

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 3rd April 2022

Sunday's "Live" Service:

Maggie is leading and Jerry is preaching from Luke 15:11-32

"The Parable of the Prodigal Father and his lost sons"

Sunday's online service: Barbara & Geoff are leading and Ron is preaching from Luke 5: 1-11 "Are we aware of lives holy moments"



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.



Ron's Reads

Lk 4:38f, Isa 6:1f, Jn:1f

For Your Prayers

Please pray for the family of Stephen Harris whose funeral is this week.

Lord we are blessed at SBC by a fellowship, community and businesses that donate and support our projects to help those in need locally and around the world. We pray Lord that generosity will continue because poverty grows as the cost-of-living crisis bites and as a Church we will continue to creatively reach out to show "Christianity in Action."

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Dorothy and Peter Bane**.

God of peace prayers for Ukraine. We pray for worried mothers and fathers. We pray for frightened children. We pray for people who cannot flee, and for those who are running for their lives. Bring comfort, safety and provision, O God.

We pray for those reaching out to help the vulnerable. We pray for leaders on both sides.

We pray for a world that seems darker today. Bring wisdom, calm and compassion, O God, and let your light shine on the people of Ukraine. May there be an immediate end to the conflict, and lasting peace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Written by **Paul Cook for Tearfund**

Virtual Prayer Room

On Sunday 27th Geoff Reynolds posted "Evening everyone, we discovered on Thursday that our "London" daughter-in-law Emma has been diagnosed with breast cancer. They have a appointment with a consultant tomorrow. Please pray for Emma as treatment plans are made, also for Matt and the girls Daisy & Lola at this time. Thanks Geoff and Barbara." Geoff updated on Tuesday "They did more tests yesterday to enable the correct treatment plan to be sorted. They should discover that at an appointment on Thursday. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers. Thanks."

Jane posted on Wednesday "Please pray for Jean Mollet who is in great pain again with her back. Painkillers don't seem to be helping and she is finding it hard to get a doctor's appointment."

James 2: 14-17 (NIV) Faith and Deeds

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

As a Christian how easy is it to just to relax and be satisfied by things you have achieved in the past?

Prayer for Escape by Frankie Dilch

Lord. I have reached my Christian retirement sitting contented in front of Your gentle glowing log fire I bath in the warmth of Your love and Grace. When the world's troubles interrupt my comfort zone, I pray from my armchair, my work done I feel blessed Lord, fulfilled, your servant.

In my Christian youth I was restless in your embrace, energised, constantly trying to feed those whose hunger could only be fed by You.

In Isaiah 43:19 (ERV). You told me *"Because I am doing something new! Now you will grow like a new plant. Surely you know this is true. I will even make a road in the desert, and rivers will flow through that dry land."* And I grew like a new plant and followed your road into the desert of other's despair and need, the rivers of Your word and love were soaked up by the aridness of people's hearts.

Those days long gone my Christianity matured, wrinkled in the heat of the desert sun. My energy eroded by sandy winds of failure.

Dear Lord, who was tortured to death on the cross, for me, energise me, provide a pin to burst the comfort bubble surrounding my life, let me escape and become again the messenger that boasts of your Love and Salvation, without fear of ridicule, ambivalence and hate, showing by my actions that Jesus is the centre of my life and all I achieve.

Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington
01692 582731

Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno
07733837687

Secretary: Diana Gordon
07951949128

Ministry Team:

The Whole Fellowship

For your Diary

Monday 4th April

9.00am Deacons Prayer Meeting

10.30am in the Church

Prayers for young people

Tuesday 5th April

9.30am -12 in the Stables

Coffee and Chat

Wednesday 6th April

9.30am -12 in the School Room

Table Tennis

7.00pm Zoom Bible Study

Details in online Diary

Friday 8th April

10.15am Prayers for Revival

Three Windows Brumstead Road

1.15-3pm Foodbank in Stables

Sunday 10th April

10.45am Sunday Service

12 noon AGM

Flowers: Edna Woolsey

Food Bank & Personal Prayer

SBC is open Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 12 noon to receive donations for the food bank and for personal prayer. Jerry or Ron are always in attendance.

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

Community Fridge in the Stables

Open Mondays 2.00 pm - 4.00pm

Tuesday to Friday 10.00am to 12 noon

Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding for the refurbishment of Schoolroom is up and running click [here](#) to see the website called "Our Space" Stalham Community

Ukraine Coffee Morning

Thank you to all those who came, helped, baked etc for last week's coffee morning for the Ukraine which raised £515.00, thanks to the staff and customers of Forrest's paper shop who donated £53.00, coffee and Chat for £300 and various other donations received which in total means £1000 was sent to Tearfund who say "As well as providing immediate necessities like shelter, health care, water and sanitation to those impacted by war, we are doing crucial work bringing together communities across the dividing lines of conflict. This is empowering people to share, learn, heal, be reconciled and work together to build peace."

