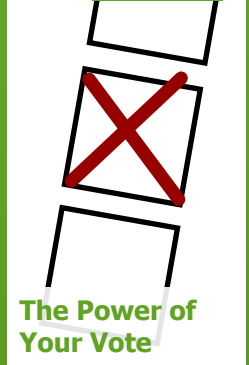


BAPTIST LIFE



Baptist Union
of Great Britain
Encouraging Missionary Disciples



**The Power of
Your Vote**



The World Cup: A mission opportunity?

READ ONLINE AT WWW.BAPTIST.ORG.UK/BAPTISTLIFE

APR - JUN '10

INTRODUCTION

by Jonathan Edwards - BUGB General Secretary



GETTING INVOLVED ... FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

What does the word 'church' trigger in your mind? I fear that most people in our society would come up with words like – out-dated, boring, institution and old. This poses a huge challenge to us. Baptists have always been keen to emphasize that the church is made of people not bricks. It's a gathering of people who love Jesus and who are committed to serving him. So if the church is truly living in Jesus' way it ought to trigger words like – relevant, exciting, happy, dynamic and new. What I love about *Baptist Life* is that it gives one illustration after another of the vitality of church life today.

Our world desperately needs God and so it needs the church to be dynamic and relevant. Election time is an important time of reflection for our society and I believe that it presents a wonderful opportunity for churches to engage. Whether you are reading this before, during or after the election there are important things that you can do.

We need to pray for our politicians. They grapple with the major issues of our day and they need wisdom. Let's make sure that we pray for them regularly but, in

addition, why not write to them and inform them that you are praying for them? And when MPs and councillors are elected why not invite them to a service so that you can pray for them in person?

We need to listen. Christians have a name for speaking a lot. We have views on everything! But if we truly love our society we will do a lot of listening. Pre-election meetings with parliamentary candidates are often held in churches and this is splendid. But careful listening needs to happen all the time. Only then will we gain the right to speak.

We need to get involved. Some will feel the call to serve at Westminster, but others will be called to become councillors or governors of local schools. The truth is that all of us are involved, whether we recognize it or not. All of us have an influence on the life of our society and we need to be continually exploring what it means to be salt and light to those around us.

I trust that this edition of *Baptist Life* will encourage you and challenge you as you get involved with your community.

Jonathan

In this feature, we focus on churches or ministries that have received a BUGB Mission Grant from Home Mission. All of the stories in *Baptist Life* benefit from Home Mission in some way. For more on Home Mission go to:  www.baptist.org.uk/homemission

Mocha Mission



Do you love a latte or crave a cappuccino when you go shopping? For many of us a multitude of coffee houses have opened up on our high streets over the last few years. In the village of Bildeston, Suffolk (Eastern Baptist Association) this was not the case until the local Baptist church began the Community Coffee Centre, financed partly by a Mission Project Grant. Open every Friday morning for

two hours, the centre has served well over 800 customers since it started in May 2009. "A broad spectrum of the community, from the young to those more elderly, has become our loyal customers and our friends," says centre organiser Tracey Ross. "People comment on the coffee. They can't believe they can go into a church and get a decent cup of coffee!" The church is hoping to open the centre two mornings a week later in 2010.

www.bildestonbaptistchurch.co.uk/coffeecentre.htm

Making Peace



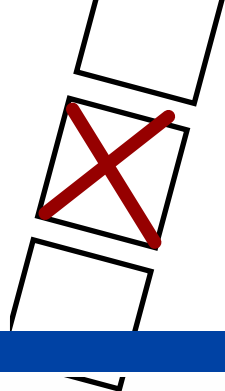
Should Britain renew its nuclear weapons? For the inhabitants of Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria (North Western Baptist Association) the nuclear debate is very close to home. The town's one major employer, BAE Systems has built all the Trident nuclear submarines and would be favourite to win the contract if the Government renews Trident. At Abbey Road Baptist Church in Barrow (whose minister John Goddard is supported by a BUGB Mission through Ministry

Grant), some are for decommission of nuclear weapons whilst others are convinced deterrence is still the best option. "All of us are agreed that the loss of the Trident submarine contract would be economically devastating to our local communities," says John. "All of us have learned to discuss these issues without falling out with one another. We have continued to learn what it means to worship alongside someone who has a different opinion on this issue."

