

FAITH AND SOCIETY TEAM

Passionate about Justice Communicating the story

Faith and Society is one of the three Specialist Teams based at Baptist House in Didcot (alongside the Ministries and Support Services Teams).

The Team's responsibilities include:

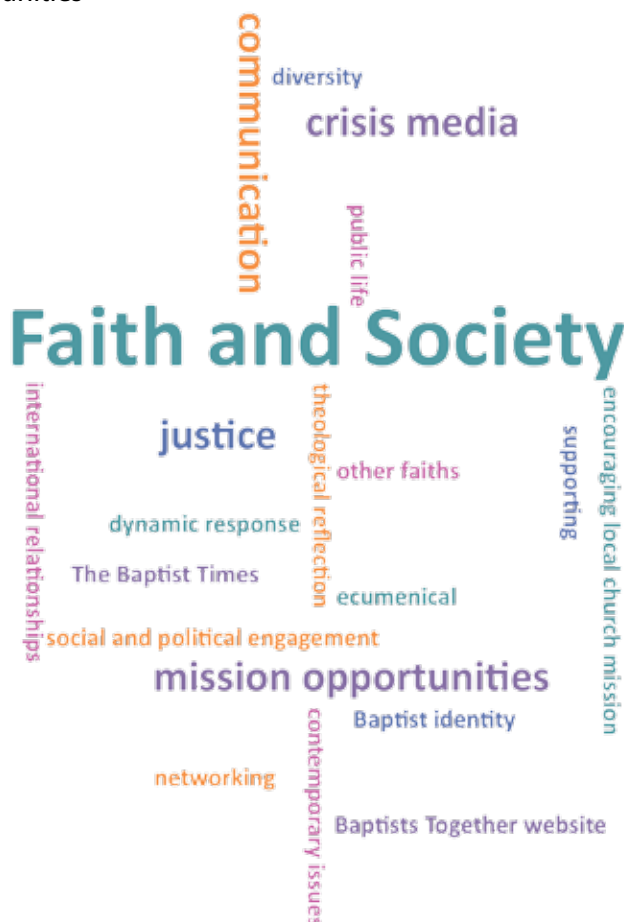
- » Theological reflection on key areas of shared belief and concern
- » Representing our Union in areas of public life and with other Christian denominations and faith communities

Intentional about Mission Reflecting on our shared life

- » Communicating news on contemporary issues, particularly regarding issues of justice
- » Communicating the key values and priorities of our Union
- » Raising awareness of areas of need and mission opportunity
- » Enabling churches to respond to the changing needs and opportunities within their communities



This is a small team who hold a broad range of responsibilities to resource the life of Baptists Together in practical and other ways.



Communication

Nearly everything that comes out of the national resource in the form of communication, be that web, email or printed comes from the Faith and Society Team. The recent developments, including the new *Baptists Together* magazine, are created within this Team. One example of the communications developed is this 40 Days of Home Mission resource that we have put together. The Faith and Society Team are not the story though; the communication is about what is happening in the whole of our Union, from local church to Association and the national expressions of the Union. The Assembly office sits within this Team. For the latest news of our Union please do look at the *Baptist Times* part of the website.

Find out more about how Home Mission is enabling Baptist churches to make Jesus known in their communities, see www.baptist.org.uk/hmstories

Make a gift to Home Mission through your Church Treasurer, or online at www.justgiving.com/baptistuniongb

Crisis Media

Engaging with the media can be an excellent way of letting your local community know your church is there and to share the message of what you are doing. However, from time to time things go wrong in the local church - there could be a child protection issue, or a local disaster or tragedy might occur. The Faith and Society Team are here to help local churches create press statements, and statements for the church, at these difficult times.

Ecumenical Engagement

Many Baptist churches are involved in a 'Churches Together' group in their town or city. Some are part of a more formal Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP), covenanting with other churches to share aspects of their life together. We encourage Baptists to engage ecumenically at whatever level they feel able and offer guidance to LEPs - including help in applying for Charity Registration.

Evangelism

We encourage local churches to engage in ways of making Jesus known, and support them in this through some national mission initiatives. Last year many people responded to a *BIG Welcome* invitation by a friend in a Baptist church.

We have also encouraged churches to get involved in *Get in the Picture*. This simple initiative enables churches to bring Jesus onto the High Street at Christmas as they take photos of people in a nativity scene. It's a great opportunity to talk to people about what their church is doing, and how God is at work today. For details see: www.getinthepicture.org.uk



Justice

We believe that justice concerns belong at the heart of our faith, and so we are seeking to ensure that the life and structures of our Union reflect our commitment to these issues, and that we work together to build inclusive communities. Key areas of work are with racial, women's and disability justice. In addition, sexuality issues are being recognised as part of this broad agenda. Work is continuing on the implementation of the recommendations of *The Journey*, alongside the Sam Sharpe Project, to ensure that our Union develops to be fully multicultural. Find out more at: www.samsharpeproject.org

Society

As Christians we do not live separated from society, but are called to live in society. Part of the work of the Faith and Society Team is prophetically being involved in shaping and challenging issues within the public space, be that making representation on issues such as Trident, or government benefit cuts, or empowering local

churches to become active at significant times within our nation's life, such as an election or time of national crisis. Much of this work we do in partnership with the Joint Public Issues team (a partnership of many of the free churches who work together)

Please pray:

- » For this small Team as they juggle their broad range of responsibilities
- » For wisdom and discernment for those involved in supporting churches through times of crisis
- » For inspiration and creativity for the Team developing new resources and initiatives to help make Jesus known
- » For the editorial group who work with the Team to develop the *Baptists Together* magazine
- » For those working to ensure that our Union is one which embraces and demonstrates inclusivity
- » Give thanks for the opportunities to make representation on issues of national interest, and for the partnership with the Joint Public Issues Team

Having followed these 40 days through Lent, and very nearly reached the end, is there a Home Mission story you would like to tell? If so, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact us on faithandsociety@baptist.org.uk to share your story.