

Baptist Assembly 2014

MORE than 1,600 people will be challenged to go further with God at the Baptist Assembly this weekend (10-11 May).

The two-day gathering at the Bethel Convention Centre in West Bromwich will explore how Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus can inspire our worship, understanding and mission today.

'It's easy to put ourselves at the centre of all we do for God – our vision, our service, our mission,' wrote Baptist Union General Secretary Lynn Green and BMS World Mission General

Director David Kerrigan in a joint message for the Assembly handbook.

'Yet Scripture calls us to see God at the heart of everything, to make sure that our picture of God is big enough, that our experience of grace is deep enough and that our understanding of the Holy Spirit's work is wide enough.

'It begins and ends in worship – but in between the journey takes us to the hidden depths of our hearts and the furthest reaches of God's world.

'As we reach higher, we are empowered to dig deeper and

inspired to go further with God.'

The first session on Sunday morning is dedicated to mission, and will be an opportunity to explore our part in God's mission together.



The following session, entitled Your Deepest Longing, has a major focus on prayer.

Chris Ellis, who will become President of our Baptist Union at the Assembly, will preach on Ephesians 3:14-21 on Saturday morning, the particular section of scripture which inspired the Assembly theme Higher, Deeper, Wider.

The Saturday evening address will be given by Jack Sara, President of Bethlehem Bible College. Jack works extensively in the areas of peace and reconciliation. Saturday evening will also include the recognition

of ministers transferred to the accredited list and the valediction of mission personnel. Communion will take place on Sunday afternoon, led by Lynn.

There will be a diversity of worship, as well as poetry, art and drama to help encounter God afresh.

Once again the children's programme B:ace is being run by Arise Ministries, for children from three months to Year 6. Viza-Viz Ministries will lead the young people's programme Innovation, in Warley Baptist

Church.

'We hope that you will have a refreshing weekend, and that you will return to your church fired up with a new determination to serve God as part of this amazing Baptist movement,' added Lynn and David.

Follow the Baptist Assembly on Twitter through the hashtag #bapt14

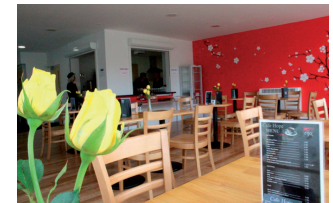
Regular updates will also be published in *The Baptist Times* (www.baptisttimes.co.uk) and on the Baptist Assembly Facebook page

New Baptist café brings hope to the Aintree community

A BAPTIST church has opened a new café in a former school as it seeks to bless its community.

The Hope Café has been created by Old Roan Baptist Church in Aintree, Merseyside. It's the latest phase in the development of the former Holy Rosary Infant School building since it was purchased by the church and called the Hope Centre.

For now the café is open three days a week and is staffed by 20 volunteers from the fellowship, all of whom completed a health and



hygiene course. It is hoped it will open throughout the week.

The café serves freshly made food and barista-style drinks, and aims to provide 'an oasis in a

hectic life', said pastor John Kearns.

Apart from providing a valuable eating and meeting place during the day, it will be used during some evenings for running courses for the community, including the Marriage Course, Divorce and Separation Recovery Course and Alpha.

The new facilities will also let the church offer more to groups such as the Parents & Tots, who have increased their sessions because of the rising numbers. In addition a regular Alzheimer's reading group takes place in the Hope Centre, alongside an exercise/painting group for stroke sufferers, counselling for MS sufferers and Reach counselling. A 'café church' for young people will be held there, and the fellowship is also part of the local foodbank.

Mayor of Sefton, Cllr Maureen Fearn, joined invited guests to open officially the newly



refurbished building on 26 April.

John said, 'At the Hope Centre we intend to be more than just an anonymous building in Aintree Lane, because we want to bless the local community in as many ways as we are able.

'We want the facilities we provide to be relevant and supportive to our community, particularly as it has been identified that there is a lack of vital services in the local area.'

