

# Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 14th March 2021

Mothering Sunday

This Sunday's online service

"A Lame Excuse to Share the Gospel"



Diana is leading and Jerry is preaching from Acts 3: 11 - 26

When we have the opportunity to share the gospel remember these three simple points:

1. Saviour v. 11-16
2. Sin 13-15
3. Salvation v 17-23

You can follow the service on the SBC website from Sunday morning, go to [www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/) Then click on the icon pictured right.



## Jerry's Reads

Num. 15:22-31; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 43; 52:13-53:12, Romans 1-3, Col. 2:13-15. 1 John 1:5-10.

## For Your Prayers

Please pray for those in the NHS and our government as they try to find a solution to the impasse over wages.

Pray for those in our community that are still suffering the after effects of covid 19 and those still anxious about contracting the virus.

Remember those whose lives are being blighted by the economic impact of the virus.

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Tanya Diggins**.

## Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 26th February at 3.43am Ruth posted "I am now travelling back home in a taxi. I have biliary colic which is a side effect of the surgery that no one told me about. Plus in the surgery they made a small cut in the tube that flows down into the intestine which also no one told me about which is the cause of all the pain and discomfort I have been in. Thank you for all your prayers."

Later the same day Steve said "I am home from hospital." On Tuesday he then posted a voice message saying his mum had had a fall damaging her ankle and asked for prayers. That day Jane Skivington posted "Can you please pray for Jan (Steve's mum) she is having an operation on her ankle today thank you."

Later prayers were requested for Eric who is having surgery on his eyelid.

On Wednesday Diana posted "I have a prayer request from Norma Huxter. Things are now moving along with their house sale and Norma asks if we could pray that this will all go smoothly and their move to Norfolk will take place soon."

On Thursday Jane posted "Can you please pray for Ruth she is back in hospital thank you."

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

## Prayer For Peace From Inner Turmoil

Dear God, I have so much going on in my life that I don't know which way to turn. I come to You, broken in spirit, to ask You to calm my inner turmoil. I have tried to sort things out in my own way, but it is all futile, so in my poverty, I come before You Lord and submit to You, asking You to grant me peace of mind and a quieting to my soul.

Please give me Your peace and Your strength. I know that without You I can do nothing, but I also know that Your peace is poured into the hearts of those that trust in You with all their hearts. Lord, I trust You now and give my life and future into Your hands, Amen.

Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com>

## Mothering Sunday

For many years the ladies in the fellowship were presented with a potted flowering plant at the service on Mothering Sunday donated by AG Meales at Wayford. This year due to lockdown we are only holding online services which made the distribution of flowers difficult but Pat Dabbs came to the rescue hand making 80 lovely Mother's Day Cards (pictured) that have been delivered to the fellowship. A big thank you to Pat.



Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington  
01692 582731  
Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno  
07733837687  
Secretary: Diana Gordon  
07951949128  
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](http://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, 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 [miniister@stalhambaptist.org.uk](mailto:miniister@stalhambaptist.org.uk)

## For your Diary

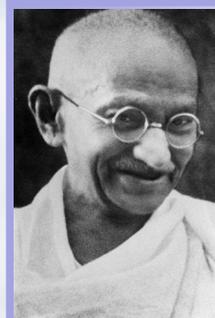
**Mon March 15th 7.00pm**

Deacons Zoom Meeting

**Thu March 18th 7.00pm**

Zoom Prayer Meeting.

Contact Diana for a link.



"The day the power of love overrules the love of power, the world will know peace."  
Mahatma Gandhi

## SBC AGM 18th April

The church meeting will be held via Zoom on Sunday 18th April 2021 at **12.00midday**.

