



Update: June 2021

Dear Friends

As we look ahead into June, the possibility of change to the current Covid restrictions looms. For so many this is great news, a sign of new beginnings and fresh starts. For others there is greater reticence; a lot has happened in the last year or so and for many there is pain and fear that will persist beyond 21 June.

As we step forward there is a sense of us holding out just what we have in our hands and it feels mightily inadequate, just five small loaves and two small fish. And yet we bring them to our Lord, trusting that what God does with what we bring, what we have in our hands, is so much greater than anything we can ask or imagine.

As you step forward, bringing to Jesus just what you have in your hands, please be assured that we pray with you as you seek to serve in new ways. We offer you these resources, ideas and reflections and our desire is to bless you right where you are today.

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

This month's featured stories:



Hedge of hope - whilst Broadway Baptist Church's building was closed, they made a feature of a hedge



Jesus is Lord - each of us, whoever we are, whatever our calling, is to live in the light of this reality



What is God's perfect dream where you live? - a challenge from Shane Claiborne during this year's Baptist Assembly

News:



Project Violet

The Centre for Baptist Studies, Regent's Park College, Oxford is pleased to announce Project Violet, a three-year participatory research project that will examine the place of women in Baptist ministry. The aim of the project is to understand more fully the theological, missional, and structural obstacles women ministers face in the Baptist community in Great Britain and identify ways forward. The project is participatory in approach so participants will be engaged as co-researchers and supported in asking questions and researching answers. There will be an **online launch event on Thursday 1 July** at 7pm. To join the Project mailing list and get an invitation to the launch email: projectviolet@baptist.org.uk



Baptists Together Online Shop

We have recently updated our online shop and have added some new titles, including several by Baptist authors. We aim to price these books competitively to support these authors and our excellent fulfilment company, Verite - and of course any profits from sales will be given to Home Mission. We encourage you to **have a look at the titles we have available**. *[If you have previously ordered items from our online shop, you should also have received an email from us regarding your new username for your shop account.]*



Baptist 5Q Cohort

Fresh Streams are pleased to announce that bursaries are now available for this year's Baptist 5Q cohort - for millennials, those in challenging contexts (where finances might be an issue), and potentially for those wanting to join the Baptist 5Q training team. More information about this continuing ministerial development opportunity can be found by watching the **recording of the taster webinar**. For those interested in finding out more you can also **register for the Q&A session** at 2pm on 15 June. RiverTree are administering the course on behalf of Fresh Streams and 5Q, and any questions can be directed to simon@rivertree.org.uk.



Coastal Expression

When we talk of coastal towns, for many of us that evokes childhood images of fish and chips, ice-creams, sandy beaches and a paddle in the clear blue sea. Perhaps it comes as a surprise to learn that coastal towns are among some of our most deprived communities in the UK and places where local church is often in terminal decline. There are some small but faithful church communities, however their energy seems to be absorbed in survival rather than mission. Coastal Expression is a new mission agency that will connect and support those seeking to embody the good news incarnationally in under-churched and marginalised coastal communities. We aim to encourage others to consider relocating to coastal neighbourhoods and discover the opportunities there for joining in with God's mission. To find out more contact Barney Barron: barney@urbanexpression.org.uk



The impact of Anna Chaplaincy

Anna Chaplaincy was founded by BRF in 2010 with the aim of supporting older people both spiritually and practically and to enable them to continue contributing to society through their experience, skills and wisdom. With increasing demand for spiritual care, BRF surveyed the Anna Chaplaincy network during Autumn 2020 and you can **read a report of their findings**.

This month's featured resources:



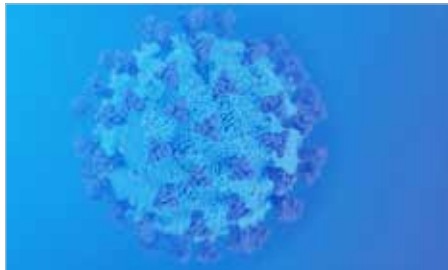
June Prayer Diary

The **June Prayer Diary** is now available to download from our website.

The particular themes this month are:

- North Western Baptist Association
- Support Services Specialist Team
- Refugee Week
- A Covid-free World

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.



Baptist Assembly Recordings

If you missed our Assembly last month, or would like to watch one of the sessions again, the recordings are all available on our website. As well as the 'In Memoriam', challenging messages from our keynote speaker **Shane Claiborne**, **Sunday morning worship** service and our five **seminars**, you can also meet our **newly accredited ministers** in videos prepared by each of the associations. [See our Assembly website.](#)



Journal of Baptist Theology in Context

The third issue of the *Journal of Baptist Theology in Context* is now available and includes the following articles:

- *Baptist Identity, Once More* – Stephen R. Holmes
- *Is British Baptist Ecclesiology a Hindrance to Intergenerational Faith Formation within British Baptist Churches?* – Simon Harry
- *Renewing a Modern Denomination by Andy Goodliff: Review Symposium* – Paul S. Fiddes, Lina Toth, Tony Peck and Andy Goodliff

[Click here to download the Journal.](#)



BRF Daily Prayer

You're invited to be part of the BRF online community to pray and worship together. They will be meeting at 08:45 each weekday (until Friday 25 June) on YouTube and on Facebook, where each week a different BRF host will offer fifteen minutes of prayer, reflections and Bible readings. If you'd like to dive deeper into prayer in the company of other Christians, BRF would love you to join in. [Click here for details and to join in.](#)



Politics in the Pulpit?

