

# Stalham Baptist Church Weekly News

Sunday February 25th

This Sunday Ron is leading and preaching, he is continuing the sermon series entitled "Who is Jesus?" The title of this week's sermon is "Jesus the Teacher" and the reading

is from John 3: 1-9

## Ron's Reads

Jn 19:39, Jn 7:46, Mk 2:22, 6:32f, Mt 18:1f, 23:11, Heb 1:1-2

## For Your Prayers

We pray for Church Pastoral Group 1, please pray for: Jenny Payne, Dan StJohn, Sue StJohn, Barbara & Geoff Reynolds, Carol Croft and Jean Mollett During February please pray for the residents of the pond area of Stalham Green, Field Road, Hollingdale Drive, Harnser Court and Moore Lane.

### A Prayer for peace in Israel and Gaza

Heavenly Father, we pray for the many people whose lives have been torn apart by conflict in Gaza and Israel.

We pray especially those who have died, those who are grieving, the injured and those now without food, shelter or medical supplies. Strengthen and support the work of all relief organisations.

We pray also for those who have the power to bring peace. May they be touched by a spirit of compassion and kindness.

Lord, hear us as we pray in the power of your Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen Source Ely Cathedral

Lord we pray for greater Christian engagement in local and national politics and that churches will effectively support and encourage those who feel called to serve God in politics.

We pray for good relationships between churches and their local MPs and that churches will seek ways in which they can support MPs in serving their communities.

The book The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich has a quote from **George Santayana** saying, "Those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it." We pray Lord that as the pressures grow threatening a third world war the mistakes of the past will not be repeated. 79 years on from the end WW2 most people's knowledge of the horrendous events have faded away alongside our need for defences. We need to remember Santayana's other quote "To know your future, you must know your past." Lord, we pray Your wisdom will guide the democratic leaders of the world and You will break into the stone hearts of the warmongers, and Your calm will spread across the menacing territories currently blighting Your world Lord, and Your peace will take a powerful grip leaving the threat of a world war to dwindle away.

## Virtual WhatsApp Prayer Room

Friday February 16<sup>th</sup> Jerry posted "From Sandra: Please Pray for our daughter Karen in hospital with heart failure. Thank you. Sandra xx"

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> Lorraine posted "Good morning, everyone ... Please can you pray for David ... He lives in a boat on the broads with his dog Sprout ... David has gone missing ... The boat and Sprout 🐶 have been found ... David not been found yet ... Thank you 🙏🙏"

Also on Monday Ruth Hayward posted "Can u pray for Sammy just dropped him off to his college interview"

To join the WhatsApp Virtual Prayer Room that gives support with the power of prayer text Jerry on 07733837687.

## Jerry's Bible Reading Blog

### John 5: 31-47 (NIV) The Witnesses to Christ

<sup>31</sup> "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. <sup>32</sup> There is another who testifies in my favour, and I know that his testimony about me is true.

<sup>33</sup> You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. <sup>34</sup> Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. <sup>35</sup> John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

<sup>36</sup> "I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me. <sup>37</sup> And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning



Pastor: Rev. Ron Skivington  
01692 582731

Assistant Pastor: Jerry Otieno  
07733837687

Secretary: Diana Gordon 07951949128

Ministry Team: The Whole Fellowship

## For your Diary

### Monday 26th February

7.00pm Deacons Meeting

10.30 to 11.30am in the Church  
Prayers for SBC and young people  
2 to 4pm Warm Space in the Stables

### Tuesday 27th February

9.30am -12 Coffee and Chat in the  
Schoolroom

### Wednesday 28th February

Table Tennis

9.30am to 12pm in the Schoolroom  
10-12pm Warm Space in the Stables

### Thursday 29th February

10 to 2pm Warm Space in the Stables  
10.30am Prayer Meeting in the  
Schoolroom Upper Room  
7.00pm Zoom prayer meeting  
All are welcome. Contact Diana

### Friday 1st March

10.15 to 12.00pm Prayers for Revival &  
Israel at Three Windows,  
Brumstead Road

1.15 to 3pm Foodbank in Stables &  
Citizens Advice Service

### Saturday 2nd March

8.30am Men's Breakfast in Schoolroom

### Sunday 3rd March

10.45 Sunday Service  
Welcome: Jean & Tom  
Flowers: Janet Nicholson  
12.30pm Shared Lunch in the  
Schoolroom

### Monday 4th March

10 to 11.30 am Romans Bible Study  
Group Session 2 in the Stables  
All welcome

### Saturday 16th March

8.30am Ladies' Breakfast in Schoolroom

## Personal Prayer, Food Bank, & Citizens Advice

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](mailto: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 Mondays 2.00 pm - 4.00pm  
Tuesday to Friday 10.00am to 12 noon

me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form,<sup>38</sup> nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent.<sup>39</sup> You study<sup>40</sup> the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me,<sup>40</sup> yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

<sup>41</sup> "I do not accept glory from human beings,<sup>42</sup> but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.<sup>43</sup> I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.<sup>44</sup> How can you believe since you accept glory from one another but do not seek the glory that comes from the only God<sup>45</sup>?"

