



Update: November 2023

Dear Friends

As we send this to you today, I hear the sound of high winds and see the rain battering the windows, and the forecast says it'll get worse! This may reflect the many storms we see across our communities and our world today. Storms that leave mess and destruction in their wake. And yet ... God is: I AM WHO I AM.

As we are sent into the world to make disciples, to baptise and to teach, to point others towards the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we stand firm on the promise that Jesus is with us always. In the storms our world faces today, let's remember the Lord is at hand and bring everything in prayer to God.

Today we pray for you. In the midst of the storms you face may know the overshadowing of the Triune God of love.

Every blessing

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

Feel free to forward this email to others in your church, or encourage them to sign up to receive our regular emails by completing the form at the bottom of every page of [our website](#).

This month's featured stories:



'The challenge is a big one, but small is special' - Notes from a recent Baptist Union Smaller Church online gathering



The whole truth and nothing but the truth? AI, and how it relates to the gospel - Baptists Together magazine article by Steve Ayers



Creating sacred spaces for growing generations - Whitley Lecture 2023. How do we welcome people of all ages?

News:



Praying for Israeli and Palestinian People

Along with other faith leaders, our General Secretary Lynn Green is encouraging us all to continue to pray and work for meaningful, lasting peace between people of all faiths and backgrounds in the Holy Land. Click here for her [statement and prayer](#). Paul Weller, a member of our Inter Faith Working Group has also written [prayers for Israel/Palestine the world and ourselves](#).



Baptist Union Council: October 2023

Our Council met last month at which key items included an update to our Financial Model Review, an in-principle vote on whether to welcome the St Hild Centre for Baptist Ministry as a College member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and an update from Project Violet. [Click here for the report](#).



Ministerial Rules Consultation

We would like to remind our ministers and churches that the deadline for completing responses on the [Consultation survey](#) is **30 November**. The external Consultation Research Team is hoping to get the views of individuals and churches across the whole range of views, so we would encourage you to share your reflections via the online survey, as this will help them to know how widespread the different views are across our Union. A response to say that you do not wish to engage with the survey is also valuable for the researchers. For your responses to be included in the research team's data you will need the unique Reference number which was sent to each minister / church secretary. If you cannot find yours, please contact consultation@baptist.org.uk and ask for it to be resent.



Baptist Union Presidency - 2025-26

A reminder that we are inviting nominations for the person who will serve as Baptist Union President in 2025-26. The Presidency is open to anyone who is a member of one of our churches, 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 2023.**

This month's featured resources:



November Prayer Diary

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

- Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer
- Remembrance Sunday
- Safeguarding Sunday
- The East Midland Baptist Association

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



Cost of Living Crisis

Change Makers Media and The Fuelcast have produced a new video series designed to help you and your church think about and respond to the impact of the rising cost of living on our neighbourhoods and communities. The four videos (each 15-22 minutes) include stories sharing the difficult reality of life in the UK. Accompanying written resources develop the themes explored in each video, offer relevant scripture readings and suggest questions for meaningful discussion. Click here [for more information about these free resources](#).



Love My Neighbour

With winter on the way, Alex Drew introduces *Love My Neighbour*, a campaign to remind and encourage us all to intentionally connect with our older neighbours this winter - 'Help shut winter loneliness and open door to God's incredible love'. [Click here to find out more.](#)



A Name to Live Up To

In this new film Jane Day interviews Helen Pankhurst about what it is like to live up to a famous name and why she continues to be passionate about combating sexism. Jane relates this to **Project Violet** which aims to investigate women's experiences in ministry whilst developing women ministers. We hope the Baptist community will watch and discuss this film in preparation for the release of the findings of Project Violet in May 2024. An accompanying leaflet to aid discussion is also available to download. [Click here for details.](#)



Disrupting Worship podcast

This podcast from Engaging Worship is a set of conversations about the future of gathered worship. Season Three is all about ***The Rest Is Worship*** with interviews and chats around what it means to respond to Jesus' invitation to rest. In episode 3.7 Baptist minister Ruth Rice shares about Renew Wellbeing Spaces, where it's 'okay to be not okay'. Click here to [access all episodes of the podcast.](#)



Nationwide Christmas campaign 'Shine Your Light' launched

'Shine Your Light' calls Christians to unite in towns, villages and cities this Christmas to take the message outdoors. The initiative is led by the National Day of Prayer and Worship in collaboration with many denominations and key ministries, including Baptists Together. It will run on the weekend of 16 and 17 December, with an emphasis on community events and activities, including nativities and family focused opportunities. Click here [for more information.](#)



Sam Sharpe Lecture 2023

In case you missed Professor Anthony Reddie's recent Lecture, '*From Sam Sharpe to Black Lives Matter: The Continued Struggle for Black Agency and Self-Determination*' a recording of it is now available to listen to on the Sam Sharpe area of our website. [Click here to find the Lecture.](#)

This month's featured events:



First Friday - Friday 3 November

This monthly Zoom-based gathering aims to help anyone involved in communications across Baptists Together. Led by local and regional communications expert Hannah Fleming-Hill and national Communications Manager Mike Lowe, with other special guests. [Click here for the programme and to register to join in.](#) Here you can also find recordings of previous First Friday gatherings.

