

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 31st October 2021

Today we will be meeting "LIVE" at SBC.

John Leaf is leading and preaching.

Sunday's online service: Diana is leading and Jerry is preaching from

1 Thessalonians 2: 13-16

"The Work of the Word of God"



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.



Jerry's Readings

Ps 119, 2 Tim 3:15-17, Heb 4:12, 2 Peter 1:20-2.

For Your Prayers

Please continue to pray for those in the fellowship and community who are waiting for routine treatments

Continue to pray for those of the fellowship that are still understandably anxious about returning to Sunday services that they will, at some time in the future, feel comfortable to join us on a Sunday.

Pray that as the Christmas season's momentum accelerates the story of Jesus will surface above the materialistic surge and bring joy to the hearts of people.

Also pray that as the winter descends on us, fuel and food prices inflate and people start to struggle to survive that SBC can continue to be a hub of support and hope and radiate into the community that Jesus loves them, showing "Christianity in Action."

As leaders meet in Glasgow for the COP26 please pray. O Lord, grant us the grace to grow deeper in our respect of and care for your Creation. O Lord, help us to recognize the sacredness of all of your Creatures as signs of your wondrous love. O Lord, help us turn from the selfish consumption of Resources meant for all and to see the impacts of our choices on the poor and vulnerable. *Lord, hear our prayer.* Jesuitresource.com

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Alan and Dee Paterson.**

Virtual Prayer Room

On Friday 22nd Simone posted "Can you please pray for Anna and myself as we are back in hospital, Anna is working very hard to breathe and we are staying overnight so she can be monitored. Thanks!"

On Sunday Simone posted "Thanks everyone so much for your prayers and greetings. They have found a cold/cough virus which explains why Anna was so poorly. She's doing much better now and we will hopefully get discharged tomorrow or on Tuesday, all depending on how she is improving. Thanks for your continued prayers!"

On Tuesday Jerry requested "Please pray for Doreen and Jan this morning as they visit people to share the hope that we have with them, thanks J and D x"

Later Jerry posted for Jan and Doreen "Thank you for your prayers, we spent most of the time speaking to two people who had some belief in Jesus and left leaflets with them J and D x"

Church Reading Plan

Mark 10:46-52 Easy-to-Read Version

Jesus Heals a Blind Man

⁴⁶ Then they came to the town of Jericho. When Jesus left there with his followers, a large crowd was with them. A blind man named Bartimaeus (meaning "son of Timaeus") was sitting by the road. He was always begging for money. ⁴⁷ He heard that Jesus from Nazareth was walking by. So he began shouting, "Jesus, Son of David, please help me!"

⁴⁸ Many people criticized the blind man and told him to be quiet. But he shouted more and more, "Son of David, please help me!"

⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, "Tell him to come here."

So they called the blind man and said, "You can be happy now. Stand up! Jesus is calling you." ⁵⁰ The blind man stood up quickly. He left his coat there and went to Jesus.

⁵¹ Jesus asked the man, "What do you want me to do for you?"

He answered, "Teacher, I want to see again."

⁵² Jesus said, "Go. You are healed because you believed." Immediately the man was able to see again. He followed Jesus down the road.

As Christians do we sometimes tiptoe around our conversations with God when we have problems? Bartimaeus came straight to the point do we feel we would offend God by doing the same?

Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington
01692 582731

Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno
07733837687

Secretary: Diana Gordon
07951949128

Ministry Team:
The Whole Fellowship

For your Diary

Monday 1st November

9.00am Deacons

Zoom Prayer Meeting

10.30am in the Church

Prayers for young people

7.00pm Alpha Zoom Meeting

Wednesday 3rd November

7.00pm Zoom Bible Study

Contact Diana for a link.

Sunday 7th November

Flowers: Magda Nicholls

Monday 8th November

7.00pm Deacons Meeting

Thursday 11th November

7.00pm Zoom Prayer 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 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

Shoe Box Appeal Service Date

The date of the combined service at St Mary's is Sunday November 21st at 3.00pm. There is still time for you to fill an empty shoebox with small items for the Christmas Shoebox Service.

A small shoebox can have a big impact. What goes into the box is fun, but what comes out is eternal. Leaflets, which detail items to be put in the boxes, are at the back of the Church. For more information: Contact Magda Nicholls on 01692 580002.