**There will be a strict time limit of 1 hour. Agenda and Reports will be sent out nearer the time.**

Deacons Elections:

1. We have 3 deacons who were due to be re-elected at the 2020 AGM. This couldn't go ahead because of the first lock down. All 3 were willing to stand and the diaconate proposed that their term be extended by a further year, which proposal received no objections. The deacons now propose that these 3, namely Diana Gordon, Henry Nicholson and David Child complete their further 2 years in office and this will be put to the vote at the AGM.
2. Maggie Harpur's term of office expires this year and Maggie has agreed to stand again. I am therefore nominating Maggie to be a candidate and require 2 people to support that nomination. Can you please contact me no later than 21st March if you would like to support this nomination. I will then arrange for the requisite slip to be signed by the first two people responding.
3. We have no limit on the number of deacons able to be appointed therefore if there is anyone else you feel would be suitable for office and who agrees to stand please find 2 people to support your nomination and provide me with those details no later than 21st March. I will then ensure you have the requisite slip to sign and return by 28th March. I would remind you that to be eligible to stand for election the person must have been a church member for at least 52 weeks and have been baptised by full immersion. I would be grateful if you could confirm your attendance at the meeting as soon as possible in order that I can be sure we have a quorum. Thank you for your support at this difficult time Diana.

## Poppy Nicholson

Our Nephrotic Syndrome Trust March marathon is well under way and we have completed nearly 20 miles so far. Writes Victoria Nicholson. Thank you to anyone who has donated, we really appreciate your support and kindness. We have smashed our £100 target and have raised an amazing £630 so far, towards funding vital research into one day finding a cure for Nephrotic Syndrome. Of course we would love to raise even more if we can. If you would still like to donate or read Poppy's story then please go to our [Go Fund Me Page](#) or leave any donations with Henry. Thank you.

## Church Reading Plan

This week we are looking at Acts 6. How easy is it to stand up for someone when many others are accusing them falsely and you could end up in a difficult place?

If you would like to suggest a reading or take part in "Testimony Tuesday" contact Diana, Jerry or Ron.

## Food Bank

During March, the following would be much appreciated:

**Long Life Milk – full fat or semi-skimmed, Tinned Tomatoes, Tinned Fruit, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Fish, Tinned Meat, Sponge Puddings, Jam, Squash, Tea, Instant Snacks – Mugshot, Pot Noodle, Cuppa Soup, Crisps, Sweets and Chocolate, Toilet Rolls, Male and Female Deodorants, Shampoo and Conditioner, Household Cleaning Products and Non-bio Laundry Detergent.**

If you need help, or know someone in difficulty, look at the information on front page of the newsletter.

## EBA Prayer Focus 14th March 2021 Wood Lane Baptist Church

Wood Lane is one of four Baptist churches in Dagenham and was opened in 1932 when the giant housing estate was built. It is a time of change for them.

Long-serving pastor Revd David Horncastle retired last year. His wife, Revd Alison Horncastle, is hospital chaplain at Queens in Romford and will be retiring in April, so they will be leaving for a life on the coast in May. Anthony Egbunike has stepped

up to a leadership role and will take the church through the post-COVID transition. He is seeking Ministerial Recognition and hopes to start studying at Spurgeon's College in the autumn.

The church has always had strong youth work with Girls' and Boys' Brigades, and Youth Club and Youth church on Sundays, but these activities have stopped since last March and there is no certainty they will resume as they were.

Sunday services and prayer groups have now moved online with weekly services on Zoom since the socially distanced services ceased in December.

The church in Wood Lane is a small church and not financially secure in the long-term. The ethnic make-up of the church has changed and continues to do so as it reflects the revolving population and diversity of Dagenham itself. New people continue to join the church, even during COVID.

The church realizes it will need to adapt and change to meet the new challenges in the post-COVID world and reach out to the local community in different ways.

Please pray:

- For the changes at the church, David and Alison's retirement, and Anthony as he takes on the leadership.
- Where God is taking the church and his future leading and direction for the fellowship after lockdown ends
- All those who are part of the church and those struggling with the effects of COVID and lockdown issues

## Jerry's Quotes of the Week

"We speak to one another on the basis of the help we both need. We admonish one another to go the way that Christ bids us to go. We warn one another against the disobedience that is our common destruction. We are gentle and we are severe with one another, for we know both God's kindness and God's severity."

