

# Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday 5th June 2022

## Sunday's "Live" Service:

Barbara is leading and Jerry is preaching from Acts 2: 1-13

"The Day of Pentecost"

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

Ruth 3:14 - 18 "Wait and See"

2.00pm Queen's Jubilee Celebration Service

You can watch the online service on the SBC website from Sunday morning, go to [www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/) Then click on the icon pictured.



### Ron's Reads

Gen 1:31f, Ruth 2:11, Isa 40:31, Jn 14:1f

### For Your Prayers

During June please pray for the residents of St Mary's Road and Brecklands. Lord bring wisdom and integrity to our government so they may be able to focus on their task of serving the people of the UK and Lord remind them of the words in the House of Commons prayer "May they never lead the nation wrongly through love of power, desire to please, or unworthy ideals but laying aside all private interests and prejudices keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all mankind; so may Your kingdom come and your name be hallowed."

Please pray for all those in our fellowship who help keep SBC growing, thriving and for all those who have recently joined us.

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Alan and Pat Dabbs**.

### Prayer For The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Dear God, our heavenly Father, we pray for our Queen as she enjoys this magnificent milestone. We celebrate the love and commitment she shows towards her people. We also rejoice that your son, our Prince of Peace, has given us salvation and daily showers us with grace and mercy. As we celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee let us also pause to hold Jesus close in our hearts. Let our souls be awakened by your Holy Spirit to the glorious magnitude of our omnipotent King. We are awe-struck that He chooses to walk with us daily, never leaving our sides. Jesus, we humble ourselves before you and breathe your presence deep into our lungs. Amen. **Source Woman Alive**

### Virtual Prayer Room

**On Monday 30th May** David posted "Please pray for Doreen who is in JP Hospital waiting for more tests."

Later that day Doreen posted "Thank you all for your prayers much appreciated."

**On Wednesday 1st June** Doreen posted "Update, I am hoping to be discharged tonight. They have discovered that the problem is gallstones so I will need to return to have my gallbladder removed. Thank you for your prayers xx"

The same day Jerry posted on behalf of Maureen K "Please pray for Shaun, our son. The pressure in both eyes is very high. He was seen at Cromer, who referred him to N&N, where they gave him drops and tablets. We have to return to N&N tomorrow. Thank you Maureen."

**On Thursday 2nd June** Jane posted "Doreen is out of hospital but is feeling tired."

**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.**

### Hebrews 11: 13 -16 (MSG) Faith is what we don't see

<sup>13-16</sup> Each one of these people of faith died not yet having in hand what was promised, but still believing. How did they do it? They saw it way off in the distance, waved their greeting, and accepted the fact that they were transients in this world. People who live this way make it plain that they are looking for their true home. If they were homesick for the old country, they could have gone back any time they wanted. But they were after a far better country than that—heaven country. You can see why God is so proud of them, and has a City waiting for them.

*As Christians we have put our faith in the Lord and know we have salvation through His sacrifice on the cross,. How easy is it though to contemplate the move to God's City?*

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 6th June

7.00pm Deacons Zoom Meeting

#### Tuesday 7th June

9.30am -12 in the Stables

Coffee and Chat

#### Wednesday 8th June

9.30am -12 in the School Room

Table Tennis

#### Thursday 9th June

2.00pm Messy Church meeting

In the Church

7.00pm Zoom Prayer Meeting

Details in online Diary

#### Friday 10th June

10.15 Prayer for Revival

Three Windows, Brumstead Road

1.15-3pm Foodbank in Stables

#### Saturday 11 June

12.30pm treasure Hunt starting at the Stables

#### Sunday 12th June

10.45am Sunday Service

Flowers: Doreen Hollebon

#### Thursday 16th June

3.15pm Messy Church in the Church (helpers at 2.00pm)

### 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



## The Queen's Celebration Service

Today at 2.00pm SBC is holding a celebration service for Queen Elizabeth as part of the Jubilee Fringe Festival.

In the Easter Community Scene Ron wrote:

You may have worked out we have a different style back cover for this edition of Community Scene which details various activities that will take place in our community to celebrate the Queen's platinum jubilee.

70 years is an incredibly long time for her to have faithfully served our country and commonwealth, facing many trials and difficulties along the way with her sense of commitment taking her through thick and thin and of course we need to recognise that at every step she has been supported and strengthened by her faith in the Christian God. So, as we offer our thanks and good wishes may we continue to pray for her as she has prayed for us.

### Messy Church Meeting

Our final planning meeting is taking place this coming Thursday, 9th June from 2pm to 3pm in the church. All are welcome.

Thanks to those who took "flyers" last week. This Sunday, 5th June, I'll have posters available for you to put in your window or anywhere else you think would publicise the event!

If you'd like any more information do have a word with me. I'm particularly looking forward to icing sheep then eating a burger... Barbara R.

### First Messy Church

Our first Messy Church "Lost...and found" will take place on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:barbarageoff@gmail.com) or 01692672120

### The Queen's Platinum Jubilee at SBC

As part of the Stalham Fringe Festival celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Sunday 5th June. SBC is hosting several acts. Running Order:

- 1.00 Gary Williams
- 2.00 Queens Celebration Service
- 2.45 Pan Afro Band
- 3.45 Walcott Warblers

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.