Book Launch

Rev Patrick Coghlan the pastor at Worstead Baptist church featured in the Harvest Community Scene (The Motorcycling Reverend) is launching his biggest resource book yet – 'Pause for God' - at a book signing event in the Old School at Meeting Hill; Saturday 13th November from 10-00am to 4-00pm.

Patrick says "In addition to my new book, I will have copies of all my other 38 published books for sale, including a selection of children's novels. It is twenty years since my first book was published; but I still feel really excited about each new book coming out."

For further details about his books, and the signing event, contact Patrick at patrick@acsmail.net Talking about Worstead Baptist Church Patrick said "We now meet in the Old School at Meeting Hill on Sunday mornings for Café Church – we sit round tables and enjoy coffee and cake during the service. Numbers are going up in the congregation – really exciting for a small village church"

EBA Prayer Focus 31st October 2021

Park Baptist Church

Standing just a stone's throw from the sandy beaches of Great Yarmouth is Park Baptist Church. A multicultural fellowship comprising of English and Portuguese speaking congregations gather each week, with up to a dozen nationalities represented.

The church is centrally located in one of the town's poorest wards, with levels of deprivation amongst the highest in the country. In recent years this has become increasingly reflected in the make-up of the congregations, with more people attending who live within walking distance, rather than the traditionally higher numbers travelling in from other parts of the borough.

The easing of Covid restrictions in recent weeks has enabled the church to celebrate the 15th anniversary of its ministry to the Portuguese-speaking community in the town. A joint bilingual service was held on 16th October, led by one of the ministers, Rev Jorge Damasceno, with attendees returning home with plenty of cake! Alongside this ministry the church operates a CAP debt centre, co-hosts the town's night shelter *The Living Room*, and runs a weekly art and crafts drop-in. Midweek Connect Groups have begun to resume meeting in-person, although the weekly prayer meeting remains on Zoom. There is a sense of a new season beginning in church life as Rev Peter Timothy returns from his sabbatical and questions begin to be asked about what kind of society is emerging post-Covid? The church had been taking steps to increasingly integrate the congregations, and there is a realisation that how this is done and how it relates to the surrounding community may require a re-examination through fresh lenses, and with a willingness to try new

things.

Prayer Points

- Please pray for conversations regarding the future of the building and finding space to worship and socialise as one congregation.
- Please pray for our CAP clients, particularly a number of new individuals who have expressed an interest in church.
- Please pray for provision and raising up of new leaders, especially with several vacancies on the Leadership Team due to be filled at next month's AGM.

Park Baptist Church and SBC have close links. Jerry recently preached at a Sunday service in Yarmouth and Ron has in the past. Park's, Rev Peter Timothy plays for Stalham Baptist Church FC and has preached at SBC. The Portuguese congregation also visited SBC on a Sunday for a memorable combined Sunday service.

SBC Football Award

Two weeks ago Ron presented Jerry with the Fellowship Trophy awarded to Stalham Baptist Church FC, by the Norfolk Christian Football League. The team managed by Josh Hollebon, won the Trophy for the season 2020-21.



Leprosy Mission

Leprosy Mission Autumn/Winter [Christmas!] 2021 catalogues are now available at the back of the church. They include the Fairtrade chocolate Advent Calendars. Orders sent via Barbara Reynolds (Stalham Baptist's "trading partner") will save you postage, make a donation towards church funds (in many cases 20% of your order) and enable the leprosy mission to assist folk with this awful disease. You pay the same prices seen in the catalogue and can also order anything you see on their website www.tlmtrading.com Please either give your order to Barbara along with payment by cash or cheque to me [Leprosy Mission request this] or pop it in the box at the back of the church. Happy Shopping!

Jerry's Quotes of the Week

"Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the book widens and deepens with our years." -Charles Spurgeon

"The Bible you have on your shelf is not some kind of police sketch made by some observer off in the distance. The Bible is how God himself has chosen to reveal himself to us. It is a sketch of God made by the hand of God. This well is beyond any of our capacities to drink in fully. God must grow our ability to see him while we read, and continually make us new with what we read. He must, by his word, renew our minds, enlarge our hearts, strengthen our faith, and equip his saints."- Rachel Jankovic.

