



Update: February 2022

Dear Friends

As we enter chilly February perhaps with a long list of tasks facing us, it can be easy to rush around to achieve 'stuff' and get things done. In the busyness of life in February, we offer the resources below and we invite you to step aside for a moment. Maybe grab a cup of tea, and come with us for a moment to stop and listen; listen to God and to the work of the Kingdom in many spaces across our country.

Listening is so important to us as a Team and this year we want to make sure we take time to listen and be attentive to some of your challenges and joys as you serve God in so many different contexts. We very much enjoy hearing the stories of God's restoration and love in surprising ways. We are also listening carefully to the pain and sadness of people, nation and creation. We are learning to listen.

So often we read in the Gospel accounts of Jesus stepping aside to listen to God and teaching us to do the same. We have been thinking about one story in particular as Jesus hurried along the road to Jairus' house whose daughter was so seriously ill. There seemed to be no time to wait. However, Jesus stopped, turned his attention to a woman whose bleeding had been unremitting for 12 years; a woman who had been rejected by society, a woman to whom no one was listening. And yet, Jesus stopped, and in the midst of the crowd and the rush he listened to the cry of her heart, she was heard and Jesus restored her.

Listening is such a privilege. Walking and listening to God in our communities is rich and rewarding and so we offer you these resources to help as you seek to listen.

One of the resources focuses on the Queen's 70th Jubilee. Many of our communities will take time this summer to join a wider conversation and listen. This provides many opportunities and HOPE have produced some resources and ideas you may find useful. Please do let us know if there are other thoughts, reflections and ideas you and your church might have as you engage with this moment.

We would also like to draw to your attention the opening of the booking for this year's Baptist Assembly. We are hoping and praying that this is a time of blessing for many across our Baptist movement. We are encouraging us all to talk and connect together and to listen well to each other. It would be lovely to see you in Bournemouth or perhaps online if you are able to join with some of the sessions.

Our prayer this February is that God would bless us richly as we listen to each other and as we hold each other in the love of God that knows no bounds.

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

This month's featured stories:



**'It really has been life changing'-
Introducing Kids Matter, which
engages local churches to equip
parents and carers**



**Learning from the last two years
- what we have learned during
this difficult time, reflecting on
what it means to be church**



**The Revd Carol McCarthy:
1940-2021 - one of the
pioneering women called into
Baptist ministry in the 1960s**

News:



Election for President - 2023-24

Following the nomination process at the end of 2021, we have received one nomination for the President of the Baptist Union 2023-24, that of Tim Presswood. Details have been sent to every church and minister by email where possible, along with details of how to vote. Please share Tim's profile with your Church Meeting so that as many as possible can be involved with the process of discernment. Voting this year will primarily be online and will be open **until 31 March**. As part of the discernment process, we will be interviewing Tim and will make this interview available on our website. If you would like to submit a question to be asked during the interview, please do **contact us by emailing faithandsociety@baptist.org.uk by Wednesday 9 February**. All questions will be considered, but we cannot guarantee that all questions will be used.



Booking now open... 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. **Book your place, or register to join us online now.** *[If you pre-registered, or are a NAM or MIT, you have been sent a separate email with details on how to book.]*



Nationality and Borders Bill

The Joint Public Issues Team have written an open letter to the Prime Minister from faith leaders addressing some deep concerns about the Nationality & Borders Bill. The Bill has provoked widespread criticism from those who want to see the UK become a more hospitable place to some of the most vulnerable people in the world. If you consider yourself a faith leader, **please read and consider signing the letter** – and please do share it with other faith leaders (though not on open social media pages at this stage).



MA Mission Prize 2022 launched

Churches Together in England (CTE) has launched this year's MA Prize for the best thesis around the themes of mission, evangelism and church planting in the UK context. The prize consists of a £100 cash gift and an opportunity for the MA to appear in an edited format (6,000 words) in the journal Ecclesial Futures, published by Wipf and Stock. **Click here for details about how to apply.**



Universal Periodic Review - Freedom of Religion or Belief

The European Baptist Federation, supported by Baptists Together and in conjunction with the Baptist World Alliance, is intending to submit a report into the UN's Universal Periodic Review process, which reviews the human rights record of a member state. We are looking for people with an interest in issues of freedom of religion or belief to comment on the proposals of topics for inclusion in the report. Click here [for more information](#).