 Abbey Road Baptist Church and the issue of Trident are featured in a film called 'Making Peace' on the 2010 BUGB DVD available in early May. For more go to www.baptist.org.uk/dvdfollowup



Rachel Lampard



General Election

The Power of Your Vote

As *Baptist Life* goes to press, the General Election is widely expected to happen on 6 May. Here Rachel Lampard, Team Leader of the Joint Public Issues Team (BUGB, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church) discusses how we as Christians can play our part in the upcoming election.

I first voted in a General Election at the age of four. My parents took me into the polling booth and (bravely) allowed me to draw their cross. So from a young age voting was for me a real occasion, a family event with the excitement of curtained booths and ballot boxes. But it was also something very normal – even a four year old could do it.

Nowadays I have registered for a postal vote because it's easier. Yet I wonder if I have forgotten something of the drama and the power of my vote. Similarly, perhaps our general disillusionment with politics and politicians means that we forget the power of our democratic opportunities. Once every five or so years we have the opportunity to cast our vote for what we want our society and our world to look like, to decide which party's policies most closely reflect our hopes and values. For Christians, voting is not an optional extra.

A General Election will be held before 3 June 2010, with the most likely date thought to be 6 May. A website has been launched www.churcheselection.org.uk to help churches to prepare. Here you can download *Faith in Politics*, a booklet with background information and questions to consider, covering a range of election issues including the economy, the environment, criminal justice and migration.

The website also offers advice on organising a hustings meeting at which candidates can answer questions from the voters. You can register and publicise your hustings event at www.churcheselection.org.uk. Alternatively you can be put in touch with other people in your constituency who might also want to organise an event. By hosting a hustings meeting churches can serve their local communities and help voters make informed choices.

We all make political decisions every day, decisions which shape the world around us. But once every five years we get the chance to be part of how our national community expresses its values and changes the world. Perhaps this year I'll cancel my postal vote, and take my four year old to the polling station with me.

For more on the Joint Public Issues Team, go to: www.jointpublicissues.org.uk

Covenant Partnership ends but much achieved

In November 2004 BUGB and the Independent Methodist Connexion (IMC) signed a covenant partnership. It was about journeying together towards unity, and though the hope that our two denominations would become one has not been fully realised, much has been achieved. It is expected that a significant number of IMC churches will be coming into joint membership with BUGB and their local association in the months ahead. Graham Sparkes, Head of BUGB's Faith and Unity Department believes that both denominations have benefited from the partnership. "There are many places where close relationships have been formed, ministry has been strengthened, and shared steps forward in mission have taken place", he says. "This journey will go on into the future, as many IMC churches become an important part of our life together."



Be part of National Family Week this May

At the end of May this year, the second-ever National Family Week will take place, encouraging people across the UK to celebrate being part of a family, whatever shape or size. BUGB is encouraging your church to support this campaign and join with thousands of organisations in promoting the week through your networks as well as considering running family friendly events and activities for your local community. Events can happen at any time during The Week, but you may wish to tie in your plans with one of the Week's theme days. For example, the Family Week Picnic on 31 May, Family Week Story Time on 2 June, Family Week House Party on 4 June or the Family Week Sports Day on 5 June.

