

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 10th January 2021

This Sunday's online service "The Seven-Miles Bible Study"



Jerry is leading and is preaching from Luke 24:13-35

Structure of Jerry's sermon:

Points to consider when reading God's Word:

1. Don't Miss the Point of the Bible v 13-24
2. Do See Jesus at the Centre of the Bible v 25-27
3. Expect the Word to Warm your heart v 28-35



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

Jerry's Extra Reading
Isaiah 53:1-12, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

For Your Prayers

SBC will be open this Sunday from 10.00 to 11.00am for personal prayer. Remember in your prayers those vulnerable people in the fellowship and community that have been instructed to self-isolate again and will be starved of social contacts. Pray also for children who are again missing their schooling and contact with their friends and their parents who are trying to balance child care and work. Also remember the small businesses in Stalham and surrounding area that are again unable to trade.

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Yvonne (Von) Brigstock.**

Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 1st Jerry posted on behalf of Jan and Henry "Please pray for our daughter Joanne who is a nurse at Helledson Hospital where there are Covid cases and she may be asked to work on the wards. Also some of the staff have gone sick, pray for their protection and stamina. Thank you."

On Saturday Ruth Hayward posted Please pray as well for those like myself working at Julian hospital. On our ward alone we have thirteen members of staff off sick with Covid and patients also have it. I am lucky and haven't caught it yet but we are running out of staff I and the remaining staff are having to work extra hours to help out."

The next day Lorraine Stuart asked Please pray for my brother Sandy - He lives in a care home in Scotland and has contracted Covid, he fortunately had the first Covid injection before Christmas, he is currently running a very high temperature and not wanting to eat which is very unlike him. Thank you."

Also, on Sunday Geoff posted "Thankyou for your prayers. Our Neighbour Derrick has passed away. Please pray for Jillian and the family. Geoff had sought prayers for Derrick and his wife Jillian on the 30th December. Derrick had contracted Covid that seemed to aggravate his Parkinson's and he was deteriorating rapidly. Geoff said "Jillian bless her, asked for a quick and peaceful passing for his sake."

On Monday Lorraine posted "Thanks for praying everyone. I did fear he wouldn't get through the night as he had to have a specialist nurse attend him. He did survive the night and smiled at his nurse this morning."

Later that day David and Eileen Neill requested prayer for Rev Richard Woodhouse from the North Walsham Congregational Church who had been taken to hospital.

Prayer for Lockdown

Each morning we wake, another day consumed by the news of the Coronavirus. Another day facing the same space, the same colours, the same sounds. We crave for the difference we had, the freedom we are used to, and the people we met. As the tears form, please Lord Jesus fill my uncertainties with peace and strength.

We have always needed it, but now we know it.

We pray for all those facing isolation, hardship, hunger, fear or anxiety. Lord let them know you are close and guide us, where we have time, energy or resources, to reach out and bring relief.

We should have always done this, but now we know it.

We pray for all those who are sacrificing safety and comfort so that others can be saved. For doctors and nurses, and care workers. Fill them with your spirit and let them know that they walk in your footsteps.

It should have always been this way, but now we feel it.

Through this time, help us draw together in spirit even while we are apart. Help us seek out the lost and lonely and know that in all circumstances, however dark things may seem, we are loved and we are eternally safe.

Your love has always been like this, help us to know it

We pray this in Jesus name, Amen.

Taken from [Paulton Benefice](#). Living and Telling the story of Jesus

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Secretary: Diana Gordon
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Ministry Team: The Whole Fellowship

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 the Stables, 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 miniter@stalhambaptist.org.uk

For your Diary

Monday Jan. 11th 9.00am

Deacons Zoom prayer meeting

Wednesday Jan. 13th 7.00pm

Zoom Bible Study
Contact Diana for the links

Thursday Jan. 14th 2.00pm

Meeting with Spurgeon's college on Zoom so the deacons are brought up to date with Jerry's minister in training course

Ron's New Year Message

As we head into another year I would like to say thank you to the wider church family for all the encouragement, support of and towards one another that went on last year, for adapting to new ways of doing things and for still being the ministers in our communities. As we go forward let's endeavour to keep doing those good positive things and may The Lord bless us and keep us and make His face to shine upon us as we seek to love and serve Him this year.

Church Meeting

Following up from my last article about holding a church meeting via Zoom to discuss our re-refurbishments, Writes Diana Gordon. I am pleased to say that I have had sufficient responses from members to meet the necessary requirements under the constitution in regard to the quorum. Anyone in the fellowship is of course warmly invited too and can join in the discussions but cannot vote. This meeting also allows those without the technology to join by telephone.

The meeting will be held on Sunday 24th January at 12.00 midday. Please contact me for a link for Zoom or how you can join in using a mobile phone or landline.

