

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 28th March 2021



This Sunday's online service "Good theology instils good practice"

Jerry is leading and Ron is preaching from Acts 4: 23 - 32

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



Ron's Reads

Psalm 2:1f Heb 1:5 Ex 16 1Cor 2:4-5

For Your Prayers

Please pray for the civilians living in the Tigray region in Ethiopia who are caught up in a civil war and suffering regular atrocities also those in Yemen embroiled in a conflict that is leading to a humanitarian crises. Also remember those in Brazil who are suffering from a severe lack of oxygen available in hospitals to treat covid victims and are experiencing an ever-growing death rate.

Remember those in the fellowship and wider community that are suffering with different medical problems and are waiting for appointments or currently having treatment and tests. Please pray for those creating a Sonrise Zoom services to be used on Easter Sunday starting at 6.30am and the Good Friday and Easter Sunday online services.

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Christine and Robert Emerson.**

Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 19th Julia Maile posted "David had the result from his biopsy today. The cancer has grown and is slightly more aggressive so they are recommending treatment. They will discuss it Monday 29th and we should have a consultation a week or so after. Please pray for David and those making the decisions. Thanks x."

On Thursday 25th prayers were sought for Fran as she was going to have an urgent test at N&N on Monday 29th.

Peter Bane say's "thank you for praying for me and please keep on praying as I recover from my operation"

Prayers for the Week

Prayer for Courage To Stand Firm

Father, we live in a world where spiritual deception and a watered-down gospel are luring many good men and women away from the pure milk of the Word of God, and instead of drinking from the fountain of life, so many people are compromising their faith by drinking from the broken cisterns of the world. Give me resolute courage I pray, to stand fast in the evil day and endow me with boldness and sufficient strength, that only comes from You, so that I may remain firmly anchored to the unalterable and infallible Word of God.

Keep me I pray, from being lulled into a spiritual slumber or lured into compromising the gospel of truth, for the sake of an easy existence or a peaceful life. May I recognise that one of the enemy's chief objectives is to render the witness of Christians impotent, by diluting the message of the glorious gospel of grace and twisting its eternal truths. I pray that my mind may be protected day by day as it is washed in the cleansing power of the Word of Truth, and may I put on the whole armour of God so that I may stand firm in the evil day. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

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

Gracious God,

We are recipients of your great love and the good news of your gospel in our salvation. Enlighten the eyes of our heart that we may see, that we may know what is the hope to which you have called us: the hope of eternal life. May our hearts burn with the words of the Great Commission — so that we make disciples of all nations.

We pray that you open doors in all areas which our lives intersect. May you pave the way for the conversations we will have. We pray that you would open doors in our workplaces, schools, leisure activities, and our relationships. Make us aware of opportunities to bear witness to the greatness, the glory, and the goodness of our Saviour. Give us a boldness to walk through these doors and proclaim the hope of redemption in Christ and the promise of eternal life, for the glory of Your name and for our good.

As Colossians 4:2-4 tells us, may we "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving; and pray for us also, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear, as I ought to speak." Lord we ask these things by the blood of your Son. Amen

Prayer written by Worship Pastor Kyle Carden, Grace Oviedo. Source discovergrace.com

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Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno
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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 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

For your Diary

Mon March 29th 7.00pm

Deacons Zoom Prayer Meeting

Thur April 1st 7.00pm

Zoom Prayer Meeting

Contact Diana for a link.



"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."
Mother Teresa

by Evert Odekerken

Easter Services

Watch our Good Friday service as well as our Easter Day celebration at www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/

To take part in the Zoom Sunrise service at 6.30am on Easter Sunday use the following information.

Join the Zoom Meeting On

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5185800970>

Meeting ID: 518 580 0970

Join by mobile

01314601196,,5185800970# 02030512874,,5185800970#

Join by landline by dialling

0131 460 1196 Or 0203 051 2874 Or 0203 481 5237.

Meeting ID: 518 580 0970

For more information contact Jerry on **07733837687**

Online Anniversary

Last Sunday was the anniversary of SBC's first online service.

It is often said "That necessity is the mother of invention."

Many in the fellowship came together and filled the gap that was a necessity to stay in contact with the fellowship with the bonus of reaching out to the wider community and people throughout the UK and the world. On average the online services attract 303 views many of those views would involve more than one person watching. Our normal Sunday congregation would number between 60 to 90 people with up to 150 or more attending for Christmas, Easter celebrations and baptisms. Turning a negative to a positive is not always easy in life but the online service has achieved that.

A big thank you to all those who have contributed to this successful project.

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.

SBC Secretary says "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."

At present we have two nominations for the diaconate Maggie Harpur & Dan Nicholson

Church Reading Plan

This week we are looking at Luke 6: 37-41. How easy do you find it not to judge people around you and those seen and heard on the media?

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

Daffodils Still Blooming

We are still harvesting daffodils to raise money for SBC. Bunches of the spring flowers are available outside Edna's house in St Johns Road and also outside SBC 10 to 12 midday on weekdays.

As of Monday 22nd March £513.50 has been raised.