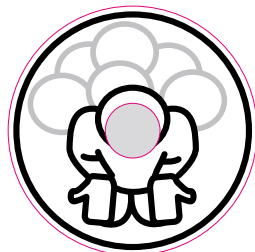


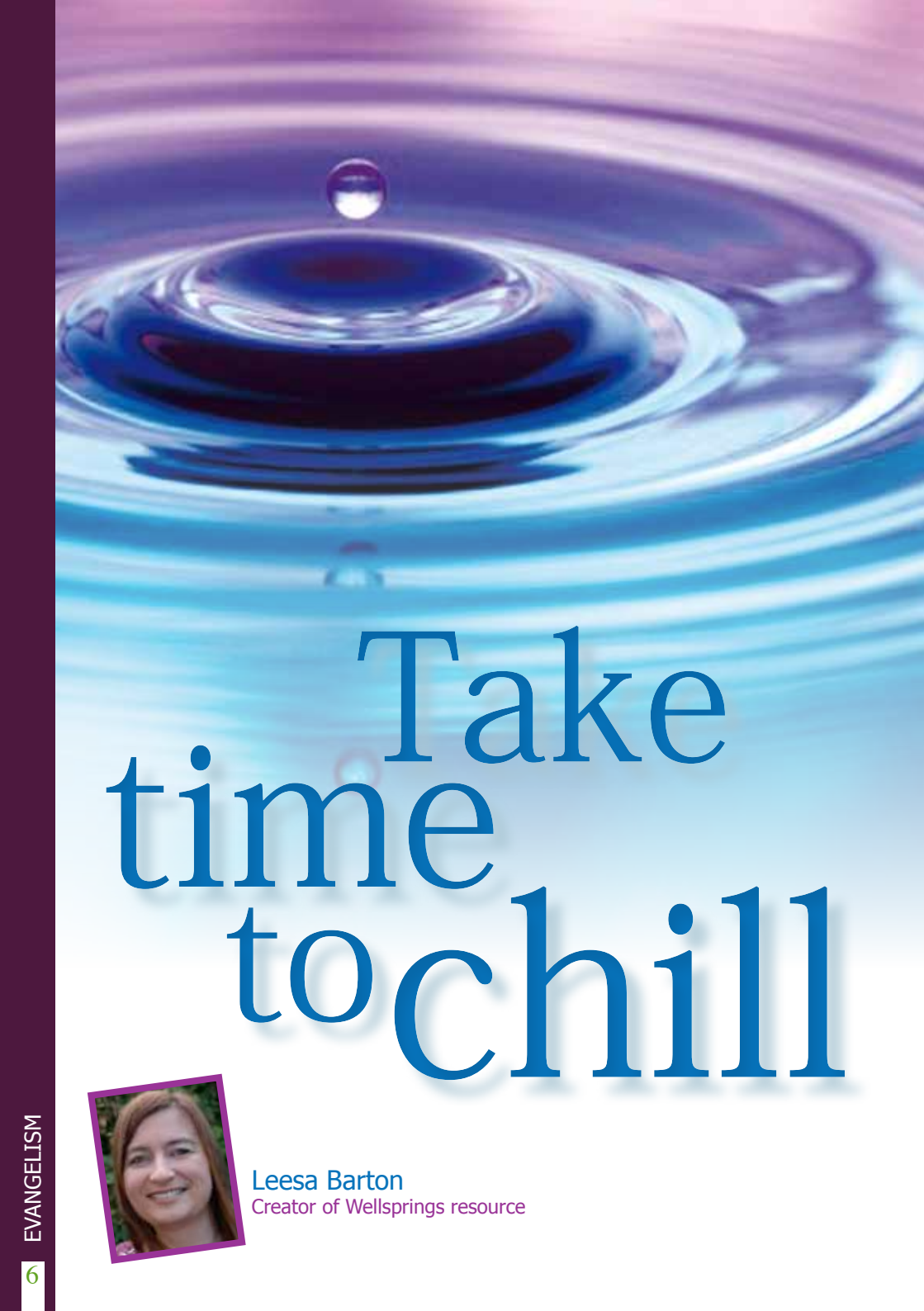
31 May - 6 June 2010

For more go to www.nationalfamilyweek.co.uk

Learning from the past

Is looking back at the past helpful in how we live today? London Baptist Regional Minister Kumar Rajagopalan thinks it is. Kumar has helped produce a special DVD resource that has been recently sent to churches on the 2007 BU Council decision to apologise for the transatlantic slave trade. "People will learn from the BU Council Apology DVD resource how the past has shaped their lives and the lives of others," Kumar says. "The DVD explores how to deal with the past and how we can move forward to become an inclusive multicultural Baptist family. It is also inspirational and encouraging to hear of how God worked to transform hearts and minds of Council members. Our church meetings can be this way too!" To get a free copy of the DVD, call the Faith and Unity Department on 01235 517726.





