



## ***Update: June 2020***

Dear Friends

Welcome to this month's Update full of news and resources for your church.

We have all been very aware of the disturbing and heartbreaking situation in the USA over the past week, beginning with the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, which has been indicative of deep-rooted injustices across our world. Please take time to read the [response from our General Secretary Lynn Green](#) along with some further reflections from Baptists. In addition, [two prayers of lament](#) have been written and can be shared widely.

Lynn calls us to 'seize this moment and take some giant leaps forward in terms of becoming the kind of Kingdom Movement that God is calling us towards' and so we commend to you the [new 'Just Aware' training](#) resource which aims to raise awareness of prejudice, discrimination, racism and its debilitating impact on the people with whom we live and work. We are hoping to pilot this online in the next few weeks and then it can be delivered on request to groups/churches around the country. Details will be published on the website shortly.

Diane, Hilary, Jane, Mary, Mat, Mike, Paul, Steve and Wale  
*Faith and Society Team*

### **This month's featured stories:**



**Pentecost 20: From mass gathering in Caversham to mass gathering online**



**Wellspring Church's alternative to the town's cancelled May carnival**



**What will your church look like after the pandemic is over? - by Darren Blaney**

## News:



### Yinka Oyekan - Baptist Union President 2020-21

Our new President, Yinka Oyekan, **took office on 10 May during our regular online prayer broadcast**, due to the cancellation of Assembly during the Coronavirus. The theme for his year as President is 'How do we grow from here?' following on from Ken Benjamin's theme last year. Find out more on the [How do we grow from here? website](#).



### Domestic Abuse Bill 2020

Covid-19 has highlighted the need for an improved response to ensure all domestic abuse survivors are supported and protected. The domestic abuse bill, due to go to a public bill committee this week, is an opportunity to ensure this. But there are several amendments that many domestic charities have been calling for to ensure that the bill supports and protects all survivors. Our Joint Public Issues Team is asking people to write to the MPs on the bill committee, to ask them to consider these changes. Click here to read the [blog launching this action](#) for details, and use the [template letter](#) to send to the MPs on the Bill Committee.



### Racial Injustice Highlighted by COVID-19

People from ethnic minority backgrounds in the UK have been disproportionately dying from Coronavirus. This stark inequality must be addressed. [Read the blog from Rosella Payne](#), the Joint Public Issues Team / House of Commons Intern for 2019/20.



### The Cinnamon Network Project Lab competition

A national competition is seeking to find ambitious church-based social action projects that are supporting local people with housing needs and building community. The Cinnamon Network Project Lab competition aims to find best practice initiatives - and help other churches to replicate them. [Find out more here](#).



### Coronavirus, Church and You

Could you contribute new research exploring responses to the Covid-19 pandemic among UK churchgoers? The research is being conducted by York St John University. Completing the survey will take 20-30mins. [Read an introduction to the research](#) and click here [to access the survey](#).



### New leadership team for Parish Nursing Ministries UK

Since its founding January 2004, there are now nearly 100 trained Parish Nurses working in a growing number of churches or Christian organisations in England, Wales and Scotland. Sue Bretherick and Anne Taylor have been appointed to the leadership team following the retirement of Dr Ros Moore and Helen Wordsworth at the end of April. They hope that parish nursing can reach even more communities to build on what has already been developed. [Find out more here](#).

## This month's featured resources:



### June Prayer Diary

The [June Prayer Diary](#) is now available to download from our website. The particular themes this month are:

- Environment Sunday
- Refugee Week
- Support Services Specialist Team
- Northern Baptist Association

Please print out a copy for those unable to access it.



## Coronavirus Guidance and Resources

*Our website contains a lot of information and guidance for churches as we all adjust to a 'new normal' during this coronavirus pandemic.*

We have collated some 'good practice guidelines' with the latest information and advice for churches. This includes guidance on legal issues for churches, advice for ministers, church treasurers, the new guide for employers, and information about safeguarding concerns. We are updating this area as regulations are changed. There are also resources for prayer and details of our regular webinars.

