



Update: October 2020

Dear Friends

As the pandemic enters yet another month, we are aware that for many it is certainly not easy keeping things going. We continue to pray for you as you seek to love and serve your communities, and this month we are particularly praying for the areas in Wales and England facing greater restrictions.

Our hope with this month's update is that you may be encouraged and equipped for the journey ahead by some of the things we have shared here. We want to make sure we help a little as we walk with you, so please do let us know if there are ideas or resources you might find useful.

As the trees change colour and autumn unfolds around us, may October be a month of unexpected blessing found in unexpected places.

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

This month's featured stories:



Assembly 2020
- a report on the online
Assembly on 16 September



Small churches and lockdown
- feedback from the Small
Church Connexion webinar



**Stepping outside to listen,
learn and engage -
Introducing Muddy Church**

News:



Presidency Nominations - 2022-23

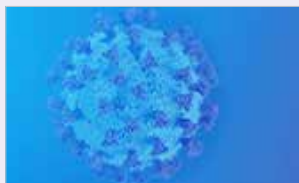
We are now inviting nominations for the person who will serve as Baptist Union President in 2022-23. The President may be female or male, lay or ordained, and will be chosen because of gifts and experience which will help to communicate our Baptists Together vision and mission priorities. [Click here for details of how to make a nomination](#). Nominations must be received by 31 December 2020.



Communications Survey

'A really helpful glimpse into the life of our churches during lockdown'

Mike Lowe and Carmel Murphy share insights from a research project exploring how our churches have responded to the current crisis. [Click here for the highlights of their report along with a link to the full results](#).



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](#).



Reset the Debt

The impact of Covid-19 has been profoundly unequal. The poorest in our communities have been hit hardest by lockdown debt. If we don't act now, families could be held back by Covid debt for years to come. We think it's time to #ResetTheDebt. Could you write to your MP, asking them to support our call to #ResetTheDebt? [Click here to discover more](#).

This month's featured resources:



October Prayer Diary

The [October Prayer Diary](#) is now available to download from our website. The particular themes this month are:

- Black History Month
- Prisons Week
- Heart of England Baptist Association
- Joint Public Issues Team

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



Black History Month - October

This year has forced many to see the reality of racism in all its forms. Black History Month is an opportunity to honour the contribution that people of colour have made in the past, to reflect on the situation today and to work together to combat racism for the future. We have launched a [new Racial Justice Blog](#) area on our website, and compiled a [list of other resources](#) that may help you and your church to reflect on racial justice matters this month. Please have a look and share.



Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer

This annual event takes place on **Monday 2 November**. This year may be different from usual, with many women's groups unable to meet together to celebrate. Unfortunately we are unable to send out printed resources as in previous years, but please do make use of the **Order of Service and Powerpoint resources** which have been prepared by the Revd Pam Searle. These are [available to download from our website](#).



Faith, Wellbeing and Mental Health

There is so much uncertainty as we face Coronavirus. It's now more important than ever to look after our mental health as a priority. With this in mind, we have created a [new area of our website to support church congregations](#). It is not a definitive list of all the resources available; if you know other useful ideas, websites or books that could be shared across Baptist churches please contact the Team at faithandsociety@baptist.org.uk.



Transforming Lives for Good (TLG) webinar

Across the UK there are children finding it hard to cope for an uncomfortable number of reasons. That's why TLG is all about helping churches to bring hope and a future to struggling children. The Emotional Rollercoaster is a free interactive webinar to help churches support children who are struggling with their emotions - it is for church staff members and volunteers who work one-on-one or with groups of children. [Click here for details and to book onto a webinar](#).



Christmas with LAMPs Collective

In these Covid times, Oxfordshire based Christian theatre company LAMPs Collective would love to help you keep Christmas 2020 special for your congregation as well as safe. Their Christmas package for 2020 includes a specially filmed performance of their Advent play *Bread and Starlight* - the story of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist - plus accompanying devotional material and options for live Zoom discussions with the creative team behind the show. [Click here for more details](#). "A mesmerising performance that had me captivated for an hour... so clever, poignant, beautiful and funny" - Audience member



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.



Catalyst Live is going online - Friday 9 October

Catalyst Live 2020 is coming – and it's more accessible than ever! 'Lite' in length but mighty in stature, bringing some of the world's leading theologians and Christian entertainers to your front room for one unforgettable Friday evening, starting at 7:30pm. Tickets for Catalyst Lite cost £5. [Click here for details about this year's speakers, and to book your place](#).



Continuing Ministerial Development - 12 and 14 October

Following the publication of the CMD handbook on 5 October, Tim Fergusson from the Ministries Team will be talking through the detail of what CMD means for ministers and answering your questions. The introductory webinar will be at 1pm on 12 October (with Amy Wearing) and repeated at the same time on 14 October (with Jane Day).

[Click here for 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. He will explore the theme: 'Man against the System' in which he will grapple with one of black history's perennial questions - how did this enslaved Baptist deacon upset the status quo and usher in a semblance of hope for the global black family? The Lecture Facilitator will be Dr Dulcie McKenzie. [Click here for more details and 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-November

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 three modules in October and November with each module running fortnightly over four evenings. The cost will be £10 per evening (£40 per module) and half price for those who are unwaged. [More information and registration are available on the Crucible website.](#)



Coffee and Online Chat to discuss the Christian faith

At the end of September, the team from christianity.org.uk held their first 'live chat' discussion 'What about prayer?'. They are planning to make this a monthly online chat discussing issues of the Christian faith. If you missed it, you can [catch up on their YouTube channel.](#)

Webinar recordings

Don't forget that you can catch up on all our webinar recordings which are available from our Resource Library. [Click here to find them.](#)