Take time to chill



Leesa Barton
Creator of Wellsprings resource

On 25 May at Ashurst Drive Baptist Church in Ilford (Eastern Baptist Association), BUGB's Mission Department are launching an exciting new course for women. Wellsprings is a new eight-week course of refreshment and pampering, looking (from a Christian perspective) at issues women face today. It offers a 'pre-Alpha' evangelism course suitable for single and married women - those who have contact with Christians through friendship, or church activities such as parent and child groups or keep fit classes.

Developed by Baptist minister Leesa Barton at her church in Buckhurst Hill in Essex, the course aims to strengthen the relationships that have been formed with these women; to explore practical ways for women to treat and look after themselves; to address key issues that affect women today; and to share relevant Christian truths.

Below is an extract from week one's talk written by Leesa where she explains the importance of making time to relax:

We are living in a busy world and have many demands on our time, energy and lives. Most women today wear a number of different hats or hold various responsibilities, often at the same time. I'm sure that like me, many of you have a variety of roles in your life. These might include being a mother, a cook, a taxi driver, a cleaner, a wife, an employee, a counsellor, a teacher, a carer, a neighbour, and a friend. Many of our roles involve us looking after other people, seeing to their needs, and caring for them, and for a lot of women there is actually a natural tendency to care about others and to want to help and support them. I'm not a wife, or a mother, yet I know in my own

life there is a great desire, and sometimes even a need, to care for other people and look after them. But there is the danger for all of us that the responsibilities we have, together with our longing to look after other people, can easily come at the expense of looking after ourselves. That's why I think it's important that we not only learn how we can take better care of ourselves, but we also try to treat ourselves to a bit of time out to rest and relax, to allow us space for ourselves, and to enjoy being pampered a little bit.

Rest and relaxation is important to all of us to maintain a healthy lifestyle. We all need to be able to sleep and we all need to be able to unwind from the stresses and strains of life. If we don't take time to relax, we can easily become very tense, very tired and very stressed. In fact, rest is so important that God himself set an example for us to follow. Even Jesus took time out, to be away from people and the demands that they were putting on him. And from the very beginning God created a pattern of work and rest that was woven into the fabric of our lives. As a Christian I believe that we were made in God's image, and it is therefore beneficial for us to follow his example of taking time to rest, so that we look after ourselves properly. And so I encourage you to enjoy some time to rest, to sit and do nothing other than relax, and to make the most of some time that is just for you.



Wellsprings

For more information about the Wellsprings Course and the launch evening go to www.baptist.org.uk/wellsprings

THE WORLD CUP

- A MISSION? OPPORTUNITY

Many of us will be looking forward to the World Cup in South Africa this summer.

The event is arguably the biggest in the sporting calendar. What's more, England is there. Come June and July, whatever your take on football, it will be hard to avoid.

What does this mean for Christians? Should we look forward to the tournament being over as quickly as possible? Or are there opportunities to explore here? The bible does not condemn sport. Indeed, in a sign that his audience was familiar with sport, the apostle Paul used it as an effective way to illustrate biblical principles (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

David Oakley, Chief Executive of Ambassadors in Sport, certainly believes sport has much to offer in the way of mission opportunities. In a study for the Evangelical Alliance tracing Christian engagement with sport, he outlined several areas where it can be a mission field - chaplaincy to participants, and the testimony of a Christian player to name a couple. He also wrote of mission possibilities through the activity of sport, and the 'relational connection' that comes about through a common interest in it. "The sharing of the sport activity/experience leads to enhanced opportunities for relationships and friendships that could be developed leading to 'natural' possible mission opportunities," he explained.

This is all particularly relevant in relation to the World Cup. A huge swathe of the population will follow the matches. England's opening game of the 2002 tournament in Japan, for instance, in the graveyard television schedule of Sunday

By Paul Hobson, News Editor of The Baptist Times

morning, pulled in a record 14 million viewers. And it's not just England fans. In multicultural Britain every country in the tournament is represented here (yes, even North Korea).

