

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 1st August 2021

Today we will be meeting "LIVE" at SBC

Jerry will be leading and Norma Huxter is speaking on Zacchaeus Luke 19: 1-10

Sunday's online service: Pat will be leading and Jerry speaking from
Nehemiah 8:1-18 "Rebuilding Faith by Loving God's Word."



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



Structure of Jerry's online sermon:

1. Reading and Understanding the Word v1-8.
2. Rejoicing in the Word v 9-12.&
3. Responding to the Word—Obedience v13-18.

Jerry's Reads for Online Service

Joshua 1:8, Psalm 19:7-11, Psalm 119:1-176, Isaiah 55:10-11, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12 James 1:19-25

For Your Prayers

Please pray for Norma our guest speaker this Sunday at SBC.

Pray also for all the children now on their summer holidays that they will have a safe time. Please pray for Barbara R as she recovers from her leg injuries and continues with her proof reading and service preparation.

Thank God for the number of new faces we have had at our Sunday live services.

Continue to pray for the Christians in India that are often the last in the queue for help during the pandemic.

Please pray for Jerry, Ron and the deacons who will be meeting on Monday.

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Jane Jones**.

Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 23rd Jenny posted "I would value prayer this morning as we go to see Mr Youssef to get a date for surgery and plan of action. Please pray for Bob too, he is quite worried about it all. Thanks Jx"

Later Jenny posted "Just seen the surgeon, now have to have another ultrasound as the MRI identified two mor tumours which need to be investigated. Please continue to pray. Will see the surgeon again as soon as the ultrasound and possible biopsies are done. Could be here a while. Thanks Jx"

Then Jenny posted "Thank you all so much for your prayers, it's amazing what a difference it makes. The ultrasound showed only tiny fatty lumps which need no treatment, so I will just have surgery on the original lump - all booked for August 18th, followed by radiotherapy. Thank you again. Jx"

On Tuesday Jerry posted "Please pray for Doreen and Jan this morning as they take the Good News of the gospel to folk in the community and that God would open doors and soften hearts."

Later Jerry posted for Jan "Thank you for prayers this morning had a few chats and left leaflets and bible. Spoke to three young men, one of whom we spoke to last time x J and D."

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To join the WhatsApp Virtual Prayer Room that gives support with the power of prayer and/or the Devotion WhatsApp site text Jerry on 07733837687. You will need a smart phone.

Prayers for the Week

Loving Father, give us hearts so full of your love that they overflow in giving to those in need around us.

Help us never to judge or reject others, but simply to love, accept and help them according to their need, following the example of your son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, let me seek your company and your will daily, and having found it, hasten to fulfil it since the fields are ripe for harvesting.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Lord, create in me a thankful and joyful heart as I put on the outfit of a Christian life and remember that all that I do, I do it in your name and through your power. Amen.

Source [Christian Aid](#)

Dear Lord Jesus. Thank you so much for all the precious children in this world. We know they mean so much to you. We pray you would help us do all we can to protect and give them the start in life they deserve. Lord we bring to you all of the wonderful work being done to release children from poverty, and we pray that you would bless every pair of hands that works for you. Increase and bless their efforts in Jesus name, Amen.

Source [Compassion UK](#)

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 online 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

Community Fridge

Open In The Stables

Monday 2 to 4pm

Tuesday to Friday 10 to 12 noon

For your Diary

Monday 2nd August 7.00pm

Deacons Zoom Prayer Meeting

Thursday 5th August 7.00pm

Zoom Prayer Meeting

Contact Diana for a link.

Sunday 8th August Service

Flowers: Magda Nichols

Church Open

The Church is now open on Sundays and a Covid secure system is in place requiring masks to be worn and a booking system requiring those attending to book each week by contacting Diana by email

secretary@stalhambaptist.org.uk WhatsApp or telephone 07951949128.

Community Fridge

The Community Fridge is up and running and is asking for produce that you grow in your garden or allotment that sometimes goes to waste when your green fingers lead to a bumper crop.

Tesco's and Forrest's have donated produce but if you get a chance when you're in local shops that supply food you could give them a nudge about donating food to the Community Fridge that would otherwise go in the bin.

For more information contact Jane Skivington on 01692 582731 .

