

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 22nd May 2022



Sunday's "Live" Service:

Jerry is leading and is preaching from Mark 9: 14-29

"Lord, I believe help my unbelief"

Sunday's online service: Pat is leading and Ron is preaching from

Ruth 3:1-5 "God's ways aren't ours"

Tea & Coffee will be available in the Stables after the service

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

Ro 8:28, Dt 24:19f, Ps 122:1, Mt 11:28, Isa 55:6-9

For Your Prayers

During May please pray for the residents of Teresa Court Flats and Portalfield. Lord, G.K Chesterton wrote "To love means loving the unlovable. To forgive means pardoning the unpardonable. Faith means believing the unbelievable. Hope means hoping when everything seems hopeless."

Lord, help us have the courage to love the unlovable, pardon those You would pardon, the unpardonable. Believe in You Lord even though those around us believe You are unbelievable and bring them to You, and as we are dragged into the darkness of what seems a hopeless situation that our hope in You will light our way. Please pray for all those in the community and the fellowship who are awaiting operations or procedures.

Pray also for those struggling to survive in our community and the entire UK due to the cost-of-living-crisis and also those around the world in places like **Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Yemen** who are at risk through catastrophic levels of hunger, malnutrition, and starvation. Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Honduras, Sudan, and Syria are also among countries facing critical levels of food insecurity.

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Iris Clark**.

Virtual Prayer Room

On Sunday 15th May Geoff posted "Morning, on my post music practice walk today I had a chat with Rita Rudrum. She is mainly isolating until her operation on 11th June so will not be at SBC until 2 to 3 weeks after the op and recovery. She sends her love to everyone and asks that we keep her in our prayers."

On Tuesday 18th Julia Maile posted "Hi, can you keep David in your prayers please? He has another investigation on Friday. Then he has an ablation and a double pacemaker put in next Tuesday. A fun week! Thank you. Julia x"

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

Luke 14: 15-24 (MSG) Story of the Dinner Party

¹⁵ That triggered a response from one of the guests: "How fortunate the one who gets to eat dinner in God's kingdom!" ¹⁶⁻¹⁷ Jesus followed up. "Yes. For there was once a man who threw a great dinner party and invited many. When it was time for dinner, he sent out his servant to the invited guests, saying, 'Come on in; the food's on the table.' ¹⁸ "Then they all began to beg off, one after another making excuses. The first said, 'I bought a piece of property and need to look it over. Send my regrets.'

¹⁹ "Another said, 'I just bought five teams of oxen, and I really need to check them out. Send my regrets.' ²⁰ "And yet another said, 'I just got married and need to get home to my wife.' ²¹ "The servant went back and told the master what had happened. He was outraged and told the servant, 'Quickly, get out into the city streets and alleys. Collect all who look like they need a square meal, all the misfits and homeless and down-and-out you can lay your hands on, and bring them here.'

²² "The servant reported back, 'Master, I did what you commanded—and there's still room.' ²³⁻²⁴ "The master said, 'Then go to the country roads. Whoever you find, drag them in. I want my house full! Let me tell you, not one of those originally invited is going to get so much as a bite at my dinner party.'"

As Christians how easy is it to deal with rejections when we talk about Jesus to people we know well and how much more difficult is it to even start a conversation with people we really don't know at all?

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.

Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington 01692 582731

Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno 07733837687

Secretary: Diana Gordon 07951949128

Ministry Team:
The Whole Fellowship

For your Diary

Monday 23rd May

7.00pm Deacons Zoom Meeting

Tuesday 24th May

9.30am -12 in the Stables
Coffee and Chat

Wednesday 25th May

9.30am -12 in the School Room
Table Tennis

Thursday 26th May

7.00pm Zoom Prayer Meeting
Details in online Diary

Friday 27th May

10.15 Prayer for Revival
Three Windows, Brumstead Road
1.15-3pm Foodbank in Stables

Sunday 29th May

10.45am Sunday Service
Flowers: Barbara Reynolds

Thursday 2nd June

12.30pm in the Stables
Jubilee Lunch

Sunday 5th June

1.00pm in the Church
Jubilee Stalham Fringe

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 is 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

A Big Thankyou

A big thank you to those who weekly create flower displays for the Sunday services and a big thankyou to Magda who organises it.

Coffee & Chat Donates £300

This week Coffee and Chat has donated £300 to Opendoors.

The charity states. "Every day, millions of Christians risk their lives to follow Jesus. In more than 60 countries, Open Doors supports them by supplying Bibles, providing emergency relief and helping persecuted believers stand strong for the long-term. In the UK and Ireland, Open Doors helps the church to pray, give and speak out for those who share our faith but not our freedom."