I'm not saying that everyone should suddenly become an expert. But a little knowledge can be a passport to many a conversation. There will be those who want to go further and maybe show a game in their church. If you decide to do this, BMS World Mission has prepared a series of five-minute videos presented by BBC commentator John Motson, which contain thought-provoking features looking at issues from the Street Child World Cup that was held this March in South Africa, that would be ideal to show at half-time.

Within God's created order, humanity was created with the capacity for relationships with God, nature, and others. Sport has thrived on this social function, says David Oakley. That's why it would be great to embrace the World Cup - you can be sure the rest of the country will.

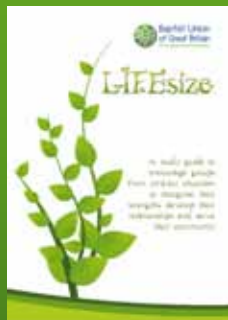
Read Paul's weekly column on sport, *Sportswatch*, every week in *The Baptist Times*

www.baptisttimes.co.uk



Resources

You can order LIFEsize through the Resource section of the BUGB website www.baptist.org.uk or by calling Publications on 01235 517708.



LIFEsize is a new resource especially produced to encourage the healthy life of churches, whatever their size, and enable them to look afresh at their local mission. Aimed particularly at the smaller church, the resource includes inspiring examples of smaller churches reaching their communities.

The study guide includes leaders' notes for five small group sessions, a DVD with teaching for each session by John Singleton (Northern Baptist Association Regional Minister) and suggested discussion questions. It is hoped that the resource will encourage groups from smaller churches to recognise their strengths, develop their relationships and serve their community.

Dulcea's Diary

Entry Number 342

My Dear Diary,

Good news! Pack your Dinnimac, Jesus sandals and bible - we're off to the Baptist Assembly! Hallelujah! Pastor Steve is organising a church delegation to go in May. It's the first time in eight years. The previous minister got hooked up with some other group called 'New Wine Spiritual Refreshment'. Sounded like an off licence to me, not a proper denomination, but he said he wasn't into all that denominational stuff. He soon found his 'Baptist identity' when we needed a Home Mission grant all those years ago. But Pastor Steve says it's time we got to know the rest of the family. "Assembly is a bit like a big reunion", he said and we should be supporting one another. He's even upped our giving to Home Mission and I was really challenged by this year's Home Mission dvd. It's amazing what can be done when we pull together. That's what family is all about. Well I for one can't wait. I just love to see everyone joining together in worship, listening to great preaching, hearing what's happening around the country and meeting up with some of my old friends. We had such fun waving our little voting cards at the annual general meeting although I always got my colours mixed up. And would you believe it, I've kept all my delegate badges (as a bit of Baptist memorabilia you understand). I've been 15 times already and I've seen how much it's changed. It's a lot more 'international' than it used to be so I don't stick out like a sore thumb any more. And between you and me the new General Secretary's a bit of a dish. I do like a tall man. He reminds me so much of my Bertram - just a bit paler. Plymouth here we come! Hallelujah!

Prayer Guide



The Way, the Truth and the Life

God, so near and far,
journey's beginning, journey's end:
our way to you is Jesus Christ.
He is the truth
which guarantees our integrity;
he is the life,
calling us through death to resurrection.
Help us, then, through him,
to trust you
and, with quiet minds,
to take the way,
proclaim the truth
and live your life
for the sake of all the world.

Taken from *Gathering for Worship* available from BUGB Publications (telephone 01235 517708 or go to www.baptist.org.uk/resources.html)

Welcome to the second quarter of the 2010 Prayer Guide – your opportunity to pray for the wider Baptist family over the next three months.

✚ If you would like more prayer resources, contact your Baptist association or go to www.baptist.org.uk/prayer_worship.html where you will find a range of materials including monthly prayers of intercession.

