

Weekly Prayers, News and Thoughts

Welcome to our condensed Newsletter. We are publishing this in digital format to help keep us up to date with each other during the Corona Virus chaos.

As you know many of our events, services, facilities, and meetings are still postponed to reduce our contact with each other. The clear and strong advice is that we do not meet for worship or other meetings to ensure appropriate social distancing and protection for those who need it most.

Church is all about relationship: with God, with one another and with the wider community as we demonstrate that our relationship to God and seek to draw others into it, those relationships can still be nurtured, but in other ways. A kindness of heart and spirit can bring light into everyone's life, be it a kind word or a simple gesture, a telephone call, an email, an instant message, social media... there are so many ways... seek to share your light with those in need - but do so safely.

Clearly, we should pray. Pray for those who mourn and have lost loved ones to Corona Virus, for those who have the illness, for those caring and supporting those who are ill, for those exploring the possibilities of vaccines and for the effectiveness of national strategies and personal practices in overcoming the pandemic.

For help and support. please feel free to contact:

- John Claydon johnclaydon@thenba.org.uk
- Paul Revill paulrevill@thenba.org.uk or
- Elaine Webster elainewebster@thenba.org.uk

NBA Online Retreat Event

NBA are holding a **Zoom Online Prayer Retreat** on Saturday 6th June 2020 starting at 9:30am and running until 12:30pm. If you would like to take part then book your place by emailing Paul Revill at paulrevill@thenba.org.uk Your email booking verification will contain the links and access details needed to attend the Online Retreat.

Prayers

Please continue to pray, either by yourself, or collectively, using one of the many online and social media channels for:

- ***Members & friends of our Fellowship***
- ***People, families & neighbours within your own circle experiencing difficulties***
- ***Those who work for our benefit and welfare in frontline jobs, putting themselves and their families in vulnerable and frequently life-threatening situations***
- ***Supermarket staff and other supply industries***
- ***Carers in Care Homes and Nursing Homes and Sheltered Housing and Hostels***
- ***Carers who look after members of their own families***
- ***Postal Workers and other delivery people who bring us our mail, food, and medicines***
- ***All those in positions of leadership, research, development, industrial organisations, and new productions, at this traumatic time***

This week We are asked by NBA to pray for our Baptist Hospital Chaplains at this time of great challenge and for our NHS as they support staff and patients who also carry anxieties of their own:

- ***Rev Robert Muir - Wansbeck Hospital, Ashington***
- ***Rev Jim Wright - Lead chaplain at North Tees Hospital, Stockton***
- ***Rev Rodney Breckon - James Cook Hospital***
- ***Rev Graeme Harrison - Lead chaplain, Northumbria Healthcare Trust***
- ***Rev Liz Edwards - North Tyneside hospital***
- ***Rev Dave Etherington - North Durham University Hospital + BAGH***

Please pray especially for all those living and working in:

- ***Ladysmith Street***
- ***East Parade***
- ***Lady Eden Care Home***
- ***The Copses***
- ***Prince's Street***

Pray for those who mourn and have lost loved ones to Covid-19, for those who have the illness, for those caring and supporting those who are ill, for those exploring the possibilities of vaccines and for the effectiveness of national strategies and personal practices in overcoming the pandemic

Northern Baptist Association - Prayers for Pentecost 31st May 2020

Before Jesus began his public ministry, God confirmed His calling and brought Him aside into a solitary place.

Following His ascension, the Disciples were called aside to wait on God. During this time God confirmed their appointment by bestowing on them the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Now God has called us to one side during this crisis.

Just as Jesus and the Disciples were called aside and prepared for their ministry, we are now called aside from the communities we serve.

God is preparing His church for the work of His Holy Spirit throughout our nation. Our prayers for Pentecost will reflect this.

Give thanks:

- that God is actively at work both in our church and the wider community.
- that God is at work building His church in our midst.
- that people who would not otherwise come to our church, are being reached by digital services.

Please pray:

- that we will be willing to set aside our personal differences, in order to seek Him.
- that the flame of His Holy Spirit will burn up the dross in our lives and purify us.
- that the fire of His Holy Spirit will ignite a revival throughout our country.

(NBA prayers forwarded to us by Roger Daniel)

Northern Baptist Association – Home Mission Open Letter

Dear Friends,

I hope this open letter finds you in good heart and health and may God's blessing be upon you.

During these unprecedented times that our church buildings have been closed and we have had very few opportunities to encourage each other in the many aspects of being church. Some have been able to innovate and transmit electronically services and encouraging videos etc. as have the NBA each week, for which we are grateful.

As your Home Mission Co-ordinator, I am acutely aware that supporting our Baptist Family around the UK is such an important aspect of being church.

