

around  
the  
NBA  
new

May 2020



We are passionate to see God's Kingdom come in power to touch people's lives and shape our society.

## Covid, Change, Creativity and Christ

**COVID-19** It has been devastating in so many ways. The Covid-19 crisis has led to fear, anxiety, death and depression. Our hearts go out to those who have lost loved ones and to those who continue to face serious health issues including those whose treatment for other conditions has been delayed. We continue to pray for those who have suffered the illness, those affected by it, those caring and those bearing the burden of leadership and difficult decisions. There seems to be light at the end of the tunnel, but we are still needing to be extremely careful, to stay alert! Although there has been a wonderful release of compassion, care and creativity we must not overlook the distressing impact many have felt as the number of deaths begins to match 50% of the number of civilians killed in the UK during the Second World War.

**CHANGE** Covid has brought change. Immediately in the restriction of activity through the lockdown and furloughing, but also the call for, and potential of, deeper and longer lasting change. There could be change in the way we view and engage in community, environment policies, the procedures and values that shape our economic and social policies. However, the journalist and former MP, Matthew Parris, suggested that we will be changed ... 'for three days.' We will certainly feel different initially and may be changed, but there are strong cultural defaults that will restrain us and call us back to previous ways of thinking along with the need to find security in the familiar. Any change that is valuable will mean being intentional with clear visions of possibilities.

**CREATIVITY** Accompanying the amazing sense of community and compassion has been the release of creativity both within the church and the wider community. We

have been creative in using the opportunities for pastoral care, mission to the community and worship. We have learnt new ways of enriching our spirituality, deepening our relationship with God, and new skills in the using of technology. Zoom used only to be about fast cars. Now we get Zoomed out, but we are using such technology in worship, mission, fellowship and discipleship. We can rejoice in the creativity and in the acceptance that people are doing their best and that the homely, if not rough and ready, is as welcome as the professionally honed.

**CHRIST** We say we have changed and will be changed. We have been creative in technology and art, but what do we take forward. There is a unique opportunity to reflect on what God is doing in and through all of this, but as we do so we should not forget the suffering of many. If the cultural defaults of our church culture, and the wider community, are to be appropriately challenged then maybe we have been given a very significant opportunity. We can think more creatively, almost as if starting afresh, about how we enable people to come to know Christ and grow in Him. We can be tempted to rejoice in the creative things that we have done and stop there, but much more we should rejoice in the faithfulness of God who has stood with us, walked with us, challenged us, changed us and equipped us. What would He have us take forward?

**Covid, Change, Creativity and Christ.** Undoubtedly the most significant is Christ. Covid threatened to overwhelm us, change and creativity has helped us, but Christ will sustain us. He is Lord of Covid, change, creativity and all things. We trust in Him, He is to be our focus whatever the changes we make.

John Claydon

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# From Camino To Coronavirus

## Lessons From The Camino De Santiago For The Coronavirus Lock-Down

Last autumn I had the huge privilege of three months' sabbatical away from my regular ministry with the NBA. I would like to say a huge thank you to the Association family for giving me this opportunity, which was significant and life-enhancing in many ways. The most memorable part was to travel to the south of France and then embark on walking 500 miles of the Camino Frances pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in North-West Spain, a challenge which took me five weeks. It was quite a transformational experience, which is still having a continuing impact upon me.

In this short piece I can't go into great detail, but I discovered that the spiritual discipline of pilgrimage being rediscovered in the Protestant branches of the Christian Church, brings huge benefits. In particular, now that we are living in very different circumstances with the Coronavirus lock-down, many of the spiritual disciplines of pilgrimage are relevant and applicable in our current restricted way of life. Here I offer a few reflections on disciplines which I hope will be helpful for you.

**Learning to live more simply.** On pilgrimage one must 'downsize' to what will fit into a backpack and to carry as little weight for the journey as possible. This is a real antidote and challenge to our modern materialistic and consumerist culture, which gets its demonic influence all too easily and deeply into church life because it is so all-pervasive. However, in lock-down, we are all now being forced to live a more simplified life, and brings with it an opportunity to reflect on what are essen-

tials for living well and what of our lifestyle, possessions and activities we can well do without.