If you would like to make a donation, please put it in an envelope marked Ukraine and either put it in the offering bag or hand to Stewart or Henry.

New Daff Even Bigger Record

This time last week (Thursday) £810 of daffodils had been sold. On Thursday this week an amazing £1051 had been sold. Henry expects to be able to keep selling daffs for another couple of weeks - the money is going to the Building Fund. You can pick up bunches at 50p each at Edna's or the Community Fridge. A big thank you to Barbara & Ben Mixer and Henry who have been picking the daffs and Edna and Eileen who have been bunching them up.

Birthday Scheme

A recent letter received from BMS showed that the Birthday Scheme raised a phenomenal £249,000 in 2021. A thank you card from Guinebor 11 hospital in Chad has been pinned to the noticeboard at back of church containing handwritten notes and signatures from patients and staff for the life-saving work which they have been enabled to do. BMS have a new video resource. Their "Birthday Scheme Thank You" video transports you to the heart of Guinebor II hospital where you will meet its wonderful staff and patients and see the faces behind the signatures in the card. The video is free to download at

www.bmsworldmission.org/birthdaythanks

If anyone would like to join the scheme please have a word with Jan Nicholson who will send you a lovely colourful card from BMS on your birthday with a donation envelope. Money raised through the scheme helps towards medical expenses in poorer countries around the world where BMS is involved.

Empanda

If anyone would like to donate Easter goodies for the young people living temporarily in the flats at Empanda, please give to Jan Nicholson.

Prayers For Revival

Weekly prayer meeting held at Three Windows, Brumstead Road from 10.15am every Friday.

AGM

Our AGM will be held on Sunday 10th April this year at 12.00. As usual it will begin with the election of deacons. This year Stewart Marsh and Elaine Smith are the 2 deacons whose terms come to an end and are prepared to stand again. Josh Hollebon will not be standing. Please be prayerful about who should be nominated to serve us as deacons as we continue to go through interesting times.

EBA Prayer Focus 3rd April 2022

Landbeach Baptist Church

Landbeach is a small fen-edge village about three miles north of Cambridge. Within this pretty and protected village is Landbeach and Milton Baptist Church who meet in their chapel built in 1854. Those who attend the church come from Landbeach and other surrounding villages in the area including nearby Milton. Although the church currently has fourteen members with a largely older profile, it is a very busy and active place with lots going on all the time. The church meets each Sunday and worship is led by a regular

team of good and faithful local speakers. Since the end of lockdown, a new Sunday evening house group and Bible study had started.

Landbeach is a warm and friendly church that meets in an attractive and well-used building. During the week there is a programme of activity organised by the church. This includes exercise classes, line dancing, craft club and a film club. The church has no minister and the moderator Andrew Dalwood is shortly stepping down after ten years' service, so the search is on to find a new moderator to take his place.

The church is seeking God's guidance as it strives to change and adapt and look towards a new chapter unfolding in the future.

Please pray:

- For a new moderator to help lead the church
- For new ideas that will attract new people to the church
- For courage to make the necessary changes
- For healing for all those in the fellowship with health issues
- For everything that is decided to be in God's will

Messy Church – What's that?

If you are able look at the 2 minute video on:

www.messychurch.org.uk It's described as being church for families and others...Christ centred...based on hospitality, creativity and celebration. How would you feel about SBC having a "Messy Church" maybe once a month, possibly on an evening after school? Interested in finding if we could do it/helping to plan/pray? Have a word with Barbara R – perhaps we can meet up and see where it goes? Prayers please.

Quotes of the Week

"If she had even once rejected Grandma Bev's insistence that she put on a happy face and make the best of things, if she had just told her mother how hurt and abandoned she'd felt, maybe they wouldn't have had to endure over two decades of distance and resentment. Maybe she would have had her mother.

Grandma Bev meant well, no doubt. She was trying to give Melody the resilience she'd needed to deal with all the changes in her young life, but it had only taught her to escape into fiction- both the kind in books and that of her own making. And instead of growing deeper in a true faith, one that was tested in tears and anguished prayers, she stuffed down her pain and retreated to superstition and magical thinking. She'd looked at God's providence like she'd looked at fairy tales- blindly and without any real belief. She'd gone from man to man, trying to buy their love at too high a price, all because she wouldn't admit how much she needed that love. How much it hurt that it always seemed to be out of reach. And because she wouldn't admit any of it, she just went on haplessly repeating her mistakes instead of turning to the One who loved her no matter what."

