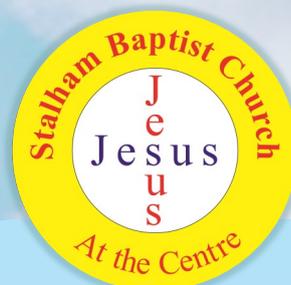


Stalham Baptist Church

Sunday 22nd November SBC News

“Blessed are the Peacemakers”

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 and Geoff are leading and Ron is preaching, from Matthew 5: 9
“Blessed are the peace makers.”

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



James 4:1, Ro 7:19, Gal 2:20, Gen 16:2 1 Sam 13, Mt 5: 38f, Ro 12:9f

For Your Prayers

Please pray for the businesses in Stalham, many have had to close and others that are open have found their sales have dramatically reduced. One shop owner said “I have plenty of quality stock for Christmas but few customers.”

Please also pray for those who have had to furlough again or face redundancy and are trying to get by on reduced wages as Christmas approaches.

As winter draws near remember the homeless who have to sleep in shop doorways or in the open.

Pray for our government that it can focus on supporting all in need in this time of anxiety, for people who are self-employed and those with young families with mortgages and rent to find.

Pray for those in Ethiopia who are crossing into Sudan to escape the conflict in the Northern region of Tigray.

As we pray through the new Church Directory, please remember **Jean Wunderlicht**.

Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 13th Jenny Payne posted “Please can I ask for prayer for tomorrow as I have two appointments at Addenbrookes, 9am - hearing test and 11am - MRI scan. I know I'll need to be patient, as there will be no immediate result of the scan. Thanks J.” On Tuesday Sue St John posted “Prayers for my sisters household would be appreciated. They are 4 people and one has just tested positive with mild symptoms. My sister and partner both have medical conditions. Psalm 91 is nice and I've said we are praying. Thanks. Will keep you informed.”

On Thursday David posted. Ros Lansdale is a nurse who is part of the Lighthouse Church in Durban SA who receives the bulletin every week and watches the online services, Ros said “I am having problems with rheumatoid arthritis, my joints are painful especially my hands. Would appreciate your prayers. Thank you, Ros.”

Prayer in a time of Coronavirus

Protection and peace

With heavy hearts, we bring before you the plight of the Caritas frontline staff around the world.

May they know our love and feelings for all they are doing to heal and help those affected by coronavirus.

God of all consolation, may they know your protection and peace.

Bless them in these challenging days and bless their families.

Amen.

Prayer: Inmanuel Chayan Biswas, who works for Caritas Bangladesh in Cox's Bazaar refugee camp From [Catholic Overseas Agency for Development](#)

Prayer for Peace

God of Peace, who declares your blessing upon us when we pursue its cause, we pray for every place in our world where war and conflict invade and destroy the wellbeing of people and communities. Our hearts break with yours when the young, the innocent and the vulnerable are caught up in conflicts for which they have no desire and from which they gain no benefit. Help us to be a people of peace; to be a nation of peace, and to work with all people of goodwill to build and sustain peace throughout our world.

Particularly we pray for those whose decisions and political ambition can, and will, affect the cause of peace. Grant them wisdom and courage to do what is right, through Jesus Christ, whose peace transcends our human comprehension. Amen.

Taken from [Baptist Together Peace](#).

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 & PERSONAL PRAYER

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

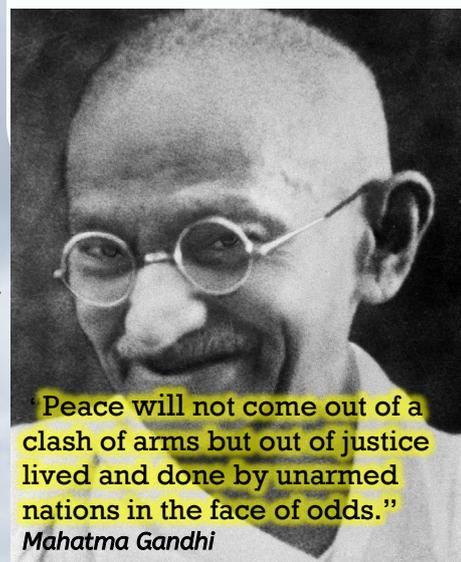
Monday 23rd 7.00pm

Zoom Deacons Meeting

Thursday 26th 7.00pm

Zoom Prayer Meeting

Contact Diana for a link



Peace will not come out of a clash of arms but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Church Meeting your Feedback Needed

The deacons have been considering the idea of holding a church meeting as there are things, that in time, will need to come to the church for approval. Many of you are familiar with Zoom many are not but if we are unable to hold a meeting in the church would you be happy if we held a Zoom church meeting? We would arrange it so you could also join by phone, either from your land line or your mobile. As yet there has been little response so please contact Diana **07951949128** or Ron on **01692 582731** or email **secretary@stalhambaptist.org.uk** **minister@stalhambaptist.org.uk**. and give them some feedback. Thank you.