April



4 -10 April BUGB Finance and Administration including BU Corporation

Pray for the Finance and Corporation staff as they help churches with practical, financial and legal matters. Pray for BUGB Treasurer Malcolm Broad and all the association Treasurers, as they work with the senior Finance staff to ensure effective use of Home Mission resources.

www.baptist.org.uk



11-17 April South West Baptist Association (SWBA)

SWBA is a family of around 90 churches in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and a small part of Dorset. Pray for the association team as they seek to serve, support and resource these churches. Pray for the local organisers of the Baptist Assembly being held in Plymouth later this month.

www.swbaptists.org.uk



18-24 April Northern Baptist Learning Community, Manchester (NBLC)

Pray for the Principals, Anne Phillips and Richard Kidd, one year into their co-leadership of the Northern Baptist Learning Community. Pray for the appointment of new Regional Tutors in partnership with our neighbouring associations. Pray for an inspiring event: 'Baptists Doing Theology – Northern Theological Consultation' at the Blackley Baptist Church Centre on Tuesday 20 April.

northernbc.wordpress.com



25 April-1 May Baptist Assembly

Pray that the Assembly theme, 'One world, one mission' will inspire Baptists gathering in Plymouth this coming weekend (30 April to 3 May). Pray that those attending will be encouraged and challenged to act on what God is saying to them as they return to their home churches. Pray for all those taking part and working behind the scenes.

www.baptistassembly.org.uk

May



2 May-8 May Baptist World Alliance (BWA)

2 May is BWA Day when Baptists worldwide recognise the larger body of Christ and pray for each other. Pray that God will bless Baptists in the over 200,000 Baptist churches that are BWA members through 214 conventions and unions in 119 countries. Pray for David Coffey in his last three months as BWA President.

www.bwanet.org



9-15 May West of England Baptist Association (WEBA)

Pray for the new missional community in Portishead, and the development of Re:source Bristol, encouraging partnerships between churches. Pray for the WEBA executive and staff as they review structures in preparation for staff changes next year, and for association events in Swindon and Bristol on the 9th and 23rd May.

www.webassoc.org.uk/



16-22 May Regent's Park Bible College, Oxford

Pray for ministerial students and all who support them, and for other students preparing for a range of vocations and entering a difficult job market. Pray that staff will have the stamina and imagination to serve all these students, and that the college's resources will be of benefit to Baptists and Christians worldwide.

www.rpc.ox.ac.uk

23 May-29 May Wellsprings (see page 6)

Launched this week, Wellsprings is a new eight-week evangelism course for women offering them refreshment, pampering and an opportunity to share Christian truths. Pray for Baptist minister Leesa Barton, who developed the course, as she enables women to run it in their churches. Pray that Wellsprings will strengthen relationships and encourage women on their faith journey.



www.baptist.org.uk/wellsprings

June



30 May-5 June National Family Week

This week sees the second National Family Week, enabling people to celebrate being part of a family. BUGB is encouraging churches to use this 'crossingplace' opportunity to run family friendly events and activities. Pray that the events in your area will help build relationships and enable the good news of Jesus to reach the local community.

www.nationalfamilyweek.co.uk



6 June-12 June Association Assemblies

This coming Saturday four associations are holding their annual assemblies: Eastern, Heart of England (Family Day), London (The London Event), and Yorkshire (Assembly and AGM). Pray for those organising and attending these events. Pray that they will be fun and inspiring. Pray for all the associations as they encourage local Baptist churches in their mission.



13 June-19 June The Baptist Assembly in Wales: Momentum – Moving Forward in Christ

On 18 to 19 June Christians are joining together from the South Wales Baptist Association and the Baptist Union of Wales, along with BMS World Mission, for the All Wales Baptist Assembly in Carmarthen. Pray for all those attending, that they will be blessed as they worship, share fellowship and the word with one another.

www.baptistassemblyinwales.org



20 June-26 June Faith and Unity

The department seeks to reflect on what we as Baptists believe, to nurture our life of prayer and worship, to encourage relations with other Christians, and to promote campaigning and action on issues of justice and equality. Pray for the team led by Graham Sparkes and for the Executive and its Moderator, Sian Murray-Williams.