Messy Church

Our first Messy Church "Lost...and found" will take place on Thursday 16th June from 3.15 to 5pm. Its free with fun activities and celebration in the church for all ages from tinies upwards – all children will need an accompanying adult - finishing with a barbeque in the car park.

Everyone welcome – for more information or to offer to help, contact Barbara: barbarageoff@gmail.com or 01692672120

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

As part of the Stalham Fringe Festival celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Sunday 5th June starting at 1.00pm SBC will be hosting various singers and music groups including the Pan Afro Band and Drumming group and will be holding a 30 minute service of thanksgiving for the life and reign of our Queen at 2.00pm. Refreshments will be available.

Car Treasure Hunt

Fundraising for the refurbishment. £5.00 per person (or more if you feel generous) Cars gather at SBC car park 12.30pm Saturday 11th June where clue sheets will be given out. Finish at Ruston House for afternoon tea. Please book your place with Diana.

Online Services

For a while we have been considering the future of our Online service and what changes may need to be made to it to meet our current needs. Shortly [once we finish our current series on Ruth] we will merge our Live and Online services so our worship leaders will only need to prepare one service, the sermon will be the same for both and the Online music will as far as possible be YouTube versions of the same songs and hymns used Live.

Recently we conducted a survey about the value of the Online service but the response was rather sketchy so we have a couple of further questions asking that you respond by either note or phone call to Diana, Jerry or Ron [as per details on bulletin front page.]

If the two services merge will you still listen to the Online or want CD's/paper versions of the sermon?

As many have become used to two sermons per week would you still wish to have something apart from the Sunday sermon to follow? and what?

EBA Prayer Focus 22nd May 2022

More2Life Christian Fellowship

About three years ago, Victory Villages Church changed its name to More2Life Christian Fellowship. It is based in the rural mid-Norfolk communities of North Elmham, Stanfield and Worthing.

The Minister of the More2Life Christian Fellowship is Rev Anne-Marie Fewell, and this fellowship currently meets in a home.

The fellowship describes itself as a "small but faithful part of the Body of Christ." As the Bible reminds us, even small parts have an important role to play, and this can be seen as true in

this fellowship.

Throughout COVID, and beyond, More2Life Christian Fellowship has kept together and rejoices in the spiritual growth they have seen. The fellowship longs to see further growth and for some seeds, sown over many years, to come to fruition.

Please pray for:

- God's blessing on the members of the fellowship who are suffering with health issues
- For spiritual and numerical growth in the fellowship and beyond

Foodbank

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

During May, the following would be much appreciated:

Cereal, Long Life Milk – full fat or semi-skimmed, Tinned Tomatoes, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Fruit, Pasta Sauce, Squash/Fruit Juice, Rice Pudding, Custard, Tea, Laundry Liquid/Powder.

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

Energy Needs

If you are, or know someone who is, struggling with their energy bills Cromer Food Bank offers a scheme called Energybank that can help. Contact the Food Bank on 07826376343, or contact Ron Skivington at minister@stalhambaptist.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau can also give advice and possible assistance. Click [here](#) for a link.

Volunteers

SBC is shaking off the shackles of Covid and re-establishing many of the things we did pre Covid plus some new ideas but we need more volunteers to build all the new projects. If you can help occasionally have a chat with Ron, Barbara R or Elaine.

Network Norwich

[Click here](#) to read an article in Network Norwich about the schoolroom refurbishment

Quotes of the Week

"Be brave to stand for what you believe in even if you stand alone."

— Roy T. Bennett, [The Light in the Heart](#)

"God will not look you over for medals, degrees or diplomas but for scars."

— Elbert Hubbard

"Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into light."

— Hellen Keller

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."

— C.S. Lewis

"To have Faith in Christ means, of course, trying to do all that He says. There would be no sense in saying you trusted a person if you would not take his advice. Thus if you have really handed yourself over to Him, it must follow that you are trying to obey Him. But trying in a new way, a less worried way. Not doing these things in order to be saved, but because He has begun to save you already. Not hoping to get to Heaven as a reward for your actions, but inevitably wanting to act in a certain way because a first faint gleam of Heaven is already inside you."

— C.S. Lewis, [Mere Christianity](#)



The Nave

Recently I walked along a footpath from Coltishall to Belaugh across beautiful wild flowered meadows and along the river Bure. Belaugh has a small Saxon church built on the top of a steep hill, inside there was a plethora of information about the Church and the community over the centuries. What caught my eye was the information about the nave. It stated "The nave is the body of the church where we congregate. Its title is from the Latin for ship, *Navis*, in medieval times it is doubtful that there were any pews. As the only public building the nave would have been used for village gatherings and festivities, a place of sanctuary for fugitives from the law, a schoolhouse and meeting place. Here the Christian faith and community life were integrated."