**Living in the present.** Slowing down and taking everything at walking pace enables one to notice sounds, sights, smells and physical sensations more intensely, and to appreciate these. So often we miss seeing God in the details of our lives because we're so busy rushing from one thing to another. The current lock-down has required us to take each day as it comes, because the future is still unclear. Because we are living in a restricted geographical space, we have the opportunity to become more aware of our home and surroundings. We notice the bird-song, the sunsets, the changing of the seasons in more detail. God is to be encountered in this attentiveness to what is around us.

Reflecting on our core identity. On pilgrimage everything else – work, family, home, media – are stripped away. Who am I when it's literally just me and a few belongings on a road? I discovered God as my loving heavenly Father in a fresh and deeper way. As we live with much of our 'normal' life stripped away, this gives us opportunity to focus upon our self-identity and to draw more deeply into the love of the Father who holds us in this crisis and at all times.

**Living out a culture of hospitality and generosity.** On pilgrimage I was able to experience God's grace in the kindness of others – people from many different nations – whom I met along the way, either fellow pilgrims or those who run the hostels, cafes and other services along the route. This in turn has led me to seek to be a more generous and grace-filled person towards others.



Even in lock-down, we can reach out to our near neighbours and online friends through acts of kindness and generosity. We can respond to people's physical needs such as by delivering food and medication; to help people's social, emotional and mental health needs through conversations; to address spiritual needs through offering prayer and sharing the hope which we have in Christ.

**Learning to live more spontaneously and to be guided by the Spirit.** For me this meant not booking any accommodation, giving away my guidebook and trusting that God would lead me to a good place to stay and good people to socialise with each day. And he didn't let me down and provided for my needs in some remarkable ways. The pilgrimage has enabled me to give God a little more control and freedom to take me out of routine and the familiar, to interrupt me from what I have planned. Now that we are in lock-down, we are forced out of the normal routine and we may find ourselves in need of financial or practical provision. This is a time when we can look with more dependence upon the God who has promised to give us what we need.

Being open to learn through the setbacks, challenges and difficulties. Walking 500 miles was inevitably tough at times, not just physically but also emotionally. But right from

## Show up, shut up: Settling into Chaplaincy

Having made my presence and purpose known to the staff nurse on duty, I stepped into bay 6, feeling the same fear in my gut that I felt the first time I entered a room with sick patients and worried relatives, like I'm imposing upon people's suffering. This particular bay consisted of two people and I struck up a conversation with the patient in bed 1. He sat in his chair, head down, looking at his lap. We chatted about normal everyday things like the weather and hobbies. He missed his garden and told me how he'd usually be preparing his borders at this time of year. Spring was coming but he didn't anticipate fruit. He was waiting to find out exactly what was wrong. All he knew, with his catalogue of suffering and recent hospital visits, was that his life was in serious danger. After half an hour or so, I asked Rob (not his real name) if he had a faith. As a hospital chaplain my job is to provide both religious/spiritual and more general pastoral/conversational care. I was surprised when he started to cry. "No," he said. It felt insensitive to proceed in this direction, so we returned to ordinary conversation, "God is just as present there after all," I thought. We chatted some more about hobbies and work and actually had a bit

of a laugh. I offered to pop back tomorrow and approached his neighbour.

To be honest, I didn't have high hopes of much of a conversation with this patient. He lay so frail, emaciated. Eyes wide, bulging. A tube stuck out of his neck. I looked hard wondering if he was actually alive. I was soon surprised. He started to speak, and being deaf and so unable to hear himself, he spoke very loudly! "Everyone can hear him, even the ward staff outside!" I thought. I could have asked him to quieten down but he was already warming up. I stood silently, freed from thoughts of how I might respond, to actually listen. I got his whole-life story: childhood, family, work-life, hobbies, marriage, war, children, disease, suffering, death. He kept forgetting his thread and wandering off into dense digressions before retracing his steps to the meta-narrative. I didn't mind. I was there for him. And I began to notice, after about 20 minutes, that even the sad and tragic elements of his story were told through a positive realism. He was thankful even for the pain of life, the heartache and brokenness of it all. I sensed, and not for the first time in a patient,

the presence of Christ. Then, right at the end, he shouted out (bearing in mind he was already virtually shouting): "AND I JUST WANT TO THANK MY GOD FOR THE LIFE I'VE LIVED AND THE MANY BLESSINGS I'VE KNOWN." I was speechless, obviously and couldn't help but think about Rob beside him.

