

Stalham Baptist Church

Weekly News Bulletin

Sunday December 17th 2017



Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington

Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno

Secretary: Geoff Reynolds 01692 672120

Ministry Team: Whole Fellowship

Barbara Reynolds and Ron will be leading, Ron is preaching from Isaiah 40:1-11

"Have we lost the wonder of the message and its messengers?"

The morning will also include a play by the Sunday school and helpers.

We would like to offer a very big welcome to any visitors who have joined us this Sunday. Please take a "Welcome" booklet, also would you kindly sign our visitor's book at the back of the Church and you are very welcome to join us for refreshments in the Stables at the end of the service.

Today the Candlelight Service Tea will be at 4.00pm and the Service at 6.00pm

Monday	18th	Church Open for Prayer Funeral of Bill Woolsey Carols in the Swan Inn	10.00am - 12noon 1.00pm 7.00pm	Church Church Swan Inn High Street Stalham
Tuesday	19th	Coffee and Chat High School Christmas Service	9.30am -11.30am All Morning	Stables Church
Wednesday	20th	Over 60's Table Tennis	9.30am - 12noon	Schoolroom
Thursday	21st	Funeral of Frank Fairweather	11.30am	Church
Saturday	23rd	Prayer Time	8.00am - 9.00am	Church (Side Door)
Sunday	24th	All Age Service	10.45am	Church

For your Prayers:

As part of our weekly worship we have a **Prayer Team** available to anyone who would like the support of others in prayer. You can find today's prayer team **Janet and Eileen** at the back of the Church. Please pray for the residents of **Horse Barns, Wayford Road and Stepping Stone Lane**. As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Geci, Elsa and Peter Burt**. Prayers please for **Brenda Stevenson, Edna Woolsey and Dorothy Fairweather** all recently widowed and their families.

Please pray for those we know who are unwell at home, in care homes or in hospital. May they know His peace in their lives. **Ormesby Light of Life** We have agreed with *Sheringham Lighthouse Church* to share *Daniel Ward's* time equally between the two churches for another year. Daniel will be working part time for us, preaching and developing discipleship, and being the apostle to us as we move into a five fold ministry pattern of doing church together. The leadership team is transitioning into this, so we would appreciate prayers for wisdom and for the new leaders to be envisioned and for the church family to come on board.

Our community cafe outreach project, *The Chapel Coffee House*, has been open for two years, and is proving popular with families and elderly people. It is a wonderful way for us to serve and get to know people in the village better. We do need prayers for God's provision, as the cafe is still being subsidised by the church family. We are passionate about the vision and values for the cafe, and we ask for God's favour for financial provision as we apply for grant funding and seek to increase our customer base.

Dates for your Diary

December Monday 25th Christmas Day All Age Service 10.00am
" **Sunday 31st New Years Eve All Age Service 10.45am**

Homeless Food Hamper. Janet Nicholson is in the process of making a food hamper for the homeless youngsters from the hostel in Allen Meale Way. If you would like to contribute in anyway please speak to Janet Nicholson or phone 01692-581529

Prayer Rota. If you would like to be included in the Prayer Rota for next year which involves being in the church between 10am - 12noon on Monday mornings. This normally works out as one turn every six weeks, please contact Janet Nicholson or phone 01692-581529.

Pop up Cafe is now closed until January 11th. Many thanks to all who help to run it.

Geoff Reynolds Thought For The Week

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!' Isaiah 52:7

I believe I am often guilty and may be you are too, of reading the Christmas narratives looking for the nugget which we can pull out, develop, focus on for this year; to make the shocking, astounding, remarkable, grace-filled, heart-stopping action of God sending his Son to this world relevant once again.

So this year as I prepared for a sermon about Joseph and his encounter with angels and how he was just an ordinary Jewish man minding his own business, when he is drawn into God's business, I suddenly saw the beauty and creativity of God's methods of proclamation. God is a God of surprises.

Firstly God stops a priest in his tracks and tells him that he is going to have a son who will 'make ready the people of the Lord'. Next God sends an angel to speak to an innocent, but favoured teenage girl to tell her that the power of the most high will overshadow her, so the holy one will be born to her and he will be called the Son of God.

Then, God speaks to our ordinary Jewish man, Joseph, a tradesman, trying to live a good and upright life, the Bible tells us he is righteous man, he is given the message that the baby to be born into his family will save people from their sins. Then the message reaches the poor and marginalised in this 1st century society, as God sends the heavenly hosts to equip the shepherds to be the next proclaimers of his good news.

Finally, wise men, the academics of the day receive a nudge from on high. They go straight to the top, to the holder of power, to King Herod to seek confirmation of the sign they have received, that there is a new king of the Jews. Leaving a shocked and greatly disturbed king, they go on their way to pay homage to the new king, the one who comes to save.

God goes from priest, a chosen elite one, to an unknown and unimportant young women, to proclaim the birth of his only son. God goes from the ordinary man in the street to the ignored and ridiculed shepherds, in order to proclaim the birth of his son. God takes the knowledgeable academics hundreds of miles to the earthly king who seemingly holds all the power, to proclaim the birth of his son.

What struck me afresh about this jigsaw puzzle of a story is that God took the religious, the ordinary, the ignored, the ridiculed, the clever and the holders of power to proclaim his message, so that every part of society should hear and know that God reigns and the one who saves, Jesus, has come.

Be bold in your proclamation this Christmas, for the good news still needs to be shouted from every high place, low place and forgotten place, for it is for all time and for every person on earth, now and forever more.

Coffee and Chat, have recently donated £300 to Stalham and Smallburgh first responders.

"Happy 70th Birthday" to Pat Dabbs on 24th December. We hope that you will have an enjoyable day, and may the Lord crown your year with His loving kindness.

Food Bank. Over 40 people a month use Stalham food bank. Media coverage is suggesting that reserves for food banks are running low coming up to Christmas please keep your donations coming.

Last collection date for food parcels is Friday 22nd December, restart Friday 5th January .

Ron's Reading

Psalm 137

Quotes of the Week on Poverty

Dom Helder Camara wrote "When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint.

When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist."

Interesting thought as Christians is it good enough to deal with effects of poverty but not involve ourselves in the battle to find an overall political solution?

Charles Darwin wrote "If the misery of the poor be caused not by the laws of nature, but by our institutions, great is our sin."

He seems to suggest the sin is a collective one. Not just belonging to those in power the decision makers!

Maggie Harpur Thought for the Week Spiritual Warfare

I was reading 1 Chronicles 21 recently where we see that Satan moved against Israel to entice David to number Israel. What a temptation and David succumbed. We see in v 7 that God was angry with Israel and there were consequences if you read on in this chapter. Why was God so angry you may ask? Because David did it in the pride of his heart; and there is no sin that is of more offence against God than pride.

Peters advice to us: 1 Peter 5 v 8 says be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Items for the Bulletin, our web site and Facebook page can be sent to publicity@stalhambaptist.org.uk
Deadline for the Bulletin is Wednesday 7:00pm. Or call David Child On 07799262645.

Next Week's Service 24th December

Flowers: Christmas Flowers Welcome: Barbara W and Jane Refreshments: Rita and Maureen K