Church Opening

We have received a recommendation from the Baptist Union saying in light of the current increase in positive virus cases that even though churches are permitted to open for services that we refrain from doing so for the time being.

We can however open for private prayer where masks and 2 metre spacing etc guidelines need to be followed.

Donations

If you would like to donate to SBC you can go on line at <https://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/donate.php> where you will find details of how to pay by BAC's, SMS or debit or credit card. You can also put cash or cheques through Henry Nicholson door at Three Windows

Church Reading Plan

This week we are looking at 1 Corinthians 3 How will your building project go in 2021? If you would like to suggest a reading or take part in "Testimony Tuesday" contact Diana, Jerry or Ron.

EBA Prayer Focus 10th January 2021 Church from Scratch

Church from Scratch are a pioneer Baptist church based in Southend-on-Sea. Their mission is simple: To bless our wider community and to share the love of Jesus.

Ordinarily the church would meet in people's houses around a meal, gathering together without a "public place of worship". However, the rules around social distancing have made this especially hard, and Southend's move to Tier 4 has limited things further.

Despite the difficulties created by Coronavirus, God has continued to bless the church and help them find ways of reaching out and supporting their community. As with many churches, Zoom has replaced midweek meetings, but the church has also been able to enjoy socially-distanced walks, garden hops and pier walks along the town's famously long landmark.

Natalie Hughes was inducted as the new minister-in-training, joining Peter Dominey and the team whilst also studying at Spurgeon's College.

2020 also saw a new group called 'Making Space' begin for volunteers who work in the church's social enterprise 'Shared Space', currently operating as a weekly online support group while its two shops have been forced to close. This complements the short online services that began in the first lockdown to help maintain a rhythm of life and prayer and to stay connected.

CfS is committed to collaborating with other churches and providing resources to bless the wider church. These include a three-film course called 'Baptism' and 'Christmas From

Scratch', found on the church's Facebook page. A number of events and training have also been held to discuss how to make church a safe environment for LGBTQ+ individuals, following a number of new members being welcomed into the church from the gay community.

Please pray:

- For those who have been isolated during the pandemic and are struggling with loneliness. That they may encounter the love of God.
- For the weekly Night Owl Prayers as they continue to help people stay connected during lockdown.
- For the evolving work with local women involved in prostitution and those battling addiction. Pray for plans to start a drop-in service.

Jerry's Quotes of the Week

"The sin of unbelief is seen in that we are more prone to believe Satan than we are to believe in God. Satan comes and whispers in your ear that the Bible is not true, or that God is not loving and merciful, that He doesn't care about you and your problems, and you are quick to believe those lies rather than to trust in God's provision in Jesus Christ"

- **Charles Spurgeon**

"Death and resurrection form no part of their [The disciples of Jesus] concept of Messiah's office and program which is why they had not really taken in what Jesus had said about His coming death. They were hoping for a Messiah who would break the imperialist's domination by the Romans by force of arms, a Messiah who managed to allow Himself to be caught by Jewish authorities, handed over to the Romans and crucified before He had even begun to organize any guerrilla operations, popular uprisings or open warfare.

What use was He? If the Old Testament prophesied a liberator who should not die but be triumphant, Jesus was already disqualified because He had died. After that, it was almost irrelevant to talk about the resurrection."

- **David Gooding**

"We must never allow ourselves to become distracted from the actual voice of God speaking to us in the Bible. There he spreads a feast for us. Other books and articles can help us savour and digest what we will find there—or even help us find things that are actually there but which our untrained eyes and palates might otherwise miss. But God forbid we should spend all our time in prep-work and never get down to the business of eating."

- **Justin Dillehay**

"I want to know one thing, — the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way: For this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: Here is knowledge enough for me. **Let me be homo unius libri. [A man of one book.]**

Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: Only God is here. In his presence I open, I read his book; for this end, to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does anything appear dark or intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights... I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God; and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach."

- **John Wesley.**

G Go to God In Prayer daily.

R Read God's Word daily

O Obey God, moment by moment.

W Witness for Christ by your life and words.

T Trust God for Every detail of your life.

H Holy Spirit— Allow God's Holy Spirit to control and empower your daily life

- **Jamie Buckingham.**

2020 - it wasn't all bad...was it?



2020 has certainly been a year like no other and one that we will never forget. However, before we write it off entirely as a lost cause, perhaps we should pause to think for a moment. If we believe in a God who is sovereign and good, then whatever the difficulties of the year, He has been at work furthering His purposes. So in the spirit of hope and joy that marks Christmas, here is a list of things that weren't so bad about 2020, things through which we may trace the hand of God at work. Writes [Darren Blaney is minister of Herne Bay Baptist Church for the Baptist Times.](#)

1. Captain Tom

At the start of the year, Thomas Moore was an unknown 99-year-old, World War 2 veteran, living out his final years in peace and quiet. Today he is a multiple record-breaking, chart-topping, best-selling, Knight of the Realm. Not bad for a man who can only walk slowly with the aid of a frame.