<sup>45</sup> "But, do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set.<sup>46</sup> If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.<sup>47</sup> But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

**As Christians do we sometimes bugle about ourselves to others?**  
To listen to Jerry's short blog click [Jerry's Blog](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/). Or go to [www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/](http://www.stalhambaptist.org.uk/) and click on "Our Weekly Bible Commentary"

Jerry explores Jesus' conversation in John 5 where He made incredible claims about His identity. Jerry used C.S. Lewis quote who said, "a man who makes these claims must be mad, bad, or God"

## AGM

Our AGM this year will take place on Sunday 7th April at 12.00. As usual it will begin with the election of deacons.

Daniel Nicholson & Maggie Harpur are the deacons whose term comes to an end but are eligible for re-election.

We have no upper limit on how many deacons we may have; the requirements needed are being baptised and a full membership of a calendar year.

Please pray about this and if you would like to nominate someone please ask them first and then give their details to Diana. You can either use the nomination slips which will be at the back of the church or you can write a letter. Final date for nomination is Wednesday 20th March.

## Prayer for Wisdom as Deacons

Lord, as we begin to take steps toward our purpose, we ask that You give us wisdom. As Your Word promises us, we ask in faith that you will give us wisdom in every small and large decision as we step into our purpose. We thank You that we don't have to rely on our own understanding, as we know that Your wisdom will guide us to our exact purpose. Thank You that we can come to the throne and ask anything. We ask for your guidance, and we thank You for the gift and power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, amen. - Source Alisha Headley

## Thank You From Maureen K

I would like to say thankyou for your prayers, flowers, and cards, during and following my recent operation. I have been very aware of the power of prayer, and knowing God's love and healing, God bless. Love Maureen.

## Daffs are Selling

Harvesting of the daffs started Monday and around £80 has already been collected. Barbera Mixer and Elinor Burdett have been picking. Henry says "the weather has been against them but they have done a great job this

week."

The daffodils are on sale outside Edna's house in St Johns Road.

Henry still needs some volunteers to help harvesting the daffs. It is very therapeutic wandering through the woodlands where the owners have given us permission to collect the lovely flowers. If you can help have a chat with H.

## Bible Art

The idea of a Bible Art group has been a great success. People's first reaction was "I'm not creative," or "I'm not an artist." Simone said "I completely get that as I'm not an artist in that sense either. But I believe that everyone can be creative. To be creative implies that something is created, and it doesn't ask for a certain level of professionalism or artistic skills. It's not about creating perfectly sellable pieces of art but more about learning to express ourselves in a different way, reflecting on the Word of God and having something in hand that can remind us of what we have learned or what became important to us.

I love it when different people come together, try out new things and learn together. And that's what happens at our Bible Art group at Stalham Baptist Church.

Feel free to contact Simone Otieno:

sim1otieno@gmail.com and or 07436837210

BIBLE Art is taking place every other Friday morning at 10am to 12pm in the school room at Stalham Baptist Church. Upcoming dates: March 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> - April 5<sup>th</sup> - April 19<sup>th</sup> - May 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> - June 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> - July 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> - (August (Summer break) - September 6th. (Holidays: Children and adults are welcome)

## Men's Breakfast 2nd March

Hi Gentlemen!

Happy New Year! One breakfast done in 2024 already. Great to be able to meet in the refurbished Schoolroom with more space to move around and a modern, well equipped, kitchen to cook in. Everyone seemed to have a good time which is splendid. It is good to see more new gents coming along too. We have decided on a few more dates so I thought I would let you get them in your diaries and spread the word.

The dates are: 2nd March; 13th April; 11th May and 29th June. They are unevenly spaced but they have to fit around B & my other commitments. The gathering together is the important thing but thanks for your generosity into the donation box Sat. £162.46 (after food costs taken out) was sent to The Leprosy Mission. See you soon, Regards, Geoff. 01692 672120: geoffreynolds51@gmail.com

## Shared Lunch 3rd March

We had a very successful shared lunch last year and are planning to do it again on Sunday 3rd March following the service.

