

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 17th October 2021

Today we will be meeting "LIVE" at SBC. Diana is leading and Ron is preaching from Samuel 3: 1f

Sunday's online service: Pat is leading and Ron is preaching from 1 Thessalonians 1: 1-10 "What's said about us?"

Today we celebrate the Lord's Supper



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.



For Your Prayers

Pray for those in the fellowship and community still waiting for routine operations. Also pray that the funds for the Schoolroom refurbishment can be found so the project can be started now planning permission has been granted.

Pray that as companies outline their potential problems in supplying goods for the Christmas season that we will not suffer another surge of panic buying.

Lord bring wisdom to our government, help them to work in unity driven by the commitment to protect and support all of the citizens in the UK as the impact of the pandemic and Brexit starts to affect all sectors.

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it. Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all your creatures. Help us to become instruments of a new creation, founded on the covenant of your love, (source Jesuit resource)

Please pray for the Christians in Myanmar, the minority in the mainly Buddhist country, who are being swept up in the military crackdown on resistance and are being murdered and persecuted.

Also pray for Christian Aid who are attempting to get food to many hungry people in Afghanistan.

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Jerry, Simone, Elsa, Kalos and Anna.**

Virtual Prayer Room

On Saturday 9th Simone posted "Thanks so much for your prayers. Anna is doing so much better and we are now at home. She is still feeding through a tube with high calorie milk so she can grow strong quickly for her upcoming heart surgery.

On Tuesday Jerry posted "Please pray for Doreen and Jan, Elspeth and Susie as they visit folks today. Thank you."

Later that day Jan said "Did 1 side of the High street and had a few chats but no opportunity to share Jesus and not many folk in this morning, thanks for prayers J & D.

Also on Tuesday DJ Steve posted an audio message saying "Don't forget mum's funeral (Jan Slade) on Thursday, will be good to see some of my friends there and give my mum the best send-off ever. Love DJ."

Prayer for the Week an End to Waste

Let us pray for an end to the
Waste and desecration of God's creation
For access to the fruits of creation
To be shared equally among all people
And for communities and nations to find sustenance
In the fruits of the earth and the water God has given us.

Almighty God, you created the world and gave it
Into our care so that, in obedience to you,
We might serve all people:

Inspire us to use the riches of creation with wisdom,
and to ensure that their blessings are shared by all;

That, trusting in your bounty, all people may be
Empowered to seek freedom from poverty, famine, and oppression.

Source [Xavier Education](#)

Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington
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Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno
07733837687

Secretary: Diana Gordon
07951949128

Ministry Team: The Whole
Fellowship

For your Diary

Monday 18th Oct

9.00am Deacons Zoom

Prayer Meeting

10.30am in the Church

Prayers for young people

10.30am in the Stables

WI Start Up Meeting

7.00pm Alpha Zoom Meeting

Wednesday 20th Oct.

7.00pm Zoom Bible Study

Contact Diana for a link

Sunday 24th Oct.

Flowers: Jan Nicholson

Monday 25th Oct.

7.00pm Deacons Zoom Meeting

Thursday 29th Sept

7.00pm Prayer Zoom Meeting

Contact Diana for a link.

Community Fridge

Open In The Stables

Monday 2 to 4pm

Tuesday to Friday 10 to 12 noon

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 minister@stalhambaptist.org.uk

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

Church Reading Plan

This week we are looking at [Luke 14: 12-24](#)

As Christians when/if things get difficult financially how easy will it be to continue being generous and keep giving to those with less?

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

Tesco Community Grant Vote For Community Fridge

Tesco Community Grants support thousands of local community projects and good causes across the UK.



This month the Community Fridge is one of three local groups vying for a grant at Tesco's Stalham. All will receive some cash. You can vote by taking a blue disc

when you buy goods and dropping it into the slot for Community Fridge. You can always ask for a disc at the checkout if you are not offered one. This is a great opportunity to help raise money for the Community Fridge in the stables.



Church Open

The Church is 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

Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Council is holding a very important meeting which will help determine the Future of Stalham and what we would like to see in our town. We need to produce a Neighbourhood Plan that will set in stone what we want for our Town.

The meeting is next TUESDAY 19th OCTOBER at 7pm in the Town Hall.

This is a chance for all of us to join in with the future by having our opinions and ideas put forward .. here are the information links about this and some local plans that have already been drawn up!