You can also follow the Community Fridge on [Facebook](#)

Sunday School Help

At Sunday's service Diana asked for volunteers to help with the children's Sunday School. This is an important part of SBC's mission working with young people allowing them to get to know Jesus and take that into adulthood.

During August the Sunday school is being suspended and will restart in September. If you would like to be involved with this rewarding program contact Diana

secretary@stalhambaptist.org.uk WhatsApp or telephone 07951949128.

Church Reading Plan

This week we are looking at **Philippians 4: 10-13** How easy has it been in life when times have been hard and there seems to be no way forward to find strength in Jesus?

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

Good News

SBC has received planning permission from NNDC for the refurbishment of the School Room.

A big thankyou to Stewart Marsh who has put a lot of effort into this project.

North Norfolk Foodbank

Thank you for your support and generosity without which the foodbank work would not be possible.

The following would be much appreciated:

Tinned Fruit, Long Life Milk – full fat or semi-skimmed, Tinned Meat, Jam, Squash, Instant Snacks – Mugshot, Pot Noodle, Cuppa Soup, Crisps, Male and Female Deodorants, Washing Up Liquid, Shampoo and Conditioner, Baby Wipes, Household Cleaning Products – Sprays, Cloths, Bleach.

Please note that we cannot accept any fresh food or items that contain alcohol.

Financial donations are always welcome. Please see our website for details. <https://cromerdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/>

EBA Prayer Focus 1st August 2021

Light of Life Baptist Church Ormesby

Light of Life Baptist Church is based in Ormesby St. Margaret, a village situated between the Norfolk Broads and the coast. Their Minister is Rev Elizabeth Stoner, who together with husband Kevin, arrived last year.

The Baptist Chapel is in the centre of the village and up to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, had been used as a community cafe amongst other activities based there. The



church had been meeting on Sundays at the larger All Saints Parish Hall in nearby Scratby and also met as home groups in various local locations.

As with other churches, Light of Life functioned online and through keeping in touch with one another by phone this past 18 months and had their first Sunday service outside on 25th June. The church is now exploring new ways of using the chapel as they seek the Lord's direction as to how things re-start.

The video for Light of Life Baptist Church is on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/OvU8ig0PJVI>

Prayer Points:

- Please pray as we discern the new rhythm of gathering together as we centre around following Jesus in our everyday lives and not a weekly Sunday Service.
- Give thanks for a loving and generous church family and a forward-thinking leadership team.
- Please pray for how we will use the chapel as a retreat space, bringing well-being, healing, a place of rest and hope to our church family and the surrounding villages.
- Pray that displays in the chapel foyer will continue to be a witness to the local community and that they will tell the story of God's love to people.

Jerry's Quotes of the Week

"When God's people get away from loving, reading, and obeying the Word of God, they lose the blessing of God. If we want to be like fruitful trees, we must delight in God's Word (Ps 1:2-3)."

-Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Determined.

"However hard some things are to understand, it is never helpful to start picking and choosing biblical truths we find congenial, as if the Bible is an open-shelved supermarket where we are at perfect liberty to choose only the chocolate bars. For the Christian, it is God's Word, and it is not negotiable. What answers we find may not be exhaustive, but they give us the God who is there, and who gives us some measure of comfort and assurance."

D.A. Carson.

Your word is formally the utterance that proceeds from your mouth and substantially the expression and commutation of your mind, and so it is with Scripture as the Word of God; formally, more than a million words strung together; substantially, God's inexhaustible, Christ-centered, salvation-oriented, self-revelation to us. The Bible is both God-given and God giving, and as such it stands as the standard of Christian faith."

J. I Packer, Taking God seriously.

"The Bible is not a "magic book" that changes people or circumstances because somebody reads it or recites it. God's Word must be understood before it can enter the heart and release its life-changing power."

Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Determined.

"The authority of Scripture is not just a matter of God putting our minds straight, but of God capturing our hearts for fully committed discipleship to the Lord Jesus. So the Bible is to be approached with reverence, handled with care and prayer, and studied, not to satisfy curiosity in any of its forms, but to deepen responsive fellowship with God who made us, love us, seeks us out, and offers us pardon, peace, and power for righteousness through Jesus Christ our Lord" **J. I Packer, Taking God seriously.**

Thought for the Week

Actions speak louder than words it's said, but as Christians how often do we talk a lot instead of putting Christianity into action?