— **Carla Laureano**, Brunch at Bittersweet Café

"Rowena focused on the plate set before her. Rimmed in gold leaf, filled with food she'd scarcely touched. She had never wanted, not when it came to those things. But what about the other empty places in ones life? An empty heart? And empty soul? "I dare say this Mr. Muller had many stories to tell of the Lord's provision. We all do, if we open our eyes to it. He is always directing us towards our better good. Sometimes that means trials, but they will lead us to the place where He knows we need to be. And He will always be there beside us, if we but let Him in." — **Roseanna M. White**, The Reluctant Duchess

"The world's love is and always will be conditional. The world says: "Yes, I love you if you are good-looking, intelligent, and wealthy. I am the prodigal son every time I search for unconditional love where it cannot be found. Whenever I prove to myself and to my world that I do not need God's love, that I can make a life on my own, that I want to be fully independent. The great event on Rembrandt's painting is the end of the great rebellion. I am loved so much that I am left free to leave home."

— **Henri J.M. Nouwen**, The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming



Update: “We are against this violence with all our hearts”: an interview with a believer in Russia

As the violence in Ukraine continues, Open Doors partners met with Olya*, a Christian from Russia. In her own words, she shared with them what life is like for believers there, and how her church is responding to the unfolding crisis. As a Christian, how do you feel the war between Russia and Ukraine?

Initially, my family and I couldn't believe this was the truth, it looked so crazy and impossible. We are against the war; we pray that God will intervene and stop the violence. It was so hard to accept that our country started the war, that we 'broke somebody's home'.

It was also hard to accept that this would have very hard consequences for the whole world. The first week was so hard for me; I was crying every day because of what I was learning from the media and social networks about the situation: violence, suffering Ukrainian people, refugees, death. I also heard about Christian believers and churches suffering from the war. It made me cry and suffer and pray constantly; I couldn't find peace.

How did you and your church react?

In our church, we organised prayers, even 24-hour prayer chains for the situation. Groups of church members prayed day and night, and many were fasting. We can't stop the war, we can't even speak out to be heard, we can't organise a revolt against our president and the government. As Christians, we have to bless, even though we are so much against what they do. We believe there could be another way, a diplomatic way to come to an agreement.

Our church also collected some funds for Ukrainian believers and sent them through one of our church members who had relatives on that side. The funds went to a church where there are lots of disabled people, and they were so grateful for this. They also purchased groceries for church members. Now we plan to collect more, but right now we don't know how to transfer the funds as the border is closed. We pray for the opportunity to transfer. What kind of problems are you facing now?

It is very hard for us – Russian believers – to feel the hatred from all over the world. It makes us feel guilty, even though we are not; we didn't ask for this war, we don't support it, we are against this violence with all our hearts. My close relatives are a Christian family who have young sons. They are so stressed because their sons might be recruited into the army in the next few months and sent to war. They fear for their sons' lives and, of course, they do not want their sons to fight against our brothers, killing people in their homes in this senseless struggle.

What are you personally struggling with at the moment? The first week was the hardest.

So many issues – lots of news and all of them seemed to be lying; propaganda means that there is no chance to learn the truth about what is happening. The growing violence, death and hatred made me so sad; I cried.

Then we also face problems because of sanctions, economic issues, which are not easy to deal with in everyday life. We can see that sanctions do not harm those who organised the war – politicians; they punish ordinary civilians.

One of the hardest things for me was worrying about my family, about my relatives who can be recruited into the army and sent to war. I couldn't stand this madness and I dived into prayer and the Scriptures, by myself and together with my family – my husband and three children. God is faithful; He gave us peace. Now I am sure that I am not guilty in what happens. God keeps everything under His control, even though we cannot understand why this happens. God warned us about such situations in Matthew 24:6: “You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.”

I know God protects me and my family and He always will do; He provides for all our needs. God taught us through this terrible situation that we should not be sad because of the hatred everywhere; we can love, He gave us the example.

We are still struggling sadness and worry because of the events every day. But now we don't feel as lost and frustrated.

How would you like people pray for you, your family and other believers in your country?

First of all, I want to express my gratitude to everybody who is praying for this situation, for Ukrainian citizens and the church, for our country – thank you very much! Prayers are so needed now, keep going, please!

