

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday May 28th

This Sunday Barbara & Geoff are leading, and Ron is preaching from
Acts 17: 1-4 "Foundations"

The online service will also be available from Sunday.

Go to www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/

Then click on "Join Our Online Service"

Ron's Reads

Mt 16:13f, Mt 4:1f, Lk 24

For Your Prayers

As we pray through the Church Directory, please remember **Edna Woolsey**.
During June please pray for the residents of **Rivermead and Strawberry Fields**.

We pray Lord for those in our community that are still struggling with the cost-of-living-crisis, inflation is going down but that doesn't mean the cost of food is going down. We also pray that the Foodbank will still continue to receive food from the generous folk of Stalham.

Lord we pray that the workforce refurbishing the Schoolroom will feel Your presence over the next few months.

Dear God, please give me strength when I am weak, love when I feel forsaken, courage when I am afraid, wisdom when I feel foolish, comfort when I am alone, hope when I feel rejected, and peace when I am in turmoil.

Prayers for Pentecost

Mighty God, as we are gathered together here in hope and in faith, we ask You to minister to our needs. Send the Holy Spirit to fill the hearts of Your faithful people and kindle in them the fire of Your love.

Lord, as we worship today on Pentecost Sunday, give us a vision. Move us by Your Holy Spirit. Bring good news to us all. Bring freedom and peace to broken people and let us get a taste of Heaven here on Earth. Open our eyes to see You as You are. And open our hearts to praise You. Give us a vision that will take us out of our comfort zones and lead us into new ways of serving You. Help us to be agents of Your love to all people in a world where there is much division and hate. Helps us to be beacons of hope in a world that is sinking deeper into despair. Help us to be agents of Your peace in a world that is torn apart by conflict and wars. In our worship today our God, Give us a vision through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Too often, we have robbed Your message of its transforming power – quick to present it as one of niceness, rather than one which comforts the disturbed and disturbs the comfortable.

Virtual Prayer room

Saturday Monday 22nd Juliana posted "Please can you pray for Phyllis .. they suspect she got cancer in uterus"

On Wednesday 24th David posted "Please pray for Pam De'ath who has an appointment tomorrow with a consultant to deal with her glaucoma."

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.

Access to Toilets

The door from the church to the schoolroom is now sealed off as the work has started in the School-room so access to the toilets will be through the Stables or side gate.

Bible Reading Blog Mark 12: 28-34 (MSG) The Most Important Commandment

²⁸ One of the religion scholars came up. Hearing the lively exchanges of question and answer and seeing how sharp Jesus was in his answers, he put in his question: "Which is most important of all the commandments?"

²⁹⁻³¹ Jesus said, "The first in importance is, 'Listen, Israel: The Lord your God is one; so love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy.' And here is the second: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment that ranks with these."



Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington
01692 582731

Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno
07733837687

Secretary: Diana Gordon
07951949128

Ministry Team: The Whole Fellowship

For your Diary

Monday 29th May

9.00am Deacons Prayer Meeting
10.30 to 11.30am in the Church
Prayers for SBC and young people
2 to 4pm Warm Spaces in the Stables

Tuesday 30th May

Coffee and Chat
9.30am - 12 in the Stables

Wednesday 31st May

Table Tennis
9.30am to 12 in the Church
10-12pm Warm Spaces in the Stables
7.00pm Zoom Bible Study
All Welcome to join in
Contact Diana for details

Thursday 1st June

10 to 12pm Bible Craft in the Church
Holidays: Children and adults are welcome
10 to 12pm Warm Spaces in the Stables

Friday 2nd June

10.15 to 11.30am
Prayer for Revival at Three Windows,
Brumstead Road
1.15 to 3pm Foodbank in Stables

Sunday 4th June

10.45 Sunday Service
Welcome: Hazel M & Maggie H
Flowers: Doreen Hollebon

Food Bank, Citizens Advice Service & Personal Prayer

SBC will be open Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 12 noon to receive donations for the food bank and for personal prayer.

The **Food Bank**: if you need help, or know someone in difficulty, either contact the Food Bank on 07826 376343, or contact Ron Skivington at minister@stalhambaptist.org.uk

The **Citizens Advice Service** is open on Friday in the Stables, 1.15 to 3.00pm. Contact Food Bank on 07826 376343.

³²⁻³³ The religion scholar said, "A wonderful answer, Teacher! So clear-cut and accurate—that God is one and there is no other. And loving him with all passion and intelligence and energy, and loving others as well as you love yourself. Why, that's better than all offerings and sacrifices put together!"