The Nobody who became a Somebody

A reflection on being competitive in the Kingdom of God. By Colin Sedgwick from the Baptist Times

How's this for a lovely story?

A pastor had been faithfully ministering in his church for many years, and had seen much numerical growth. But things were changing, partly because a new young pastor had come to a neighbouring church and was beginning to attract large numbers.

One Sunday evening the congregation numbered just a handful. The pastor said, sadly, "Where is everyone?" After an embarrassed pause somebody replied that they were probably at that other church. Whereupon the pastor smiled and said, "Well, perhaps we ought to join them then"; he gathered up his books and led his loyal little flock down the road.

That must have been hard. But it was done with grace, dignity and humility.

The world we live in is ferociously competitive. We all want to be top dog, to be the most successful person in our particular field. When it comes to sport, of course, that's fair enough: the whole point is to *win*, and if one person wins, then everyone else, obviously, must lose. But in other areas it's a very different matter. A famous novelist is reported to have said "Every time a friend succeeds, something in me dies". Perhaps he said it with a smile on his face, not meaning it too seriously. I hope so. But I can't help wondering.

This kind of competitive spirit creeps like poison into the church. When I was a very new minister, still feeling my way, an even newer one arrived. At the first ministers' fellowship he attended he informed us - bold as brass - that "We are praying to become the biggest church in this town". Not, note, the most *loving* church, or the most *Christ-centred* church, or the most *Spirit-filled* church... I have to confess that I sat there thinking, "Oh, you silly, silly man..." (Within a year he had gone.)

According to John's Gospel there was a short period when John the Baptist and Jesus were both active in preaching and baptising. This is what we read in John 3:22-28...

An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him." To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him'".

To us, as we look back knowing what we do, what happened was inevitable: the disciples of John gravitated to Jesus – of course! But some remained loyal to their teacher – and, it seems, got upset and jealous on his behalf: "Rabbi, that man... – the one you testified about – look, he is baptising, and *everyone is going to him*". How dare they!

And how does John respond?

First, he states, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven... I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him..." (verses 27-28).

In other words, God has a purpose for each one of us, and our job is to find out what it is and simply get on and do it – and not worry about anyone else, even if their God-appointed role seems to eclipse ours.

Second, John compares the coming of Jesus, and the breaking in of the kingdom of God, to a wedding, with all the joy that implies. Jesus, of course, is the bridegroom and, says John, "My role is that of 'best man'". In weddings in most societies the best man (or whatever title he may go by) is very important: much responsibility falls to him. But one thing he absolutely *mustn't* do is steal the limelight from the bridegroom – just as the bridesmaids, however beautiful, mustn't steal the limelight from the bride.

(I conducted a wedding once where one of the bride's sisters drew a lot of attention to herself by acting like a prima donna: everything she said and did seemed to scream out "Look at *me!* I'm here!" It was embarrassing, and eventually another member of the family took her aside and told her very firmly "This occasion *isn't* about you!" Fortunately it did the trick...)

My job, said John, is to point people to Jesus (John 1:33). So if my disciples are drifting from me to him, great! long may it continue! And he summed it up with that famous little saying: "*He must increase: I must decrease*" (John 3:30). Can we say that? Truly, from our hearts?

The poet T S Eliot wrote: "Most of the trouble in the world is caused by people wanting to be important". Another witty writer offers the warning: "You may get to the top of the ladder, and then find that it has not been leaning against the right wall". I like that!

In terms of the kingdom of God, the only way to be *something* is to make yourself *nothing*. That, and nothing less, is the way of Jesus (Philippians 2:7). Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear...

Lord Jesus Christ, please deliver me from any kind of competitive or jealous spirit, so that all the glory goes to you. If I am called to do great things, may I do them without pride, and if I am called to do little things, may I do them without resentment. Amen.

[Source Baptist Times](#)



Open Doors

Preetha was denied treatment after a horrific attack

Preetha was violently attacked while praying with some friends - and then she was denied treatment in hospital, because of her faith. Here's her story - and how you're helping her, and can support other believers facing the same ordeal.

