



Update: September 2020

Dear Friends

So we have got to September, the schools are returning and it feels like a new term; but in many ways we have none of the certainties we are used to at this point in the year. Jesus' disciples knew the uncertainty of the times in which they lived and, even more so, the uncertainty of the life to which Jesus was calling them.

As we begin this month, standing in the midst of uncertainty, we pray that we will all hear the Lord say to us: *'Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.'* Jeremiah 6:16

Standing at the crossroads requires a stillness, which can be difficult in the flurry of September activity. The stories and the ideas shared with you here in this Update are intended to help you stand strong.

We all stand in slightly different places, not one of us has the same experience as the other. As you stand and read some of this today, know you are unique. Your community is unique; created and knitted together by our Creator God in September 2020 to be present, standing and listening; and perhaps to walk the ancient path of creativity in the uncertainty of the coming month. We pray that something here might encourage you.

Do let us know what the ancient paths might look like for you, even in the uncertainty of these 'new' days.

Diane, Hilary, Jane, Mary, Mat, Mike, Paul, Steve and Wale
Faith and Society Team

This month's featured stories:



The experience and practice of sustaining Messy Church throughout lockdown



How your church could support local care homes - Care Home Friends



Five parables from science and technology that illustrate the nature of God

News:



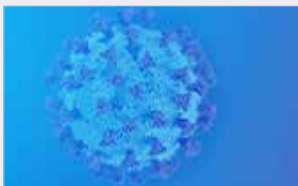
Baptists Together Magazine: Seeking to Listen

Ministers and Church Secretaries will soon be receiving their copies of the Autumn 2020 *Baptists Together* magazine, along with *Transform* 56. The theme of this magazine, *Seeking to listen*, emerged as we captured some of the stories and reflections across our denomination in the months of lockdown and anti-racism protests. **Additional copies of the magazine, including annual subscriptions, are available to order from our online shop** as usual.



Assembly online

We will be holding an online session on **Wednesday 16 September at 19:00** to replace the 'BUGB AGM' session that normally takes place at Assembly each year. An excellent opportunity to hear about the ongoing work of Baptists Together. Please **click here for details of how to participate**.



Coronavirus Guidance

We are continually updating our guidelines for churches to reflect the latest Government guidance and ensure that everyone is kept safe. Please see the **Essential Guidance area** of our website for **information about re-opening church buildings**, a **template for risk assessment** and **guidance on church worship**.



The Big Church Read

Hodder Faith, in partnership with St Andrew's Bookshop, has announced the launch of this national church book club on 21 September. The first title is *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer – a book that encourages us to unplug and slow down in order to follow Jesus and live the life God intends for us. **Church groups and individuals can join in for free** by registering their details where a video with the author will be released introducing the themes of that week's chapter so groups can discuss with their friends, prompted by a range of starter questions which are available for free in the resource pack.



Calling all aspiring Christian writers

The Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) is offering aspiring writers the opportunity to see their work in print in *The Upper Room*. Published in 35 languages, *The Upper Room* is unique in that its readers are its writers. After the success of the 2017 competition, this is another chance to write for the publication. **Click here for full details on how to enter**, plus terms and conditions, sample reflections and tips to get your started. The deadline is midnight on 31 October 2020. For further information email eley.mcaish@brf.org.uk or iris.jenkins@brf.org.uk

This month's featured resources:



September Prayer Diary

The **September Prayer Diary** is now available to download from our website. The particular themes this month are:

- Climate Sunday
- Education Sunday
- The European Baptist Federation
- The Yorkshire Baptist Association

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



A Wellbeing Menu for the Church

During this difficult time, many people are struggling with their mental health and wellbeing. This document, compiled by Ruth Rice of Renew Wellbeing, highlights some of the organisations which can offer support to churches as they decide how to engage in the arena of mental and emotional health. [Click here to download the document.](#)



Doxecology

Doxecology, by Resound Worship, is a collection of 13 contemporary, congregational worship songs on themes of creation, ecology and Christian hope. Alongside the 13-track album there are scores and charts, backing tracks and lyric videos (with streaming permission), and an accompanying book of studies with contributions from some leading scholars and practitioners in the fields of environmental concern and worship. [Click here for more information.](#)



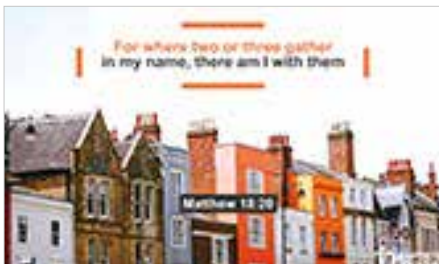
msm online course - starting September 2020

mission shaped ministry online is a one-year part-time learning journey in a supportive online community which will equip you for a lifetime of good practice and learning in planting and sustaining fresh expressions of church. The course runs over 15 Monday evenings, and will be hosted by Simon Goddard. [Click here to find out more.](#)



Educational Resource for Baptist Ministers in Deliverance Ministry

The Baptist Deliverance Study Group (BDSG) has been in existence for three years now, originally a plot project with the NWBA and designed to research, reflect, resource and support Baptist ministers in the safe practice of deliverance ministry. The BDSG is always available to help with advice, prayer support, case analysis and case management, if needed. You can contact the BDSG by emailing irlamjayne@gmail.com



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 online events:



Baptists Together Prayer Broadcasts - 19:00 Wednesday

Since the coronavirus restrictions came into force, we have been offering an online time of prayer led by our General Secretary Lynn Green and other guests. [Please use the link www.baptist.org.uk/prayerbroadcasts](http://www.baptist.org.uk/prayerbroadcasts) to publicise these prayer broadcasts to your church family. Previous broadcasts are also available to watch from the same page on our website.