Please pray:

That God would intervene in the situation and stop the violence

For God's wisdom for the presidents and authorities of both our countries for how to deal with the situation in peaceful way

That God will care for those who are in danger, especially for Ukrainian people who lost their beloved ones, for His comfort and protection over them and the Ukrainian church

For opportunities for our churches to support Ukrainian believers in need

Please also pray for Russia:

That God will comfort Russian families who have lost their beloved ones

For Russian men not to be sent to this senseless war
Please pray for me and my family too, to feel peace, and for God's protection. Pray that God will turn this terrible situation to the better, even though this looks impossible now, to turn the hatred into love. He is almighty and He can do much more than we can imagine, He can change this. Please support us and our Ukrainian brothers and sisters in prayer.

**Name changed for security reasons*
<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>



How Baptist churches in Ukraine are responding to war

“Huge initiatives of practical help, prayer... and homecooked pies”

Hundreds of Ukrainian Baptist churches continue to be at the heart of relief efforts in their besieged country. According to the latest briefings from the All-Ukrainian Union of Churches of Evangelical Christian Baptists (UCECB), churches are involved in a range of activities including evacuation, resettlement, delivery of homecooked food and humanitarian supplies, provision of spiritual care and prayer support. In fact, so many churches are active in this way, they “look the same”, reported the UCECB.

The support is taking place in some of the worst affected areas. Mariupol has been under siege for more than two weeks now, with more than 50 to 100 air bombs dropped every day. Around 350,000 residents of the port city are hiding in shelters and basements from the continuous shelling.

Oleksiy Ivanov is an elder in the Zaporizhia region. He reports the Regional Baptist Churches Association continues to evacuate people from Mariupol and bring humanitarian aid there. Food and medicine have been transported from Lviv, Lutsk and other western cities. There is similar activity in both Luhansk and Donetsk. Earlier this week the Church of Lysychansk in Luhansk gave out “a glass of sugar, five or six potatoes, half a loaf of bread and 500g of grits” to everyone who visited the church that day. The food is brought from the nearest cities of Donetsk region, such as Bakhmut, Pokrovskaya, Druzhkovka.

Church deacon Stepan Kozodoy gave an insight into the practicalities of providing this: “Unfortunately, food runs out quickly, and we need go there and back, again and again,” he said. “Lots of money is spent on fuel, for buses and generators. One of the buses breaks every now and then.

“We need help.”

Lysychansk, along with other Luhansk cities Severodonetsk and Rubizhne, are being subject to the “total destruction of civilian infrastructure and housing” as the Russian occupiers struggle to capture them. Hundreds of thousands of people, in addition to shelling, are suffering without gas, water and electricity.

In the midst of this, the Church of the Transfiguration in Severodonetsk continues to be active, evacuating families, hosting the homeless and distributing food kits to sick and elderly people in the city. The church was only established in 2016, and had previously focused its ministry on people with harmful addictions. Their activities in the war mean that “former alcoholics and drug addicts have become true heroes of the faith, preaching the gospel and hope in the Lord,” wrote the UCECB.

The shelling is a similar story in the northern city of Chernihiv. People are leaving the city not only by car, but also by foot, across fields. Many personal belongings are “scattered everywhere on the road, as it was difficult to carry them,” said one of Chernihiv’s pastors.

For those who remain, the church has organised a support



centre, where it bakes bread, receive people, distributes food and organises places to stay.

“We distribute more than a tonne of food every day,” the pastor added.

Churches continue to be active in the Kherson region, almost all of which is under occupation. They gather for services and joint prayer meetings, and organise help for all they can: Kherson city churches, as well as those in the towns of Olshkiv, Novokahovka and Chulakivsk, are engaged in a “huge initiative”; feeding people, finding casualties places to live and receiving local residents in bomb shelters. Christians from the Kherson church Golgotha have been looking after children from a regional orphanage right from the start of the war.

Small churches are involved in extraordinary efforts. Take the Philadelphia Church in Ternopil, a city in western Ukraine. Despite having only 40 members, every day it receives around 100 people, many with pets, who are evacuating. It gives them food, rest and shelter in its building. In total it has helped 7,000 people, with the help of friends and partners.

Food is a vital activity in the response. The Novomoskovsk church members in the Dnipropetrovsk region bake 130 pies every day (except Sunday) which are then taken to the nearest roadblocks to feed the soldiers. Churches of the northern district of Poltava region have been preparing “a dozen traditional, regional, delicious dishes” for the defenders.

“We have examples of more than 30 churches that serve in this way,” reported the UCECB “showing practical evangelism and bringing victory closer.”

Elsewhere life continues as best it can. In Mykolaiv, a town in Lviv, the local church held a baby shower for pregnant mums, three of whom have fled their homes. There were “tears of happiness and fervent prayers of blessing...” the UCECB stated.

“After all a baby shower is a feast of hope and a testimony that life is going on.”

This story first appeared on the [European Baptist Federation website](#), and is republished with permission

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