
Friday - Discipleship means still listening to God and going deeper with God

We invite you to join us each day through Zoom at 9.30 – 10.00am each day, Monday to Friday.
 Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88201290903>
 Meeting ID: 882 0129 0903
 Passcode: 794152

Prayers in a Pandemic

Love never fails

Even in the darkest moments, love gives hope.

Love compels us to fight against coronavirus alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty.

Love compels us to stand together in prayer with our neighbours near and far.

Love compels us to give and act as one.

Now, it is clear that our futures are bound together more tightly than ever before.

As we pray in our individual homes – around the nation and around the world – we are united as one family.

So, let us pause and find a moment of peace, as we lift up our hearts together in prayer.

Prayer from [Christian Aid](#)

God of our Salvation, you have ordained that we should serve you in serving one another.

Look upon this nation, burdened at this time with many cares and anxieties, with infection, sickness, and untimely death.

Grant us grace to work together, with honest and faithful hearts, each caring for the good of all; that, striving first for your kingdom and its righteousness, we may have added to us all things that we need for our daily sustenance and the common good. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

(Based on a prayer of Geoffrey Fisher)

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/>