Later, as I reflected with my friend Linda on this event, I wondered what it means in ministry today to follow a God of presence, who shows up in the flesh (a particularly relevant question during the current pandemic), who listens and watches for the Father's lead, and touches the untouchables. The preacher who lay in the bed before me was beautifully silent now. He reached out his hand and said, "Father, bless me." And before I could say that I wasn't a catholic priest, his head was bowed. I held his hand anyway and thanked God.

*David Etherington  
Hospital Chaplain*

**Northern Baptist Association**

## From Camino To Coronavirus—continued

the first day when a rail strike threatened to derail my plans, I found that a crisis provided a new opportunity and that God was present in the midst of the difficulties. We often learn the most important life lessons through such challenges. So now for all of us, this pandemic provides an opportunity for God to teach us

new things. Are we open to what God is wanting to do in our lives and through us in the lives of others?

As you can see, you don't need to walk 500 miles to practise any of these disciplines. A lock-down provides the perfect classroom to learn new ways of being and to deepen

our spiritual life. I pray for you that you will seize the opportunity to use this time well as a way of creating space to encounter God and to be slowly but deeply changed by the One who travels with us throughout the journey of our lives.

*Paul Revill  
NBA Mission Enabler*

## Stockton Baby Bank

Stockton Baby Bank opened in January as a ministry of Portrack Baptist Church. A baby bank is a bit like a food bank but we offer baby essentials-- nappies, wipes, clothes, Moses baskets, prams-- anything you might need for a baby, we've probably got it. These things have come from local families who have passed them on, ready to go to new homes.

We have links with community midwives, family support workers, social workers and others helping to support families in Stockton. They will often send families our way, but anyone is able to access the baby bank without a referral. We do this because we know that having a baby is expensive-- even if you're in work, these essential things bought brand new can run

into the hundreds of pounds. When a family comes along to the baby bank, they can fill in a wish-list of the things that they need and we will either provide them if we have them in stock or start asking around to see if we can get them one.

We're also here to support families beyond just meeting physical needs. Because we know that having a baby is hard work! We've been there. It's tough emotionally and physically. So we're here to listen and encourage. We really want to be a safe place where parents and carers can come to be empowered to be the best parents that they can be so that their little ones get the best start in life.

We're able to be generous be-

cause people in Stockton are generous! We've had so much come in that we're full to capacity because so many families like the idea of supporting other families and want to help. We also hope that our generosity reflects the generously loving God whom we serve.

During the coronavirus lockdown, we have been running the baby bank via home deliveries. With the added pressures on daily life, we have had quite a number of families asking for our help. It has been a real joy and privilege to get to love and serve our community in this way; even if it's just leaving a pack of nappies on the doorstep, we feel like we're taking one less thing to worry about off of these parents' minds.

## Moderator's Musings

As I started writing this during Lent and continued entering into Easter week, I am aware that the social distancing or self-isolation we are all in is not easy. However when we read that the Lord experienced all we do, my prayer is we are all encouraged by that afresh. We have not yet spent 40 days in the wilderness but we can use this time for reflection and being led in new ways by the Spirit. We can join the Lord in prayer just as he often found an isolated spot for 'Time' with His Father and came out of it refreshed and ready for the next steps.

Those next steps are exactly what we are seeking. The Transition and succession group have made a start on your behalf. All the ministers of the Association were given the opportunity to respond to a survey. Our next step in parallel to a survey to the churches and their leadership

teams to learn from the past through interviewing the current team members later this month. Then to collate and seek new ways forward that are fitting to the 21st century. At any time, if you believe you have something to offer in this process do not hesitate to let us know. We cannot guarantee all ideas will be incorporated but we want to be as open as possible as to what the Spirit is saying to us as a Regional community.

It has been an interesting 6 months since appointment and fortunately before lockdown was able to attend the various sub groups and committees of the NBA to learn about the Association currently. This was important and vital for me having only lived in the area for just over a year. I hope to get to know many more of you over the next few years when things return to normal.



In the meantime I expect many of us to learn new ways of doing things and this may include not returning to traditions and methods we have kept rolling along year in year out. Like spring and Easter, look out for the new blooms and the signs of resurrection that our wonderfully creative God will provide and lead us into.