What propelled Capt. Tom to such fame? Yes, it was the media coverage, of course. But that only answers the how, not the why. I think there were two reasons behind the Capt Tom Phenomenon.

Firstly, of all the people who had a right to lock themselves away, do nothing, and complain about how awful everything was, surely a frail 99-year old would be top of the list? Yet, he didn't. He decided to take action. He might not be able to change the world, but he could do *something*. Indeed, to use the old phrase of US President Theodore Roosevelt, he did what he could, where he was, with what he had. In the end, in a small but profound way, he did end up changing the world.

That, in turn, leads to the second reason why Capt. Tom became such an icon. In doing what he did, I think Sir Tom embodied something we all want to see in ourselves: the ability to transcend our circumstances and not be defined by them, the ability to do something good and meaningful, even in the midst of the most distressing of times. People gave because they saw something in him that they hope lives in them too. Perhaps that is why a popular Christmas advert on the TV suggests that the only thing that puts you on the "naughty list" this year is not having donating to his fund-raising appeal!

In all this I am reminded of the miracle of the Feeding of the 5,000. He may have looked at his walking frame and his small patch of garden and saw little more than five small fishes and two barley loaves. God saw a way of touching the lives of millions. Perhaps that is a lesson the church needs to hear again and take to heart.

(By the way, just for the record: it is estimated that the final total that he raised for the NHS will be just shy of £39 million, his autobiography was a Sunday Times #1 best-seller, and his chart-topping rendition of "you'll never walk alone" made him the oldest person ever to have a UK #1 hit. He didn't have a bad year really, did he? I wonder what you and I will be doing in our 100th year?)

2. Learning to cherish church

Many people have said to me how much they miss Sunday morning church. You remember that, don't you? That's the one where we used to complain that the building was too cold, or the sound system too loud, or we didn't like the drums, or the sermon was too long, or the service finished ten minutes late, or we never sang our favourite hymn anymore... Now we realise how much we had, how special it was, and how much we benefited from it. Now we treasure the thought of being able to meet together, to shake hands and hug, to pray together and sing out loud God's praises as His people.

God has been reminding us how important church is. May we never forget 2020 and forever be thankful for our church, whatever its imperfections might be!

3. Breaking out into new technologies

Let me be honest, before March this year I had never even heard of Zoom! I certainly never thought that the sentence I would utter more this year than any other would be "you're on mute!"

Most of us have a love/hate relationship with this technology. We find it difficult and at times frustrating, yet we are deeply grateful that it allows us to continue meeting together. Whether it has been Zoom, Facebook Live or Youtube, the church in the UK has been experimenting with and adapting to the use of new communication .

Along with learning new skills this has also opened up new ways for the church to connect with people who might otherwise never come to a church building and so never have heard the gospel. Indeed, a majority of churches surveyed have said that even when things go back to 'normal', they will continue to offer online services as well.

(By the way, there are rumours that after the pandemic is over Facebook, Twitter and Youtube are going to merge. The new service will be called You Twitface. Apologies, please keep reading...)



4. The relevance of the Good News

If 2020 has taught us anything, it is surely that this life, this world that we take for granted, is far more fragile than we ever dared think. A tiny microscopic virus has managed to shut down most of the economy, end normal life as we know it, and spread fear and uncertainty to millions. Perhaps it is a partial fulfilment of the words in Hebrews 12:26-28:

"At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe."

In a year where so much has been shaken, let us be grateful that we have received in Jesus Christ that which can never be shaken. Let us remember that the certainty of this life is but an illusion. It is the good news that gives us the only certainties in life, both in this world and the one to come.

5. How has your faith been?

Lastly, with much of the support offered by church, homegroups and even meeting with friends taken away from us, this has been a year where our faith has been tested. How have you done? If you have struggled, do not despair! God does not test us to crush us, but rather to grow us. Scripture is full of this:



"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." - James 1:2-4

"In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed." - 1 Pet 1:6-7

"And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." - Rom 5:3-5

"And we know that for those who love God all things work

together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified." - Rom 8:28-30

So be encouraged. What the world, the enemy and even our own sinful nature may have intended to harm us, God will use to refine and build us - even if it doesn't feel like it.

We have just finished Christmas. Many of us will have celebrated it quite differently in 2020 from how we have in the past. Yet its central message remains

unchanged. It is a message of hope, a message of a God who works through the most unlikely of people in the most unlikely of situations to bring about salvation for His people.

That same God is still at work today and we can trace His hand at work through the events of last year. It hasn't all been bad. He's still using unlikely people, like you and me, in the midst of unlikely times...like 2020.

For more about the Baptist Times click [here](#).

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