Click on the following for more information:

[Guidance on Neighbourhood planning](#)

[Neighbourhood planning](#)

[Plans that have already been produced locally.](#)

[Acle Neighbourhood plan](#)

[Wroxham Neighbourhood plan](#)

Please make time to come and find out what you can do.

For more information please contact the Parish Council Clerk on: 07881 638145 or clerk@stalhamtowncouncil.org

EBA Prayer Focus 17th October 2021

Hardwick Evangelical Church

Hardwick Evangelical Church is a village church in Hardwick, five miles west of Cambridge. The Minister is Rev Kate Gaze, who has been sole Minister of the church since April, after being Co-Minister for almost ten years.

The fellowship is of about 40 people. As they meet in the local primary school, they started meeting in person since the beginning of September, when restrictions for school hire were lifted. The congregation enjoy being back 'home' rather than on Zoom, although Zoom served them well throughout the pandemic restrictions.

Just before lockdown began in March 2020, they had taken on the lease of an office/meeting place in the village, which they have called The Living Room, and which has been kitted out to accommodate small group meetings. As well as the office part of the space, they have a regular Bible Study Group meeting there, a local youthwork team, and a prayer meeting. There are plans to start a Bereavement Support Group, a well-being café and a midday reflection; other groups are in the pipeline. It is also hoped that the space can be used as a place for prayer and ministry and for individuals to meet with friends.

The fellowship is able to use the Community Room attached to the school to help run a Baby and Toddler group and started this up again in September.

Praise

- * The fellowship give thanks that they are able to meet in person again.
- * Almost everyone who was attending regularly before lockdown is still coming to the church, and they have even gained a few new people.

Prayer

- * For enough volunteers to run children and youthwork on Sunday mornings and the various activities in The Living Room.
- * Applications to the advertisements they currently have (children & families' worker, and youth worker), so they can develop the work amongst these groups of people.
- * Good health for the older people in the congregation who have experienced significant health deterioration over the past eighteen months.

North Norfolk Foodbank

During September SBC contributed 417.55kg (920lbs) of food which helped towards a monthly total of 3533.05kg. We totally rely on donations, both food and financial, to operate and we are extremely grateful when people choose to support us. So thank you for thinking of us and enabling us to serve the people in crisis across our district.

If you would like to be involved in fundraising for us in the future or would like one of us to come to talk about the work of the Foodbank either on zoom or in person when allowed, then please get in touch.

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

During October, the following would be much appreciated:

Long Life Milk – full fat or semi-skimmed, Tinned Fruit, Tinned Meat, Jam, Squash, Biscuits, Crisps, Male and Female Deodorants, Washing Up Liquid, Shampoo, Laundry Liquid/Powder, Household Cleaning Products.

Quotes of the Week

"There will always be someone willing to hurt you, put you down, gossip about you, belittle your accomplishments and judge your soul. It is a fact that we all must face. However, if you realize that God is a best friend that stands beside you when others cast stones you will never be afraid, never feel worthless and never feel alone." — Shannon Alder

"Though we are incomplete, God loves us completely. Though we are imperfect, He loves us perfectly. Though we may feel lost and without compass, God's love encompasses us completely. ... He loves every one of us, even those who are flawed, rejected, awkward, sorrowful, or broken." — Dieter F. Uchtdorf

"To truly try means to accept God's love, his healing, to accept the world can be ugly, but your heart doesn't have to be. It takes courage friend. You haven't held on to your anger and bitterness in search of healing, but as a banner of your hurt. Because it's real and visible and strong. But so is God's love and so are those arms he's holding out for you." — Jenny B. Jones,

A living hell: Churches, clergy targeted by Myanmar military

Rights groups say Christians, a minority in the mainly Buddhist country, are being swept up in the military crackdown on resistance. Source Aljazeera.

Churches, which have provided refuge to people fleeing violence, are being caught up in the Myanmar military's crackdown on all forms of resistance to its rule. Christians in Chin State say these hymn books were thrown out by soldiers who ransacked their church in August

By Nu Nu Lusan and Emily Fishbein

14 Oct 2021 Updated: an hour ago

Last month, Myanmar soldiers gunned down Cung Biak Hum, a 31-year-old Baptist pastor, while he rushed to help put out a fire caused by military shelling. As his town of Thantlang in Myanmar's north-western Chin State went up in flames, soldiers sawed off the pastor's finger and stole his wedding ring.

