



Update: January 2022

Dear Friends

Happy New Year!

At the start of a New Year you will have heard many reflections about the year ahead and new beginnings; you may even have given some yourself. Our prayer for you at the start of 2022 is that you will be strengthened by God's Spirit in all you hope to be, that you will be filled with the knowledge of God's love and that you experience the peace God the Son has brought to us.

The theme of journeying is present throughout the Biblical narrative with many accounts of different journeys being taken. This is very much the case in the account of Jesus' life as he both led and leads others. As we step forward on the journey set before us, we are confident that we go with Christ. We are reminded in Matthew 11 that as we journey together we are invited to be yoked to Christ, 'for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls.'

We hope that the resources we share in this update will provide a little help with the journey you are taking with God in 2022.

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

This month's featured stories:



Review of the year 2021 - highlighting the most clicked pieces in The Baptist Times last year



This is what the jumper is telling the world, we all BELIEVE! Why a number of Baptist ministers wore the M&S jumper



Live out the gospel message during Shipley Baptist Church's covenant service - with a new song based on Romans 10:14

News:



Election for President - 2023-24

Nominations for the President of the Baptist Union 2023-24 have now closed. Details of those who have been nominated will be sent to every church and minister before the end of January. We would like as many as possible to be involved with the process of discernment, so please look out for this email, and share the profile with your Church Meeting. Voting this year will primarily be online and will be open until 31 March.



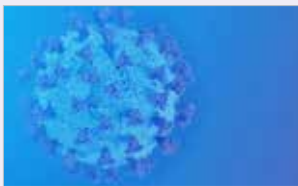
Coming back together... Baptist Assembly 2022

On 14-15 May we will be gathering in person at Bournemouth to hear what God is saying to us as a movement with many creative connecting and conversation spaces. Following the huge success of our online Assembly last year we will also be broadcasting live our main sessions on YouTube. **Pre-register today you will receive a discount code before tickets go on sale** later in January.



Baptists Together magazine and Transform

The Spring 2022 edition of *Baptists Together* magazine - 'Is it time for a new song?' and *Transform 60* will be sent to all ministers, church secretaries and treasurers in mid-January. Please look out for the mailing and share the stories and information with your church. As usual, these resources will also be available to **download from our website** later in the month, and additional copies are available to **order from our online shop**.



Coronavirus Guidance

We continue to monitor the Government guidance and statements and update our guidance when necessary. **Please keep checking our website for the latest information.**



Annual Returns process and Church Update

The Annual Returns process is now open and will be **available until 31 January**, so that Church Secretaries can provide us with the latest contact details and statistics for our churches. Thank you to all the Church Secretaries who have already completed their Return, and who maintain their records using the Church Update system throughout the year. Click here for **details about the Annual Returns process**.



Association for Church Editors annual Magazine Competition

The search is on for Britain's best church magazine! The Association for Church Editors organises an annual national competition for church magazine editors and for 2022 they are asking for A5 magazines printed in colour (even just on the cover). The closing date for entries is 7 February 2022. **For full details, please see their website.**

This month's featured resources:



January Prayer Diary

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

- Our hopes for the new year
- The Heart of England Baptist Association - HEBA
- The Support Services Specialist Team
- The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- The West of England Baptist Network - Webnet

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



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from 18- 25 January, and the theme for 2022 is 'We Saw His Star in the East'. Materials for the Week have been prepared by the churches of the Middle East with English and bilingual Welsh/English versions available to [download from the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland website](#) now.



Reimagining Mission and Learning in Community course

The International Baptist Theological Study Centre are offering this online course starting in February. In today's world, we experience rapid change, movement, and choice. Social media networks are coming and going, all demanding time and energy. We exist in a worldwide crash of cultures as people move and work, some by choice, others not. This course will discuss relevant questions that arise from the situation in which we find ourselves. [Click here for details and application form.](#)



Wholistic care and wellness

In November 2021, Baptist minister Helen Wordsworth, International Parish nurse consultant, was invited to be guest speaker on a Canadian webinar about the importance of health and wellness ministries in churches. Click here to [listen to the recording of this webinar.](#)



The Good News Bible - Family Edition

This brand new Bible created by Youth for Christ and Bible Society has been designed to get your family engaging with, and experiencing the Bible together. Maybe you aren't an expert on the Bible – but you are THE expert on your family. This Bible is designed to support your engagement in the way that best suits the wonderful uniqueness of your family. [Click here for details.](#)



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 events:



Fresh Streams - 10-12 January

The past season of ministry dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic has had many challenges and many opportunities for local church ministry and we need to encourage leaders who are tired, weary and in need of reconnecting with God. The three days at The Hayes Conference Centre will be just that - times of refreshing as we (re) connect with one other and (re) connect with God, as we spend in his presence. [Click here to find out more and book your place.](#)



Reparations and Economics: What do I get? webinar - Monday 17 January

Organised by the Racial Justice Advocacy Forum and hosted by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, this will be a stimulating conversation focusing on reparations from an economic perspective. Chaired by Alton Bell, our three speakers Priya Lukka, Karen Campbell and Sarah Edwards will explore reparations - discussing everything from trade, aid, development, the banking system and the churches' response. [Click here to register.](#)



Climate Sunday webinar - Thursday 20 January

COP26 may be over, but it will continue to be vital for churches to build on the progress made over the Climate Sunday campaign. Churches are encouraged to continue to deepen their understanding of creation care and climate justice, to continue to take action in their buildings and community for the environment, and to raise their voices to put pressure on the UK government to scale up and follow through on climate commitments made in Glasgow. [Click here for details and to register for the webinar.](#)



Theology Live! - Friday 28 January

For the first time ever, Theology Live! is set to take place as a hybrid onsite and online event, bringing together Baptists engaged in theological and biblical research to share their thinking. The day comprises a series of short papers, reflecting the diversity of current Baptist theological engagement, with opportunities to interact with speakers. [Click here for details and registration.](#)



World Day of Prayer - Friday 4 March

The World Day of Prayer worship service has a special annual theme which is developed by women of a different country each year. The theme for this year's World Day of Prayer is 'I know the plans I have for you' and the service resources have been written by Christian women from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. [Click here for the resources.](#)



Baptist Assembly - 14-15 May

We are busy planning this year's Baptist Assembly in Bournemouth, when our keynote speaker will be Alan Donaldson, General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation. You will also have the opportunity to join some of the sessions online. Save the date, and plan to join us in person, or online. **Pre-register to receive a discount code** before **registration opens in late January.** [Further details are available on the Baptist Assembly website.](#)



Festival of Church Music - Saturday 21 May

In Harmony Free Church Choirs is recruiting choirs and individual singers for the Free Church Choirs Festival of Church Music at Lichfield Cathedral, on the theme of 'Unity'. For further details, including a list of music to be sung, please [see the Free Church Choirs website](#).



Satellites - 9-13 August

Satellites is a new five-day summer gathering designed to inspire teenagers to live with God at the centre of their lives all year round. Organised by Youthscape, it's taking place at the East of England Arena in Peterborough, 9-13 August. Tickets are already on sale - and there's a super saver ticket rate of just £85 as an incentive to book this far in advance. [Click here for more information](#).