³⁴ When Jesus realized how insightful he was, he said, "You're almost there, right on the border of God's kingdom."

After that, no one else dared ask a question.

As a Christian how easy is it to love your neighbour but at times struggle to love yourself?

Listen to Jerry's short blog based on this verse click [Jerry's Blog](#), if you are reading this on a computer or phone. Or go to www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/ and click on "Our Weekly Bible Commentary"

Monthly Prayer Meeting

As you know we hold a regular prayer meeting for the fellowship every other Thursday via Zoom. This has been a blessed time of prayer for those who participate. We recognize that there are some who don't have the facilities to engage with this digital medium or prefer meeting face to face and so we are planning, in addition to the 2 weekly Zoom, to have a monthly prayer meeting in the Sanctuary. The first one will be Thursday 29th June at 7pm. Prayer is the life blood of the church and we encourage you to join us either in the Sanctuary or on Zoom, or even both!

Shared Lunch

We are so excited to see our church grow week by week and thought it would be a really good idea to have a 'shared lunch' one Sunday after the church service to give us an opportunity to get to know each other better. We are planning to do this on 2nd July, which is the day Bethan & Gareth Shrubsole are our visiting speakers and will also join us for lunch. Diana will be coordinating the food arrangements so those of you able to contribute a food item please speak to her. Also please let Diana know **07951949128** if you would like to join us so we can get an idea of numbers for the catering. Thank you, Dan StJohn, for this excellent suggestion!

Meet the Shrubsoles on 2nd July

Gareth and Bethan Shrubsoles and their three children joined the Guinebor II hospital team in Chad in January 2020. Gareth has a non-medical senior role in the management of the hospital, working to oversee some of the operations of Guinebor II. Bethan works as a music therapist, with a project run by BMS partner TEAM, helping vulnerable women affected by abusive relationships or the sex-trade.

Edna's Birthday

Following the morning service on 28th May, there will be tea, coffee and cake in the Stables to celebrate Edna's 90th birthday. All are welcome but Edna has requested no presents please, however if anyone wishes to donate money to SBC Building Fund (Schoolroom Refurbishment) that would be most welcome, thank you. For more info have a chat with Jan Nicholson.

Citizens Advice Service in the Stables

The Citizens Advice Service is back in the Stables every Friday 1.15 to 3.00pm. To make an appointment contact Food Bank on 07826 376343.

EBA Weekly Prayer Focus: 28th May Thorpe-le-Soken Baptist Church

Thorpe-le-Soken is an attractive village in north east Essex not far from Frinton and Clacton. There has been a Baptist church here for more than 250 years.

Part-time pastor Rev Aubrey Cardy has been at the church since February 2023 initially for two years. He is supported by part-time community worker Michelle Pratt who joined in November 2022, and the church has a strong leadership team of four deacons.

This small church of local people is a warm and loving fellowship with a good range of ages represented. After a difficult period over the past few years and reduced attendance, the church is now bouncing back and seeing a strong increase numerically with about thirty present on Sundays, together with spiritual growth too.

Aubrey preaches and leads the service on two Sundays a month. On one Sunday in the month there is café church, led by community worker Michelle Pratt, with an opportunity to sit around tables, discuss and learn together, across age groups. The time usually includes a short thought, some sung worship and fun activities. On the final Sunday(s) in the month there are guest speakers which often include members of the fellowship.

There is also a wide programme of weekday activities with messy church, a mother and toddler group and Cameo (come and meet each other), a church/community group who meet for soup and fellowship. There is a fortnightly evening home group and a fortnightly mid-morning Bible Study group. And the church is hoping to start a dementia group soon.

There has been massive house-building and new estates all around the village, so the challenge is how to reach those who have moved in and identify how to bring God's kingdom to the wider community.

Please pray for:

- For younger workers to help the church grow and new members to help the church connect with more people.
- For more musicians to join the small Sunday worship team.
 - For wisdom in taking the church forward in terms of identifying key issues,
 - Involvement in the community and planning for growth both spiritually and numerically.

North Norfolk Foodbank

During May any of the following would be much appreciated:

Long Life Milk – full fat or semi-skimmed – Tinned Fruit – Tinned Meat – Tinned Vegetables – Tinned Tomatoes – Pasta Sauce – Rice Pudding – Biscuits – Pot Noodles/Mugshots – Squash – Cereal – Coffee – Plus any toiletries or household cleaning items

Please note that we cannot accept any fresh food or items that contain alcohol.