"The killing of Cung Biak Hum and mutilation of his finger demonstrate the extent of disrespect and brutality with which [Myanmar military] soldiers are conducting themselves in their ongoing war against the people," Salai Za Uk Ling, deputy director of the Chin Human Rights Organisation, told Al Jazeera.

Ex-Myanmar president says army tried to force him to cede power ASEAN could bar Myanmar general from leaders' summit Myanmar will not address world leaders at UN General Assembly Top UN official urges Myanmar action 'before it's too late'

The September 19 incident is one of at least 20 cases documented by human rights groups and the media, in which Christian churches, church leaders and volunteers have been targeted or caught in the crossfire of military [attacks](#) since a February 1 coup.

The incidents include shelling churches, detaining pastors, and using churches as military bases.

"Churches are now empty and deserted," said a Catholic church leader in Kayah State who, like several others interviewed for this article, spoke on condition of anonymity due to concerns of reprisals. "Fear is instilled in the hearts of people. Even churches are not safe from attacks," he said.

Military spokesman Major General Zaw Min Tun did not respond to multiple attempts to reach him for comment on the incidents mentioned in this report, as his phone was switched off.

In May, the military justified its attacks on churches in Kayah, including a Catholic church where artillery fire killed four people, by claiming "local rebels" were hiding there, Radio Free Asia reported.

Christians, including Catholics, make up about six percent of Myanmar's population but are mostly from ethnic minority areas. Experts say they are targeted both for their religion and their ethnicity [File: /Jorge Silva/ Reuters]

According to 2014 census figures, which surveyed some 50 million people and excluded roughly 1 million mostly Muslim Rohingya, Myanmar's population is nearly 90 percent Buddhist.

The predominantly Buddhist ethnic Bamar majority dominates the military and politics, and the military has long promoted [Buddhist nationalist](#) organisations. The

military-drafted 2008 constitution also recognises the "special position of Buddhism as the faith possessed by the great majority of the citizens".

Christians, meanwhile, make up just six percent of Myanmar's population and are mostly from ethnic minorities concentrated along the country's borders, where their experiences of marginalisation and forced assimilation have contributed to decades-long armed struggles for self-determination.

According to Benedict Rogers, senior analyst for East Asia at the human rights organisation Christian Solidarity Worldwide and author of three books on Myanmar, the military has always had a "deep-seated hostility" towards non-Buddhist religious minorities.

"[The military] have often used religion as a tool of repression. They have sowed religious nationalism, and that has been the case for decades," he said, adding that since the coup, these patterns have only intensified.

"Christians have certainly been targeted, both for their religion and their ethnicity," he told Al Jazeera.

Chin, Kayah and Kachin State have the country's largest concentration of Christians, according to the census.

Damage sustained to Our Lady of Peace church in Kayah State's Demoso township during military attacks in the area in June [Supplied]

Some 85 percent of the 478,000 residents of Chin State, located on Myanmar's north-western border with India, identified as Christian, while in Kayah, which borders Thailand in Myanmar's southeast, 46 percent of its 286,000 people said they were Christian.

Damage sustained to Our Lady of Peace church in Kayah State's Demoso township during military attacks in the area on June 6 [Supplied]

In Kachin State, in Myanmar's far north on the border with China, 34 percent of 1.6 million people surveyed identified as Christian; the census excluded about 46,000 people living in areas under the control of the Kachin Independence Organisation.

"[The central government] set the mark of their ownership on Kachin lands, building their pagodas wherever there is a hill," said Layang Seng Ja, head of research and publications and a professor at the Kachin Theological College and Seminary. "Our beautiful hills, valleys, plains and mountains have the symbols of their domination."

To read the entire harrowing article from Aljazeera click [Here](#)

Christian Aid: Increase our faith so we can live boldly. Something to read

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. - Hebrews 11: 8-10.

Something to think about

On the face of it, Abraham sounds completely irresponsible. He heads out from the wealth and security of his home in Ur of the Chaldees (that's in modern Iraq) without having a clue where he is going. This is not a normal thing to do!

If somebody went out on such a mystery tour these days, they would at least have the advantages of their mobile phone and credit cards. But not so for Abraham, for whom this was a complete journey into the unknown. The writer to the Hebrews sees this daring journey as clear evidence of Abraham's faith. The only possible explanation for this uncertain journey was his absolute certainty in God. He knew that God would not let him down and so he was content not only to head off into the unknown but to live in a state of complete vulnerability, in tents, in a foreign country.