### Sponsored Walk

Barbara and Ben's sponsored walk to raise money for the building amounted to £400. A big thank you to B&B.

### EBA Prayer Focus 5th June 2022

### Wilburton Baptist Community Church

Wilburton is a small village in Cambridgeshire, which was a thriving farming village but is now home to many commuters with the farmland being farmed by large farming groups. We also



have a large showman population, who are cautiously integrating with the community.

Wilburton is one of the smallest churches in the Association who have still managed to keep together and increase the number worshipping together through the pandemic and back into the church services. During the pandemic services were held every Sunday via a conference call. Everyone dialled in, chatted to each other, then listened to the word being preached and spent time in prayer. This was vital to the church sustaining its future.

We are now back in the church on a Sunday morning worshipping together with a congregation of around 14 people which is still mainly led by Anthea Dodson and a visiting speaker once a month.

We have restarted our Café Church on a Thursday morning for those wanting to get together for a chat and catch-up and our numbers are around 16, with people coming from the village who don't attend on Sunday mornings.

The Toddler Group is running again and we usually see around 12 families coming along. The Fundraiser Cafés we run for organisations in the village to help them raise funds are getting re-established and well supported. This is part of our outreach to show God's love. We haven't started Messy Church again yet but hope to in the winter.

We are a church family that prays together for so many different people who are brought to us asking for prayer which is our main focus.

#### Prayer points

- Strength to be able to continue to provide the support for those in need
- For the faithful witness of the church in the village and beyond
- For the ability to show God's love through everything we do

### Quotes of the Week

"When you strip it of everything else, Pentecost stands for power and life. That's what came into the church when the Holy Spirit came down on the day of Pentecost." — **David Wilkerson**, [The Cross and the Switchblade](#)

"It is well known that Pentecost reverses Babel. The people who built the tower of Babel sought to make a name, and a unity, for themselves. At Pentecost, God builds his temple, uniting people in Christ. Unity – interpretive agreement and mutual understanding – is, it would appear, something that only God can accomplish. And accomplish it he does, but not in the way we might have expected. Although onlookers thought that the believers who received the Spirit at Pentecost were babbling (Acts 2:13), in fact they were speaking intelligibly in several languages (Acts 2:8-11). Note well: they were all saying the same thing (testifying about Jesus) in different languages. It takes a thousand tongues to say and sing our great Redeemer's praise.

Protestant evangelicalism evidences a Pentecostal plurality: the various Protestant streams testify to Jesus in their own vocabularies, and it takes many languages (i.e. interpretive traditions) to minister the meaning of God's Word and the fullness of Christ. As the body is made up of many members, so many interpretations may be needed to do justice to the body of the biblical text. Why else are there four Gospels, but that the one story of Jesus was too rich to be told from one perspective only? Could it be that the various Protestant traditions function similarly as witnesses who testify to the same Jesus from different situations and perspectives?" — **Kevin J. Vanhoozer**, [Biblical Authority After Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity](#)





# Unless it includes everyone, the church cannot be the church

Baptist Times, 25/05/2022

**God calls each and every one of us – so if we put up barriers and exclude certain people whom God is calling, we are not doing God's work.**

**By Ruth Wilde, Tutor for the Inclusion of Disabled People at Northern Baptist College for the Baptist Times.**

## God calls everyone

There is a phrase from Isaiah on the font in Salisbury Cathedral, which took my breath away when I first saw it:

*'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine'* – **Isaiah 43:1**

For me, inclusion is and has always been about calling. God calls each and every one of us. Not only a chosen few, or some more than others. We are all incredibly important to God. That doesn't mean that community isn't important or that we are not dependent on one another – it is and we are – but God calls us as individuals too. We are each precious and irreplaceable. We each have a name which only God knows. We are each knit together by God in our mother's womb (Psalm 139:13). None of us has the right to tell someone else that they are defective or less wonderful than anyone else in the eyes of God.

God calls all people equally. This is why the Baptists and the Quakers (my denomination) both believe so fiercely in a non-hierarchical church; a church where there is autonomy of thought, equality between members, and where everyone is in communion with God and led by God's Spirit. Some are not considered better than others or more in touch with God.

In theory anyway. Of course, we all fall short of God's ideal in what we do and how we treat one another. One of my bugbears in the Society of Friends is that sometimes certain Quakers are called 'weighty Friends', meaning that their opinion carries extra weight – perhaps because they have been Quakers for a long time, or they have fulfilled important



roles locally and nationally. However, in my opinion, this goes entirely against the Quaker testimony to equality. I'm sure you as Baptists can think of many similar examples of when some people are treated or considered better than other people, despite the things we profess to believe in.

Every person is important to God and every person is called by God. This is why if we do not follow the inclusive example of Jesus – welcoming all and centring the most marginalised – we are not truly being the church. God calls everyone without exception. If we put up barriers and exclude certain people whom God is calling, we are not doing God's work, we are not building the Kingdom of God, and we are not being the church.