*Tony Ruddle  
Moderator*

# Welcome and Thank you

The Association held its first Zoom AGM. Due to the restrictions placed on us by the Corvid-19 crisis we were unable to hold our Spring Assembly, but did hold an AGM using Zoom video conferencing. Forty four people joined us which was encouraging given the circumstances. We received a video greeting from Lynn Green, our Baptist Union General Secretary, and Andy Byers, the Director of the Free Church Track at Cranmer Hall in St John's College, Durham offered ministry leading us in Biblical reflection.

During the AGM we were able to appoint Caroline Friend and Rachel Holland and reappoint Jackie Buckle to our NBA Council. We are grateful them all for being willing to serve us in this way. We also expressed appreciation to Phil Hope, our NBA Treasurer over recent years, but who is looking to stand down in the summer due to pressures of work. Phil has brought a kind and gracious wisdom to the role and we thank him for his care, support, insight and friendship over the years. We wish him well as he stands down in the summer and would value your prayers as we search for a new treasurer. Similarly, we expressed gratitude to John Bunce who stood down as our Moderator in December 2019 to be replaced by Tony Ruddle. John has been a faithful, kindly and wise hand on the tiller and a support in all that

we have done. Thanks were also expressed to a brace of Roys. Roy Merrin and Roy Searle who both stood down from the Council in recent months. During our time together Tony gave an update on the progress of the Transition Group in relation to considering the future after my retirement in August 2021. An update from the Transition Group is found on page 8.

It has been great to welcome some new ministers emerging within our area. Fiona Preston, a musician and teacher, has now been inducted as lay minister at Headland Baptist Church. Fiona is also candidating for ministerial training, but is yet to be interviewed by Northern Baptist College.

Nick Megoran, a university lecturer, recently made professor, has also responded to a call to ministry at Wallsend Baptist Church and has been inducted there.

Sadly, we have recently lost four ministers. Dennis Kerridge died in December. Dennis was one of the original members of Beacon Lough and also served for many years as Lay Pastor at Easington Colliery. He had significant engagement in the life of the Association including serving as our Moderator at the turn of the Millenium. Richard Hetherington died in January. He had been sent into ministry from Northallerton and after training and serving in Summer-sham, he returned north and served for over 12 years at Oxford Road Baptist Church. On the 23rd April Jim Cargill and Jenny Price both passed away. Jim was 99 and had served a church in Halifax and then to Westoe Road in South Shields and finally to Middlesbrough Baptist Church. After retirement Jim was a great



encouragement to churches and ministers in Teesside. Jenny had served as the Baptist Minister in St John the Evangelist in Kingston Park before retiring. The church was a Local Ecumenical Partnership, but she had her own ecumenical partnership as she was married to Anglican minister Clive Price who also served as an Anglican ecumenical officer. We remember Pat Kerridge, Susan Hetherington, Clive Price and the family of Jim Cargill in our prayers.

Paul Richards, of Whitley Lodge Baptist Church, will be retiring from ministry in the Autumn.

In December we were delighted to appoint a new honorary Company Secretary, Cornelius Harding. Cornelius is a member of Westgate Church and takes the role over from John Fleet who had served us faithfully for several years. We are grateful to John for going the extra mile (several months) whilst we searched for a replacement, We thank Cornelius for taking on the role and look forward to working with him.

*John Claydon*



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"The Pastor keeps referring to this morning's text' ... but which one?"

FLETCHER

## Inspecting Documents!

I pray that you are all keeping safe – you know about that type of ‘safety’, but I am so glad that our forebears in NBA churches very often did not take the ‘safe option’ and, instead, worked tirelessly to spread the Gospel and, meantime, recording their progress for future generations. Do you recognise anyone from days gone by? Members of that ‘great host of witnesses’ who provided foundation and purpose to many of the churches in which we serve.

Recently, I was perusing documents prior to shredding them; their contents were an accurate record of a past event but would not be helpful to those generations of future Christians who may view them.....

We are called to be faithful in our witnessing to the truth of events; Psalm 89. 37 uses the moon’s passage through the skies as an example of consistency – what is our primary consideration when collecting together documents recording past events?

In another context, Isaiah 43. 9 reminds us that it is always helpful to seek out supporting documents which will underpin the main record..... ‘let them bring their witnesses as a defence; let them hear and say, “It’s true!”’

How often have you inspected a document which testifies to events, initiatives or decisions occurring in past days? John 1. 7 provides us with no finer act of testimony than that of John, himself, telling of the LIGHT which was to come after him; what value do you place on personal testimony in your search for truth concerning the foundation of your church?