www.baptist.org.uk

THE BAPTIST TIMES

27 June-3 July *The Baptist Times*

The Baptist Times has seen major changes in the way staff work, some quite stressful. But it's now far better placed to prosper in the fast-changing media world, and staff are excited about the future. Pray that God will use them for the work of the gospel among Baptist churches and further afield.

www.baptisttimes.co.uk

BAPTIST PORTRAITS

INTERVIEWS WITH PEOPLE FROM ACROSS
THE BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

THE BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN
NATIONAL RESOURCE IN DIDCOT



Philip

Philip Putman is Head of BUGB Finance and Administration including the BU Corporation at the National Resource in Didcot

Favourite hymn or chorus:

The Day thou gavest, Lord, is ended. The concept in it of a 24 hour long cycle of prayer and praise reminds me of when I worked in Africa with other missionaries from Australia, New Zealand and North America.

You love cricket. Any plans to see any matches this summer?

No tickets yet!

It is the start of a new financial year. What are the main things on your mind at the moment?

The old financial year!

People don't always see finance as important as mission activities...what would you say?

We see in our department that the vast majority of mission activities need at least some finance, and perhaps a lot, to enable them to reach fruition. We do our best to support as many of them as we can.

Linda Holder is Manager of the Baptist Union Corporation (BUC) at the National Resource in Didcot

Favourite hymn or chorus: *The Day thou gavest, Lord, is ended.*

I love the hopeful images of our faith that will not fade away, and the line 'the voice of prayer is never silent, nor dies the strains of praise away'.

You and your husband have a caravan. Planning on taking it anywhere in the next few months? Cornwall, Yorkshire and Derbyshire (but not all at on the same trip).

Can you sum up what the BU Corporation does in the size of a Twitter 'tweet'? The BUC offers practical support and legal help to churches for their mission initiatives, charity needs and property related matters.

What's the most rewarding part of your job?

Helping to solve problems and providing useful information. We deal with many churches and apply our knowledge and experience to find creative solutions to practical problems and legal difficulties. This helps churches fulfil their local mission more easily.



Linda



BUGB Communications Awards 2010

The nominations are in. It's time to vote!

Since January we have been looking for the best church websites and best church magazine. A panel of experts will decide on the winner of best magazine but the decision about who receives the prizes for best church website (there are awards for Best Content and Best Design) is up to you! Go to www.baptist.org.uk/commsawards2010 to vote. Voting closes on 23 April and the winner will be announced during the Baptist Assembly in Plymouth (30 April to 3 May) and then on the BUGB website.

It's not too late to register!

The Baptist Assembly is from 30 April - 3 May 2010
Have you booked yet?

The Assembly is your chance to hear how God is moving through the Baptist family both here and overseas, get inspiration for the mission of your church, and catch up with old friends and make new ones.

Speakers include David Coffey, Kwame Adzang and Karl and Reuben Martin.

To find out more and to register go to
www.baptistassembly.org.uk

ONE MISSION
ONE WORLD

Baptist Assembly
30 April - 3 May 2010
Plymouth Pavilions
www.baptistassembly.org.uk

The Gathering presents....

REACHING THE MARGINS

HELPING WHITE AND BLACK BAPTISTS REACH MARGINALISED
COMMUNITIES INCLUDING THE WHITE WORKING CLASS

DATE // 16 October

TIME // 10:30 - 17:00

VENUE // Woodgrange Baptist Church,
Romford Road, Forest Gate E7 8AA

COST // £15

SPEAKERS // David Shosanya,
Di Blackler, Stuart Murray-Williams,
Ian Bunce, Rosemarie Davison Gotobed



LEADING EDGE BIBLE HOLIDAY FESTIVAL 2010

Come and be REFRESHED, RENEWED, RECHARGED

www.baptist.org.uk/leadingedge

WALKING THE WIRE



Joel Edwards
International Director
Micah Challenge International



Jonathan Edwards
General Secretary
Baptist Union of Great Britain



Tracy Cotterell
Director, Imagine Project
The London Institute for
Contemporary Christianity



David Kerrigan
General Director
BMS World Mission

**following Jesus in a
confusing world**

**9-15 August, 2010
The Warwick School
Warwick**

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