His faith was not a whim or a passing emotional experience but a way of life, which he gladly embraced because he knew that God had something much better in store for him. There is something in all of us that causes us to shrink back from stepping out in faith. We love the security of the familiar, and are often nervous about embarking on something that is new and that might go wrong. Abraham reminds us that God is so faithful we can confidently step into the unknown.

Something to do

Reflect on one way in which you can step out in faith today. Perhaps you need to speak to a homeless person, or call on an elderly next-door neighbour, or write to your MP commending one of Christian Aid's campaigns. Take a step and take it with God, knowing that he will be with you as you take it.

Something to pray

Loving Father, we thank you for the amazing story of Abraham. Help us to be willing to step out in faith today. We confess that we have often played it safe, and have avoided doing things that might make us feel insecure and uncertain. Increase our faith in you so that we will be willing to live boldly for you this day.

We worship your holy name, and pray that you will empower us by your Holy Spirit so that we will live in a way that brings honour to the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Today's contributor is the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, former General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

For more information about Christian Aid click [here](#)

The Christmas gift for people living with dementia

Dementia affects the brain and cognition, but it doesn't touch the soul and the spirit of a person, and at Christmas time, especially, the Holy Spirit can be released through our worship and spiritual songs. By Louise Morse source Baptist Times.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! Supermarket shelves are full of all things Christmassy, and Sainsbury's is handing out its seasonal food order forms. After months of Covid separation friends and families are planning to celebrate a 'proper' Christmas, one that includes worshipping together again in 'real' church services. And the company, the celebrations and the worship can bring a special blessing for people living with dementia.

One of the greatest gifts is the way the Holy Spirit magnifies our understanding of all things spiritual (2 Corinthians 4: 18). Dementia affects the brain and cognition, but it doesn't touch the soul and the spirit of a person, and at Christmas time, especially, the Holy Spirit can be released through our worship and spiritual songs. There's a reflection of this in the lyrics to 'O Holy Night', where it goes, 'long lay the world in sin and error pining, till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.'



This year Christmas will bring together people who haven't seen each other for a long time and you may see some changes among older relatives. Experts are expecting a rise in dementia because of the Covid effect, and it's known that feelings of loneliness increase vulnerability to dementia. But forgetfulness and apathy may be due to mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a condition that again, can be brought on by stress and loneliness. MCI is reversible in most cases. If your Christmas gatherings include someone with dementia or MCI you'll want them to be contented. They will enjoy the time better if their sensory input is not overloaded. A comfy chair in the corner, with a little side table for a cup of tea and a mince pie is better than in the centre of a crowded room with high noise levels.

An excellent example of including someone with a disability without putting them under pressure happened around a hospital bed. Marie, in her late 60s, was recovering after major surgery. She had a large family of six children, and one evening they came into the hospital and, after greeting her with a careful hug, found some chairs and sat around her bed and chatted amongst themselves, with an occasional word or nod to her. She clearly felt included, but wasn't expected to have to make an effort to join in, although she did a few times, of course. She was just happy to have them there and see them being family. Each of them brought a little gift and put it on her bedside locker, which made it look like Christmas.

At Christmas time, through the worship and familiar, beloved hymns and liturgy, deep calls to deep and the Holy Spirit speaks to our spirits. We are 'strangely warmed' as John Wesley described an experience. It touches the essence of who we are, and can make our spirits soar. Spirit to spirit communication bypasses a damaged brain, and makes a soul feel its worth. It can also help the person emerge through the fog, with faculties that they had apparently lost. It happens at other times of the year of course, but there is more stimulus at Christmas time with its church services, worship, and Scripture reading. It is a precious thing to be touched by the Holy Spirit.

You can also find on our website www.pilgrimsfriend.org a small programme of [Brain & Soul Boosting for Seniors](#) (BSBS) at Christmas time. We are receiving good reports on the results being seen. The Christmas version is suitable for a small group or for a couple.

Also good for sharing together is our new picture book, *God's Word in God's World*. It was designed by Ruth Ranger, whose father is in one of our homes. Looking at the pictures and saying the Scripture verses out loud can be a boon for someone living with dementia.

Louise Morse is a speaker and author of several books on issues of old age, including dementia.

She is also external relations manager with the Pilgrims' Friend Society, a Christian charity founded in 1807 to help support needy elderly Christians.

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