

<b><i>Weekly Prayers, News and Thoughts</i></b>
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Welcome to our condensed Newsletter. We are publishing this in digital format to help keep us up to date with each other.

***Wednesday Community Days***

- Whilst we are not currently holding our indoor events due to Covid and the need to protect everyone's safety, we will continue to provide takeaway food at lunchtime each Wednesday whilst observing the appropriate safeguards.

***Church Services***

- We will continue to with the creation of online services which will be available via YouTube and our website.
- Audio CD's of the services are available upon request.

***Bible Study***

- We are continuing to suspend face-to-face Bible Study for safety reasons. Electronic solutions are available. Please contact us if you would like to be included.

***Sharing God's Comfort***

- If you know of anyone you feel would benefit from our online offerings please feel free to share our website at [www.bishopbaptists.co.uk](http://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk) with others so they too can enjoy our weekly online service (also available on our YouTube Channel), newsletters, blog and other items of prayer and interest.

***Spreading God's Love***

- 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.

***Please feel free to contact the following NBA members for additional help and support:***

- Paul Revill [paulrevill@thenba.org.uk](mailto:paulrevill@thenba.org.uk) or
- Elaine Webster [elainewebster@thenba.org.uk](mailto:elainewebster@thenba.org.uk)

<b>Prayers</b>
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Please keep in your prayers all local churches in Bishop Auckland area and especially our Northern Baptist Association, and the work they are continuing to do to help the local people cope with the problems caused by Coronavirus and Covid -19, and continue to do the Lord's work in our towns and communities.

As the Anti Covid restrictions and various support schemes, all of which are in a state of flux and constantly changing, we must remember those who will be affected by the onset of major job losses soon across our economy. Many people are only just hanging on financially now, commonly being reliant on food banks to feed their families and who are going to be faced with more hard times. Remember them and "look out" for them

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***

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 – Bishop Auckland and North Durham Hospitals***

*Please pray for all those living, working and playing in the following communities:*

- **Northumberland Ave**
- **Brancepeth Grove**
- **Westfield Road**
- **Blair Grove**
- **Brewer Street**
- **Grove Road**

Please remember too:

- **The fellowship at Hamsterley Baptist Church**

Please give thanks for the organisations and people who contribute food, clothing and books for us to distribute to others:

- **FareShare (via Asda)**
- **Feeding Families**
- **The Auckland Project**
- **Local Donations**

<b>Asda &amp; FareShare</b>
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One of the organisations that donate food to us to pass on to people with problems and difficulties affording food, is ASDA, in conjunction with FareShare.

Thanks to its partnership with FareShare, over the past three years the supermarket, ASDA, has donated much-needed quality, in-date produce, often including bread, bakery items, fruit, vegetables and eggs.

These good quality products can no longer be sold in store due to shorter sell-by dates.

With help from Asda colleagues and FareShare, charities and community groups can receive up to five collections a week from Asda supermarkets, superstores and supercentres across the country.

The scheme is part of the supermarket's Fight Hunger Create Change programme and has been rolled out to all of its stores and depots able to donate surplus food.

This rollout has meant that the supermarket has donated 3,000,000 meals this year alone.

Karen Todd, Senior Manager for Asda's Zero Waste, said: "We are extremely proud to have helped so many people through the "back of store" donation scheme and I am thankful to every store and depot whose hard work has made a big difference.

The amount of food donated to charity through our back of store donation programme has increased by 58% over the past year and has helped us as a company donate over 18 million meals since the start of the partnership."

Lindsay Boswell, Chief Executive at FareShare, said: "We're incredibly grateful to Asda for their continued efforts in redistributing surplus food that has become available in their stores – especially during what has been such a tough time for so many.

The Covid-19 pandemic has put a massive strain on a lot of charities and community organisations, because they are facing increased demand as more people struggle to make ends meet.

"Being able to source good to eat, free surplus food from retailers, provides thousands of vulnerable people with much needed food that they otherwise wouldn't have access to."

Asda has also donated £23 million across two years to FareShare and the Trussell Trust, a leading food bank network, to help create long-term positive change to poverty in the UK.

The donation has already helped expand FareShare's food distribution network and allowed the charity to accept donations of fresh produce so they can help more people in need. It has also enabled the Trussell Trust recipients of its emergency food parcels.

*Jan2021*

<b>Prayer for Palm Sunday</b>
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Lord Jesus,

We remember today the timeless account of how when you rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, your friends threw their clothing in your path and children waved palm branches welcoming you with their shouts of Hosanna.

Father loosen today the Hosannas that often stick in our sophisticated throats. Let the child in us come alive that we too may joyfully honour you. May our blinkered eyes catch something of who you really are - the Way, the Truth and the Life.

At the beginning of this holiest of weeks help us to examine our commitments, our loyalties, our priorities and assumptions.

Do not let us be deceived as to where we would have stood had we been in Jerusalem that first Holy Week, we who constantly betray you with our lurking grudges, prejudices and reluctance to forgive.

May the events of this Palm Sunday and this coming week, pass silent judgement on our lives. Help us, like you, to have the courage to stand for the difficult right against the easy wrong and to share something of your passionate concern for justice and peace.