Preetha was savagely attacked by Hindu extremists. When she woke in hospital, she found that doctors wouldn't treat her - because of her faith

When Preetha* woke up in hospital, the first thing she felt was pain – pain all over her body. Her hand hurt most. She looked down at it – it barely looked like a hand. There were deep cuts in four of her fingers and her palm, and blood was everywhere **Christians**

Preetha could see her daughter, Mirai*, in the bed next to her, with her own deep cuts and dark bruises.

Her son who was by her bedside told her: "The doctors are saying they won't treat you because we're Christians. Where can we go now?"

The memories started flooding back of what she had endured before she lost consciousness.

A terrible attack

Preetha and her husband, a pastor, had been visiting a woman from their church – Vinita*. She had been harassed, and wanted to pray with them. But they hadn't been praying long when a terrible attack began.

Eight or nine men burst into the house with weapons, calling "Where are the Christians? We don't want Christians here!"

The other men started smashing everything in sight, and wildly attacking the small gathered group of believers. The last thing Preetha remembers of the ordeal is a man lifting up an iron rod to attack her. She held up her hand to try to stop the blow – and then everything went dark.

"As they hit me with the rod, I went unconscious," says Preetha. "I do not remember anything – I was like a dead body. My daughter saw and dragged me away to another house. They followed us inside, and beat me again."

Amazingly, everyone survived the attack – but were now being denied treatment by the hospital, simply because of their faith.

Preetha's husband used to persecute Christians himself

Just a few years before, it had been Preetha's husband, Navin*, who had been attacking Christians. Like St Paul, he went from persecuting believers to being a fervent servant of God. Preetha remembers watching one day as he had snatched a bunch of gospel leaflets out of a man's hand.

"We're not interested in your foreign gods here," Navin said, tearing the leaflets into pieces and throwing them in the man's face.

He had beaten Christians, hoping it would keep them away. But they kept coming – and some of their friends in the village even converted to Christianity. Preetha had felt the same about Christians until one day she became curious about the god they were always talking about.

Mirai, their daughter, had been suffering from a skin disease since childhood. It was causing serious psychological trauma to the girl. The couple had tried everything the local Hindu priest suggested – fasting and praying to the Hindu gods, taking part in all kinds of rituals and ceremonies. Nothing helped.

Christians from their village suggested that they take Mirai to church. Preetha was willing to try anything at this point, and so took the girl to a priest who prayed for her. Miraculously, Mirai's condition started improving! Preetha and Navin were so amazed that they started investigating Christianity more thoroughly – and eventually chose to

follow Jesus. Navin even became a pastor.

Rejected by their community

This decision didn't go down well with their village and relatives. They

were told that Christianity was a foreign religion and that they were 'anti-Indian'.

"We were threatened before," says Preetha. "We were persecuted and attacked. They told us to stop the church and ministry."

Finally, the threats turned into action, resulting in this violent attack.

Preetha found help through Open Doors partners. Thankfully, Navin was able to give his wife good news in her hospital bed: "Preetha, I've been speaking to Pastor Jeet. He says his team will help us – they're going to take us to another hospital where you can be treated."

Pastor Jeet* is a local Open Doors partner in India. Thanks to the gifts and prayers of Open Doors supporters, he was equipped to take Preetha and the others to a different hospital, pay their medical bills and help Vinita recover her business – which had been damaged in the attack. Local partners have also helped with a legal case against the attackers.

"Thank you, not just to God but also to His people who have helped us," says Preetha. "Yes, I have seen God's favour as well as the favour of God's people. You helped, thinking of me as your own."

Despite the trauma she has experienced, she says she is comforted by God's Word. She quotes Isaiah 49:15, which says, "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!"

"This word strengthens me," she says. "God is always with me."

Sadly, this attack is not an isolated incident by any means. Hindu extremists have vowed to quickly wipe out Christians and other non-Hindus from India, and they use extreme violence to carry out their plans.

Many other Indian Christians are in the same position as Preetha – caught between two terrible crises, of persecution and pandemic. They need your help today to keep going – and to keep the church alive in India.

**Name changed for security reasons*

For more information about OpenDoors click [here](#)