WCC Assembly Stewards

The World Council of Churches (WCC) invites ecumenical youth to be stewards at the 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 2022. The Stewards Programme aims to bring together a dynamic and diverse group of 160 young people from all over the world, from 21 August to 10 September 2022. It includes on-site ecumenical formation, participation in the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Young People, and work at the 11th Assembly. The WCC looks for young people capable of integrating their experience back in their local contexts, motivated to multiply the ecumenical enthusiasm, ready to "do ecumenism" locally. [Click here for more information, and to apply.](#)

This month's featured resources:

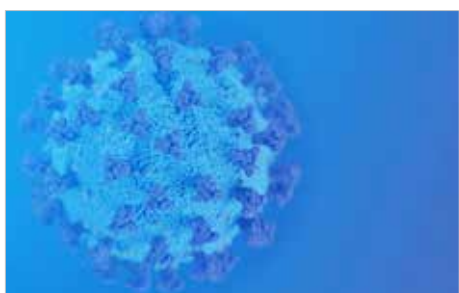


February Prayer Diary

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

- Day of Prayer for BMS World Mission
- Racial Justice Sunday
- London Baptists
- Core Leadership Team

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



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.](#)



The Racial Justice Advocacy Forum

The RJAF is an ecumenical Christian entity that seeks to speak prophetically on behalf of Black and Brown Christians to the government on racial injustice challenges and reparations. In response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report (March 2021), this Forum seeks to make recommendations to help churches begin or continue engaging with racial injustice in the twenty-first century.

[Click here to explore their new website and find out more.](#)



Platinum Jubilee – a celebration of faith and service

Get ready to celebrate the Queen's 70 years of faith and service. Bring your community together. Plan a party. Sing a new anthem. Involve everyone of all ages in 70 acts of service. Give everyone a commemorative gift. Help local schools, youth groups, uniformed organisations and toddler groups to celebrate. And, for the grand finale, invite everyone to a special church service on Pentecost Sunday – the final day of the four day Platinum Jubilee celebration. [Ideas and resources are now available](#) from a partnership facilitated by Hope Together.



Daily Hope Phoneline

Since April 2020, the Church of England, in partnership with Faith in Later Life and Connections at Holy Trinity Claygate has been offering a free telephone line for those who cannot access Church in other ways. The service continues to receive thousands of calls each month. Lisa Hutt (Director of Prayer for Neighbourhood Prayer Network and Hill Cliffe Baptist Church member) has recorded a series of Daily Blessings based on the Psalms and key New Testament passages, for option 3 during the month of February. Please share the telephone number with anyone who might find this helpful: **0800 804 8044**.



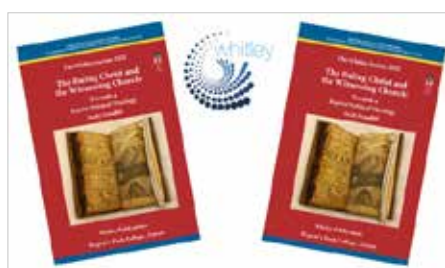
Growing Good

Church Urban Fund has launched *Growing Good* - a free six-session course exploring how churches can be faithful and fruitful in our local communities. You can use the material online or in person, at church or in small groups. In simple steps, *Growing Good* shares ideas and activities that can have an impact beyond the walls of the church and make a difference in your local community. Click here to [find out more about Growing Good](#).



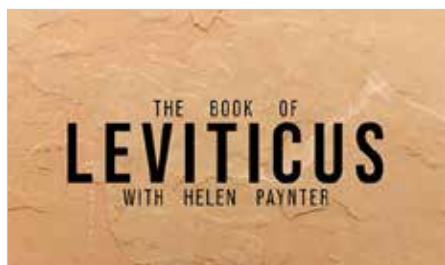
The Passion - Easter show from LAMPS

Reach out and remind your community what Easter is all about with a performance of *The Passion* from Christian theatre company, LAMPS Collective. This powerfully inspiring and accessible production is perfect for outreach and has been touring with great success for the last five years to churches all over the UK. Hear the Easter story afresh from the viewpoints of Simon Peter, Mary Magdalen and a Roman centurion named Marcus in this simply staged production which speaks with enormous power. Click here [for more information and details on how to book the show](#), or email bookings@lampscollective.com



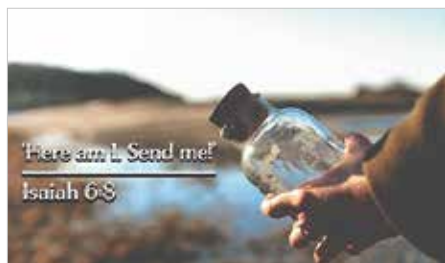
Whitley Lecture 2022

In this year's lecture, Andy Goodliff offers us a crafted exploration of what a Baptist political theology might be. His argument begins with an overview of Nigel Wright's discussion of church and state but soon moves into a powerful reflection upon what it means today to inhabit a dissenting ecclesiology, one which says 'no' to the power of the state and 'yes' to the Lordship of Christ. [Click here for more information](#).



The book of Leviticus with Helen Paynter

In this series of eight videos, Helen Paynter, Baptist minister and tutor of Biblical Studies at Bristol Baptist College will help us navigate through Leviticus - so that when reading the Bible in one year, we don't get stuck and stop. Please [see our YouTube channel](#) to find this helpful series of videos - whether or not you're reading the Bible in a year!