**Dietrich Bonhoeffer**, *Life Together*.

"When God forgives, He forgets. He buries our sins in the deepest ocean, gone forever and puts a sign on the shore that says, "No Fishing Allowed." - **Corrie ten Boom**

"What is sin? Sin is:

- The glory of God not honoured.
- The holiness of God not revered.
- The greatness of God not admired.
- The power of God not praised.
- The truth of God not sought.
- The wisdom of God not esteemed.
- The beauty of God not treasured.
- The goodness of God not savoured.
- The faithfulness of God not trusted.
- The promises of God not believed.
- The commandments of God not obeyed.
- The justice of God not respected.
- The wrath of God not feared.
- The grace of God not cherished.
- The presence of God not prized.
- The person of God not loved." - **John Piper**

"True repentance has four essential aspects. First, it must be intellectual—someone must have an awareness and understanding that they have done wrong. Second, it must be emotional—someone must hate sin as God does. Third, it must be volitional—someone must have an earnest desire to change and sin no more. Finally, it must be spiritual—someone must believe that Christ is faithful and just to forgive all sins and cleanse from all unrighteousness those who confess their sins (1 John 1:9). This is the kind of true repentance Peter asks of his audience." - **R. Albert Mohler, Jr**, *Acts 1-12 For You*.

"Jesus Christ is at the centre of the Bible's message and God's plan for the universe – and at the centre of human history. But is He at the centre of our existence – our hopes, priorities and day-to-day lives? We need to move on from simply knowing the details of His birth, life and death to a deeper understanding of their meaning." **Justin Buzzard**, *Consider Jesus*.

# Jesus who shares our pain

If God is present in the darkness reaching out for us, then light and hope are not something to be found when the darkness has gone - they are already there present when the darkness is at its deepest

Anthony Clarke on how an extraordinary stained glass window reveals something of the nature of God.

Lent is not only a time to think about how we live and act, whether we decide to give something up or take something on for the 40 days, but also to reflect again on the God who we worship during this time, particularly as we follow again in the footsteps of Jesus towards the cross.

Some years ago as minister of a local church I would try and help us do this by putting the same picture on the front wall of the church, which would then be behind me as I preached each week. It was a very large picture painted on perspex by my predecessor as minister and another church member and was a copy of a stained glass window inspired by a visit to the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham Alabama. The original can be seen [here](#):

The story behind the window is certainly inspiring as well. In September 1963 a bomb planted by the Ku Klux Klan detonated at the church killing four young black girls, and in doing so blew out one of the existing windows which had a picture of Jesus in a typical pastoral scene.

Wanting to do something to respond to such senseless killing this new window was created by John Petts, an artist from Carmarthenshire and was a present from the people of Wales; one of the local newspapers started a fund with the maximum donation limited to half a crown so it required thousands of people all to do a little and engage with the project. And so the church had a new window, whose story spoke of our human solidarity in suffering and whose image, a black Jesus, spoke of divine solidarity with us.

Lent is a journey to the cross, with the cross providing a shadow behind us as we go. And it is as we get closer to the cross in those last days of Jesus' life in Gethsemane and at Calvary that the story asks so many probing questions about how we understand Jesus. It shows us a truly human Jesus who experiences anguish, suffering and loneliness; as Mark tells the story of the passion Jesus is gradually abandoned by everyone, even God. If there is any sense in which these experiences are going to be human like ours then there can be no pretence here, no sense in which any kind of divine knowledge counteracts the pain of the moment. Here is Jesus experiencing the reality of human life to its very depths.

Yet in the mystery of the Incarnation it also shows a truly divine Jesus, and so of course what true divinity is like, rather than some of the pictures of God we carry based on our human ambition and longing for power. If Jesus is also truly divine then here is a God for whom it is not strange to come in Christ to share the very darkness and godforsakenness of our own lives.

Again as Mark expresses in his Gospel, this moment of godforsakenness on the cross then becomes the greatest revelation of the God who is most divine in becoming human, most true to God's self in self-giving, most authentically God in this supreme act of love and vulnerability.

The whole narrative of the Gospel has been steadily moving to this climax of the darkness of the cross, in the cry of vulnerability and the centurion's response, truly this was God's Son. The Word becomes flesh to the depths of accepting a godforsaken death; and the flesh now becomes Word for in this suffering and silence God speaks new words of love and hope.

I find this picture a particularly hopeful one. Partly it is hopeful because of the story behind it, with the willingness back in the 1960s to fashion a window with a black Jesus as a sign of solidarity with a church community that had experienced not just a terrible bombing but years of racial intolerance. Here in this act of generosity is a glimmer that mirrors, if only faintly, the solidarity that God showed to us in becoming human, and calls us to that same solidarity now. In a world that experiences so many divisions and such pain, such creative and generous acts of solidarity are just as badly needed. And as well as a time of reflection and confession, Lent must also be a time for a renewed commitment to such life changing actions.