"The Bible evidences itself to be God's Word by the heavenliness of its doctrine, the unity of its parts, its power to convert sinners and to edify saints; but the Spirit of God only, bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in our hearts, is able fully to persuade us that the Bible is the Word of God." John Piper

"The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid." -Martin Luther

"The Bible is the book of my life. It's the book I live with, the book I live by, the book I want to die by." -N. T. Wright

The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly." -Søren Kierkegaard

"The Holy Scriptures are our letters from home." -Augustine of Hippo

Break the silence - You're not alone

Domestic abuse comes in many different forms, and sadly seems to be as prevalent as ever. Let's be aware, writes Baptist minister John Cheek

I once worked for the second largest government department in Britain. My desk could be found in the second largest building in Essex. As a new recruit I sat opposite my training officer, Christine (not her real name). Christine was tall, attractive, middle-aged and had clearly 'lived a bit'. She wasn't the sort of person that you would want to mess with. I got the feeling that she could handle anyone who chose to come up against her, either physically or verbally.

It was therefore somewhat surprising when a few of us learned that she was planning on moving out of the house that she had shared with the man that she lived with, for several years and that she was having to do so, 'covertly'.

The man, also middle-aged and often aggressive, had been subjecting her to regular episodes of 'unreasonable behaviour'. It had come to a head at a family barbeque to which they had been invited, where her partner had punched another man, a friend of the hosts, simply "for looking at him in a certain way".

Christine began planning her 'escape' from the relationship afterwards, discreetly moving some of her things to her sister's home, claiming that there was more space for them there, before the final day came where, with him out at work, she took a day's leave, moved out with the help of her family and left behind a note. What was almost as shocking as his behaviour, was that Christine was the least person whom you'd expect to be a victim of domestic abuse. "Yet it happened to me. It can happen to anyone."

Everyone can have an argument or disagreement with their partner, family members or others close to them, and while this is invariably upsetting, it happens.

However, if an incident, or pattern of incidents, involves violence or bullying or threats and intimidation, or any of the other harmful behaviours highlighted later in the article, then it's domestic abuse. **Crossing Point**, based in Liverpool, "a Christian response to domestic abuse", was founded by the late Irene Taylor, a Christian nurse at one of the city's hospitals, who treated many victims of domestic violence and became concerned that the issue was far more widespread than she first thought - and that domestic abuse wasn't just confined to physical violence, as bad as that was.

These are concerns that now days are certainly shared by increasing numbers of Baptists around the country. A look at the Baptists Together website shows that, among **Safeguarding policies and resources**, there are **a number of documents and pages relating to domestic abuse**. The Baptists Together Guide to Understanding Domestic Abuse states, "Churches have a unique opportunity to offer support to those affected by domestic abuse. It is not just the minister's role or for those in church leadership - it is the responsibility of the church community as a whole."

Historically, domestic abuse was rarely mentioned in churches of any denomination. It was even less-likely to be the subject for any teaching or guidance from the pulpit. As the Baptists Together guide expresses, "Sadly, churches have not always responded well to incidents of



abuse when people found the courage to ask for help. This has been partly due to a lack of understanding about domestic abuse and its impact, and partly due to the misguided use of the Bible to justify and perpetuate abuse, particularly against women."

From experience, Crossing Point fears that many church leaders (of all denominations) are reluctant to acknowledge that the problem even exists in society, let alone in churches. It offers guidance and training to leaders to look at the issue afresh.

In normal circumstances, Crossing Point has previously been invited to Merseyside schools to give presentations in assemblies and lessons. The responses it observes from pupils suggest that, sadly, domestic abuse appears to be as prevalent as ever. A global pandemic and lockdowns have only exacerbated that which was already there. The old stereotype of a husband beating his wife is the tip of the iceberg. It can be woman-on-man; uncle-upon-niece. Domestic abuse is no respecter of persons. It is the "hidden secret", taken into church, or the workplace. We don't know what the person who lives opposite us is going through. If you're reading this and realising that this is your experience, remember: you are not alone.

Let's break the silence, abuse is not just physical violence or sexual abuse. Neglect is a very common form, usually when the victim is a child or a vulnerable adult. Financial abuse is theft by another name and a crime leaving the victim not only cheated out of money that was rightfully theirs, but often leaves them saddled with heavy debts that should be otherwise in the name of the abuser. Forced-marriage, incest and female genital mutilation are also forms of domestic abuse, often justified for religious or cultural reasons, against victims.

