



Update: July 2021

Dear Friends

As we put together July's update, I am sitting wrapped in a blanket, listening to a storm raging in the background. We are hoping that summer will eventually come along and we might be able to sit, read and relax in the sun, as well as be able to keep the children occupied outside during the school holidays.

Perhaps listening to the storm reflects life a little at the moment. We are standing listening to a storm raging in the background and we do not know how or when we will glimpse the sun break through. With lockdown ending there is still more change to negotiate. In churches we know we cannot go 'back', but we seek a path forward that involves all. We hear the fear and pain in our communities which continues to rage; people hungry for God's kingdom to come and God's peace to reign, even though people might not express it in these words.

There are many stories in the Bible of storms and disruption; which ones come to mind for you? In each one there is always a challenge of faith. Faith in the sovereign God who brings the moments of sunshine in, through and out of the storm.

In our Update this month there are stories of faith as the storm rages and there are opportunities to walk together in hope and faith. Our hope is that you will see rays of light as you read and find hope in the resources we have shared.

This summer, as we may hear a storm raging in the background, we pray you know the sun shining in surprising ways and experience the blessing of God as the light shines in the darkness.

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

This month's featured stories:



'Visionary leadership, personal kindness' - tributes to the Revd Dr Joel Edwards who died last week

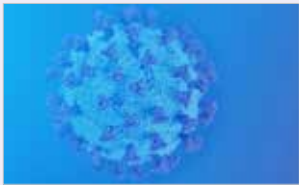


Community grocery opens in Baptist church in Liverpool - in partnership with the Message Trust



Guildford Baptist Church is the latest recipient of Through the Roof's Luke 5 Award for disability inclusion

News:



Coronavirus Guidance

On 5 July, the UK Government announced that at step 4 of their Covid-recovery roadmap for England they will remove outstanding legal restrictions on social contact, life events, face coverings, and the closure of venues. Once step 4 is confirmed (on 12 July), the nature of our own guidance for churches in England will be changing. We will outline some principles and questions to consider that will enable churches in their own reflection and decision-making - we hope to publish this revised guidance during the week starting 12 July. The Welsh Government are due to review their guidance and restrictions on 15 July. What they announce will determine the nature of our ongoing guidance for churches in Wales. [Please keep checking out website for the latest information.](#)



Project Violet

The Centre for Baptist Studies, Regent's Park College, Oxford launched Project Violet, a three-year participatory research project that will examine the place of women in Baptist ministry last week. 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. If you missed the launch a [recording is available on the Project Violet website](#), where you can also [sign up to the mailing list for updates](#).



Parliamentary debate on debt

Over the last few months, the JPIT team have been working with MPs to get a debate scheduled on the impact of covid-19 on household debt, as part of the Reset The Debt campaign. This debate has been scheduled, for **Thursday 8 July** at 13:30. We need as many MPs as possible to attend the debate to have the biggest impact. Make sure your MP is there. [Write to your MP today](#) to urge them to attend the backbench debate on 8 July, to listen to and put forward solutions to a growing crisis in household debt.



The Relay to COP26 led by YCCN is underway!

Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) is coordinating a 'Relay to COP26', asking that the UK government uses its influence to ensure no country gets pushed into debt because of climate change. Click here to [watch the send out service](#) from Truro Cathedral. The Relay is open to all ages - [sign up on the website](#). The Relay is particularly looking for offers of accommodation. You can [see the gaps here and sign-up on the website](#). If you would be interested in supporting the relay in this way, please email Rachel at hello@yccn.uk.

This month's featured resources:



July Prayer Diary

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

- 'Together' the Baptist World Congress
- Central Baptist Association
- Baptist Colleges
- BMS World Mission

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



Journeying Together

Parent and toddler groups have the incredible opportunity to open their doors to welcome and serve families as they journey through the ups and downs of family life. This free training resource to help strengthen and develop your toddler group is now available from Care for the Family, to equip your toddler group teams to come together to dream, discuss and plan what your unique group could become. [Click here for details.](#)



The impact of Covid-19 on women who sell sex or are sexually exploited

Working with Beyond the Streets, a charity supporting women who sell sex or are sexually exploited, the Joint Public Issues Team have put together a research report on the effects of Covid-19 on women who sell sex or are sexually exploited. Research early in the pandemic indicated that women who sell sex or who are sexually exploited were likely to be a group that faced particular difficulties. The report looks through the lens of poverty and the lens of trauma, and outlines some policy suggestions. [Click here for the full report.](#)



CYF ministry at Bristol Baptist College

Bristol Baptist College is committed to hearing the voice of children and young people and enabling their full participation in the life of our churches. They are also acutely aware of the lack of children and young people in many of our churches and so there's an urgency in continuing to discover what it means to share the good news and to be good news to the children, families and young people in our communities. Have a look at the training courses on offer or get in touch to chat and pray about how you might fit in to this. [Click here for more information.](#)



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-Glenney 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:



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.](#)



Prayer Broadcast - Wednesday 14 July

The latest in our continuation of Prayer Broadcasts will feature the Revd Johnny Pozzo - Pastor of New Malden Baptist Church in south west London, a church of ordinary people on a journey exploring, experiencing and expressing the heart of God. Johnny will be praying alongside our General Secretary Lynn Green, and one of our BSL Interpreters. [Click here to join in the prayer broadcast at 19:00.](#)



Big Covid Debrief - Thursday 15 July

Charlie Clayton (Pioneer in Mevagissey, Cornwall) introduces this brand new, free resource designed to help churches creatively lead their communities as they reflect and process the events of the last 12+ months of the COVID pandemic and the national Lockdowns. There will be opportunity for questions and sharing ideas during the webinar as well as hearing how the resource will be used in Mevagissey in the months ahead. [Click here for details and registration.](#)



Journeying from Despair to Hope - Tuesday 20 July

This is an event for church and community leaders to explore the theme and resources for this year's Prisons Week: 10-16 October. It is an exciting opportunity for Prisons Week and church and community leaders to meet and hear about this year's campaign, its theme and the prayer resources available, and to consider how we can best encourage others to pray. [Click here for more information.](#)



How to pull together a CMD audit - Wednesday 29 September

The Baptists Together CMD framework asks all ministers to conduct an annual CMD audit with a colleague of their choosing, ideally in the late autumn of each year. The purpose is to review how we have been practising the five CMD habits in the last twelve months and how we intend to do so in the coming twelve. [Click here for details and to join the 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.



Discernment, dialogue and the Church Meeting: A way forward - Thursday 4 November

Hosted by Project Violet on Zoom, Prof Rachel Muers, University of Leeds will introduce the recent World Council of Churches work on discernment in the church. The Revd Ruth Moriarty will respond from a Baptist perspective, reflecting her research on church meetings. More details to follow.



Triologue 8th Annual Preachers' Conference - Saturday 13 November

This free conference via Zoom on the theme 'The Ecumenical Pulpit' promises to be an exciting event to discover how different church traditions prepare and deliver the Sunday sermon and what we can learn from another preaching tradition. This is truly an ecumenical event that will be given by our guest lecturer Dr Joe Aldred. **To register and to find out more about this conference** please email Samuel Thomas at sydenham_ntcog@hotmail.com



Satellites - 9-13 August 2022

Satellites is a new five-day summer gathering designed to inspire teenagers to live with God at the centre of their lives all year round. Organised by Youthscape, it's taking place at the East of England Arena in Peterborough, 9-13 August 2022. Tickets are already on sale - and there's a super saver ticket rate of just £85 as an incentive to book this far in advance. [Click here for more information.](#)