It struck me that SBC has returned to the pre Victorian times by discarding the pews to open up the Church for activities that brings the Church and community together

Also it led me to Google the earliest use of the word sanctuary in churches I found "The concept of sanctuary predates Christianity, going back at least as far as Greek and Roman temples that offered protection to fugitives. Early Christian churches competed with these pagan temples by offering their own protections, and by the end of the 4th century, sanctuary was a part of Roman imperial law. If a person murdered someone and then ran to the church to claim sanctuary, no one could come in and harm, arrest or remove them for punishment" This was recognised by English Law from 4th to 17th century.

Sanctuary is a term in the Hebrew Bible that refers to the inner sanctuary of the Tabernacle, where God's presence appeared.

Sanctuary is also used to denote the part of the church which contains the main, or "high" altar.



Secret believer sends letter as North Korea officially declares 'first' Covid-19 cases

More than two years after the start of the global pandemic, North Korea has officially declared its first cases of Covid-19 – though experts say the virus has long had a devastating effect in the country. It's led to further restrictions which could further affect our North Korean family. But as a letter from a secret believer reveals, Christians continue to trust in Jesus. Please keep praying for believers in North Korea and those who serve them.

Restrictions have been enforced across North Korea to curb the spread of Covid-19

North Korea has officially declared its first cases of Covid-19, more than two years after the virus began its rapid spread across the world. The outbreak of the Omicron variant in Pyongyang was reported on 12 May and has led to Kim Jong-un enforcing strict lockdowns across the country.

But as is often the case with North Korea, what's portrayed officially by the country is very different to the reality. Open Doors sources say that the current situation with Covid-19 is worse than is being reported, which echoes what a secret fieldworker shared in August 2020 about the '[ghost disease](#)' that was rife in the country.

More challenges for believers in North Korea

While the extent to which the country has been hit by Covid-19 is unclear, what is clearer is the impact it's had on reaching believers with help. The restrictions faced by Open Doors fieldworkers have made it one of the hardest challenges the ministry has faced. But despite this, God has made ways for projects to continue, ensuring that our North Korean family have remained upheld by your support.

However, with Kim Jong-Un reinforcing strict lockdowns throughout all regions of North Korea to prevent the spread of the virus, our work in the region – such as secret deliveries and the safe house ministry – may be affected. There is also the inevitable impact on the North Korean economy, with the exponential rise in prices for food and other necessities having a potentially devastating effect on people, including secret believers. Meanwhile, the government is clamping down on any suspicious activities, meetings, travel and unusual possessions.

A message smuggled from a secret believer

Ultimately, it all presents another challenge to our North Korean family. But as always, they're sticking close to Jesus, as shown in a secret letter we recently received from an underground church leader.

"Especially through the coronavirus pandemic and several great natural disasters that followed the virus, things seem to threaten us in every way," the letter says. "Difficulties and hindrances lay hidden here and there, but because we know that the Lord allows us to unite together as one to share the faith and fellowship, we walk upon the way of a pilgrim that trusts and follows the Lord."

Please join us in praying with the underground believers of North Korea, who are fixing their eyes on 'the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast' (1 Peter 5:10).

more information about Opendoors [click here](#).

'Ordinary people bringing extraordinary hope'

The charity Dnipro Hope Mission (DHM) works with church partners in Eastern Ukraine - and wants to highlight the different ways people are using their gifts in the war

Dnipro Hope Mission (DHM) is actively working with church partners in Eastern Ukraine, to provide life-saving care for refugees and disabled and elderly residents of care homes. Partners also offer medical supplies for the injured, support for pastors who are themselves providing pastoral support to local units of Ukrainian soldiers, who are defending their communities and families. Funds are sent to those who are bravely taking fresh supplies of food, water and medicine on a daily basis to those in desperate need, particularly to those fleeing conflict.

'DHM has been providing life-saving care through local Ukrainian churches, for almost 10 years,' says Joshua Searle, Founder of DHM says. 'Since the invasion in February 2022 DHM has been able to reach those in the most desperate need, through grants to fund the purchase of food, water, medicine and other essential supplies.

'But this would not be possible without the amazing people who bravely risk all to care for the hungry, fearful, injured and isolated.

'Below are some amazing sacrificial stories of how ordinary

people are now called to do extraordinary things for Christ's Kingdom.'

Vet to medical supplies deliverer

One of DHM's partners Alexander who is based in the central Dnipro region, who before the war was working as a vet, is now engaged full time in delivering life-saving medicines to care homes and orphanages on the frontline in Eastern Ukraine. He often has to literally dodge bullets on his way to deliver essential supplies. In this context, 'discipleship' involves real courage as well as compassion.

