



Staple Hill

Local ... Lively ... Loving



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Great Bible Best Bits

Natalie Parkes' best bit from the Bible is found in [John 9:1-12](#) where Jesus heals a man born blind.

As a much younger man, I was diagnosed with a rare and progressive eye condition ... for a while it was a very real possibility that I might end up losing the sight in one eye. Fortunately, that condition has remained dormant since and hasn't caused me much of a problem other than some double vision (a good excuse for all the wrong notes I play in the band). My sight is so precious to me that I can't even imagine how it would feel to have been born without any. Jesus, on the other hand, understands all things and freely restored this man's sight. However, this miracle started out as a theological question from the disciples – "Who sinned...this man or his parents?" It seems a nonsense question today, but that just illustrates how much Jesus changed the way people think – then and for all time. Within this passage, Jesus said: *"While I am in the world, I am the light of the world"* [John 9v5](#) – and he is still illuminating us with his light and teaching today!



Paul Heath

Do you have a Bible Best Bit you would like to share? Either email: contactstaplehill@gmail.com or phone/text Nicola or Colin.

WEEKLY PROGRAMME:

All activities in our buildings are currently suspended in line with government advice in the fight against the corona virus.

FLOWERS TODAY:

In more normal times, we would have been blessed by two sets of flowers on our Altar table today. The first set would have been from Viv to mark 10 years since Allen's promotion to glory, and the second set from Rita to mark the 1st anniversary since the passing of Harry. Our thoughts are with you this week.

HELPING THE COMMUNITY:



If you happen to pass the hall this week, you may notice something different - a new banner across the entrance to signpost the opening times for our emergency foodbank.



In addition to the provision of food parcels for those in greatest need, the Corps has also reached out to a number of the care homes in the local area ... Gwendoline, Deerhurst and Avonmere – where we have delivered approximately 120 small thank you gifts to care workers acknowledging the frontline work that they are doing in the community at the moment.



WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

50 people are now meeting regularly each week in an Extra Slice Group and it's proving to be a great opportunity to see each other, have a chat and learn a little bit more about the Great Bible Best Bits. We're into week 4 now and more people are joining each week. Each group has about 10 people so you're able to get a word in edgeways! Equally it's perfectly OK if you just listen to everyone else too! You don't need to be brilliant at technology you just need a smart phone, tablet or computer. Each group only lasts for about an hour so it's easy to fit into your schedule - so what are you waiting for? Give Colin or Nicola a call if you want to know more or follow the instructions on the email that this bulletin came on.

Tash has also been running some brilliant Zoom groups for youth, Laura has become a 'CBBC' presenter going online with Lighthouse Club for the children and Primary children have been receiving sheets in their weekly mailing from Margaret. All of these are exciting new ways of doing church - so if you're not taking part, what are you waiting for?

COFFEE AFTER THE MEETING:

Wouldn't it be great to meet for coffee after the meeting on Sunday? Well this week we're going to do that, via a computer screen. It might be complete chaos, but we'll give it a go - just bring your own coffee! Please see the details on the email and give Colin or Nicola a call if you want to know more.

CHRISTIAN WEBINARS:

An on-line Christian conference on urban mission took place this week, organised by the Eden Network called 'Proximity 2020'.

Their introduction reads: *"If you love where you live and want to show Jesus' love to those you meet you're in the right place. We're going to spend a day together being equipped for urban mission, and encouraged to discover what Jesus' call to 'Come Follow Me' means for us."*

There are 3 seminars:

- Following through a crisis
- Following Christ
- Following in Community



All 3 seminars are available on YouTube at :

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8ITKUCyagIge3b5N-GRKTndvd SvIPTu>

PRAYER NETWORK: staplehillprayers@gmail.com

During this past week, we have been praying for:

- Julie Phillips whose husband passed away
- Louise and her family, whose two week old granddaughter passed away
- Moira and Terry Nielsen. Terry, in a Care Home, has been diagnosed with a kidney infection
- Pat and Arnold's grandson's friend whose baby is dangerously ill in Hospital and Pat's uncle who is undergoing surgery on Monday and worried about leaving his wife on her own.

MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND!

As we can all appreciate ... in addition to my [Gary Matthews] hair getting longer, things have changed so much over the last 8 weeks. Life as the Corps Treasurer has become even more challenging!

We continue to do the Corps finances remotely with emails, texts, phone calls and via communication with our regional finance department (who are also working from home). So where are we and how are we doing?

As you can imagine with the Corps being closed, finances are down. I have put together a short report below which you may like to give some thought to?

Looking at the different sections we have: Senior Band, YP Band, Worship Band, Songsters, Singing company, YP Corps, Youth Fellowship and the weekly clubs such as Baby Song, Parents & Toddlers, Lunch Club, Coffee Morning, Friday Club, Friendship Club, Rainbows, Gardening Club, Meet & Greet, & CAMEO, As these sections are not meeting they also are not having any expenditure so finances have become stagnant (apart from section standing order subs). I do not have any major concerns over this in the short term

We are also using less electricity and gas not just because we are not meeting but also because of the time of the year. We had recently (as a cost saving measure) upgraded most of our lighting to LED

There are bills which we still need to pay both for the Hall and Quarters: council tax, utility bills, insurance, salaries and such like. We now also have extra costs for our on-line Sunday services along with the weekly postage of communication to corps folk, both of which is vitally important to keep us together as a church family.

Unfortunately, we are losing finances from the outside organisations that hire our rooms during the week (£700.00 per month) along with the income from our Friday night pub literature visits. Not having Sunday meetings has resulted in losses from the offerings. The open

plate loss is around £350.00 per month, and envelope giving £1087.00 For those who are able to watch the on-line Sunday services you may notice the light-hearted reminder that 'we will now take up the offering' It will make a big difference if those who give with a weekly or monthly envelope still give, and I urge you to continue to save these at home until there is an opportunity to bring them to the hall. With the recent relaxing measures announced by the government and any future announcement we may find a way of collecting/giving these cartridge envelopes. In total, finances are down around £2150.00 per month although I will expect this to be less once I get a fuller picture on our expenditure

As you know we have been encouraging people to set up a standing order for their cartridge offering and 70% of corps members do. This leaves 7% monthly and 23% weekly giving by envelopes. With a large proportion of income by standing order this has proven to be very beneficial to us. If anyone wishes to set up a standing order please email me gary.matthews@salvationarmy.org.uk or leave a telephone message at the hall 0117 9569733 and I will pass on the required form. (Note Due to my work commitments it may be a few days before you hear from me)

As a corps we are financially OK to 'weather the storm' in the short term. What we don't know is how long the current situation will go on for and what affect it will have on the months/years ahead. Will people be comfortable to return to our Sunday meetings, weekly clubs, special events, concerts and Christmas carol services? I do believe people will come back and we will continue to grow and God will be with us, but it will take time.

*Gary Matthews
Corps Treasurer*