Elaine has post a list of suggested items to bring at the back of the church - that doesn't stop you from adding anything else! If you would like to join us then please add your name underneath and what you will be bringing.

## Ladies Breakfast 16th March

The next Ladies Breakfast will be on Saturday 16th March 8.30 to 10.30am in SBC's Schoolroom. Breakfast includes cereal, fruit juice, pastries, and a cooked breakfast. The Guest Speaker is Zephney Kennedy. No fixed charge, but all donations are appreciated, all profits will go to a



**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.

charity. Book a place or more information by contacting Elaine on 07796 875785 or email [Elainemsmith364@btinternet.com](mailto:Elainemsmith364@btinternet.com)

## **EBA Weekly Prayer Focus 25th February Gunton Baptist Church**

Gunton is a suburb of Lowestoft in Suffolk where Gunton Baptist Church is situated on a large estate in a deprived area.

The church has a small and mainly elderly membership and has been without a minister since 2022. There is a leadership team of four deacons. Sunday services are led by one of the deacons, several of the members preach or local lay preachers or sometimes videos are used.

The church has a very busy programme of weekly activities that reach out into the wider community. These include:

- Create 'n' Craft with coffee and craft activities.
  - A very popular Hub café with drink and food served at a low cost. It provides a great opportunity to meet others and build friendships locally.
  - A weekly prayer and Bible study meeting.
  - The Roots Community Clothing Scheme which is like a charity shop and provides clean, good quality clothing and household items for the local community. Any money raised provides equipment for homeless people and those who are moving in to new accommodation.
  - A small foodbank to support the needs in the local community.
  - And Baby Basics which works with midwives, health visitors and other professionals to provide Moses baskets, baby clothes bundles, cots, prams, pushchairs and high chairs to vulnerable mums in and around Lowestoft.
- The church has a very practical focus in its outlook and ministry that tries to help those in need in the local area. Their greatest prayer is for families and children to become part of the church.

Please pray:

- For new people to join the church and make things grow.
- For guidance and leading in what God wants the church to do in the future.
- For fresh ideas and how the church can look for new opportunities..

### **Prayer Meeting**

The Church Prayer Meetings on the February 29<sup>th</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup> and March 28<sup>th</sup> will be in the Upper Room with heating. They will be every 1<sup>st</sup> and last Thursday every month. At 10.30am.

### **Foodbank**

During February any of the following would be much appreciated:

**Long Life Milk, Tinned Fish, Tinned Meat, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Tomatoes, Tinned Fruit, Squash, Fruit Juice and shampoo.**

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

### **Quotes of the Week**

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher.



He would either be a lunatic – on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

**C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity**

"Many people think of Jesus as our Saviour, as the one who will get us into heaven. So the question often is "Have I accepted Jesus as my Saviour?" But we never ask the question "Have I accepted Jesus as my teacher?" And that's the real question.

With the disciples, it began there. They began by accepting him as their teacher, and then accepting him as their Saviour—which included, of course, their eternal destiny—was a natural outflow of that. But they started with Jesus as their teacher, because we all have to learn how to live."

**Dallas Willard, Living in Christ's Presence: Final Words on Heaven and the Kingdom of God**

"Jesus's teaching consistently attracted the irreligious while offending the Bible-believing, religious people of his day. However, in the main, our churches today do not have this effect. The kind of outsiders Jesus attracted are not attracted to contemporary churches, even our most avant-garde ones. We tend to draw conservative, buttoned-down, moralistic people. The licentious and liberated or the broken and marginal avoid church. That can only mean one thing. If the preaching of our ministers and the practice of our parishioners do not have the same effect on people that Jesus had, then we must not be declaring the same message that Jesus did."

**Timothy Keller, The Prodigal God: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith**

### **Journey Into Easter is a new book by Hazel Manley**

**which takes the reader on a journey exploring the events of Easter and how those events can impact their lives.**

Over the centuries, there have been various versions of the Stations of the Cross highlighting different parts of the Easter story. Hazel has painted her own interpretation of them focussing on seven key points in the journey from the last supper

to the resurrection. These pictures form a key element of the book offering a very personal window into Easter with all but one of the pictures showing the scenes as if looking at Jesus' hands through his eyes.

Hazel says, "The book came about through an encounter with an older lady who was quietly entering the church to 'do the stations'. As I accompanied the lady on one of these occasions, I found a new appreciation for the events of Easter, the cost and the results."

