

Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday June 18th

This Sunday Jerry is leading and preaching from Psalm 103:8-18 on "God Our Good Father".

David describes God our Father using three phrases in verse 8 namely: God is (1) Compassionate and Gracious, (2) Slow to Anger and (3) Abounding in Love.

The online service will also be available from Sunday.

Go to www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/

Then click on "Join Our Online Service"

Jerry's Reads

Exodus 34, Isaiah 57:16, Jonah 4:2; Nahum 1:7; 2 Chronicles 30:9, Micah 7:18-19, Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Peter 3:9.

For Your Prayers

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

Lord, we pray that the community and SBC fellowship will support Jan and Henry Nicholson's Coffee Morning centring on the persecution of Christians in Nigeria on Friday 23rd. Hetty and Emanuel Osegboh, two Nigerian Christians, will be attending.

Please pray for Noman Masih a Christian living in Pakistan who was arrested in 2019 prosecuted for blasphemy, and has been sentenced to death by hanging. It took the legal system almost four years to hand down his sentence. Norman had been sent some cartoons of Muhammad on WhatsApp. It's believed the man that sent the cartoon to Norman – a Muslim – has not received any form of punishment, the Vatican News Agency reports. Pray that his lawyer is able to appeal the sentence, at the High Court of Lahore and he will be found not guilty.

Virtual Prayer room

Thursday 8th June Jerry posted "Thank you for your prayers. A bed is available and Abbie has just gone to the theatre, Love Maureen." Later in the day Jerry posted "Update on Abbie. She is just out of the theatre; the surgeon has said the surgery went well and will know more tomorrow. Thanks again, Love Maureen."

Also on Thursday Pat Dabbs posted "Update on our grandson Shaun. He is not responding to treatment (antibiotics and steroids). The blood tests are inconclusive so the lumbar puncture will go ahead. The medical staff want to explore other possibilities for his symptoms including an MRI brain scan. He is not dealing well with his situation as he has a friend who lost a limb to meningitis. Could you also include Wendy in your prayers. She is exhausted and was quite tearful when she updated us. She is worried that the stress and tiredness will bring on an epileptic fit. She has been free of fits for twelve years. Thank you all for your prayerful response."

Saturday 10th June Pat Dabbs posted "Geoffrey has just given us an update on Shaun. The MRI scan did not show anything to cause concern and his blood count is coming right down so it would seem that the infection is under control. He will still have a lumbar puncture and if the results are OK, they will discharge him, probably tomorrow. They are still not sure if it is meningitis, but it was certainly a serious bacterial infection which, at one point, was almost on the point of sepsis. Thank you all for your prayers for both Shaun and his family. They are very much appreciated and our love and best wishes to you all." Later that day Pat posted. "Shaun is home. The doctors said he has had sinusitis bacterial infection that led to sepsis, but levels are right down and can now be managed with oral antibiotics at home. The lumbar puncture result will be back tomorrow or Monday which will show level of sepsis still in the body. Wendy is very relieved."

Monday 12th June Pat posted "Some of you may remember our youngest son, Chris, had a cardiac arrest nine and a half years ago. He had an internal defibrillator fitted which now needs replacing as the battery is low. He is going into Barts Hospital tomorrow to have this done (under a local anaesthetic) and should be allowed home late afternoon. Please pray that there are no complications, and he is able to go home, and everything heals quickly."



Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington
01692 582731

Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno
07733837687

Secretary: Diana Gordon 07951949128
Ministry Team: The Whole Fellowship

For your Diary

Monday 19th June

7.00pm Deacons Meeting
10.30 to 11.30am in the Church
Prayers for SBC and young people
2 to 4pm Warm Spaces in the Stables

Tuesday 20th June

Coffee and Chat

9.30am - 12 in the Stables

Wednesday 21st June

Table Tennis

9.30am to 12 in the Church
10-12pm Warm Spaces in the Stables

Thursday 20th June

10 to 12pm Warm Spaces in the Stables

7.00pm Zoom Prayer Meeting

All Welcome to join in

Contact Diana for details

Friday 21st June

10.30 to 12.00pm

Persecuted Nigerian Christians Coffee Morning at Three Windows, Brumstead Road

1.15 to 3pm Foodbank in Stables

Sunday 25th June

10.45 Sunday Service

Welcome: Maureen & Rita

Flowers: Janet Nicholson

Thursday 29th

11.00am Funeral service for Marie Read

7.00pm Prayer meeting in Church

Saturday 1st July

8.30 Ladies Breakfast in the Stables

Sunday 2nd July

The Shrubsoles are at SBC [our BMS missionaries from Chad]

Shared Lunch 12.30 - 2.30pm

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.