Church Reading Plan

This week we are looking at Romans 8: 18-39.

Does this reading give us some assurance during these difficult times? If you would like to suggest a reading or take part in "Testimony Tuesday" contact Diana, Jerry or Ron.

Questions about Church Closures

The current lockdown came as a blow to many Churches that had worked towards creating Covid-safe environments to restart communal worship. SBC managed one service on 1st November before having to close down, except for receiving foodbank donations and supplying food to those in need, personal prayer and funerals with a maximum of 30 people.

Many church leaders believe that communal worship is an essential way of dealing with the depression and despondency created by Covid-19. The [BBC](#) reported on the 1st November the following:

Emotional blow

Cardinal Nichols and Archbishop McMahon said everyone has to make "sustained sacrifices for months to come" to tackle Covid.

But they added: "In requiring this sacrifice, the government has a profound responsibility to show why it has taken particular decisions.

"Not doing so risks eroding the unity we need as we enter a most difficult period for our country."

Meanwhile, Bishop of London Dame Sarah Mullally,

chairwoman of the Church of England's recovery group, said she would study the new regulations and "seek clarification" on how public worship would be affected. And John Steven, director of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, said the new restrictions came as a "very significant emotional blow" for couples who had weddings planned this month.

He added: "For people in church and other religious communities it seems a very unfair restriction - churches have put a great deal of effort into coronavirus measures and they are much safer than other settings which are still allowed to be open like secondary schools."

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) said in a **statement**: "The government's inadequate consultation and poor engagement with faith communities remain a problem as the pandemic endures."

While the rules allow places of worship to remain open for individual prayer, the MCB said the distinction is "not straightforward or practical for many mosques, compared to other faith communities".

Quotes of the Week

"Peacemakers who challenge the prevailing concept of peace achieved by violence are often, ironically, called disturbers of the peace. That is only true if peace is defined as an uneasy ceasefire in a world dominated by the corrupt, a tenuous subjugation of the weak by the powerful, a hurting humanity suffering silently en-masse for the profit of the bloated few. If, though, peace is defined as freedom, equality, safety, health, opportunity, and a voice for all, then we, the peacemakers, aren't disturbers of the peace. We are purveyors of peace because we are disturbers of the status quo."

L.R. Knost

"I learned that I was never alone, that there was Someone always very close by and, indeed, within me, giving me strength in times of weakness and desolation, light in times of darkness, joy in times of great sorrow and pain, and the will to struggle on when continuing seemed futile."

Joseph F. Girzone, My Struggle with Faith

"When you are deeply peaceful and confident that, because of Christ, God will bring you safely to his eternal kingdom and be the all-satisfying Treasure of your life forever, then you are free to see the truth, and love the truth, and speak the truth no matter what, and joyfully spread a passion for the truth whose name is Jesus."

John Piper, Think: The Life of the Mind and the Love of God

"When you find God you find love.
When you find love you find joy.
When you find joy you find peace.
When you find peace you find hope.
When you find hope you find life."

"Faith is greater than fear.

Peace is greater than anger.
Joy is greater than sorrow.
Hope is greater than despair."

"If you love truth, you will love justice.
If you love justice, you will love peace.
If you love peace, you will love unity.
If you love unity, you will love harmony.
If you love harmony, you will love the world."

Matshona Dhliwayo

"You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will live as one."

John Lennon

 **DURING NOVEMBER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WOULD BE VERY WELCOME - READY FOR US TO BE ABLE TO GIVE CHRISTMAS GOODIES TO CLIENTS**

CHRISTMAS PUDDINGS
- NO ALCOHOL -

 **CHRISTMAS CAKE**
- NO ALCOHOL -

 **MINCE PIES**
- NO ALCOHOL -

TINNED HAM

TINNED SALMON

TINNED POTATOES

 **CHRISTMAS CRACKERS**

BOXES OF BISCUITS

CRISPS, NUTS ETC

CHOCOLATE TREATS

 **SPONGE PUDDING**

CUSTARD

FRUIT JUICE

SQUASH

 **TOILET ROLL**



Open Doors

Your prayers are needed for Ethiopia

Violence in the north of Ethiopia follows months of unrest across the country. In this article, Open Doors supporters are asked to keep praying for vulnerable brothers and sisters in Tigray and elsewhere.



