



## ***Update: March 2022***

Dear Friends

Welcome to this week's Update with news, resources and events.

During this last week, Vladimir Putin's decision to launch an invasion of Ukraine has been met with widespread condemnation and sorrow, as well as renewed calls for prayer. The Joint Public Issues Team has released the following prayer for Ukraine which might help you and your congregation as we pray and seek peace together.

God of all,  
with alarm and concern we bring before you  
the military intervention in Ukraine.

In a world you made for peace and flourishing,  
we lament the use of armed force.

We mourn every casualty of this conflict,  
every precious life extinguished by war.

We pray comfort for those who grieve  
and those who are fearful.

Hear our longing that leaders and nations  
will honour the worth of all people  
by having the courage  
to resolve conflict through dialogue.

May all our human failings be transformed  
by your wonderful grace and goodness.

We ask this in the name of Christ,  
the author of peace and sustainer of Creation.

Amen.

## This month's featured stories:



**Ukraine crisis: crying out for God's protection and justice for the vulnerable - a call to prayer on Wednesdays in March**



**Faith leaders 'horrified' by refugee bill and urge PM to rethink - in a letter coordinated by the Joint Public Issues Team**



**Connection and conversation: the Baptist Assembly 2022 - Registrations are now open for this year's 'hybrid' event**

## 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. This page also includes a link to a video interview with Tim by Diane Watts. Thank you to those who submitted questions for the interview - we have tried to cover the topics raised during the conversation. Voting this year will primarily be online and will be open **until 31 March**.



### Next phase for Project Violet

Project Violet is a three-year participatory research project examining the place of women in Baptist ministry. The aim is to understand the theological, missional, and structural obstacles women ministers face in the Baptist community in England and Wales and identify ways forward. Now in its third phase, the first group of women researchers are in positions of senior leadership in Baptist life and are reflecting upon topics from that perspective. [Click here for details, and to watch a recording of last week's webinar: The minister and family life: a theological conversation.](#)



### Networking Zone at Baptist Assembly 2022

Could your Organisation or group benefit from being part of the Networking Zone at this year's Baptist Assembly? It will be an excellent opportunity for you to promote what your organisation/group does. Please have a [look at our website if you would like to know more](#) about how to make use of this excellent opportunity.



### Hope UK - looking for Band of Hope members

Christian drug education charity Hope UK (formerly known as the Band of Hope) is a national alcohol and drug education charity, working with children, young people and those who care for them. They are looking for former Band of Hope members to assist with a study of the effectiveness of its work over the decades, in equipping young people to make drug-free choices. All findings will be anonymous. Click [here to complete the survey](#) or contact Hope UK at [survey@hopeuk.org](mailto:survey@hopeuk.org) for a paper copy or further information. Click [here for a version of the survey that may be completed on behalf of a family member or friend.](#)



## 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. [Click here for more information, and to apply.](#)

## This month's featured resources:

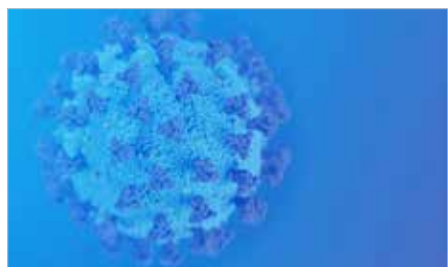


### March Prayer Diary

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

- World Day of Prayer
- Southern Counties Baptist Association
- Baptist Union Trustee Board
- Mothers

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



### Coronavirus Guidance

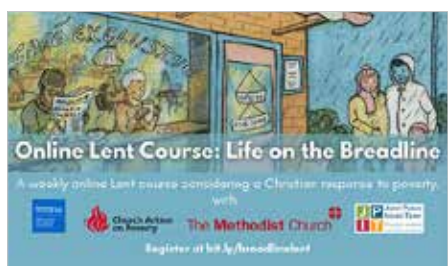
Our guidance has now been altered to reflect the UK Government's removal of statutory requirements relating to Covid-19 in England. This includes considerations for churches as we 'learn to live with Covid'. Our previous suite of guidance on re-opening church buildings, church worship, and children's, youth and families work, has been replaced by a single guidance document laying out some principles to consider. This includes details of the on-going regulations for Wales.

[Please keep checking our website for the latest information.](#)



### 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, 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.



### Lent course from the Methodist Church and JPIT

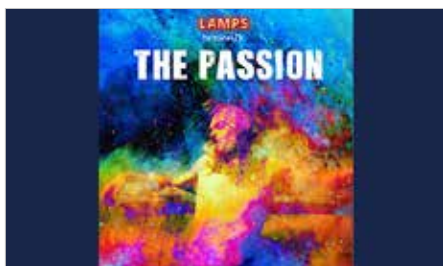
In 2018 an estimated 14.2 million people were living in poverty in the UK, including more than 25% of children. What does poverty look like in the UK today, and how can the Church respond? Join in four sessions exploring the Lent resources from *Life on the Breadline*, a three-year project which explored how austerity has affected Christian engagement with poverty in the UK and the theological motivations which underpin it. We'll hear from experts by experience, dig deeper into causes and understanding of poverty, and be empowered to act for a world where everyone is able to flourish. [Click here for details and to register to join the sessions on Zoom.](#)