[Click here for this area of our website.](#)



## Stay and Pray

Our Joint Public Issues Team has launched Stay and Pray - pointing people towards different issues - local, national and global - that they want to encourage us to pray for. This will particularly highlight vulnerable and marginalised groups during the Coronavirus crisis.

Click here to [find out more and sign up for the daily email.](#)



## Table Talk for Lockdown

For most of us life has changed quite dramatically, in a very short space of time. It's important to take time to process what has happened, and listen to each other's experiences and struggles. The Ugly Duckling Co has made the new 'Table Talk for Lockdown' available free of charge from its website. You can use the questions to have these conversations with your friends and family, and use the links to share the questions on social media. [Click here for details.](#)



## A time to say goodbye

Castle Hill Baptist Church is aiming to provide an opportunity for people who have lost loved ones during the lockdown and have not been able to attend a funeral service to participate in a service where their family members are remembered. [Details are on the church website.](#)



## Church after Lockdown

Now that we are moving towards coming out of lockdown, Pinner Baptist Church, in partnership with LBA and Baptists Together, has prepared a simple resource based around 14 questions churches can use to prompt reflection and discussion in leadership meetings around what God is saying, what to change, what new priorities to step into.

[The resource can be downloaded and shared.](#) We hope it will be useful to church leaders as we all set aside time to have prayerful discussion and seek God's will for the days ahead.



## Two's Company

This new telephone befriending project, from Christian charity Linking Lives UK, enables local churches to reach those particularly impacted by self-isolation. It provides a tried, tested, straightforward and safe process for local churches to ensure that people within their local communities, who are particularly at risk at this time, can receive regular telephone contact from a member of their congregation - providing a real lifeline for those who are on their own.

[Click here for more information.](#)





## Everybody Welcome to the Future

There are a lot of new online churchgoers and this new document suggests how to welcome people into church and faith today, and how to plan for a mixed in-person-online church future. Lockdown and online give us a unique opportunity to re-think and re-grow our churches. Will we take the enormous opportunity we have been given? Click here [for more information and to download](#) the resource, along with the earlier [Everybody Welcome Online](#) resource published in April.



## “Lean on me”, says God

Poet Lucy Berry has written this new song of comfort for times of trouble. It is available (copyright-free) as a video, along with the lyrics, and [can be viewed on Youtube](#).



## Equipped to Heal

This new podcast from Alastair Mitchell-Baker, elder at The Gate in Reading and moderator of trustees for the Baptist Union of Great Britain, explores Christian healing through sharing stories and answering questions. He is aiming to encourage people to learn more about how we can follow Jesus in the healing ministry, through a wide range of views and perspectives from across the Baptist family and other streams. [Click here to listen to the podcasts](#).



## Faith in Politics Podcast

The latest episode of the Joint Public Issues Team podcast is now available. This month the team is discussing the impact of COVID-19 on rough sleeping and homelessness in the present and on future policies. Interviews with Baroness Hilary Armstrong and David Smith, the director of an Oasis Community Housing Project in Newcastle. [Click here to listen](#).



## Blogs from the Seventy-Two Network

The Seventy-Two Network has published a series of blogs on their website from Southern Counties Baptist Association Regional Minister Joth Hunt. [A Journey in Missional Leadership](#) shares a series of articles in which he reflects on over 25 years of ministry. They also share a series of video blogs entitled [Marks of a Growing Church](#). In these, Alex Harris from Firestarters shares the seven marks of growing Baptist churches he's identified through his experience in Church ministry.



## DNA - a Christian 'gap year' for all ages

DNA recently launched a 3 month online version of DNA called DNA:Lite (in addition to its year-long programme). They hope that in the current climate this will be a resource that will really bless and serve the church. Click here to [find out more about DNA:Lite](#). Due to the current government restrictions DNA's 'taster days' are being held online rather than face to face - click here to [register for a taster day](#).



