

# Filipino prayers

THE pastor of a new UK Filipino Baptist church which will be commissioned on Sunday has asked for prayer following Typhoon Haiyan.

The Revd Virgilio Pansacala leads the Filipino International Church, based at Whitley Baptist Church in North Tyneside, and said many of the congregation's 26 families have relatives and friends from the areas worst affected by the devastating storm, including Tacloban. He invited the UK Baptist family to pray.

'Please pray for the relatives of the members of our church. Some of them have had no communication, and still don't know what has happened to their families,' said Pastor Virgilio.

'Of course please pray for the relief work, and how they will rebuild their lives.'

He added there hadn't as yet been news from his wife's family.

'Many of rural areas have badly affected but not been reported in the news. And it's difficult for the Filipino community here in the UK, because communication is so difficult.

'Even my wife's home town, we have had no communication. We know that they were evacuated, but 90 per cent of the



houses have been wiped off. It's a very difficult time.'

Sunday's commissioning will still go ahead despite the uncertainty. 'It is good to be together, and we will take a collection to help back home,' said Pastor Virgilio. 'The only thing we can tell our people is to keep praying, keep trusting the Lord.'

The congregation has been meeting at Whitley Bay Baptist Church for a number of years. Around a decade ago the NHS attempted to fill gaps in its nursing staff by attracting trained personnel from overseas. Six Filipino nurses arrived at the church one Sunday and were quickly integrated in the life there.

Over time their husbands and children came to the UK to join

them, including Virgilio, the founding pastor of Maranatha Baptist Church in Montalban Rizal.

Led by him the group of Filipinos asked permission to meet regularly as a congregation worshipping in their own language of Tagalog. The congregation has grown and draws from across the North Tyneside region including the City of Newcastle upon Tyne and South Northumberland. Pastor Virgilio says there are around 2,500 Filipinos in Newcastle alone.

Following the commissioning service it will become a member church of our Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Northern Baptist Association (NBA) in its own right. The church will then continue to meet, under its own leadership, on Sunday afternoons in the premises of Whitley Bay.

**BMS World Mission has launched an appeal for the Philippines and is working through Asia Pacific Baptist Aid. Visit: <http://www.bmsworldmission.org/>**

**The Disasters Emergency Committee launched an appeal: <http://www.dec.org.uk/>**

# Baptist minister's national role in campaign against payday lending

A BAPTIST minister is set to play a key role in the campaign against payday lenders.

The Revd Chris Lewis, the minister at Mount Zion Baptist Chapel in Bonymaen, east Swansea has been invited to join the national strategy group of Sharkstoppers, which is campaigning for a law to be introduced that will cap the level of interest on payday loans, as well as supporting the promotion of credit unions as fair alternatives.

Sharkstoppers is supported by the grassroots campaigning organisation Movement for Change and is active in UK towns and cities from Dundee in the north to Southampton.

Chris was first invited to join his local campaign Credyd Teg Bae Abertawe/Swansea Bay Fair Credit as his ministry is an area targeted by doorstep and payday lenders.

Members of the group will be meeting with the new Financial



**Chris Lewis (second left) and fellow Swansea Bay Fair Credit campaigners meet Welsh Assembly Members on Tuesday**

Control Authority at Canary Wharf and hope to organise consultations between the FCA and people in the English regions, Scotland and Wales experiencing stress because of high interest loans.

Others issues in sight are lenders' practices such as inadequate credit checks, rolling over loans and HP arrangements, advertising during children's programmes and commission based collections by doorstep lenders leading to the harassment of borrowers.

Key members of the Swansea Group have also been involved in discussions with the Welsh Government, and took their concerns to the Welsh Assembly this week, meeting First Minister Carwyn Jones, and Swansea West Assembly Member Julie James (pictured).

There is growing support for the Swansea campaign from churches and the Rt. Revd John Davies, Bishop of Swansea & Brecon became the campaign's first champion in September.

Chris said, 'We have been greatly encouraged by the support we have received and the wins we have made so far but there is much still to do. Our morale is high locally and nationally.'

A Christian response to the rise of payday lenders, such as Wonga, has received much coverage after the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby encouraged churches to support the development of real lending alternatives like as credit unions.

# New co-directors for IMC

BMS World Mission has announced a new joint appointment of the Revd Claire Ord and the Revd Mark Ord as co-directors of the International Mission Centre (IMC) in Birmingham.

IMC is the training centre for all BMS mission personnel, from gap year students on our Action Team programme to those who will serve long term in various countries.

Claire and Mark both trained at Spurgeon's College in London, and served in Italy with BMS

from 1994 until 2010, in Liguria. Initially Mark was pastor in Genoa and Claire was pastor of a Filipino congregation in Rapallo. They then became joint pastors of the Baptist church in Genoa and over ten years the church grew significantly into a diverse multi-cultural community. They also had pastoral oversight of the other Baptist churches in Liguria.

Since their return to the UK they have served as co-pastors at Burton Latimer Baptist Church and Claire has served as a trustee

of BMS World Mission.

Commenting on their appointment, Mark and Claire said, 'We feel very blessed by God to be back with BMS: it feels like coming home. It will be a great privilege to work with people who are responding to God's call and going to serve and follow Christ in places of need.

'We are really excited about being involved in the formation of mission personnel going to a variety of places and occupying such a wide range of roles.'

## Obituary

# The Revd Walter Hargreaves Wragg

Walter Hargreaves Wragg was born on 15 May 1914. His first job was for the Merchant Navy where he served as assistant to the Harbour Master at South Shields. On receiving a call into Christian ministry he entered Rawdon Baptist College where he obtained his BA degree. It was whilst at Rawdon that he met Regina and they subsequently married.

