

# Church at the carnival

AN inflatable church and free tropical punch helped a Baptist congregation meet hundreds of its community in Europe's biggest one-day carnival.

Around 200,000 people attend the Luton International Carnival, and this year Limbury Baptist Church made sure it had a very visible presence.

It hired the inflatable Baptist Union of Great Britain church, served 100 litres of free tropical punch, hosted puppet shows and craft activities, and gave away hundreds of helium balloons, leaflets and gospel tracts. There was also worship and simply a chance for carnival goers to sit down and have a chat. Altogether around 1000 people visited the church stall in Wardown Park.

'It was an amazing day,' said minister David Fleming. 'We had some long conversations, there were lots of people stopping by and it's the first event I've been to where we've run out of gospel tracts.'

David said he had been inspired by the Big Hearted message of Chris Duffett's year as Baptist Union president in 2012-2013.

'I know from these kind of events every stall wants your money, so I wondered if we could do something that was



more generous.'

Around 40 members of Limbury took part, bolstered by another half a dozen people from Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church.

They gave away 700 glasses of free punch, running out in the afternoon, plus a hundred helium balloons, tracts and leaflets about their church. Their own teenagers organised the puppet shows, producing five throughout the day. Dozens of children took part in the craft activities.

The inflatable tent, which is in the shape of a church, was also a draw.

'To take part in a carnival like this I think you have to be a bit brash,' said David. 'The inflatable church was a huge

talking point.

'If anything we were a little overwhelmed by the numbers who came, but the spirit among our people was fantastic, both on the day and in the run up to the carnival. We joined Luton in having a great time. For a medium sized Baptist church, it was an amazing bit of outreach.'

David is determined to work alongside other churches to produce something as 'bold and brash' next year.

'I'm pretty sure we were the only Christian group there,' he said, 'If we had known just many people were going to come, we could have done even more.'

'Already my church is saying "Let's do it again", so I think it will be a regular thing for us!'

# Oasis of calm, coffee... and connection

Peter Lanigan reports on a new community facility imaginatively developed by Hugglescote Baptist Church

THE Oasis, at 67 Central Road, Hugglescote, had its official opening on Saturday 17 May when tea, coffee and cakes were served all day. We were delighted to see every table filled at several times throughout the day and we also had a visit from our local MP Andrew Bridgen who offered his support.

This new community facility developed by Hugglescote Baptist Church provides the church with an opportunity to make new connections with the community and is ideally situated in the main shopping area in the village.



A number of years ago the church building in Hugglescote was demolished and that released some funding which allowed the church to purchase and redevelop this former chemist's shop in Central Road.

Church services on a Sunday take place at 10.30 in Hugglescote Community Centre,

**IMPRISONED Sudanese Christian Meriam Yahia Ibrahim has given birth to a baby girl five days early.**

**According to local sources, Mrs Ibrahim's husband Daniel Wani has yet to be granted permission to see his wife and newborn**

but The Oasis gives the church new opportunities to be more involved in the community.

The church realised that for many people, coming in to a church service without knowing anyone at the church is often a daunting prospect, whereas coming in to a cafe style setting is much more accessible.

Rather than holding on to our funds in the hope of one day building a traditional church building for worship, we realised that God was calling us to think differently and focus on mission in a different context.

Initially The Oasis will be opened on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays as a cafe.

Moving forward, other activities will develop in response to the needs of the community. There are plans to work with Heartland Youth For Christ to offer a space for young people to meet after school, possibilities for running advice sessions, special interest groups, quiz nights and opportunities to explore the Christian faith for



those who may wish to do so.

I have been very encouraged that the Hugglescote Baptist fellowship, a relatively small group with Home Mission funding to support a part-

time pastor, nonetheless has a big heart for mission.

They have been willing to take on this exciting challenge of running a cafe several times a week with the prospect of other events in The Oasis as they move forward.

It has also been great to see that as we have moved out in faith, offers of volunteer help from other churches in the village have been given and we are convinced that God will provide all that we need for the running of this centre.

The Oasis is all about making connections with people at street level, providing a listening ear and an encouraging word, and responding to the needs that emerge.

**Peter Lanigan is the minister of Hugglescote Baptist Church**

**daughter, who are currently incarcerated in Omdurman Federal Women's Prison along with his 20 month-old son Martin, but has been informed that both mother and baby are well.**

**Meriam has been sentenced to death for 'apostasy' –**

**leaving Islam – although she's been a Christian all her life.**

**The UN and Amnesty International are working on the case, and Christian Solidarity Worldwide has a number of prayer and action points.**

**For more visit [bit.ly/Sjt4mk](http://bit.ly/Sjt4mk)**

# Line-up for Catalyst Live announced

A GLOBAL array of speakers has been assembled for this year's Catalyst Live.

Catalyst Live, organised by BMS World Mission, was a sell out when it took place for the first time in 2013.

Now a number of speakers have been confirmed for the next event in October.

