



Update: April 2021

Dear Friends

One of the post resurrection accounts of Jesus that resonates deeply this year is the story of Jesus joining the two disciples as they walked towards Emmaus. It was a long walk giving plenty of time for reflection and lots of space to talk. In the heat of the day, in the middle of their discussions, Jesus himself came near and walked along with them. What a beautiful picture!

Together they walked, they talked and they listened to Jesus as he retold the Hebrew story and revealed God's plan from the beginning.

Our prayer this April, in the days after Easter and as we walk the long journey into an unknown future, is that together we will hear the truths of Scripture in a fresh way. We pray that the Spirit of God will reveal once again the glory of the One who suffered all things for us and we pray that you will know something of your heart's stirring with hope and love in the days ahead.

In a small way we offer the reflections and resources below to help as we walk together.

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

This month's featured stories:



**Baptist Union Council:
March 2021 - Reporting on
the outcomes of the latest
meetings**



**Cycle ride to highlight
scourge of modern slavery
- a homage to abolitionist
Thomas Clarkson**



**Call & Care -
Now is the time to build
links with people who are
feeling isolated**

News:



President - 2022-23

Thank you to everyone who took part in the process to discern our next President, particularly as we are aware that the current circumstances have meant that churches may not have been able to discern together in quite the same ways as they would usually have done so. The outcome of this discernment is that **Hayley Young**, regional minister in the South Wales Baptist Association, will serve as our President in 2022-2023.



Baptists Together App

Our website baptist.org.uk contains a huge range of information and resources for our churches, with over 6000 pages to explore! To help you find the key and most up-to-date information for your church, we are excited to launch our new Baptists Together App which can be downloaded free of charge to your phone from baptist.org.uk/hubb Download it now for easy access to our website.



Applications for JPIT internship are now open!

Our Joint Public Issues Team full time internship, paid at the London Living Wage, is a chance to get practical experience in campaigning, communications and public policy – all whilst amplifying the voice of the Church in the public square! Applications to begin in September 2021 are now open. Could this be for you or someone you know? Applications close on Wednesday 14 April. [Click here for details.](#)



Baptist 5Q Cohort

Following on from the input of Alan Hirsch and Rich Robinson at their conference in January, Fresh Streams is inviting you to be part of a 5Q cohort starting in July. If you're a minister who is passionate about equipping disciples and leading a healthy church actively engaged in the mission of God, helping us to draw on the full potential of the fivefold ministries from Ephesians 4, then do [come along to a free webinar on 13 May to find out more.](#) For more information contact: Simon Goddard, simon@rivertree.org.uk



WCC Stewards Programme 2022

The World Council of Churches (WCC) invites ecumenical youth to be stewards at the 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 2022. The Stewards Programme aims to bring together a dynamic and diverse group of 160 young people from all over the world, from 21 August to 10 September. They also get to be involved in the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Young People, and is a great opportunity to experience an international conference. The deadline for applications has been extended to 30 June. [Click here for details.](#)

This month's featured resources:

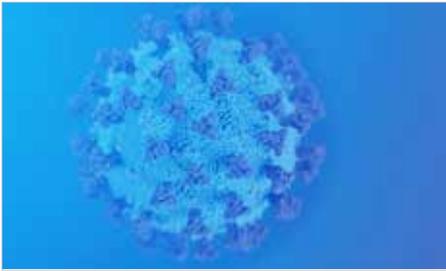


April Prayer Diary

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

- Easter
- Heart of England Baptist Association
- The Ministries Team
- Our ecumenical instruments: Churches together in England, Cytûn and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

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



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 the latest information, which has been updated to reflect the easing of lockdown restrictions.



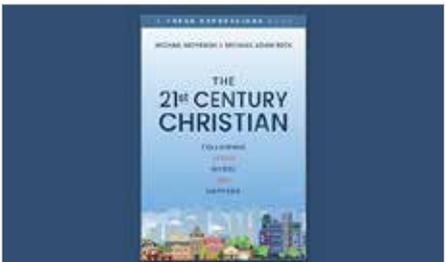
Politics in the Pulpit?