Have you ever been challenged by the contents of a document? One which reveals previously unknown facts – perhaps providing you with a challenge to leave your comfort zone!’ Acts 1. 8 hints, strongly, at the strengths of challenge awaiting us as we uncover past truths and prepare for future service in our churches.....”rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit



has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” .....coping with the unexpected, both in faith and whenever handling records for that first time.

In conclusion, documentation worthy of archiving can be viewed as a “living stone” in the structure that was the church; 1 Peter 2. 5 suggests that we are called to be “living stones” in our quest to develop a ‘spiritual church’ worthy of being inherited by generations to come.

Peter King  
Archivist

## We’ll meet again!

It was touch and go! ‘Should we, shouldn’t we?’ was the nature of the conversation between Paul Revill and myself. The Coronavirus loomed ever larger and we considered cancelling the Small Churches Evening on 16th March. With an hour to go we decided to go ahead: God was faithful and we were blessed as we shared together. By the end of the week gatherings were ruled out, services put on hold and we were soon in lockdown.

Much as we enjoy seeing one another on screens it is not the same as fellowship shared in one another’s presence. Christ is always with us, but He also calls us to serve together in Christian Community: church.

As we wait for the opportunity to gather together we can dream of what a renewed church might look like. Having taking the break we can consider how we can resume as

God honouring, disciple-making, communities of love and mission. There is an opportunity to recast the die of the shape of church.

John Claydon



# Northern Baptist College Hub @ Cranmer Hall

The Cranmer term ended rather abruptly on March 13th finishing a fortnight early as Durham University responded to the Covid Crisis.

Like church though, although the doors are closed, the work goes on! Assignment deadlines remained in place and the term brought modules being taught on-line.

Modules in Easter term are usually block modules and will now be provided online with some lectures being recorded and available to the students via video, while seminars, small group activities and tutorials will be conducted via zoom. I taught remotely on the Death and Dying module; a two-week module entitled "Death, Dying & the Christian Hope." In the current context two weeks focussing on death and dying may sound like the last thing students would want to do but praise be to God for the bigger context of the empty tomb and the hope that

we have in Christ Jesus.

This year has been a year with fewer students. We have 3 Ministers in Training: Heather Farrow (3rd yr) at Grange Rd BC in Jarrow; Rachel Holland (2nd yr) at Portrack BC in Stockton and Catherine Tate (1st yr) at Skipton BC. The Free Church Track year started with 5 students and we are finishing the year with 3; one person wisely halted study due to increasing workload in church and at home and another has been called into Anglican ministry and will later this summer be interviewed by the Bishop's Advisory Panel to begin training as a Priest in the workplace.

At the beginning of March 2020 we had an excellent open day at Cranmer Hall, and met with a variety of potential students. Lockdown happened very soon afterwards but the application and discernment processes continue and potentially we

have up to 4 candidates who may become ministers in training.

Please pray for all of our students, churches & ministries; as and when we emerge from lockdown we will not be what we were. We need to lament, grieve, give thanks and trust God for the courage to embrace a new normal. In the prophetic words of Lynn Green the General Secretary of the BUGB let's "have courage, and let the wind of the Spirit take (us) and let's be bold in these days. God has anointed (us) to listen attentively and to be bold and to take risks and to experiment. God is appointing you to embody and enact something prophetic in our movement." **Amen**

*Linda Donaldson Hub Tutor  
for Northern Baptist College  
At Cranmer Hall, Durham*

## Encountering our Baptist story and values

Recently, I had the opportunity to take the Baptist History and Principles module as part of my accreditation process. I'm from the States, and have a masters in Theology from a Baptist seminary there, so this was another opportunity - along with 5 years of Baptist ministry here in the UK - to juxtapose American and British Baptist life, culture, and structure.

In UK Baptist history, the figure of John Howard Shakespeare looms large for his role in developing a more centralised Baptist Union, Home Mission, and the precursors to the regional associations, which we know today. This centralisation perhaps marks one of the bigger structural differences between the Baptist denomination in which I became a Christian in the States (the Southern Baptist Convention) and the BU. American Baptists don't have any kind of central body re-

sponsible for ordination. Associations at State and national levels are more loosely connected, and a greater identity as Baptists "feels" a bit looser because of the size of the States and the denomination than it would do here.