Just a Reminder

Fire Evacuation In the event of a fire everyone should make their way to the fire assembly point which is outside Trett Phillips Residential in the High Street. For more information speak to Daniel.



If you shop in Tesco's the slot for SBC's refurbishment is open on the Tesco's Community Grant collection point. SBC could be granted up to £1500 if we receive the largest amount of the blue tokens you can collect as you pay at the till area.

Community Fridge Open

Monday to Friday 10.00am to 12 noon

Quotes of the Week

"Without meaning in our lives, our purpose, and our service, it's easy to feel empty, awash with uncertainties and insecurities. Blown about by tides of others' making, we don't get the chance to drop our anchor where we most desire. True meaning comes from within, and when we dig deep to find it and create a foundation with it, fulfilment and joy have a fertile place to bloom from."

Kris Franken,

"Don't be crushed under the oncoming tide of adversity that moves in to test your faith. Make sure that your foundation is built on the solid rock of Jesus Christ. Be ready for the storms of life and move forward in a confidence that cannot be shaken by the strong winds of hardship."

Calvin W. Allison,

"You have got to build a firm foundation on the living word of God. You have got to study it, to store it in your heart, to gain the wisdom that it gives and apply it to your life."

Calvin W. Allison,

"Let God be the foundation of your life, and no matter what life throws at you, you will not crumble.

"Blooming late in life gives you the gift of being able to sustain your blessings, success, and foundation."

"Lay a solid foundation for the future generations yet to be born."

Ojingiri Hannah

Realising as human beings, we cannot be able to do anything unless we put God as a foundation in everything we do is one thing that has made many people miss God's divine purpose for their lives. I have seen many people who start looking or asking God for help when things have already gone wrong yet they did not ask God at the beginning.

Nevertheless the foundations of God stands sure ..

(11 Timothy 2:19)

Nyasa Times Malawi

If you are reading this newsletter as a PDF or online you can click on the red highlighted links and you will be taken to the relevant websites.

Something to read



Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

- Mark 1: 14-15.

Something to think about

Jesus bursts onto the scene in Galilee calling his first followers. Galilee was a thriving, fertile, heavily populated area - but it also had a certain reputation.

It had been settled by pagan nations and lots of their rituals had impacted local Jewish culture. Galilee had become morally and spiritually questionable.

And it is here that Jesus begins his ministry. Not in Jerusalem. Not in the temple. Not with the religious people, but in Galilee. Probably one of the least expected places for the Messiah to turn up announcing the arrival of God's kingdom.

The kingdom of God is God's reign here, His will being done on earth as it is in heaven.

And the fact that the arrival of His kingdom is announced in an out-of-the-way location with a dubious reputation is a reminder that He initiates, not us. He brings about His kingdom wherever he chooses, not where we might think appropriate.

Where might God be at work today, without us even realising it?

While it is God's prerogative to initiate His kingdom where and when he wants, it is our duty to respond to Jesus and the arrival of the kingdom. Jesus gives these two commands, to 'repent' and 'believe'.

The kingdom of God begins in our lives as we repent, as we change direction and begin journeying closer to God. His reign in our lives also begins as we believe the good news that His redeeming and transforming purposes are at work in our lives, as we accept Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Something to do

Read through the news headlines. What would God's Kingdom look like in these situations if it were to break out?

Something to pray

Lord, show me where I need to change direction and live more according to Your will rather than mine. Amen.

Today's contribution was from Andy Frost, Director of Share Jesus International.



Lord as I sometimes stumble along the path to your salvation. Help me spot the false prophets beckoning me along their effortless comfortable paths with their soft words, promises and oh so simple to believe talk in my moments of doubt.

That is until you reach the end of the road.!



Julian of Norwich - a woman for our century

May 2023 marks the 650th anniversary of Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love* - Julian is believed to be the first female author to write in English.

Sheila Upjohn is an author who set out to find the reason why Julian's book had been hidden for centuries, and why it is so startlingly relevant today

When the 600th anniversary of Julian of Norwich was celebrated back in 1973 most people thought she was a man. Even the few who realised she was a woman knew almost nothing about her.

I was one of them, which was surprising since I'd lived in Norwich nearly all my life and studied mediaeval language and literature at university.