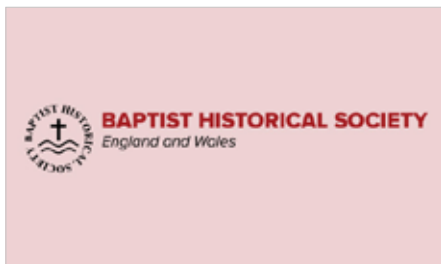


Please be aware that the **Hope for Justice event** planned for Saturday 4 November **has been postponed until 13 April 2024**.



Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer - Monday 6 November

For more than 70 years, sisters in Christ have united in prayer for the Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer on the first Monday of November. The 2023 theme is 'Breath of Life' drawn from Job 33:4: 'The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.' As we pray this year, may you breathe deeply the presence of God as you experience the power of collective prayers being lifted in more than 100 nations! Click here for [more information and resources](#)



Baptist Historical Society Website Launch - Tuesday 7 November

The Baptist Historical Society has been working on a new website which aims to help Baptists (and anyone else) understand their history over the last four hundred years. The website has some new features, which will be a good way of resourcing those doing historical work or anyone interested in our rich and diverse story. Join the website launch at 8pm - a brief meeting to showcase the website and introduce people to the work of the Society. [Click here to join on Zoom](#).



Christian Resources Exhibition Midlands - 8-9 November

Often dubbed 'the ideal church show' CRE Midlands, at Cranmore Park, Solihull, will feature more than 160 exhibitors offering products and services for churches, ranging from contactless card machines to customised keyboards for worship. Mission on the Map will bring together a dozen missions working nationally and internationally. Some 50 talks will feature experts offering advice in various aspects of church life, from fund raising to faith sharing. Advance tickets available from £3 (£8 on the door). [Click here for more information](#).



Deaconesses: a history hidden in plain sight - Thursday 16 November

Friends of the Angus invite you to this online seminar being given by the Revd Dr Ruth Gouldbourne, and hosted in association with Project Violet. For more information please contact fota@regents.ox.ac.uk Click here for [free booking for online access](#) via ticket source.



JustMoney national conference - 18 November

This year's national JustMoney conference will be held in Birmingham, a city that is home to a huge amount of activity tackling injustice and building stronger communities. The conference is a great opportunity to gather together to worship, pray, share and encourage one another in our vision of a world where money is used to shape a fairer, greener future for everyone. This year focuses on the role of money in building a fairer society, where everyone can flourish and where everyone is included. Click here [for more information and free registration](#).



Anabaptist Lecture 2023 - Wednesday 22 November

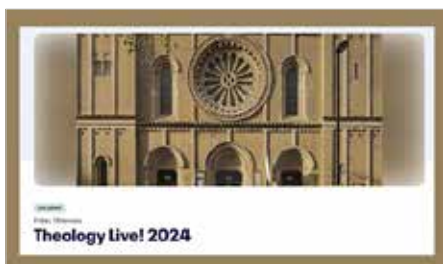
The Centre for Anabaptist Studies' Annual Lecture is entitled '*Why Women Doing Theology Matters for Everyone: Sexual Violence, Tainted Legacies, and the Integrity of Anabaptist Theology*' and will be given by Dr Fran Porter. Click here [for more information and to register to join](#) online for this free lecture at 11:00.



Fresh Streams National Leadership Conference - 15-17 January 2024

Each January ministers, leaders, elders, deacons, worship leaders, youth leaders – whole church leadership teams – come to The Hayes and are inspired and invigorated. You are invited to join them!

Five keynote speakers will be speaking into the theme of conference - ***Together: Discipleship in a Divergent World*** - and there is a great line up of seminar speakers including Ken Benjamin, Rachel Heffer, Martin Young, Simon Harris, Simon Goddard, Kate Irvin, Sue Glover and Isabella Senior. Worship leaders are Josh and Florrie Bishop Hall. Click here [for more information and online booking](#).



Theology Live - 19 January 2024

Theology Live has been running for six years. A day conference for Baptists to explore theology together, with specialist input and time for discussion, it's been a fantastic mix of papers by Baptists engaged in theological research and study. Theology Live in 2024 will be a little different, and will take the time to reflect on how we discern, so central to our being Baptist, and the theology that gives it meaning and weight. Read more about [plans for the event and a link to book your place](#).



Baptist Assembly - 17-19 May 2024

Why not plan to join us at our Assembly in Telford next year, with a group from your church? To get a feel of what Assembly is like, we have a selection of videos from this year's event now available to view on our website. Please [see the Assembly website to access them](#). More details about Assembly 2024 to follow.