He added, 'This has been our vision for many years and thanks to the help and support of organisations such as The Veolia Environmental Trust, this vision can now become a reality.'

80 years a church member

RAMSAY MacDonald was still Prime Minister and Fred Perry about to win Wimbledon when Irene Burdett became a member of South Bank Baptist Church.

In a remarkable feat of longevity, service and loyalty, Irene celebrated the 80th anniversary of that membership last weekend.

Irene officially joined the Middlesbrough church on 6 May

1934, a few weeks after being baptised aged 14.

Now 94, she attends almost every Sunday with daughter Doris, and last weekend was no different with members sharing tea and cake with her following the service.

'It's a staggering amount of time,' said minister Jon Edwards.

'This has always been her church: she has remained in the

area and there has been no break.

'She has always played a full and active role: women's fellowship, Sunday School teacher and more. Everybody knows her, and she is always pleased to see people. She always has a smile on her face, and whenever someone talks about her, they smile.

'She is absolutely the heartbeat of the church.'

Pioneer research centre launches

A NEW Baptist-led training and research centre into pioneering mission has launched.

The initiative, called *Urban Life: Networking for Mission in Marginal Places*, brings together the church-planting agency Urban Expression in partnership with Bristol Baptist College, BMS World Mission and the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB). The latter has provided the funding for the first five years of the initiative.

It will focus on delivering training and developing capacity for 'innovative and pioneering approaches to ministry and mission in marginalised and deprived places', said Urban Expression founder and Bristol tutor Stuart Murray Williams.

This will be delivered to groups and teams in their own contexts so that 'whole teams can learn together and their learning journey will be tailored to their own local situation,' he added.

Urban Life will provide courses for colleges at degree and masters levels with the intention of encouraging stronger missional approaches to training. PhD students who have a vision for researching key areas in relation to urban mission will also be recruited.



Two free webinars

To celebrate the launch of *Urban Life*, two free webinars exploring the theme of mission in marginal places have been organised:

21 May
Mission in Marginal Places:
engaging with power

10 June
Researching Neighbourhoods:
practical tools for a prophetic
community

Each webinar starts at
7.30pm and lasts 60 minutes.

To register, email Stuart
Murray Williams at stuart@murraywilliams.co.uk and you
will be given details of how to
access them

For more on *Urban Life*,
contact Mike at mikepears@hotmail.co.uk

Mike Pears, an accredited Baptist minister and member of an Urban Expression team in Bristol, will be responsible for facilitating Urban Life.

The new centre has been welcomed by General Secretary Lynn Green, who said, 'When I came into my post I said we needed an explosion of pioneers.'

'We are delighted to be supporting this centre, which will help equip those already in pioneering situations and would-be pioneers looking to explore a call to mission in the most marginalised communities.'

To celebrate the launch of *Urban Life*, two free webinars – web seminars – exploring the theme of mission in marginal places have been organised, both led by Mike (see inset).

This first on 21 May will explore key questions related to the stigmatisation of 'problem estates'. What is marginalisation? What does mission look like in marginal places?

The second on 10 June will introduce some practical tools for researching neighbourhoods. Getting to know our neighbourhood more deeply will challenge us in unexpected ways, and open our eyes to what Jesus is doing around us.

'Pray for Ukraine'

BAPTISTS have been encouraged to pray about the worsening situation in Ukraine.

Ukraine happens to be the focus of the European Baptist Federation (EBF) prayer calendar this week, and in an email to colleagues across Europe, General Secretary Tony Peck made a request to 'surround Ukraine and its Baptists in prayer that the conflict and violence may cease and the Lord will lead this nation forward in the ways of righteousness and peace.'

He wrote, 'The Baptist Union of Ukraine is almost our largest member Union in the EBF. We know that our brothers and sisters in Christ are standing for peace and reconciliation in the midst of a conflict which seems to be becoming more and more entrenched and bitter.'