This lectionary-based preaching resource from JPIT is available by video and podcast. Each week features a different guest in discussion with Beth Allison-Glenny to discern the political dimensions present in the Scriptures. Together, they 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.](#)



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:



CTBI 'God with us' Bible Studies - 3, 9 and 14 June

God With Us is an anthology of Bible Studies, prayers, reflections, poems, hymns and song suggestions, activities for youth groups and other ways to include worship and prayer on the theme of refugees and migration. Join CTBI on these online Bible Studies (via Zoom) to explore the *God With Us* resource over three evening sessions. [Click here for details and to register for the studies](#).



Let's talk understanding conflict - 4, 11 and 18 June

Would you like to learn how to understand conflict in your home, work or community? The Blackley Centre is running a series of three workshops to help you to improve your understanding of conflict, the effect it has on relationships and how good communication skills can help prevent conflict, restore and re-build families, organisations and communities. [Click here for details and to book your place](#).



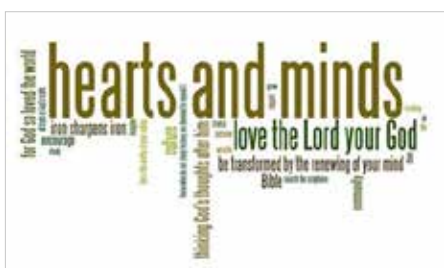
Christian Council on Ageing: Conference Calls - Tues 15 June

These Conference Calls are discussions on important issues open to anyone interested in the work of the Churches with and for older people. The presentation in June will be led by Maureen O'Neill (Director of Faith in Older People) on the subject 'Supporting those who care for us' and will focus on the issues which have emerged for health and social care staff in our care homes and care at home organisations as a result of the pandemic. Register your interest or enquire about places by emailing discussion@coa.org.uk



What can Fresh Streams do for you? - Wednesday 16 June

Fresh Streams is a national network that aims to equip, inspire, connect, resource and give courage to ministers and leadership teams. They connect with over 350 church leaders and leadership teams from over 100 local churches in England and Wales, the vast majority of them Baptist. What can Fresh Streams offer ministers especially that will help them in their development as they seek to serve and lead church communities and mission projects? We will be joined by Andy Glover, Amy Wearing and Pete Everitt who will discuss their vision for this movement. [Click here for more information and to join this webinar](#).



Hearts and Minds conference - Monday 21 June

This online day conference, mainly for Baptist ministers, is an opportunity to present or listen to papers within a friendly, supportive environment. Keynote speaker: Anthony Reddie. Click here to [register to attend](#).



National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast - Friday 25 June

This year's Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast (from 08:00-08:45) is online and features prayers, hymns, and an address by The Rt Revd Professor NT Wright, who will speak on the theme of 'Life Beyond Covid: A Renewed Hope'. The event is an annual recognition of the contribution that Christianity makes to the national life of the UK. [Click here for more details.](#)



Urban Expression 'open Zoom' event - Monday 28 June

At the end of March, Urban Expression hosted two 'Open Zoom' events for anyone interested in joining or forming a team, offering support, or simply wanting to know more about Urban Expression. 17 guests attended these events, in which team leaders shared their stories and there were opportunities for questions and discussion. Another 'Open Zoom' event is planned at 19:30 for those who were unable to join us in March, and others who are interested. [Click here to register.](#)



CIO Online Training Event for BUGB churches - Wed 30 June

This is an opportunity to explore in greater depth the legal structure for charities known as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). It will be of interest to charity trustees who are assessing the risk profile of their church and considering a change to the legal structure of their church. It is also of relevance to those considering a CIO as an option for a separate project such as a pre-school or coffee shop. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)



Baptist World Congress - 7-10 July

The Baptist World Congress is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for Baptists worldwide to stand together. For the first time in our history, Congress will be offered as a fully virtual event, making it more accessible than ever before. Join us online as the BWA family continues to stand together during this critical time – celebrating our unity across borders, languages, and ethnicities. [Click here for details and to register.](#)



Learning from each other: the riches of Baptist journals - Wednesday 14 July

As we pursue learning we can draw from a vast pool of resources fed by any number of different church and theological streams. It's good to read around of course, but sometimes we overlook the thinking and writing that emerges from within our Baptist family. We will be exploring the ethos and typical content of, among others, the *Baptist Ministers' Journal*, and the *Journal of Baptist Theology in Context*. [Click here to join this webinar.](#)



Sam Sharpe Lecture 2021 - Thursday 21 October

Sam Sharpe Lectures in conjunction with House of Commons present this lecture being delivered by Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, CEO of Christian Aid. Please save the date - more details to follow.