## Jesus' inclusive example

The books of the Bible were written at very different times to our own, but nevertheless we can see how they still speak to us and can guide us today – especially the stories of Jesus. There are so many examples in the gospels of Jesus' radical inclusion, but I will just draw out two powerful examples from the Gospel of John, because that is the gospel which has most often been dismissed as exclusive (some of this is due to the way it has been tragically misused and abused by anti-Semites and Nazis). It is however, at its heart, just as inclusive as the other three, if not more so.

The first example is a story which appears only in John – the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter 4. Jesus stops at a well in Samaria to speak to a woman who is there all alone. Firstly, he has apparently gone through Samaria, whereas scholars say that it was common at the time for Jews to go all the way round, in order to avoid coming into contact with Samaritans. Jews and Samaritans were a bit like Catholics and Protestants can be and have been at some points in history – very close religiously, but enemies in spite of (and perhaps because of) that fact.

Jesus has no problem going through Samaria himself, and he has walked quickly and gone ahead of his disciples. He therefore meets the woman all alone. The woman is sadly not named by John – perhaps her name has been forgotten, or perhaps this is a case of unconscious (or even conscious) bias against women at the time. Jesus begins to talk

to her, despite all the taboos in his culture against speaking to a woman alone, and speaking to a Samaritan.

Not only this, but she is likely an outcast, as she is at the well in the heat of the midday sun, on her own. Usually, women would have gone together in groups, and they would have avoided the hottest part of the day. He is speaking to a Samaritan woman who has probably been rejected by her own community, perhaps because she is forced to live with a man who won't marry her, after a string of unfortunate past relationships.

I want to make the important point here that the way we sometimes interpret the part about her having had multiple husbands is entirely historically inaccurate and reveals our prejudice – she wouldn't have been able to initiate any of the divorces and she would have likely been financially dependent on men, meaning that any previous husbands who died or divorced her probably left her destitute. When Jesus points out that she is unmarried and has had a string of husbands, the last thing he would be doing is judging her.

The fact that Jesus breaks all social taboos by even engaging the woman in conversation (the disciples are shocked when they arrive) is not even the most remarkable part of this story though. The two most incredible aspects of this story are:

that he has an in-depth theological conversation with her, in which she more than holds her own (and that said conversation is the longest one of any in the whole gospel), and

by giving her secret knowledge of who he is and telling her to spread the word to her village, he restores her rightful place in the community to which she belongs, and he gives her power and agency within that community, as she is now an important bearer of good news – an apostle, if you will.

This story shows that Jesus cares not only about welcoming or including marginalised people, but about empowering them and centring them too.

The second story I want to highlight is in John 6 – the feeding of the multitude. This story appears in all four gospels (and in one gospel twice!) – which is pretty unusual – but in John it contains some interesting details. It is likely that a large number of the crowd that day were made up of disabled and sick people. The gospel writer says that the people who followed Jesus did so because of 'signs he was doing for the sick' (6:2). They gathered on the side of the Sea of Tiberias (also called the Sea of Galilee) which was considered an unclean sea on the edge of a 'necropolis', Tiberias. Most Jews would have been headed to the Passover celebrations ('Passover' was near' 6:4), and they certainly wouldn't have wanted

to be at Tiberias, so this was likely a crowd of outcasts – people on the edge of society. It seems once more that Jesus wants to be with the most marginalised people, even when there is an important religious feast approaching. Jesus' expansive love and inclusion inspires others to share and be in community with one another, feeding a great multitude of thousands.

## The calling of the church to inclusion

The longer I have worked in the field of inclusion with churches, the more I have realised how essential it is to our faith, to the mission and future of the church, and – most importantly – to the building of God's kingdom. Firstly, as can be seen above, it is one of the major themes and right at the heart of the gospel – I could have given so many more examples of Jesus' radical inclusion and work for justice alongside marginalised people, just from John (the wedding at Cana, the woman 'caught in adultery', etc), never mind the other gospels.

Secondly, inclusion is the route of true discipleship, as we are called to follow and imitate Jesus, who always worked to include and centre those who were excluded. Thirdly, it is essential to church growth, and therefore the survival and future of the church, as [studies](#) from the Methodist church have recently shown. And finally, it is (as I said above) essential to being the church, as we are all called by God and have no right to put up a barrier or stop sign for some people but not others.

My new role at Northern Baptist College may be focussing on disability inclusion, but I am also the National Coordinator of the ecumenical charity Inclusive Church (IC), so I am used to thinking intersectionally about inclusion. As one of the IC trustees, Fiona MacMillan, says, 'all exclusion is the same exclusion'. It is important that we understand that. I look forward to working more closely with Baptist churches, trainee ministers and tutors on how we heed the call of God to open wide our gate and include everyone.

Image | Salisbury Cathedral font | Andrew Writer  
| [Flickr](#) | [Creative Commons](#)

Ruth Wilde is the new Tutor for the Inclusion of Disabled People at Northern Baptist College.

She is also the National Coordinator of Inclusive Church and an Associate Tutor at Woodbrooke Quaker Learning and Research Centre

[Source Baptist Times](#)