Please keep praying for our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia. ‘Scores, and probably hundreds,’ of civilians have been massacred in the growing conflict in Tigray, northern Ethiopia, according to a report from Amnesty International. Witnesses blamed forces loyal to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) for the killings, though Tigrayan officials have denied that pro-TPLF troops were involved.

human rights abuses and corruption. When regional and national elections were indefinitely postponed earlier this year, because of Covid-19, tensions further escalated between TPLF and the federal government.

Christians targeted in violence earlier this year

This follows deadly protests in July in Addis Ababa and several towns across Oromia State, further south. At least 280 people were killed, with Christians belonging to the Oromo ethnic group being particularly targeted. The Orthodox church and some Evangelical churches spoke out against specific targeting, and more than 9,000 Christians have been displaced.

The violence erupted after the murder of a prominent ethnic Oromo musician and activist, Hachalu Hundessa. Gunmen shot Hundessa in Addis Ababa on June 29, in what Prime Minister Abiy called ‘an evil act’. The prime minister said it was part of a plot to destabilise the country and derail democratic reform, but the motive behind the murder has not been proven.

Please remain in fervent prayer for Ethiopia, as unrest continues in various regions and for different reasons. The UN estimates that nine million people in and around Tigray are at high risk, and many Ethiopians are fleeing to Sudan – which does not have the infrastructure to support a large influx of refugees.

Image by nicolajcarnall from Pixabay

Map by Trex.

Violence at the Eritrean border

It has been reported that, last week, Ethiopian forces liberated a town in the northern Tigray region, accusing local TPLF leaders of taking 10,000 prisoners from the town as they fled. (Getting information has been hard, with phone lines and the internet down in that area, and Open Doors contacts have not yet been able to independently confirm any of these reports.) In a very worrying development, Tigray forces fired rockets into neighbouring Eritrea on Saturday 14 November. At least three rockets appeared to have been aimed at the airport in the Eritrean capital, Asmara, hours after the Tigray regional government warned it might attack.

The TPLF was a prominent and powerful force in Ethiopian politics until Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power in 2018. Since then, its members have lost central government positions and others have been arrested for



Jesus was a refugee

Making the connection between the Christmas story and the ever-present plight of refugees around the world - in the form of a new collection of cards. By Simon Cross.

[Original article published in Baptist Times](#)

Jesus was a refugee.

It's a thought that goes through my head quite a lot. It's quite haunting actually.

In particular it goes through my head whenever I hear news stories about people fleeing their homes, trying to find refuge in a strange country. I think of it when I read about small boats trying to cross the channel. I think of it when I read of families walking across the Sahara.

Whenever I see, hear, or read those stories I'm immediately reminded of that short but iconic passage in Matthew chapter 2, where the holy family escape from the soldiers in the nick of time, taking refuge in Egypt until Herod dies.

There are nearly 80 million "displaced people" around the world today, and according to the United Nations, more than half of all the world's refugees are children. That's astonishing. And appalling.

Millions of children have had to flee from their homes, many to another country altogether. Forced out of their homes by war, or famine, or one of the many impacts of climate change perhaps. It's an extraordinary number, one in every hundred people in the world.

I credit the Baptist church I grew up in with awakening me to the social dimension of the gospel. It was there that we talked about the responsibility of Christians to not stand idly by while people suffered around the world. It was there too that we were encouraged to be creative, and to use our gifts and imaginations while engaging in the work of the church.



Earlier this year I was thinking ahead to Christmas, and wondering how I could help others to make the connection between the Christmas story and the ever-present plight of refugees around the world. I was feeling a bit fed up about the way that Christmas is so often simply presented as a cutesy story about little donkeys and cosy stables, and I wanted to remind people of the way the refugee story that sits at the heart of the narrative.

So I commissioned four amazing artists to produce compelling imagery which would help me do the job. They jumped at the chance, delivering four very individual designs for me to turn into Christmas cards. Profits from the cards will go straight to refugee charities, supporting vulnerable children who find themselves displaced, a long way from home.

It's a small gesture. It won't solve the problem, but it might just help a little. And it will help us all to remember a simple truth.

Jesus was a refugee.

Simon Cross is a writer, researcher, journalist and activist who lives and works in Grimsby, UK. He set up and ran the UK's first ever official 'Heavy Metal Carol Services' and is always developing projects which seek to push at the boundaries between sacred and secular.

Find out more about

[Refugee Christmas here.](#)

Image by Dorothee QUENNESSON from Pixabay