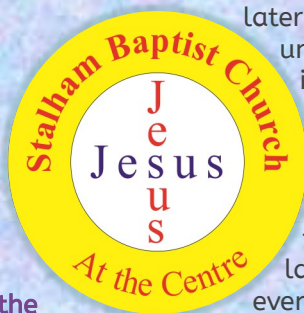
But in those pre-internet days students of literature got our information from books, and the Oxford Companion to English Literature, our go-to book for information, had just two lines on Julian: "*JULIANA OF NORWICH 1343-1443 anchoress; she wrote XVI Revelations of Divine Love, two manuscript copies of which are in the British Museum.*"

What has happened in the intervening years to make her so well known today? My eyes were opened when I was invited to join the committee to plan Julian's 600th anniversary. And I was invited as a punishment. I'd written an article in the local paper opposing the plan to deconsecrate almost all the 32 mediaeval churches in Norwich and turn them into suitable secular uses, but without any proposal about where the money for their future maintenance might be coming from.

But Alan Webster, the Dean of Norwich and my neighbour in the Close was an old hand at dealing with trouble makers. Next morning he rang me: 'Sheila,' he said. 'Since you're so keen on prayer, perhaps you'd like to serve on a committee.' So after that I had to read her book. I found it had been written by a woman who had been taken so gravely ill at the age of 30 that her mother and her friends had gathered at what they thought was going to be her death bed. In that illness Julian had a series of visions of Christ and knew that it was he himself who showed them to her. He showed her his suffering, and told her that he suffered willingly for love.

The visions lasted from four in the morning until noon. Julian recognised that what she had been shown was meant for everyone, not just for her, and so she knew she had to write it down. Most people were unlikely to have been taught to read and write in those days - least of all women - and Julian may even have had to learn her letters before she could begin. She became an anchoress living in a little room beside St Julian's church.

Part of the popularity of Julian's writing

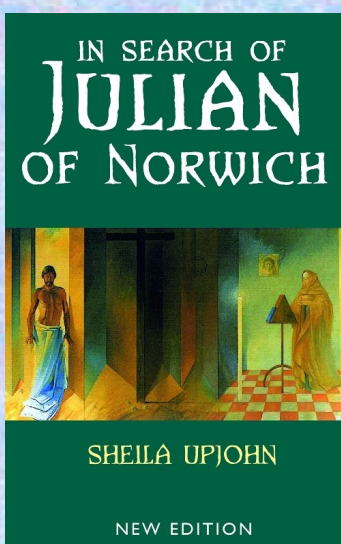


today comes from the fact that she was the first woman to write a book in English, although in her final version of her book (for she wrote a short version which she revised later) she doesn't even mention this. It was an unheard of thing for a woman to do - and to write it in English, too. English today is the international language (luckily for us!) but in the 14th century it was a local dialect. Latin was the international language of scholarship. The language of diplomacy and of the court was French. English was the working language, the language of the streets. It did not even become the official language of England until Julian was 20 years old. So to be the first woman to write a book in English was not something to be proud of, but a shaming admission she did not know Latin.

Julian wrote her book by hand, and it was copied out by hand (printing had not been invented) and passed round secretly by hand. It could not be made public because it appeared to contradict the teaching of the church - the penalty was burning at the stake - even though Julian herself and those who read it prayerfully understood it all agreed with Holy Scripture and was founded on it.

The church in those days - and sometimes indeed in our own - preached an angry God who punishes us for our sins. Julian was shown that God loves us, and looks after us tenderly as a mother looks after her child. She was shown that Christ is beyond male and female, untroubled by the distinctions that obsess us in our day. Julian wrote: 'And so I saw that God rejoices that he is our father, and God rejoices that he is our mother, and God rejoices that he is our true husband, and the soul his beloved wife. And Christ rejoices that he is our brother, and Jesus rejoices that he is our saviour.'

She continues: 'But often, when our falling and our miserable sin is shown to us, we are so ashamed we scarcely know where to put ourselves. But our loving mother does not want us to run away from him then, for he does not love us less... And here I understood that our Lord looks upon his servant with pity, not with blame. 'For this passing life does not ask that we live completely without blame and sin. He loves us endlessly, and we sin continually, and he shows us our sin most tenderly... And if we do not begin to feel better straight away, we can be sure he is behaving like a wise mother. For if he sees it is better for us to sorrow and weep, he allows us to be sad for a while, pitying us and sorrowing with us, for love.' Perhaps only a woman could have been shown God in these terms. And perhaps it is because we are no longer confined in rigid male/female roles that her book has become so widely read today.



Whatever the reason, Julian's book has become known and loved in the 21st century at a moment when we are longing to be sustained by Julian's God-given promise 'All shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well' - the words that are embroidered on the screen used at the holiest moment of the Coronation.

Sheila Upjohn is the author of *In Search of Julian of Norwich*, first published in 1989 and updated in 2023, and [numerous other works about Julian](#)

Source [Baptist Times](#)