I have come to appreciate this greater centralisation. It has meant that my road to ordination is a bit longer than it would be in the States, but I don't think that's a bad thing. It is probably too easy to be ordained in the Southern Baptist Convention. It has led to a lot of mistakes that can be made when Baptist churches have no central body with which to communicate, particularly in a series of journalistic exposés on how Youth workers, with offenses against minors were allowed to be rehired multiple times in the American South.

The greater centralisation of the BU means that ministers are properly vetted and candidates only truly ready for ministry are more likely to be the ones ordained. But also, this centralisation in some ways builds a greater efficiency in policy among churches, resources for smaller congregations, and perhaps the help provided by regional ministers to churches in transition or in crisis. Things like this are a delicate balancing act in a denomination that values local church autonomy and congregational government. However, on balance, I think the greater centralisation has been valuable to the Baptist family in the UK. It helps us to communicate with like-minded churches, leverage funding for colleges and mission, practice oversight and accountability, and to perhaps even preserve the unity of churches in our denomination.

*Vince Sacco  
Middlesbrough Baptist Church*

# Update from the Transition Group: May 2020

The group includes Linda Donaldson, Heather Farrow, Dave Tubby and myself and whenever they can join us Lynn Green (BU General Secretary) and Phil Barnard (RM London).

We were appointed at the beginning of 2020 by the Council to consider whether to explore the NBA vision or the person coming into role first and to look at how the two work together. Some of the issues mentioned at Council were:

- Concerns for the role if the vision is not clear.
- Is the remit only to appoint JC's replacement?
- The importance of thinking creatively.
- The need to consult widely
- Other associations have thought radically about how they have approached this subject.
- There is a real need to hear voices from outside the region.
- What do we really need to help to make the association work?

The group has met at least once a month and developed a 3 phase approach to consultation with the original intention of having a significant presentation and debate at the Assembly planned for today. It became clear this was a very tight schedule. Then the current health crisis began and while a drawback we concluded it also permitted a slower timeframe because we still believe it important if possible to have the NBA Assembly in the autumn to have that face to face debate and decision face to face.

Into this:

We have conducted Phase 1 which was a survey of all Ministers both active and retired. 96 were contacted with a response from 48. The active ministers in pastoral setting (24) were the highest proportion and then retired (14); the rest consisted of leaders, deacons, chaplains, secretaries where no ordained leadership was in post.

The survey revealed a wide spread of responses to the questions posed revealing only a little commonality of

perspectives. However the group detected a general trend that expects change and a reshaping of the NBA. Grateful for John's 20 years as RM but recognising that times and cultures have changed within and without the church since his appointment. It is time for new approaches and we believe that Lynn Green's prophetic message encouraged us as the smallest Baptist Region, the Benjamin of the family, to be bold and vibrantly created.

**Phase 2** has only just been completed. Here the Regional team in addition to a group comprised of a wide range of age and experience was interviewed in order to consult in a more in-depth way around themes of how they perceived the NBA and what they hoped or believed was needed to have a vital leader(s) in the spiritual life of our Associating.

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> phase**, still to be completed, is to consult the churches and their members with a different set of questions formulated from what we have already learned.

Regardless of what the future looks like in terms of personnel, what we are clearly hearing is that a team approach is valued and the following elements will be key:

- Highly relational
- Able to provide clear leadership & think strategically
- To separate out the necessary governance functions
- To promote and release missional leaders and initiatives

The repetitive themes so far are relationships, relevance, seeking to be less institutional and more incarnational, flexible, responsive and releasing To be willing to take risks by encouraging new ways, new enterprises as new expressions of ministry and church. To discover and renew the interconnectedness and covenant nature of our associating and which may work for the good of all, but more importantly enable our corporate service in the Kingdom of God.

If the current situation has taught us all something, going back to normal

is not an option. We all need to buy into this so as to support inspiration from leadership, to enable freedom to listen and create new structures that fit the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To have breathing room that reinvigorates the NBA for the lord's glory.

## TIMING

The transition Group will move into Phase 3 during June. It is our intention, if possible, to hold a conversation by zoom with representatives from the churches, not just our ministers.

This will then go to Council in the autumn and the decision will come to the November Assembly. This will allow advertising to commence in the New Year with the normal processes following.



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