Help us not only to ask some of the big questions, but to find some of the big answers by joining today with the crowd that surrounded you on that first Palm Sunday, shouting that the answer to many of life's biggest questions lies in you.

We pray in your name,

Amen.

*(The Very Rev Dr James Simpson)*

<b>Mark 11: v1-11 (NIV) – Jesus Come to Jerusalem as King</b>
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As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.

If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway.

As they untied it, 5 some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?"

They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go.

When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it.

Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields.

Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted: *“Hosanna, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!”*

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

This Bible passage seems to be a new form of parable:

It isn't told to the gathered crowds, but instead it is acted out for everyone to see.

This is more in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets who sometimes used their actions to speak louder than words. (For example, read Ezekiel 4: v1-16.)

It's possible to compare it with today's kneeling by sportsmen and women prior to kick-off in a football match or similar occasions, or during anthems in USA, and even the provocative actions caused by the toppling of statues built to honour people who were slave traders as well as philanthropists.

Jesus's journey has brought him to Jerusalem for what will become his final week before his death.

The beginning of these final events is marked by Jesus's procession into Jerusalem on the back of a small donkey (colt).

What may seem to us to be an insignificant journey, to those assembled it seems to be much more momentous.

A reason for this is built upon the ideas and images shared by Israel's prophets, which would have been very familiar to those watching.

Zechariah 9: v9+10 is one such passage celebrating the coming of a King who will bring peace to the nation.

We also have echoes of Psalm 118 25+26 in the cries of the people who waved their palm branches and laid their coats before him.

The journey was also significant because of the contrast it offered to another political moment occurring in the city.

As Jesus entered on the back of a donkey, hailed as King of the people, the city's ruling power was riding in mounted on a war horse and surrounded by armed centurions and soldiers.

This process was supposed to be a reminder by the ruling authorities of who was in charge and yet the sight of a man on the back of a donkey had begun to stir up the thought of freedom for an oppressed people.

*Does the company of others and knowing what they about Jesus' influence what you say about Him?*

*(The Methodist Church North East – Mark: The Great 50 Days)*

<b>Psalm 71: v8</b>
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*My mouth is filled with your praise, declaring your splendour all day long.*

*Our mouths can be filled with food, profanities, or gossip...*

*Or we can choose for our mouths to be filled with “Hosannas” to the Lord.*

*We can declare the greatness, majesty, and splendour of our heavenly Father all during our day.*

*We can let others know of his grace as we go about today's activities.*

*Holy and marvellous Father, you are God of all creation and also God of all grace, thank you for your kindness shared with me in Jesus.*

*Thank you for your powerful victory at Easter.*

*Father, thank you for your patience with me as I sometimes stumble, but am always desiring to more perfectly reflect the character of Jesus.*

*Please help me, O Lord, to profess and to show my love and admiration for you all during this day.*

*In Jesus' name I pray,*

*Amen.*

*Anon*

**NBA News**

**The online NBA Spring Assembly is taking place over the weekend of 23rd to 25th April.**

Please feel free to advertise this within your church communities.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at 7pm**

Evening Celebration:

DEFEATING THE DRAGONS: OBSTACLES TO MISSION

Speaker Alan Donaldson (former General Director of Baptist Union of Scotland)

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 10am**

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Including the appointment of the Transitional Strategic Leader (Regional Minister)

Annual General Meeting

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April - Evening**

A Youth Event organised by Paul Revill and Dan Holland (of Portrack Baptist Church)

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April**

Streamed morning service from Stockton Baptist Church

***Details on joining instructions will be sent nearer the time.***

***We look forward to you joining us.***

***Elaine Webster (NBA Admin Support)***



**NBA Praying Together**

**We are asked to pray this week for:** Stocksfield Baptist Church, Minister Pete Jorysz.

- We start streaming live worship services from Sun 11th April and it would be good to pray that we reach more people with God's word.
- We are considering various social action projects we could develop as a church and it would be good to pray for God's guidance.

**Ephesians 1: v15-16** *"For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers."*

**Clocks Spring Forward**

Daylight saving time 2021 in United Kingdom began this morning,  
Sunday, 28th March at 01:00 am.

**Singing Hosana - Palm Sunday Benediction**

*Go from here  
singing hosannas  
all the way home.*

*Do not be afraid,  
Jesus is walking with you.*

*(Carol Penner - www.leadinginworship.com 2019)*

<b>Online Prayer</b>
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- Bishop Auckland Baptist Church Service  
<https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/babc-sunday-service/>
- Northern Baptist Association Service  
<https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/nba-sunday-service/>
- Influence Church Service (Services streamed Sundays at 11.00am and 5.00pm)  
<http://www.influencechurch.co.uk>

<b>Helpful Links</b>
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<b>BABC Sunday Service</b>	<a href="https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/babc-sunday-service/">https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/babc-sunday-service/</a>
<b>BABC Newsletter</b>	<a href="https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/newsletter/">https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/newsletter/</a>
<b>BABC Garden Blog</b>	<a href="https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/church-garden-blog/">https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/church-garden-blog/</a>
<b>NBA Sunday Service</b>	<a href="https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/nba-sunday-service/">https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/nba-sunday-service/</a>
<b>BABC Main Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk">www.bishopbaptists.co.uk</a>

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