Community Fridge Open

Monday to Friday 10.00am to 12 noon

Tuesday 13th Pat posted “Just heard from Jenni, Chris’s wife. Surgery is completed and all went well. He has to stay for a couple of hours for checks, but I presume he can then go home. Thank you for your prayers.”

Also on Tuesday Jerry posted “Update from Maureen: Abbie is home. Please pray for a speedy recovery that will be seizure-free. God bless you all, Maureen.”

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.

Bible Reading Blog Hebrews 10: 32-39 (MSG) “Don’t Throw it all Away”

32-39 Remember those early days after you first saw the light? Those were the hard times! Kicked around in public, targets of every kind of abuse—some days it was you, other days your friends. If some friends went to prison, you stuck by them. If some enemies broke in and seized your goods, you let them go with a smile, knowing they couldn’t touch your real treasure. Nothing they did bothered you, nothing set you back. So don’t throw it all away now. You were sure of yourselves then. It’s still a sure thing! But you need to stick it out, staying with God’s plan so you’ll be there for the promised completion.

It won’t be long now, he’s on the way;
he’ll show up most any minute.

But anyone who is right with me thrives on loyal trust;

if he cuts and runs, I won’t be very happy.
But we’re not quitters who lose out. Oh, no!
We’ll stay with it and survive, trusting all the way.

As Christians sharing our fellowship comfortably every Sunday how easy is it to understand how it is for at least 360 million Christians experiencing “high levels of persecution and discrimination around the world?”

Listen to Rons short blog based on this verse click [Ron’s Blog](#). Or go to www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/ and click on “Our Weekly Bible Commentary”

Persecuted Christian Leah Sharibu turns 20 but remains in captivity in Nigeria for refusing to Renounce Jesus.

Rons blog explores brilliantly Hebrews 10: 32-39. Highlighting the persecution suffered at the time. The persecution of Christians is rife throughout the world. Nigeria is number six in the World Ranking of Christian persecution. The persecution facing Christians in Nigeria is extreme and often brutally violent, as Islamic militants and armed bandits attack with increasing impunity. Click on the Here on the picture of “A Letter to Leah” and watch to Leah’s mums video blog about her daughters refusal to renounce Jesus’s six years ago.

The video is powerful and emotional and certainly challenges us, whether we would react in the same way as Leah who could have been realised with many of her school friends by just saying “I accept Islam” meaning she would have been freed.

Read more about Leah on page three and four.

There will be a Coffee Morning in the garden of Jan and Henry, Three Windows, Brumstead Road on

Friday 23rd June from 10.30am to 12 to raise money for the Persecuted Church in Nigeria. Proceeds will be sent to Release International. Hetty and Emanuel Osegbob Nigerian Christians will be joining the coffee morning.

Jan says she looks forward to seeing you.



Pray for Persecuted Christians in Nigeria Please pray.

For Christians who have experienced violent attacks, for the families of martyrs, for those who have been forced to flee and for those who have been kidnapped. For Release International partners who are working to provide basic food and medical supplies, trauma counselling and training for local pastors to share the hope of the gospel.

For the Nigerian government to act justly, to provide proper representation to Christians in the north and central regions, and to fulfil its duty to protect all its citizens.

For the terrorist groups and other militants who are targeting Christians to stop their violence and turn to God for forgiveness.

For the Christian community to trust in God’s faithfulness and ask that out of these ashes will rise a wave of an uncommon, unseen revival.

Can You Help?

Extra volunteers for the prayer corner on Sundays would be welcomed. If you can help talk to Diana.

Volunteers needed to clean/tidy the premises during the cleaner’s holiday. 18th July to 19th August.

Please put your name on the rota on the table at the back of the sanctuary if you can help with any of the dates. Speak to Monica (01692 580947) for further information.

EBA Weekly Prayer Focus: 18th June West Leigh Baptist Church

“West Leigh Baptist Church in Leigh-on-Sea is a part of the city of Southend-on-Sea. It is one of the many Baptist churches in the city.

The church is served by Rev Jeff Jacobson (Senior Minister) and Rev Bill Eugster (Associate Minister). The church is also served by a wonderful staff team which are a blessing both to the church and the community.

On Easter Sunday, the church had five baptisms, including two who came to faith through the Alpha course. The Sunday congregation is growing and new members join the church regularly.

Throughout the week, WLBC has several ministries. On Mondays there is the Stay and Play group, serving children and their carers. Boys Brigade is run on Tuesdays.

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.