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:



Pioneering woman - Margaret Jarman from Deaconess to Hermit - Thursday 3 February

As part of the 'Opening the Angus' Spring seminars, the Revd Dr Keith Jones (President of the Baptist Historical Society) will be presenting this online seminar in collaboration with Project Violet. To register and receive the Zoom meeting link, please email fota@regents.ox.ac.uk



Hong Kong Covid webinar - Friday 4 February

The Wirral Chinese Christian Church is hosting a webinar about Covid which will be delivered in Mandarin and Cantonese. If you have Chinese and Hong Kong members in your congregation, please [pass on the details to them](#) and encourage them to [sign up to join in](#).



BMS World Mission Day of Prayer - Sunday 6 February

God can do amazing things through our faithful prayers. Join with BMS World Mission in prayer for our world on Sunday. You can pray as a church, in a group, as a family or individually. [Downloadable prayer points to guide you are available](#) from the BMS website.



CIO Online Training Event for BUGB churches (by Zoom) - Wednesday 9 February

This is an opportunity to explore in greater depth the legal structure for charities known as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). It will be of interest to charity trustees who are assessing the risk profile of their church and considering a change to the legal structure of their church, and those considering a CIO as an option for a separate project such as a pre-school or coffee shop. [Book your place by 6 February](#).



Bristol Baptist College Online Open day - Sat 12 February

Bristol Baptist College offers a wide range of courses at all different levels. If you'd like to find out more, and see if there's a course that's right for you, join in their online Open Morning from 10:00-11:30. Click here [for more information and to book your place](#).



Racial Justice Sunday - 13 February

Racial Justice Sunday takes place on 13 February. CTBI have released new resources which ask 'Racial Justice: what's it got to do with me?', and call all churches to remember, reflect and respond. You can download all of the resources, including worship resources, information, ideas and activities. [Click here to access the resources](#).



Building Safer Churches webinar - Thursday 21 February

The Centre for Baptist Studies at Regent's Park College, Oxford is hosting a webinar with Creating Sanctuary to hear about the need and impact of the *Creating Sanctuary* resource designed to journey with churches to create safer spaces for LGBT+ people. Register by emailing christine.joynes@regents.ox.ac.uk



DNA Christian Discipleship and Leadership taster days - February-June

Do you... Dare to dream about your destiny in God? Realise that your dream demands development? Want your life to make a difference? DNA is for EVERYONE; whether for you it is a Christian gap year, sabbatical, education or alongside work and family. Find out more about how DNA can help you at one of their Taster Days. [See their website for details](#).



Parish Nursing: Explore Online - Wednesday 23 February

Join on Zoom to find out about parish nursing, what it is and how it works - with no strings attached. Hosted by Regional Nurse Coordinator Dawn Stephens with input from parish nursing services around the country, explore what parish nursing could offer to your local community. Free hour-long sessions will be hosted at 10:00, 13:00 and 19:00. Just choose a time that is convenient for you and contact enquiries@parishnursing.org.uk for the Zoom link.



Christian Resources Exhibition - 23-24 February

Coming out of the pandemic positively and growing beyond it – that's the agenda for churches at the upcoming Christian Resources Exhibition at Westpoint, Exeter. Fresh resources from more than 100 exhibitors will be available, covering new technology, financial management, fund-raising, safeguarding, cyber security, mission, youth and children's work – all looking to help churches recover from and build beyond the pandemic. Expert advice will be on hand in 40 seminars. Click here [for more information and to book your place](#).



The minister and family life - Thursday 24 February

Project Violet is hosting this theological conversation with speakers Lina Toth, Assistant Principal and Lecturer in Practical Theology, Scottish Baptist College and Beth Allison-Glenny, Chaplain and Fellow in Theology, Regent's Park College, Oxford. Following their discussion, there will be an opportunity for conversation in small groups before hearing about the progress of Project Violet. [Click here for details.](#)



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

[Book your place now](#) to join us in person in Bournemouth or online for this year's Baptist Assembly. We are also encouraging all our churches to join in online for our Sunday worship service when our speaker will be Alan Donaldson, General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation. [Further details are available on the Baptist Assembly website.](#) *[If you pre-registered, or are a NAM or MIT, you have been sent a separate email with details on how to book.]*



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.](#)



From the Ground Up: JPIT Conference - Saturday 11 June

Tickets for JPIT's 2022 conference taking place online and at Oasis Hub Waterloo are now available!

- What does social justice look like where you are?
- Where do we find hope in our neighbourhood?
- What can we learn from those who are already doing this work?
- How can local change be part of changing the bigger picture?

Join this one-day conference to reconnect with fellow changemakers and be re-energised to work and pray for peace and justice.

Want to find out more? [Check out the details and book your space](#)



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.](#)