Empanda

Jan Nicholson will be taking a few things to Empanda housing for Easter. If anyone would like to donate sweets, chocolate, homemade cakes or other cakes, biscuits etc, please bring them to Jan and Henry before the end of March.

EBA Prayer Focus 21st March 2021 Haddenham Baptist Church

Bordering on the Cambridgeshire Fens, located in one of the larger villages is the fellowship of Haddenham Baptist Church. Like many similar fellowships, Haddenham has faced a steady decline over the past twenty years. This has, however, spurred the fellowship on in mission to reach their community for Christ.

Tudor Parsons has been their Pastor for the past two and a half years whilst also completing his Theological Studies at

Spurgeon's College.

Prior to the pandemic, nearly fifty people were attending the monthly café-style services from across the village. Now, there are four thriving home groups, men's breakfast mornings, a group set up to bless those in need across the surrounding villages, monthly quiz nights, and they are in the process of finishing the new church website. At Christmas, the fellowship delivered around forty Christmas hampers to those in the community, having grown from twenty-five the year before.

Prior to lockdown, the fortnightly youth group moved from two/three in attendance to sixteen to eighteen children over the year. Thanks here also goes to the help the Church received from 'Youth for Christ' and their support.

Following a bequest to the church, the fellowship is in a position to explore mission going forward, whilst attending to the ongoing repairs of the church premises.

God is certainly on the move in Haddenham. The weekly zoom church gatherings are consistently attended and being blessed by a range of gifted preachers. Haddenham Baptist Church may, numerically speaking, be small, but it has a big heart to serve God.

For Prayer

Please pray that

- The Church will continue to following the leading and prompting of the Holy Spirit
- God will continue to protect Tudor and the Church leaders as they seek to follow Him

Quotes of the Week

"This life is for loving, sharing, learning, smiling, caring, forgiving, laughing, hugging, helping, dancing, wondering, healing, and even more loving. I choose to live life this way. I want to live my life in such a way that when I get out of bed in the morning, the devil says, 'aw no, he's up!'"

— **Steve Maraboli,**

"You see most people don't believe that miracles still exist. They believe those things ended with the disciples. I will gladly tell them our story and let them see that God is still working. Through all of my struggle and pain I want people to know that when we look at the storm of life and become afraid, God is there protecting us from the winds and lighting."

— **Andrew Golden,**

"It is the Word alone, and not the interference with it, that finally counts. True enough, and fittingly enough, the most obvious point in the whole parable is that the fullest enjoyment of the fruitfulness of the Word is available only to those who interfere with it least. But even in making that point, Jesus still hammers away at the sovereignty and sole effectiveness of the Word. Those on the good ground, he says, are those who simply hear the Word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty-, some sixty-, and some a hundredfold. It's not that they do anything, you see; rather, it's that they don't do things that get in the Word's way. It's the Word, and the Word alone, that does all the rest."

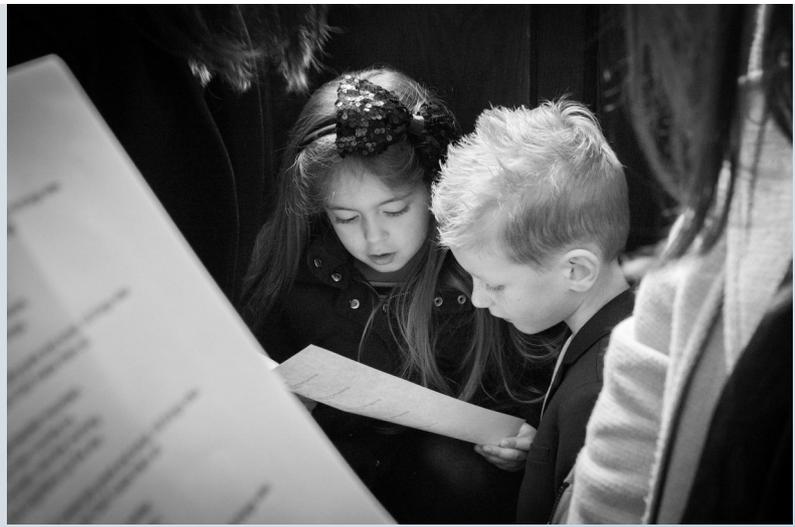
— **Robert Farrar Capon,**

"The Gospel of grace must not be turned into a bait-and-switch offer. It is not one of those airline supersavers in which you read of a \$59.00 fare to Orlando only to find, when you try to buy a ticket, that the six seats per flight at that price are all taken and that the trip will now cost you \$199.95. Jesus must not be read as having baited us with grace only to clobber us in the end with law. For as the death and resurrection of Jesus were accomplished once and for all, so the grace that reigns by those mysteries reigns eternally - even in the thick of judgment."

— **Robert Farrar Capon,**

We Are What We Sing

Our theology is often shaped more by our singing than it is by preaching or teaching, writes *Simon Woodman for the Baptist Times*. In this period when many of us have had to start again with our church's worship repertoire, writing your own hymn is a project that could serve to nourish and sustain your congregation.