Perhaps an overlooked and invisible form is emotional and psychological abuse. The use of power and control, mind games and personal criticism, slowly erodes the confidence of the victim, therefore destroying their self-esteem and self-worth and creating a dependency upon the abuser for all areas of life. If we claim to believe in a just God, and follow the Jesus who claims to be the truth, as well as the way and the life, should we consequently take a stand against such crimes? The first step is to acknowledge that it can and does exist. Is it happening in your home? Within your wider family? At your church? Is it happening to you?

In the beginning, "God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps

upon the earth.' So God created humankind in his image."

Note that God doesn't say that human beings should be allowed dominion over one another. The scripture doesn't say that any human nationality, skin-colour or sex has dominion over another. On the contrary, we are meant to live in harmony with one another, in the image of God in relationship within the Godhead. Anything less violates this sacred image, as well as violating human beings made in his likeness and died for by Jesus. Are we prepared to walk on by and allow it to continue? Break the silence: let's talk about this issue, at least.

If you are a victim, remember, you are not alone.

Before March 2020, on average two women each week were killed in a domestic context. Crossing Point provides a free, confidential service to victims, using independent domestic violence advisers, along with trained volunteers. They can be reached at thecrossingpoint.co.uk or tel: 07731 878076. All enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence. If you are a victim, please do not leave these details lying around at home.

If you wish to know more about Baptist Union policy and resources, please visit [the Safeguarding section of the Baptists Together website](#).

John Cheek is the minister of New Brighton Baptist Church. Originally from Southend-on-Sea, he also broadcasts regularly on Flame Christian and Community Radio in the north-west. For nearly four years he has produced and co-presented a regular series about domestic abuse called *Walking On Eggshells*.

Image by [Diana Cibotari](#) from [Pixabay](#)

COP26 - how can we respond?

It is not a matter of debate as to whether (or why) the climate is changing, but how much it will change, and what we can do now to prevent the worst impacts of that change. By Michael Shaw

There is a constant discussion in our house when it comes to buying our daughter presents. My wife is quite happy to surf ebay and find a good quality second-hand toy, but I say 'why are we not treating her with the best we can afford?'

I suppose growing up we were the family that didn't have much. We went to a private school, because of bursaries, the assisted place scheme and some money from my paternal grandmother. But I remember other kids laughing at my mum's second hand Mini and being the last in our class to get a VHS video recorder. This left me with a sense of not wanting my daughter to experience some of the things I did.

Our entire economic system is based on growth, and it now seems that that growth, if left unchecked, will erode the systems of life that we require. As a Christian I have



heard many reactions to this. Some on the more fundamental wing have a pessimistic view of the world, and long for the day when Jesus will return, and so think that this will



be that moment.

Others take a more optimistic view - God will not let us die, he will save us. While others take a more realistic view (in my opinion) that God has asked us to care for his creation, and we have fallen woefully short, and succumbed to the sins of greed and selfish-centred living that have allowed climate change to thrive.

I firmly believe that Jesus is the hope for our world, but I also believe that God is just. While he forgives our sins, often he allows us to experience the consequences of our sinful behaviour. The murderer, even if he repents, doesn't get a get out of jail card (Matthew 5:21-22), he will still face earthly punishment. So unless we make fundamental change (turnaround - repent - is not just a mind thing but an action thing) then we are going to see the impacts of our sin on our world.

Over the next few weeks world leaders will be gathering in Glasgow to decide the future of our world (and I am not being melodramatic). Some reluctantly, **while others are already trying to play down the change that is required**, but the scientific consensus remains clear: it is

not a matter of debate as to whether (or why) the climate is changing, but how much it will change, and what we can do now to prevent the worst impacts of that change.

It is vital therefore that we pray - that

we pray for them to put the long-term future of our world before short term economic factors.

It is vital that we change - that we start to make small changes in our lifestyles that will make impacts into our world.

It is vital that our churches respond - **sign up to become an eco-church** or divest our money from banks that invest into fossil fuels.

My wife if right! The best gift I can give my daughter is not a brand new toy, but a world that she can live in safely!

Michael Shaw is the minister of Devonport Community Baptist Church, a silver award Eco-Church.

Source for both articles [Baptist Times](#)

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