## Lent Knitalong

Knitters at Victoria Methodist Church (Bristol) are holding their third Lent knitalong this year and would warmly welcome knitters from all over the country (and beyond!) to join them. The knitalong will consist of weekly emails throughout Lent, with a set of daily knitting instructions (or 'clues') and specially written meditations for each day. By the end of the knitalong, each knitter will have completed a cushion cover which will only use simple knit and purl stitches, so should be achievable by knitters of all abilities. For further details, or to sign up for the emails, contact Lyn Lloyd-Jones at [lljcomposition@googlemail.com](mailto:lljcomposition@googlemail.com)



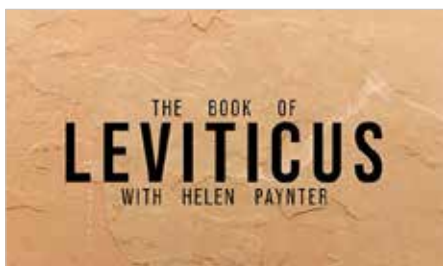
## The Passion - Easter show from LAMPS

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](mailto: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:



### Grief and Lament webinar - Thursday 3 March

Join this webinar for ideas about how to preach, teach and come alongside others, including how to become a bereavement friendly church. Speakers include Judith Brashaw on [the journey Oundle Baptist Church is on to become a bereavement friendly church](#) in a bereavement friendly community. Judith is joined by Cassius Francis and Katy Tutt from Loss and Hope; and host Louisa Lockwood (editor of *Preach* magazine). Click here [for more information and to register](#) for the webinar.



### 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](#).



### Zoom around the World - 7-8 March

The International Rural Churches Association is connecting communities in prayer online and is inviting anyone with a passion for rural ministry to join them on Zoom for all or part of the 24 hours. The event celebrates and helps us pray together for rural people, places and ministries across the globe. Members of CTE's Churches Rural Group are also looking for contributors to help share stories of God at work in rural places - either photos or 2-minute videos. [Click here for details, and to register to take part](#).



### Setting us Free - Monday 21 March

This Racial Justice Advocacy Forum webinar, in partnership with the Movement for Justice and Reconciliation and the Sankofa Collective, will explore how to heal the 400 years of damage caused by enslavement and racism to Black Christians. Join an international panel of theologians and thinkers as they grapple with one of the most problematic but often ignored issues in society. [Click here to register](#).



### Migration, People of Colour and Nationality/Borders Bill - Monday 28 March

This webinar is hosted by the Racial Justice Advocacy Forum, in partnership with the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT), the Evangelical Alliance and Churches Together in England (CTE). The panel will share the potential consequences of the Nationality and Borders Bill, what it means for our churches and discuss its adverse impact on those seeking asylum and citizenship of people of colour living in the UK. [Click here to register](#).



### Fresh Expressions National Gathering - 29-30 March

This will be a gathering to dream together, listen to movement makers together, and together to discern the call of God. At this significant point in history, God has a MORE THAN vision to offer to the world, and to the church. Do you? If so, join this fully hybrid event with the opportunity for you to join online or onsite at The Hayes Conference Centre. [Click here for more information and booking](#).



## DNA Christian Discipleship and Leadership taster days - April-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.](#)



## CMD: Attentive to Rhythms of Grace - Wednesday 6 April

In October 2020, Baptists Together launched a CMD Handbook setting out expectations of recognised Baptist ministers for their continuing ministerial development (CMD). The approach centres on five habits of CMD which ministers are asked to adapt to their own needs and contexts. This workshop supports the Habit of Attentiveness and is closely connected with Geoff Colmer's Presidency and his theme of Attentive to Rhythms of Grace. [Click here for details and a link to book.](#)



## David Goodbourn Lecture 2022 - Tuesday 26 April

In this lecture, *After Pestilence*, speaker Professor Mario I Aguilar (University of St Andrews) will be exploring the centrality of social justice within the Church and the social gospel. This lecture is being presented by the Centre for Theology and Justice, and hosted by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI). [Click here for more information and registration.](#)



## IBTS Ethics Conference: 4-6 May, Amsterdam

This conference '*The Heart of Christian Ethics: exploring the sacredness of life, justice, forgiveness, truth and love*' is for pastors, leaders, students, researchers, academics and also those from fields of politics, journalism, social work, development and education. Students, researchers and academics are also invited to contribute papers engaging with relevant chapters of Prof David Gushee's new publication: *Introducing Christian Ethics*. [Click here for details.](#)



## Baptist Assembly - 14-15 May

Book now to join us as we gather in person at Bournemouth to hear what God is saying to us as a movement with many creative connecting and conversation spaces. ***As well as our whole weekend tickets, we have now released individual tickets for Saturday, Saturday evening and Sunday with some special offer prices if you book before Easter.*** Following the huge success of our online Assembly last year we will also be broadcasting live our main sessions on YouTube, and are ***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.]*





### Black Light Course - May-June

The Black Light course was developed 24 years ago by Les Isaac and Stuart Murray Williams to engage with contemporary concerns about racism and injustice. It explores the presence and contributions of black people in the Bible, in church history and in Britain today. It celebrates the remarkable growth of the church in Africa and the exciting 'reverse mission' impact on Europe. Running weekly through May and June - click here [for more information and to register](#).



### 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](#)



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### 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. [Click here for more information](#).