'We know too that Russian and Ukrainian Baptist leaders have met one another and stood together as brothers in Christ looking to Him for a peaceful way forward for the Ukrainian nation.'

'And we are aware that some Ukrainian Baptists are directly involved in the government at this time, especially the Acting State President Olesksandr Turchinov.'

'So I write to ask you in your Unions and churches to have a special focus of prayer for Ukraine this week, and for the witness of the Baptist churches in this crisis.'

Specific prayer requests can be found at www.ebf.org

Let's talk about worship

A NEW resource suitable for home groups or individual study has been produced to accompany the presidential year of Chris Ellis.

Called *Let's Talk About Worship*, it features eight short films of Chris in conversation with fellow Baptist pastor Ruth Rice, discussing a variety of aspects relating to our worship of God.

Each clip is accompanied by

Bible passages and a series of open-ended questions to help delve into some of the points raised. 'We worship a big God who wants to stretch and deepen our faith,' Chris said. 'I'm delighted with this resource which I pray will stimulate and bless local churches.'

Let's Talk About Worship is free and available at www.baptist.org.uk/ltaw

The Baptist Times Weekly Round-up is produced each week. Subscribers are alerted by an email to an online and printable option. To subscribe or download visit www.baptist.org.uk/roundup

We also want to hear your stories! Email phobson@baptist.org.uk

JOBS

Chaplain for South Lincolnshire, Lincolnshire Chaplaincy Services Chaplains, RAF Development/Projects Manager, Quiet Garden Trust Youth Worker, Ampthill Baptist Church

For more details visit: www.baptist.org.uk/jobs

BAPTISMS

Attleborough Baptist Church, Nuneaton: Laura Turnbull	1
Battle Baptist Church, Battle, East Sussex: Tim Nunn, Katie Walsh, Ben Collyer, Brian and Rosemary Corner	5
Borehamwood Baptist Church, Hertfordshire: Gladys Quansah	1
East Barnet Baptist Church, London: Jessica Years, Rebecca Srikumaran, Nikita Smith, Isaaq Mohamed	4
Eastleigh Baptist Church, Hampshire: Richard Hicks	1
Horley Baptist Church, Surrey: Chloe Witherden	1
Rayners Lane Baptist Church, Harrow, Middlesex: Chloe Davis	1
Sardis Baptist Church, Resolven: Daniel Jervis	1
Tabernacle Baptist Church Penarth: Veronica Charles; Kenneth Briggs; Matthew Hall	3
Tabernacle Baptist Church, Wolverhampton: Chaoxue Cao, Rachael Birch, Arshang Jahedi, Thelma Dunlop	4
Tanterton Christian Fellowship, Preston: Colin Baker, Yolanda Baker, Sharn-Claire Baker, Petula Provost, James Duncan, Philip Marriott, Brenda Marriott	7
West Wickham and Shirley Baptist Church, Croydon: Georgette Green, Kurtis Justin	2
Yardley Wood Baptist Church, Birmingham: John Bauckham and Anthony Briggs	2

Send notifications of baptisms, ministerial changes, deaths and testimonies to phobson@baptist.org.uk

From the www. baptisttimes.co.uk

Recent stories and comment pieces on *The Baptist Times* website

> We need God time, not me time: 21st century Britain is all about me, me, me. But surely

God deserves our time and love more than we do?

<http://bit.ly/1YuiOP>

> Christian Vision for Men (CVM) and the Baptist Men's Movement (BMM) have announced that they are covenanting together to introduce men to Jesus Christ across the UK

<http://bit.ly/1fPtdsv>

> Helping you run a successful foodbank: Baptist Insurance highlights its guidance notes on running a safe and successful foodbank

<http://bit.ly/1o6FCuD>

> The Evangelical Alliance discontinues the membership of the Oasis Trust

<http://bit.ly/1IOLEJW>