Wednesdays are dedicated to the Parish Nurse ministry, which includes exercise classes, a walk-in clinic, a well-being support group, a worship service and lunch. Friday evenings is the youth club Extreme, which sees around 30 young people come each week. Getting enough volunteers for all of these is always an ongoing challenge.

WLBC hosts Alpha courses during the spring and autumn. The spring Alpha, which began in April, has 12 guests coming along, many of whom had no prior connection to the church before.

The church also runs a charity shop, Cornerstone. This is creating encouraging connections with the community and also contributes to the financing of an upcoming building project. The church is really grateful for the volunteers, some of whom are not part of the church.

Later in the year, Bill Eugster will be re-retiring and returning to Northumberland. Therefore, WLBC is looking to call a new Associate Minister.

Prayer requests:

- Pray for the provision of an Associate Minister.
- Pray for provision for the upcoming building project.
- Pray for the people on Alpha, that they may come to Christ.
- Pray for increased support and resources for the Parish Nurse project, as the demand for its services grows.

North Norfolk Foodbank

During June 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.

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.

Don't forget the 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 Update

If you would like to take part in the Shared Lunch on Sunday 2nd July at 12.30 – 2.30pm in the Stables or Church add your name on the poster at the back of the church. List of items needed is on prayer corner notice board. Please note in the space provided what your contribution will be.

Bethan & Gareth Shrubsole are our visiting speakers and will also join us for lunch. Diana and Elaine will be coordinating the food arrangements so those of you able to contribute a food item please speak to them. For more

information contact Diana on 07951949128.

Ladies Breakfast

The Ladies Breakfast is on Saturday 1st July at 8.30am in the Stables. Breakfast includes cereal, Fruit Juice, Pastries, Cooked Breakfast. The speaker will be Elaine. No fixed charge, but all donations are appreciated, all profits will go to a charity. Please contact Elaine on 07796 875785 or emailElainemsmith364@btinternet.com for more info .

Just a Reminder

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.

Spring Harvest 2024

Some of you have already been at Spring Harvest, others may not have heard about it. A few of our church members including our family went to Spring Harvest 2023 and we were so blessed by God's presence and Him speaking into our lives.

That's why we think it would be great to have more people from SBC (or other Christian friends) to come along with us in 2024.

We are aiming to do a group booking so we can have accommodation together. Once we know how many we will be we can organise how we'll get there. It sounds very far away but the booking opens on June 14th. In order to get good prices it's advisable to book as early as possible.

From their website:

"Spring Harvest is an exciting and safe space for you to find Spiritual refreshment, hear God's voice and be inspired to go back to your streets, villages, towns, and cities to make a difference. Spring Harvest is the perfect holiday packed full of inspiration. It's where we equip the church for action.

The theme for 2024 will be: 'Up and Alive – Living the life we are made for'. This theme will become part of the daily focus for the events."

You can find more information on: www.springharvest.org

Date: 1 -5 April 2024

Location: Butlin's Skegness

Cost pp: Standard room £149 + dining package £91 = £240 all inclusive

Children: Standard room £149 + dining package £46 = £195 all inclusive

Other option is a self catering apartment: £213 pp, bring food to cook

There is the possibility to apply for funds if it is difficult for you to pay such an amount.

Jerry's Quotes of the Week

"God takes our sins – the past, present and future and dumps them into the sea and puts up a sign that says, NO FISHING ALLOWED." -Corrie ten Boom.

"I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I want to be. I am not what I hope to be. But still, I am not what I used to be. And by the grace of God, I am what I am." - John Newton

"The Cross is the lightning rod of grace that short-circuited God's wrath to Christ so that only the light of His love remains for believers." - A. W. Tozer

"I can forgive, but I cannot forget, is only another way of saying, I will not forgive. Forgiveness ought to be like a cancelled note – torn in two, and burned up, so that it never can be shown against one." - Henry Ward Beecher



“Our God is abundant in love and steadfast in mercy. He saves us, not because we trust in a symbol, but because we trust in a Savior.” -Max Lucado.

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.



Open Doors

60 years of serving persecuted Christians

Leah Sharibu turns 20 but remains in captivity – all because she bravely raised her hand to say she’s a Christian

This month, Leah Sharibu from Nigeria turns 20. Her teenage years were spent mostly in captivity after bravely refusing to renounce Jesus.

We caught up with her mother, Rebecca, to find out how she and her husband are doing as they hold onto the hope that they’ll one day be reunited with their daughter. Shortly after being kidnapped by Islamic militants from their school in February 2018, more than 100 girls were gathered by their captors and asked, “Who is a Christian?” One girl courageously put up her hand. Her name is Leah Sharibu.