Lecturer to linguist/translator

Roman, a good friend of DHM from the Lviv region, worked as a lecturer. He now uses his skills as a communicator and linguist to write powerful reflections in English, about the cultural and spiritual changes that he is observing in Ukraine as a result of the war. Thereby helping many people throughout the world to grasp the deeper issues at stake in this war.

Opera singer to sandbag filler

Kyriilo who was working as an opera singer before the war, now finds himself on the streets of Dnipro filling sandbags and digging trenches. He puts his professional operatic voice to good use by singing Ukrainian folk songs and Christian hymns while out on duty. By his 'singing ministry' he helps to lift the spirits of people caught up in this new frightening and surreal situation.

Cooking for family to baking pies for soldiers

Elderly women in Poltava have discovered a new vocation: to bake pies for a local Ukrainian garrison defending the region from the Russian invaders. The pies are sent to a local church, where they are given to Ukrainian soldiers returning from the frontline.

'These testimonies of ordinary people doing extraordinary things challenge us to think about what we can do on our own 'frontlines',' adds Joshua.

'Although we might not find ourselves literally on the frontline in Ukraine, all of us are still called to join in God's mission to transform the world into the image of his Kingdom.'

Image | DHM's ministry partners, who work as doctors at Dnipro State Hospital

To find out more about the DHM charity, visit its [website](#). To donate to its work, [click here](#).

[Source Baptist Times](#)

Was God really there through it all?

Mental health campaigner and author Hope Virgo shares the impact her eating disorder has had on her faith

I was 17, laying there in bed on a cold evening. The rain pounding against my skylight. My brain was reflecting on the last 24 hours. The CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service) appointment where they had discovered I had been lying to them the last few months about my weight, the argument over dinner, then me shouting at my younger brother at breakfast as he had tried to help me find something to eat. To the obsessive ruminating, calorie counting. I had got so good at putting on a bit of a front all day when I was at school, when in reality I was finding things really hard to navigate.

My brain did what it did every evening, telling me that tomorrow would be different, that somehow I would get up in the morning and everything would click into place. I longed for that freedom away from my brain, away from these behaviours.

Every single evening was the same, but as the sun began to rise, my shame, insecurities were no longer hidden in the night sky. As the reality came back, I pulled myself up in the early hours of the morning, found my scales stashed away in the cupboard. The number that appeared in front of me was never quite what I wanted it to be. I glanced at my reflection in the mirror, and told myself that I had to just do one more day of this and everything would be okay.

Little did I know on all these evenings when I was so desperate for things to change, that just weeks later I was to be admitted into a mental health hospital with anorexia, where I was to spend the next year of my life.

Throughout my year admission I spent a huge amount of time questioning my faith. I knew that people were praying for me which was some comfort, but I was angry, frustrated and just fed up with God. While eating disorders are serious mental illnesses, with complicated causes, I knew that one of the contributing factors to mine was the sexual abuse I had faced as a child. And it was this that I kept coming back to that year. That anger that because of what someone had done to me had left me with these feelings, that there was something categorically wrong with who I was and I had to change that factor. How could an all loving God allow this to happen without healing me?

It was this anger that totally consumed me. Even as I began my road to recovery, getting more of my life back, I was at the same time pushing God so far away. By the end of that year in hospital I had given up on my faith altogether, and I would spend the next 10 years or so completely separated from God. If anyone ever tried to talk to me about him, I would have a difficult question ready to go.

All up until 2019, when someone stopped at a station to talk to me about their faith. I had been going through a bit of a rough patch and just felt at a bit of a loss. He sat with me, telling me all about his faith, what it did for him. I longed for what he had. Longed for that sense of peace. Longed for the shame to disappear.

The next afternoon I found myself in Holy Trinity Brompton in London. Sitting at the back of a huge congregation, absorbed in the faces around me.

What followed that church visit was attending the Alpha course, lots of heated discussions about faith and then finally in November 2019 I recommitted to my life to being a Christian. The thing about becoming a Christian, it doesn't immediately mean that all these problems and hardships will disappear. For me it was about learning to sit in this place of tension. This place of not having all the answers and being honest in that space. In those moments when it feels really hard and the emotions begin to take over me, I journal a lot, flood myself with worship music and find a Bible study to do on the Bible app. I don't always get it right, and I have these moments when the fear completely consumes me, but I am learning to be intentional about my time with God, getting stuck in and ensuring that I am part of a community where I can be inspired and challenged.

As I sit here 14 years later, I still feel grateful that I am actually alive. Grateful that I got the support and treatment I needed back when I was 17 years old. As I sit here I can one hundred percent say that God was there by my side through it all.

Recovery from an eating disorder is hard, long and relentless in places. And when you aren't healed you have to choose to trust, to keep bringing these behaviours in to the light and that will give you that space to heal.

[Source Baptist Times](#)