Based in America but originally from Croatia, Catalyst Live's keynote speaker will be renowned theologian Professor Miroslav Volf (pictured), whose book *Exclusion and Embrace* was named as one of Christianity Today's 100 most important religious books of the 20th century.

Also from Europe is Lithuanian Dr Lina Andronoviene, Pro-Rector at the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague.

Presenting Catalyst Live this year is Helle Liht from Estonia, who is Assistant General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation.

From Lebanon comes the Director of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr Martin Accad. With a Lebanese father and Swiss mother, Accad views himself as a bridge between cultures: an interpreter of Arab-



Professor Miroslav Volf

Middle-Eastern complexities to a Western audience, and of Western complexities to an Arab audience.

Karl Henlin, former president of the Jamaica Baptist Union, will be among the speakers as British and Jamaican Baptists celebrate 200 years of association.

From the United States there will be exclusively recorded interviews with esteemed theologian Professor Walter Brueggemann, who is widely seen as one of the most influential Old Testament scholars today, and with Father Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest known worldwide for his teaching on Christian mysticism.

UK speakers include Sir

John Houghton, past Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Dr Tanya Walker, an apologist at RZIM Europe and Tom Price, Academic Tutor at Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics.

Dr Rob Ellis, Principal of Regent's Park College will be talking about sport and Glen Marshall, Co-Principal at Northern Baptist Learning Community will be sharing his love of jazz.

**Catalyst Live is happening on 23 October at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield and on 24 October at the Concert Hall in Reading. For more information and to book go to [bmscatalystlive.com](http://bmscatalystlive.com)**

named after one of the longest ever serving Baptist ministers. A present-day successor looks at his life and ministry

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## Weekend of prayer for children

'HOW do you make your community more child-friendly?' That's the challenge being set by the Christian charity Viva as it organises its global World Weekend of Prayer campaign for children at risk on 7-8 June.

Over the two days, hundreds of thousands of Christians from over 40 nations are expected to gather in prayer marches, church services, conference centres and special events to pray for vulnerable children.

The theme for this year's 2014 World Weekend of Prayer is 'child-friendly communities', and Viva is calling on Christians to pray that marginalised children would be loved and protected, that leaders would be wise in creating policies, and that churches would have a heart for children in their communities.

According to the UN, in the world today, over a third of all births are not registered, 115 million children are engaged in hazardous child labour, and 61 million primary-aged children don't go to school. During last year's campaign, over 141,000 Christians prayed in 24 languages.

**Free resources including prayers, reflections, stories, activities for children, teenagers and all-age services, plus a short meditation video, can be downloaded at**

[www.worldweekendofprayer.com](http://www.worldweekendofprayer.com)

# The Big Welcome

RESOURCES for this year's Big Welcome are now available.

The Big Welcome is a simple idea to encourage Christians to invite someone they know to something they love, and is about making people feel welcome in any church activity.

This year's theme is a "A chance to discover", which recognises that there are so many positive aspects to be found in Church - community, hope, friendship, acceptance and purpose. Therefore a Big Welcome event of any kind, provides visitors with a chance to discover some of them.

Churches are encouraged to be creative about what they invite people to - a meal, a concert, a quiz night, a coffee morning, men's breakfast, toddler group or even a church service.

A variety of resources suitable to publicise and use at Big Welcome events are now available, including invitations, posters, sermon ideas, and children's resources.

The closing date for Big Welcome orders is Tuesday, 1 July.

**For more visit <http://www.baptist.org.uk/bigwelcome>**

**FREE official community resources on the film *Belle*, which is in UK cinemas on 13 June, are now available from the Damaris Trust. *Belle* is inspired by the true story of Dido Elizabeth Belle, the illegitimate mixed race daughter of a Royal Navy Admiral. *Belle* falls for an idealistic young vicar's son bent on change who, with her help, shapes the role of the Lord Chief Justice to end slavery in England.**

**More information about the resources: [www.damaris.org/belle](http://www.damaris.org/belle)**

## JOBS

**Church and Community Worker Post, Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit, the Methodist Church Ecumenical Accompaniers, Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel (EAPPI)**

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

## BAPTISMS

**Edward Road Baptist Church, Birmingham:** Gary Boulton, Fay Samuels, Leroy McGhie and Courtne Courier ..... 4  
**Howlands Baptist Church, Welwyn Garden City:** Jan Hedley ..... 1  
**North End Baptist Church, Portsmouth:** Faith Edosa ..... 1  
**Oaks Baptist Church, Sutton Coldfield:** Carol Chandler, Maisie Jones, Rita Vernon ..... 3  
**Pottlands Bar Baptist Church, Herts:** Sharon Abouzarrah, Davie Davidson .. 2  
**Rugby Baptist Church, Warwickshire:** Margaret Kearney, Catrina Rimen, Jacob Coleman and Beth Ledingham ..... 4  
**Selsdon Baptist Church, Surrey:** Dasharna Jones and Giacomo Fiderio .. 2  
**South Bank Baptist Church, Middlesbrough:** Paul Venis, Krista McPartland 2

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

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

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

> John Wilson Street, synonymous with the murder of Lee Rigby a year ago, was