The opportunities to hear stories from our churches that are supported by Home Mission funds are very limited, however these churches still need our continued support, even though what we receive from the BU has been reducing over the recent years.

The main ways we support each other is by Prayer, Grants, and the regular input from our Regional Team.

Your giving helps us to maintain our commitment to supporting eleven local ministries as well as the NBA Team in their ministry and support to all. It is vital as we are unable to physically meet to interact in new and innovative ways as well as the usual telephone and email systems.

These all still need to be paid for and your continued sacrificial giving is of possibly even greater importance at this time, so please continue to give generously as you have been and pray without ceasing for all we are able to accomplish through Home Mission, "our Family Purse"

We all continue to pray for you and trust that it will not be too long before we are able to meet and greet each other, maybe not as before but in a very meaningful way.

When we are able, I would like to come to as many churches in the NBA to offer support and encouragement regarding Home Mission, so please get in touch as soon as you are able.

Every Blessing

Ray

Online Prayer

- Northern Baptist Association
Pentecost Service 31st May <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVheydK9c04>
- Influence Church <http://www.influencechurch.co.uk>
Services streamed each Sunday at 11.00am and 5.00pm

FareShare Food Scheme

John and Vanessa at Bishop Auckland Methodist Church continue their sterling efforts in collecting the vast amount of FareShare food kindly donated by local suppliers. They are currently taking the food to Woodhouse Close Food Bank to ensure the most efficient route of distribution. The food bank is open every weekday from 10.00am until 12.00pm.

The food is being received and distributed to those who need it most and includes a wide variety of products across numerous categories from basics to occasional treats.

Church Garden

We owe a great big word of “THANK YOU” to one of the good friends of Bishop Auckland Baptist Church , who continues single handed in the upkeep and development of our church garden, and he is still creating contacts with passers-by! (at a safe distance of course). The blog is now on the front page of our website.

Thoughts

Stand With The World on Solidarity Sunday - 31st May 2020

On Sunday 31 May, UK Baptists will be coming together for Solidarity Sunday, a day set aside to hold up in prayer the people who are most vulnerable in the Coronavirus crisis, as well as those who are responding across the world.

Solidarity Sunday falls at Pentecost, a wonderful opportunity to remember that we have a God whose living hope is for peoples of all languages and nations.

Churches up and down the UK are facing challenges and changes, but Solidarity Sunday is about reminding ourselves and each other that there is so much good we can do when we come together through giving and through prayer.

We praise God for our churches and congregations across the UK, many of whom are struggling during these uncertain times. Please pray for strength and peace in the hearts of UK Christians, pray for all the Baptist churches who have been meeting remotely, ask the Lord to bless all those working behind the scenes to make these services possible and pray for future opportunities for the Baptist family to enjoy meeting together.

Full details of Solidarity Sunday can be found online at www.bmsworldmission.org

Pentecost - Sunday 31st May 2020

Pentecost is one of the most important Christian celebrations and holidays. It is celebrated on the 49th day (the seventh Sunday) after Easter Sunday and commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit through rushing wind and fire upon the heads of the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles.

It is often observed by Christians through prayer, vigils, fasting (pre-festival), retreats. Pentecost is also called White Sunday or Whitsun. In Christianity it is considered to be the birthday of the Christian Church and is celebrated by Christians as such.

Originally, Pentecost was a Jewish holiday held 50 days after Passover. One of three major feasts during the Jewish year it celebrated Thanksgiving for harvested crops. However, Pentecost for Christians means something far different.

Before the crucifixion and death of Jesus, he told his Disciples that the Holy Spirit would come after, follow, him:

John 14:16-18 (NIV)

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

And 40 days after Jesus was resurrected (10 days after he ascended into heaven), that promise was fulfilled when Peter and the early Church, (the believers and followers of Jesus) were in Jerusalem for the Jewish Pentecost holiday:

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from Heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongue/languages as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:41

Those who accepted His message were Baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Wouldn't it be great to see 3,000 added to God's people in church today?

Those who accepted Peter's message at Pentecost were Baptised and the beginning of the early church started with an incredible bang.

Earlier that day, only a small group of Jesus' followers had met to pray just as they had done for several days since Jesus' ascension.

As night falls in Jerusalem, the number has jumped to over 3,000!

Acts 2 stands as a hallmark passage showing us the message of salvation, what the response of open hearts will be, and how the Holy Spirit uses this simple message to bring seeking hearts to salvation and community.

- Try to read Acts 2 today
- Jot down what Peter says about Jesus
- Notice what Peter tells the people to do to be saved.

The Gospel is still just as simple, so let us not only study it but share it, praying for God to bring revival to our times and to our broken land!

Prayer

Holy and Most High God, please breathe your Holy Spirit out upon us through wind and fire and bring true revival today to our churches and salvation for thousands who are lost. I pray this, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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