## Visual Reflections

We regularly post visual reflections on our [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts. These high quality images can be used for personal reflection and in churches, with our blessing. Click here to [find the current selection of images on our Flickr account](#).

## This month's featured online events:



### Baptists Together Prayer Broadcasts - 7pm Wed/Sunday

Since the coronavirus restrictions came into force, we have been offering an online time of prayer led by our General Secretary Lynn Green and other guests. These are being held every Wednesday and Sunday evening at 7pm. [Please use the link www.baptist.org.uk/prayerbroadcasts](http://www.baptist.org.uk/prayerbroadcasts) to publicise these prayer broadcasts to your church family. Previous broadcasts are also available to watch from the same page on our website.



### Baptists Together Webinars - 1pm Wednesdays

The last few weeks have seen enormous changes to the life of local church communities. We are therefore offering some webinars each week which we hope will be helpful to you. These will be covering a range of practical and more reflective topics. To find the forthcoming schedule of topics, links to join the webinar and recordings of previous ones, please use the link [www.baptist.org.uk/coronawebinars](http://www.baptist.org.uk/coronawebinars)



### Helping the Grieving during the Pandemic - Wednesday 3 June

How do we support those facing loss of loved ones, jobs, and security when meeting them is difficult? Pete English from At A Loss, and Vania John-Baptiste, Baptist minister and bereavement counsellor explored the ways we can support the many who are facing bereavement and loss in all its forms. Click here [to listen to the recording of this webinar](#).



### Leadership Insights - 7.30pm Tuesdays

Firestarters are hosting a new webinar called Leadership Insights fortnightly on Tuesday evenings for 45 minutes. These sessions are a great opportunity to invest in your own leadership development and that of your church leadership team. The [talks will be given over Zoom](#), are short, free and will include an opportunity for questions. On 9 June listen to Anne Calver, a Baptist minister, author, speaker and part of the Spring Harvest planning group. On 23 June listen to Lynn Green, Baptist Union General Secretary. More speakers are planned in July and August.



### Tax Justice Sunday online service - 14 June

This 30 minute video is a self-contained online church service that is focussed on the issue of tax justice. It can be used on Tax Justice Sunday or on any Sunday. It has been produced by Church Action for Tax Justice and is made available for free. [Click here to view on YouTube](#).



### Refugee Week - 15-21 June

Refugee Week is an annual festival celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees. Its first ever virtual edition is an invitation to connect across borders and distance, and, together, imagine a different world. Click here to find out more about the [six ways you can get involved](#).



### Beyond Church - Doing Life - Being Christ - Tuesday 16 June

The Mission Core Group of the European Baptist Federation is hosting the last of its three webinars, led by Ali Boulton. The webinars have explored being church in the current pandemic, and this one focuses on 'Being Christ'. Click here for [more information and to register](#) for the webinar.



### Churches' Refugee Network Webinar - 7pm Wed 17 June

This one-hour *Asylum and Refugee Matters in Europe in the Realm of Covid-19* webinar being chaired by The Rt Revd Dr John Perumbalath, Bishop of Bradwell, the newly appointed Chair of CRN, will give you an opportunity to find out more about how the COVID-19 crisis is impacting refugees and asylum seekers across Europe. Join us, as we explore what is happening in Calais and northern France; Lampedusa and Sicily in Italy, and what churches are doing to address this crisis across the continent. Click here [to register your attendance](#).



### A Day to Stop, Look and Listen - Thursday 25 June from 10.00-15.00

In these extraordinary times, 'A Day to Stop, Look and Listen' is an invitation to do just that in the presence of God. Guided by Geoff Colmer and Beth Powney, the day will consist of mainly one-hour sessions with a break for lunch. Each session will begin with an introduction and some guidance for about 10-15 minutes, and then time to reflect and pray as you choose. You're welcome to attend the whole day or just a part. You will find it helpful to have a Bible and a notebook. [Click here to take part in the day](#).