Four degrees shift: discipleship in a changing climate - Wednesday 2 September

Dave Gregory and Rachel Mander led us in exploring why we should be concerned about climate change and what Baptist churches can do collectively to reflect the gospel in their approach to the environment. [Listen again using the recording of this webinar on our website.](#)



Climate Sunday - 6 September

The Climate Sunday initiative is calling on all local churches, Christian denominations, 'streams' and networks to hold a climate-focused service on a convenient date from 6 September 2020. At this service congregations will be encouraged to make a short and simple commitment to greater action to address climate change in their own place of worship and community, and to raise their voice to urge bolder action by governments. [Click here for more information.](#)



Doxecology - Songs of creation, ecology + Christian hope - Wednesday 9 September

This second climate webinar timed around Climate Sunday investigates a new worship resource called Doxecology. We will be joined at 13:00 by Joel Payne and Sam Hargreaves, two of the resource's originators. [Click here for more information and to join in.](#)



Small Church Connexion Webinar - Saturday 12 September

Are you part of a small church? Join in this 2-hour webinar starting at 10:00 to hear from speakers on Connecting – UP (with God), IN (with church - with and without tech) and OUT (with the community); Going back into the building; The new normal - How might you do church differently in the future? What has God been saying to us about our call? Are we in the right place? Is mission our priority? There will be an opportunity to discuss these topics in break out groups. Please register your place by contacting Hilary Taylor at: hilary.taylor@tiscali.co.uk



Communion, Covenant and Creativity - Monday 14 September

An Approach to the Communion of Saints through the Arts – A Baptist Perspective is an online day conference organised by the Centre for Baptist Studies, Regent's Park College, Oxford. With speakers: Myra Blyth, Paul Fiddes, Elizabeth Newman, Brian Haymes, Ruth Bottoms and Richard Kidd. Please email: christine.joynes@regents.ox.ac.uk for full programme details and to reserve your free place.



Whitley Lecture - Monday 14 September

This year's lecture on the theme: *Finding a Friend: The Baptist Encounter With Judaism* will be given online at 19:00 by Robert Parkinson. Are Baptist churches sometimes guilty of unwitting anti-Judaism? What is the state of play for Baptist-Jewish relations? This lecture will examine these and similar questions. Drawing on the positive side of Baptist history and practice, it will offer guidelines for encouraging a greater regard for Judaism and a closer friendship with Jews. [Click here to access the lecture.](#)



Incarnate Network Houseparty - Friday 25 September

As we are not able to meet in person, the Incarnate Network Houseparty is heading online for a kind of Houseparty at Home. Lots of the usual Incarnate Houseparty favourites from the comfort of your couch! And all for just £10. It will run from 12:30 - 17:30 and include time to connect with Christ, enjoy space to socialise, workshop ideas, a variety of contributors to kick off the conversations in small group discussions and an opportunity to harvest learning and shape the next steps. [Click here for the full programme and to book your place.](#)



Playtime conference for toddler group leaders - 25-26 Sept

This autumn, Care for the Family is running its first ever Playtime conference online! The programme is packed with brand new talks and workshops, and you'll even be able to interact via live chat. This year, the theme is looking at how to be salt and light to our communities. Have a look at the [promotional video](#). All you have to do is sign up – free of charge. [Click here for details.](#)



COVID-19 and BAME - Tuesday 29 September

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Britons have been severely impacted by the Covid-19 virus. Figures show that while BAME people make up only 14 percent of Britain's population, they account for 35 percent of all coronavirus patients in intensive care. This one-hour webinar, beginning at 19:30, is being jointly hosted with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and will feature speakers: Dr Chi-Chi, Dr Vivienne Lyfar-Cisse and Wale Hudson-Roberts. [Click here for more details.](#)



Sam Sharpe Lecture - Monday 12 October

This year's Sam Sharpe lecture will be delivered online by Bishop Wilton Powell, OBE - Former National Presiding Bishop of the Church of God of Prophecy. The Lecture Facilitator will be Dr Dulcie McKenzie. [Click here to join the lecture.](#)



Gospel, Redemption and Shame conference - Wed 14 Oct

This online conference hosted by the Transforming Shame Network, is for church leaders, pioneers and those engaged in mission to explore the issue of shame theologically and missionally. It will be both an introduction for those beginning to explore issues of shame in faith contexts, as well as an opportunity for deeper learning and sharing for those already aware of the impact of this issue. [Click here for full details and to book your place.](#)



Crucible goes online - October-December

As the Crucible course modules cannot go ahead because of the pandemic restrictions, the team is offering Crucible Online until at least the end of the year and will be running a number of modules between October and early December with each module running fortnightly over four evenings. [Details will be on the website in early September.](#)