This new lectionary-based preaching resource from JPIT is available by video and podcast. In weekly 30 minute episodes, they'll ask how reclaiming the justice issues present in the biblical texts helps us to be good news in the world today. Each week will feature a different guest in discussion with Beth Allison-Glenny to discern the political dimensions present in the Scriptures. Together, they will reflect on how they connect with the week's current news and our role in the Kingdom of God. We hope this will be a useful and inspiring tool to resource preachers and worship leaders. Episodes will be released on Tuesday mornings. [Click here for the latest episode.](#)



JPIT Election Resources

Across the UK, elections will be taking place on 6 May. Our Joint Public Issues Team is supporting you to Think, Pray, Vote – whether it's in local or national elections, or for your Police and Crime Commissioner. [See JPIT's website for resources](#) to help you find out what you're voting for, explore issues briefings and how to hold a hustings.



The 21st Century Christian: Following Jesus Where Life Happens

Fresh Expressions has recently published this book - a timely contribution to church life as church and society begins to emerge from lockdown. The book is co-authored by Michael Moynagh (a recognised missional thinker) and Michael Beck (a fresh expressions practitioner). [Copies are available from www.fxresourcing.org/shop](http://www.fxresourcing.org/shop) (with a 10% discount until the end of April with code 21CENT10). Over the coming months, Mike Moynagh will be offering webinars about the book - contact Simon Goddard for details at simon@rivertree.org.uk.



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:



Spring Harvest Home online event - 8 - 14 April

Spring Harvest Home 21 will be streamed on a brand new, custom-made platform. You can watch and interact with exciting live worship celebrations, transformative teaching, insightful Bible study, fun kids sessions and so much more, all from the comfort of your own sofa. The regular price is only £55 for the four days of content including all age meetings and evening entertainment - and you can get a 10% discount using code SH21BU when registering. [Click here for details.](#)



CMD Webinar - Journeying together: the Order of Baptist Ministry - Wednesday 14 April

The Baptists Together CMD framework focusses on the practice five habits, three of which are attentiveness, accountability and connection. There are a number of ways we might sharpen these habits, but one way is to join a community that commits us to a certain way of being. Tim Fergusson will be in conversation with Colin Norris, team leader for Southern County Baptist Association, and Sarah Crane, a healthcare chaplain in Milton Keynes, will join us to talk about the Order of Baptist Ministry. [Click here for details and to join in.](#)



A Moment of Dishonour? Racism, Sewell and the Christian Response - Wednesday 14 April

The Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (Sewell) Report has generated a great deal of debate within society and the church since aspects of it were launched on 31 March 2021. This webinar with an expert panel including: Dr Robert Beckford, Sir Simon Woolley, the Ven Rosemarie Mallett and Eleasah Louis will be fantastic opportunity to hear from some of the keenest minds in church and society on this report, and for you to share your opinions on these issues. [Click here for details and to register.](#)



Back to Church – How to Rebuild? - Saturday 17 April

The Small Church Connexion is organising this Zoom webinar on *How to reach our hurting communities?* Time to talk, swap ideas and pray - with guest speakers Simon Goddard and Ruth Rice. [Click here for more information.](#)



DNA Christian Discipleship and Leadership taster days - April-July

Do you... Dare to dream about your destiny in God? Realise that your dream demands development? Want your life to make a difference? DNA is for EVERYONE; whether for you it is a Christian gap year, sabbatical, education or alongside work and family. Find out more about how DNA can help you at one of their Taster Days (currently being offered via Zoom). [See their website for details.](#)



Five habits of CMD: Workshop - Wednesday 21 April

In October 2020, Baptists Together launched a CMD Handbook setting out expectations of recognised Baptist ministers for their continuing ministerial development (CMD). The approach centres on five habits of CMD which ministers are asked to adapt to their own needs and contexts. This workshop (delivered in two two-hour sessions 10am-12pm and 1-3pm) supports ministers in that process of adapting the five habits. Cost £35. Click here [to book for the workshop](#)



2021 Whitley Lecture - 21 and 27 April

This year's lecture will be delivered by David McLachlan on the theme: *Does This Cross Have Disabled Access?* As churches increasingly seek to include people with disabilities, how disability fits into the gospel is a pressing question. Disability and sin often appear together in the Bible, which is awkward. Jesus' healing signs, as a foretaste of the saving power of the cross, only seem to make matters worse. The lecture asks whether the insights of people with disabilities might help here. [Click here for more information.](#)