The book can be used by individuals, groups, once a week throughout Lent; daily, or all in one day- there are no rules! Each 'day' has a double page and is laid out so that



the reader can start wherever they find most helpful - with the readings, the picture, or the reflection. There is space to journal responses or to make notes with questions to encourage deeper exploration of the events of the story.

Hazel Manley paints under the brush name of **Roeh Art** which she used for many years to protect her identity whilst working as an adult literacy teacher. She explains that Roeh comes from a word that means to see, perceive, notice, understand, determine, check, investigate and examine; all of which play some part in her work.

Since leaving adult education, Hazel has continued to paint small watercolours quietly during services and vibrant oil pastels from her studio space in North Norfolk, all inspired by the glories of creation.

**Journey Into Easter** costs £3 plus P+P at cost, and is available by [emailing Hazel](mailto:hazel@roeh-art.com) at Roeh Art.

Discounts are available for orders of 10 or more.

Visit [roeh-art.com](http://roeh-art.com) for more information.

Also on Instagram and Facebook.

Source [www.networknorwich.co.uk](http://www.networknorwich.co.uk)

The Norfolk and Norwich Christian community website



## 'The Inter Faith Network is in peril - please support it'

The government is withdrawing funding from the Inter Faith Network, leading to its potential closure. Paul Weller, a member of the Baptists Together Inter Faith Working Group, is encouraging Baptists to urgently protest the decision. Baptist Times, 20/02/2024



As a Baptist Christian who, between 1988-1990, was employed as the Resources Officer of the then new [Inter Faith Network for the UK](#); and who, more recently, until July 2023 was its Christian trustee, I am calling on all Baptist Christians to make urgent representations to the government.

Please sign [this petition](#) in support of continued government funding for the Inter Faith Network's vital work.

From their beginnings onward, Baptist Christians have supported religious freedom as something that is theologically mandated. [The Baptist Inter Faith Working Group](#) of which I am also a member, is itself a member body of the Network and has actively contributed to, and benefited from, the work of the Network.

The Inter Faith Network has on a national level acted as an inclusive forum for engagement on the part of the UK's diverse religious communities and traditions, both with a whole range of government departments and with public life more broadly.

Locally and regionally, the Network has been of particular help as a focus for exchange of good practice to local inter-faith groups, many of which have testified to the importance of the Network's practical advice and support in bringing their vital, but often relatively fragile, local work into being.

Since 2009 it has developed and promoted an annual [Inter-Faith Week](#), which has encouraged and resourced diverse bodies, including local church

congregations such as my own at Broadway Baptist Church in Derby, to make some focus on matters of inter-faith relations and dialogue.

Before I completed my last term of office as a Network Trustee, I was greatly reassured to learn that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had, subject to the Network's submission of a work plan (subsequently submitted), decided to continue its funding of the Network for the financial year 2023-24.

However, it seems that as late as six months following the Department's in principle positive funding decision, the Secretary of State, Michael Gove MP, is now apparently "minded" to withdraw funding from the Network. Mr Gove expressed this intention in a letter on 19 January.

In the light of this the Network's Trustees have decided that, unless this funding is restored or similar funding secured, there will be no other option than to close the Network.

More details can be found in this [Religion Media Network video briefing](#), which describes the IFN's impending closure as 'devastating' and 'outrageous'.

The Network's [own special issue newsletter](#) also contains background to the decision, and details the 'hugely damaging' effect on the charity.

The Secretary of State's newly articulated position seems to be informed by a concern that the Muslim Council of Britain (in relation to which the government has a policy of

no direct engagement, even though it is the largest representational body of Muslim organisations in the UK) is a member of the Network, and that one of the MCB's officers is a Network Trustee.

However, the MCB's longstanding membership of the Network has never previously been raised by this or any other government as a potential barrier to government funding, and the MCB is neither a proscribed organisation, nor has it been found guilty of any illegal activities.

Therefore, in addition to its likely highly detrimental impact on UK inter-faith relations at precisely a time when its expertise and experience is very much needed, the timing, manner and substance of Michael Gove's intervention could, at the very least, be perceived as an attempt politically to interfere in the governance of a charitable organisation, the aims, objectives and effectiveness of which require it to engage with all faith community bodies which operate within the law. The IFN Board meets on Thursday 22 February to make a final decision on closure.

**Time is of the essence - please consider signing the petition 'Urge Michael Gove to maintain funding for the Interfaith Network for the UK!' [here](#).**

**Paul Weller is a Non-Stipendiary Research Fellow in Religion and Society, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford and member of Broadway Baptist Church, Derby.**

**He is a member of the Baptists Together Inter Faith Working Group**

For more information from Baptist Times click [HERE](#)

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