One of the things that has been most-missed by congregations during the last year of rolling lockdown has been ability to gather together to sing. Whether we prefer the pipe organ or the guitar, hymns ancient or modern, the act of raising our voices together in worship before God just *isn't the same online*.

We might sing-along-at-home with some piped music during our electronically-facilitated services, but we don't get to raise the roof together, joining our voices with angels, archangels, and with all the company of heaven. Online clergy discussion forums regularly have people asking for musical resources for use in online services, and the issues of copyright are complex and sometimes frustrating.

But nonetheless we persevere, because singing matters (even for those who, like me, can't hold a tune). It matters because it touches us deeply, emotionally, and intellectually. A good worship song, a good hymn, will reach into our souls and nourish us, challenge us, and sustain us, in ways that very little else we do together in worship has been able to.

I remember once hearing John Bell, the great hymn-writer of the Iona Community, saying that our theology is shaped more by our singing than it is by preaching or teaching. As a preacher, I recognise the truth of this - sermons are given, and then they fly away.

Songs are sung again, and again, entering deep within. John Bell also, memorably, commented that the songs of our childhood are those that sit the deepest within us, remaining in old age when others have gone, and that he would rather enter the gates of heaven singing 'Jesus loves me this I know', than he would 'If I was a fuzzy wuzzy bear'!

So, as all worship leaders know, what we sing matters. A good tune is not a guarantee of good theology, and vice versa. During lockdown, many of us have had to start again with our church's worship repertoire. Our well-rehearsed 'favourites' that the musicians can play off-pat have had to be revisited, re-found, recorded.

At my church we formed a 'Lockdown Choir', where we circulate a singalong track to the choir, who then send back a recording of their voice to add into the mix. We've

not managed the sophistication of those who have combined videos as well, but it's worked well enough to get those in the congregation who want to join in, singing again.

One of our deacons suggested we should write a hymn for the new year, to express something of the distinctives of our congregation's understanding of its values, vision, and mission. Contemporary hymns (such as those written by Stuart Townend, or Keith and Kristyn Getty) offer a good combination of 'sing-ability' and theological depth, allowing a more modern musical compositional style to sit with a carefully worded progression of thought.

I'm offering our hymn here as an example of the kind of project a church might undertake to nourish and sustain the congregation over this coming year of change. Why not have a go at writing your own?

Verse 1

*We are your people called together,
Bringing hearts and minds to you;
We nurture faith through strength and weakness,
Seeking truth in all we do.*

Chorus

*Great God you call us to your heart-beat:
Living love, including all;
Provoking faith across our city,
Help us follow where you call.*

Verse 2

*Great Christ our centre and our focus
Give us courage to stand true;
Confronting forces of injustice,
Risking all, we follow you.*

Verse 3

*This church stands open to your Spirit,
We will help the broken mend;
A sanctuary for those excluded,
Christ, we follow to the end.*

Words: Simon P Woodman

Music: Alexandra Cran-McGreehin

To listen to our recording of this, or to download the sheet music, go to: bloomsbury.org.uk/a-new-hymn-for-bloomsbury/

Image by [GemmaRay23](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Love.

Something to read

And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing

1 Corinthians 13:2.

Something to think about

Over the last year there has been much said in the media regarding race. A subject that over hundreds of years, has been the source of much injustice, inequality and suffering. A topic that raises mixed emotions in many of us.

I remember once visiting the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg with some colleagues. Back in the early 2000s, we travelled from Lesotho and on our way back, we drove to Johannesburg for a return flight back to the UK. We had some time before the flight, so we visited the museum.

Together, we bought our tickets, and I discovered written on my ticket was the words 'blacks only' and my two white English colleagues were given tickets written 'whites only'. We went through two different entrances and walked in silence the journey that black South Africans had walked.

At the end of the walk, we came out together, got into the hired car and drove in silence to the airport where we sat until we boarded. The emotions I experienced included anger, pain, outrage, shame and finally hope.

Speaking to a crowd at London's Trafalgar Square in 2005 for the Make Poverty History campaign, Nelson Mandela said: 'Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times-times in which the world boasts breathtaking advances in science, technology, industry and wealth accumulation – that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils.'

As my colleagues and I talked about our experiences at the apartheid museum, we worked through our emotions and found a shared love – one that keeps us fighting against poverty and injustice.

The act of love takes us into being co-workers with Christ in the work of restoration. In restoring to himself, a world that has gone astray, we experience an unconditional love that gives us a hope that we can be better as we 'love our neighbours'.

Something to pray

Thank you for the unmerited favour and love that you have shown us.

Cause us now oh God, to abide in your everlasting love.



Let that love be manifest in us and in our actions and in how we relate to each other as human beings and to all your creation.

May our purpose in this world be to be the instruments of your love.

Amen.

Today's contributor is Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, Chief Executive of Christian Aid:

'I am a child of God, created in his image, with innate worth and deserving of dignity according to His divine Mercies and Grace.'

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

Image by [falco](#) from [Pixabay](#)