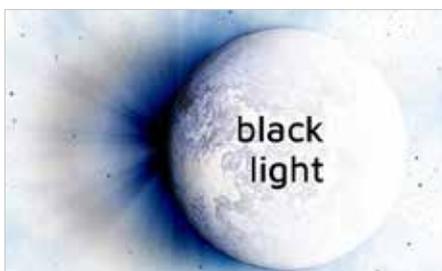
Attentiveness & Action workshop - Thursday 22 April

The Incarnate Network is hosting a series of online workshops around the theme of Attentiveness & Action. The next of these will be from 10:00-11:30 when Hannah Malcolm will help us reflect on the current climate crisis. Hannah is an ordinand who writes and organises around climate justice and the Church. [Tickets are just £5 and are available here.](#)



Wells in the Wilderness: BRF's Virtual women's day 23 April 2021

For the first time ever, BRF's annual women's conference will take place online. The theme is inspired by the promises in Isaiah 43:18-19 and five speakers (Amy Boucher-Pye, Catherine Butcher, Mags Duggan, Claire Musters and Rachel Turner) will explore the different ways in which God provides refreshment in the wilderness. Tickets are £15. [Click here for more information, and to book.](#)



Black Light - April-June

Urban Expression and the Ascension Trust are running this online course over 8 evenings exploring various topics, including: The Black presence in the Bible and church history, The experience of Black communities in the UK, Reverse mission and multicultural church, Engaging with racism in church and society, Black and White in partnership. This is an updated version of a course first developed by Les Isaac and Stuart Murray Williams, which ran in London in the 1990s, and will be offered as a freestanding module alongside the popular Crucible course. Speakers include Ben Lindsay, Kate Coleman, Robert Beckford and Bev Thomas. [Click here for details, and to book.](#)



The Trussell Trust's Big Church Leaders' Breakfasts - April and June

Food banks offer vital support to people in crisis and churches are at the heart of that work. The Trussell Trust are inviting church leaders to join them for a Big Church Leaders' Breakfast, to say thank you for all that churches do to make this possible, and to share their vision for a hunger free future. All church leaders are welcome, whether your church supports a food bank or you'd just like to hear more about the Trussell Trust's work. [Click here to find out more and register.](#)



Opening up Chaplaincy - Wednesday 28 April

The Free Churches Group is offering this free webinar on Zoom to hear from serving chaplains in prisons, healthcare and education about their distinctive ministry, learn about how to support chaplains, and find out more about opportunities in chaplaincy and how to take the first steps. [Click here to book your place.](#)



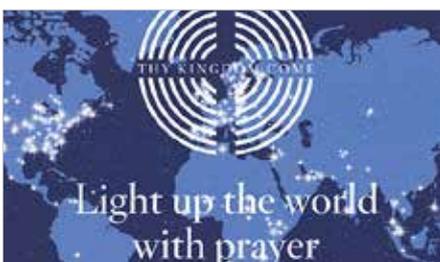
Crucible Course - 11 May-22 June

'Restoring Hope' is the last of six modules from the Crucible course running online during this season of restrictions on meeting in person. It will run fortnightly on Tuesday evenings. This module explores how, in light of God's mission to bring shalom (peace) to all creation, we can live towards that hope and help to create communities of peace. You are welcome to try out the 'Restoring Hope' module – just £40 for four evenings. [Click here for information and registration.](#)



Baptist Assembly Online – 13-16 May

We are very excited that, being an online event this year, Baptist Assembly 2021 can be made available to all, offering a unique opportunity to bring a large number of people together to join in worship, prayer, Bible study and consideration of current issues. The sessions will be free for anybody to join via our website – but [register to join us](#) and we'll send you all the links you'll need in advance. [See our website for more about the weekend's programme](#), including seminar topics, [information about our keynote speaker Shane Claiborne](#), and registration. We hope you and your church family will be able to join us during the weekend.



Pentecost - Sunday 23 May

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. What started in 2016 as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer. [Click here for details and resources.](#) This year the National Day of Prayer and Worship is also hosting a **Virtual Pentecost** day of prayer - [click here for details.](#)