“We rebuked her and said that we are all Muslims,” reported the girls afterwards. “But she refused. She raised her hand and said she is a Christian. They [the militant group Islamic State West African Province, or ISWAP] said, since she is a Christian, she must denounce Christ and accept Islam before she could enter the van. She refused and said she is a Christian and she would not accept Islam.”

It was an extraordinarily brave thing to do, because whilst all other girls were released a month after being taken, Leah remained held – as she has ever since.

The girls return – but not Leah

When she was first taken from the Government Girls Science Technical College in the town of Dapchi in northern Nigeria’s Yobe State, Leah was 14 years old. Her birthday is 14 May and this year she turns 20. She becomes an adult having had most of her teenage years cruelly robbed from her.

For Leah’s mother and father, Rebecca and Nathan, the heartache continues each day. Leah’s story is no longer in the headlines, though many Open Doors supporters are faithfully praying for Leah and her family. Earlier this year, Open Doors local partners visited Rebecca and Nathan in Dapchi to encourage them and pray with the family, and to let them know that Open Doors supporters worldwide continue to pray for them.

For Rebecca, the moment she heard that her daughter was not among those released is etched into her memory. “When all the parents ran to the school to see their daughters, I was told Leah is not among them. Leah was not returned. I asked the girls that came back, ‘How come Leah is not back?’”

Courageous but costly faith

It was then that Rebecca and Nathan were told of their daughter’s courageous faith – and what it had cost her. “Since you will not accept Islam, you will be left here [as a prisoner],” the militants said to Leah, to which she defiantly replied: “I will not accept Islam because I am not a Muslim. I will remain here.” The girls told Rebecca that, after her declaration of faith, Leah was crying. “We were all crying as they put us in the van and left,” said one of Leah’s classmates.

Two months later, ISWAP released a video in which Leah begged for the government’s help and asked the public to ‘help my mother, father, my younger brother and relatives’. Two weeks later, the militant group warned that they would kill Leah, 15 at the time, if their demands were not met. After the deadline, ISWAP released another video saying that Leah would be their ‘slave for life’. While there are frequent rumours about Leah’s whereabouts, and reports that Leah has been married off to one of the commanders and given birth to two children, her parents have yet to see or hear from her daughter. “Only the video released some days after their abduction, that was the first and last time I saw her face and heard her voice,” says Rebecca.

[Stand up to violent persecution in Nigeria and across sub-Saharan Africa](#)

Unwavering faith and steadfast hope

Rebecca is so proud of ‘her Leah’, even while knowing that her daughter would be with her now if she had renounced her faith. “I am thankful to Leah for the decision she took,” she continues. “She refused to become a Muslim. Her strong faith makes me feel very happy.”

It’s a joy that sits alongside grief and agonising uncertainty. “Honestly, we are not happy,” admits Rebecca. “We are just managing our lives here.” But they don’t live in despair, helped by their unwavering faith. “God has been our source of strength in everything we are doing. Looking at my walk with God, I can say this is the time I became closer to Him.”

Like many persecuted believers navigating the absence of a family member, Rebecca turns to her community and the Bible for support: “Joining the women’s fellowship church, I have been really encouraged and strengthened,” she shares. “Staying alone at home will not strengthen or encourage me... Anytime I am worried, I read and recite Psalm 23.”

Such faith not only gives Rebecca and her husband strength for each day but hope for tomorrow. “We are praying for Leah; nothing is too big for God to do. I know one day she will come back,” she says.

“Keep praying for Leah”

Leah’s mother also has a message for her global family who continue to uphold her family in prayer. “I want to say a big thank you to Open Doors who have been praying with us, may God bless you all. Our thanksgiving is the only thing I can give. I lack how best to say thank you,” she says. “My request morning and night is that you keep praying for Leah, as you have been doing in the past. I know that one day God will answer and rescue my daughter.”

Thank you also to the hundreds of you who have written a message of encouragement to Rebecca and Nathan. These have now been sent to the couple and they will be a tremendous source of encouragement to them.

For more information about Opendoor click [HERE](#)



Spring Harvest 2024

"I've been on the Stewards team for about five years but I came to Spring Harvest as a child too."

"Even though we are serving, we're paying attention to the sessions and God still has ways to speak to us through that."

"It is just a wonderful community. You work, walk around the site and people are talking about what God's been doing and getting ministry."

"We're all from different backgrounds, but we are here and know that Jesus loves us and that just really brings us together."

"I love Spring Harvest because I'm with family."

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