I also find it hopeful because of the very picture itself. The lighter colours of the rainbow that seem to stand behind the cross suggest that there is another day coming, yet already somehow present in such a way that does not diminish the significance and suffering of the moment. Yes there is another word to come, yes after cross there is resurrection, but as God himself in vulnerability and love shares our pain and suffering, in the midst of the darkness the light is already there. I want to take Jesus' cry of forsakenness in all its stark fulness; this is the reality of the moment.

But behind the Son on the cross is a Father who has not turned away to leave the Son alone, but is reaching out in the darkness to find the Son. If God is present in the darkness reaching out for us, then light and hope are not something to be found when the darkness has gone but are already there present when the darkness is at its deepest.

The very large copy of the picture I stood in front of some years ago became particularly meaningful for me in my own experience of God at that time; there is now a much smaller version on our study wall. And once again this Lent it calls me to follow this Jesus, human and divine.

**Image | Alby Headrick | Flickr | Creative Commons**

Anthony Clarke is Tutorial Fellow in Pastoral Studies and Community Learning at Regent's Park College in Oxford  
Source [Baptist Times](#)



# Walking with the 'Just God'.

## Something to read

Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

- Luke 14:27.

## Something to think about

My conviction of journeying with poor and excluded people and communities is driven by my faith and gender. My faith teaches me 'love your neighbour', and take the side of the poor and excluded in their struggle for liberation and justice. My gender taught me to continuously speak out for equity and equality. I am a follower of Christ and that is why I am in this vocation since 1987.

However, in the early 90s, I was accidentally made to manage a project working with sex workers on HIV prevention. I was very uncomfortable. I could not come to terms with it for six months, as I was more comfortable working with women in need in slums and women who faced violence.

My struggle was answered by the bible. When I read in John chapter 8 about how my Christ dealt with the Woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). That example of Christ taught me, you are not here to judge anyone, you are being sent here to be a catalyst, to change things for the better.

Today the whole world is celebrating International Women's Day. But, today I remember the women and girls who are forced to clean and carry human excreta from dry latrines, it is not their choice, but just because they are born into a particular caste or community.

This dehumanising practice, known as manual scavenging, is prevalent across India, where I live and work. It is not only a humiliating practice but a major cause of discrimination and is keeping these women and their families in poverty. This age-old practice made me disheartened when I joined Christian Aid in 2005. Being born and brought up in a city, I hadn't really understood how deep rooted this caste system is in my country. Or how it is systematically and structurally keeping communities in poverty.

Christian Aid is supporting a partner organisation called SKA to eradicate manual scavenging from the country. I am glad to be part of it and to make it history. Whatever consequences we may face to end this inhuman practice we will continue, as disciples of our God, and carry the cross. This means giving one's life for a cause, speaking about truth and justice for the oppressed and excluded in our countries.

What is it that we really mean when we pray 'thy kingdom come on earth as it in heaven'? We are sent into the world with a purpose. If my neighbour is suffering inequality, discrimination and injustices, will I be quiet? I believe God has created all equal and cannot be partial with that faith and so I continue to work and many times to fight for equality in this world. But still with hope.



## Something to pray

Dear Lord,

I thank you for all our supporters who share their love and support for your mission, for why you have sent your son, our beloved Christ to this world. We learn from him why we were also brought into this world. How to

be his disciples and address hypocrisy. Lord our God, I pray to you when the world is celebrating International Women's Day. I want to see no women and girls engaging in manual scavenging but instead having a dignified life, since you have created all equal. I strongly

believe your creation cannot be discriminated by caste and gender as you created all of us equal. For if we want to be your disciples we are renouncing all that we possess, not only materials of this world but all we possess in our pride and attitude. Amen

Today's contributor is Semeda Steves. Semeda is a professional social worker and trained family counsellor, working with marginalised and excluded communities in India for the last 30 years. Her passion and commitment is working with women from the communities, who face violence and discrimination, in their struggle for justice and life with dignity.

Source <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/pray/daily-bible-readings>

Image by [billy cedeno](https://www.pixabay.com/users/billycedeno/) from [Pixabay](https://www.pixabay.com/)

International Women's Day was last week