His first pastorate was at Girdlington Road Baptist Church, Bradford before moving to Blackhill Baptist Church, Consett & Rowley in County Durham in 1944. He always talked fondly of his time at Blackhill. It was during this period (1945 and 1948) that his two sons Peter and Cliff were born.

His next move was to Hucknall in 1951 where he served for 13 years. It was during this ministry that he studied by part-time distance learning with London University, and obtained his BD degree in Theology. Whilst serving in Hucknall he was invited to make some radio broadcasts for the BBC. The first was as the presenter of 'Sunday Half Hour', and then a broadcast



service on the BBC Midland Home Service and later relayed on the BBC World Service, letters of appreciation being received from many parts of the world.

Under his leadership the Hucknall Baptist Church became pioneers in children's work and family church and in an early church plant on a nearby housing estate (now a flourishing Seymour Road Baptist Church). In 1964 he moved to take up the pastorate of the Baptist Church of North Finchley (subsequently to become Trinity Church Baptist/URC).

His last church was at Harlington in 1973 where he also became the Free Church Chaplain at Heathrow Airport. Here he was to work in close collaboration with his Anglican and Roman Catholic partners, an ecumenical

cause that had always been a feature of his ministry.

After Regina died in 1999 he continued to live in Langley right up until the beginning of this year when he moved to Rock House in Chalfont St Peter, run by Gold Hill Baptist Church. He died on 22 October 2013, seven months before, what would have been, his 100th birthday.

Wally, during the height of his ministry worked closely with the then Principal of Rawdon College Dr David Russell as it amalgamated with Manchester College to become the Northern Baptist College in 1963.

This was also a friendship he kept up until Dr Russell's death in 2010. In any other life Wally might have had a successful career in academia but his chosen calling and vocation was to grass roots ministry.

His intellect plus his wit and dry humour, as well as his endless amusing stories and anecdotes, will all be sadly missed.

But his greatest lasting legacy is seen in the many lives he touched during his ministry, and the many vocations to Ministry, he encouraged and nurtured.

people who were like me... but Jesus has other ideas  
<http://bit.ly/1j4H2ik>

> Leading Remembrance Day worship left one Baptist minister feeling decidedly uneasy  
<http://bit.ly/1hFOVPS>

> Could Association gatherings learn from the Scottish Baptist Assembly? A reflection on the

recent Assembly  
<http://bit.ly/HMNkYn>

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From the www.  
[baptisttimes.co.uk](http://baptisttimes.co.uk)

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

> The most annoying commandment - I would much prefer to spend all my time with

## EA seven deadly sins survey

THE Evangelical Alliance has launched a survey on discipleship and is inviting all evangelical Christians in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and England to participate.

The survey – part of the 21st Century Evangelicals series – asks Christians about the disciplines and practices which help them to grow in their faith. They are asked to reveal their routines of prayer and Bible reading, the temptations and struggles they face and how they draw on the support of others.

The findings are helping leaders and churches across the UK to make more effective plans for mission and ministry.

General Superintendent of Elim Pentecostal Churches, John Glass, said that the research series 'provides us with a reliable lens through which we can better understand the context in which we seek to serve - and so enabling us to focus with clarity on issues we should prioritise'.

Dave Landrum, director of advocacy at the Evangelical Alliance said, 'If we want the Church to grow and prosper in the UK we need to understand the opinions and day-to-day practices of evangelicals today. So we encourage everyone to play their part in completing this important survey about discipleship.'

The survey is found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/21CEdiscipleshipsurveynov2013>

## New YBA regional minister

THE Revdy Mary Taylor, formerly of Wakefield Baptist Church, has been inducted as the new regional minister for the Yorkshire Baptist Association.

At the service last Saturday the Revd Brian Nicholls, Chair of the YBA

Executive, said there had been some good candidates in the selection process but that Mary's 'quiet determination, breadth of experience, mission-focused heart and her evident love for God stood out'.

'The interview panel were unanimous in recommending her for appointment.'

He added that Mary was not an ecclesiastical bureaucrat or a maintenance engineer – rather she would be there to 'encourage us to catch that wave of being missional people as the Spirit of God moves in our region'.

Mary said she felt she was at

the start of an adventure – and it was an enormous challenge. 'Churches in many ways are standing at a place of death – but I want to encourage you that at the place of death, for those who trust in Jesus Christ it is the place of resurrection.'

'I don't come with a programme, plan or strategy – but primarily I believe God wants me to come as myself. That's what I bring. I want us to walk together to discover the possibilities God has for us.'

Induction promises were made by Mary, her husband David, representatives of the YBA churches, ecumenical representatives and the whole congregation. Prayers were said by Michael Bradley, Shahbaz Heydari, Beauty Edebor, Sally Martin and Graham Ensor.

For a full report and photos visit <http://bit.ly/1726mn0>



THE November edition of *Baptist Voice* is now ready to listen to or download.

VISIT <http://bit.ly/17pD4fb> for part 1, and <http://bit.ly/1cV3Zas> for part 2

### JOBS

County Ecumenical Officer, Churches Together Buckinghamshire

For more details and more jobs visit: [www.baptist.org.uk/jobs](http://www.baptist.org.uk/jobs)

### BAPTISMS

Abbey Baptist Church, Reading: Satish Damai ..... 1  
Streatham Baptist Church, London: Adassa Harrison, Kwame Opoku ... 2

Send notifications of baptisms, ministerial changes, deaths and testimonies to [phobson@baptist.org.uk](mailto:phobson@baptist.org.uk)