

<i>Weekly Prayers, News and Thoughts</i>

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 CDs of the services are available upon request.

Bible Study

- Will recommence on Tuesday 13th April at 1pm – [see notes below for more details.](#)

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 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 or
- Elaine Webster elainewebster@thenba.org.uk

Prayers

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:

- **Ediscum Garth**
- **Bamburgh Avenue**
- **Langley Grove**
- **Warwick Road**
- **Walmer Grove**
- **Grove Road**

Please also continue to pray for:

- ***The message broadcast through BABC's websites and channels***

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***

Emmaus

There are all sorts of pilgrimages for which one plans and prepares and looks forward to and anticipates with excitement.

This story in Luke 24:13- 35 is nothing like that.

This is a story about a walk that comes from grief and trauma, from profound disappointment and sorrow. It is a story that starts with the slow steps of the depressed and cast down. But it ends with the excited running of the redeemed, and the joy of finding life transformed.

(from "The Walk to Emmaus" by Susan Durber (Pilgrimage Bible study))

Luke 24 v13-35.

On the road to Emmaus...

...Jesus appears to two disciples, who had been present when Jesus was crucified three days previously in Jerusalem.

This is the longest single post-resurrection narrative in the gospels.

In John's Gospel, Chapter 20, just prior to this encounter described in Luke's Gospel, Jesus appears to Mary of Magdala in the garden outside his burial tomb.

In Luke's account, this appearance of Jesus in the evening of the third day is unique.

Many scholars believe that Luke received the narrative regarding this occurrence from an eye-witness account, and that the narrator was Cleopas, one of the two disciples in the account.

Nowadays, there is also a popular theory that the two disciples may have been man and wife.

Jesus appears mysteriously to the depressed and disillusioned pair as they walk back on the road to their village, Emmaus, on the afternoon of His Resurrection.

This road is approximately 11 kilometres (about 7½ miles) from Jerusalem.

The two disciples walking this road think that Jesus is a pilgrim who must have witnessed Jesus' Death.

During the walk Jesus seems to display an ignorance about the events of the past few days, but He listens intently to their discussion.

The disciples tell him of their shattered hopes and dreams for Jesus, the prophet, who through his great and mighty works and preaching was expected to redeem Israel.

The concept of redemption for these disciples, and for many other Jews too, meant that a conquering, all-powerful Messiah would come and lead them to freedom, but now their idea of redemption had been devastated by the death of Jesus.

They also now believed that the women's story of Jesus' Resurrection (see John 20) was simply an idle tale.

On their walk together, Jesus, still the stranger to the disciples, proceeds to explain through scriptures that in fact the fulfilment of the expectation of the People of God for a Messiah had been accomplished through the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

Upon arriving at Emmaus, the disciples welcome and invite the stranger, who has now become the companion on the journey, to stay and prepare to have a meal with them.

Jesus accepts their hospitality, and, during their meal takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it and gives it to them.

It is at this moment, as the scriptures have been explained to them, that their hearts burn, they are transformed, and they realise their companion is the Risen Jesus.

It is the message of faith nourished by Jesus, the living bread that many believers take from this narrative. Believers are sustained by faith that Jesus that burns within their hearts.

Christian believers now understand that death does not put an end to one's life.

The essence of this passage is that the Messiah must suffer and die before he enters glory (Luke 24:26).

The death of Jesus, the Messiah, was in keeping with God's purpose.

(togetheratonealtar)

Philippians 4:5

Let your gentleness be evident to all.

The Lord is near!

Extravagant over-reaction! That's what we're programmed to seek and to display in our modern world of soundbites and over-hyped personality.

But gentleness, that moderating grace in the midst of chaos and conflict, is so vital to bring the peace of God to conflict-laden churches, families, and relationships.

How can we be gentle, how can we restrain from over-reacting to the wounds, offenses, and slights that come our way?

The Lord is near!

He is our vindication. He is our example. He is our comfort. He is our hope. He is our strength. He is near!

We are not alone, and our destiny, reputation and value are not up to us to establish or to defend.

O LORD, my Father God, please be ever near me as I seek to be your person of character in the middle of the chaos and conflict around me. I ask that your presence be made known and that my character reflects that presence in all that I do and say today, and each day that follows.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

(phil@verseoftheday.com)

BABC Bible Study to Restart Meetings

At the BABC leaders meeting, it was decided that, as the first stage of re-opening worship in BABC:

- The Bible Study will recommence on Tuesday 13th of April, at 1pm.
- Please use the front entrance on Cockton Hill Road, but if you are physically unable to enter that way, you may use the side entrance on Westfield Rd.
- We will be using the Sanctuary and will be socially distanced.
- Please wear a face covering, unless you have an exemption and sanitise your hands, on entering.
- The only toilet to be used, is the one by the front doors.
- No refreshments will be served, so please bring anything you need, for your own use only.
- No Church Bibles or Hymn books will be available, so please bring your own.

Sorry to give so many rules, but it is so we all keep safe.

Very much looking forward to seeing each one of you.

John Gaines

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 23rd April at 7pm

Evening Celebration:

DEFEATING THE DRAGONS: OBSTACLES TO MISSION

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

Saturday 24th April at 10am

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

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

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 24th April - Evening

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

Sunday 25th 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 Prayers

*We are asked this week to pray for: **Rowley and Wolsingham Baptist Churches.***

Thanksgiving:

- Both Rowley and Wolsingham have been worshipping together via Zoom every two weeks.
- Rowley Baptist Church hold a Covid-19 safe distancing service in the church and alternate every two weeks with the Zoom service.
- A Lady has requested to be baptized at Rowley after the lockdown restrictions are lifted.

Pray that:

- Rowley are seeking guidance from the LORD to appoint a children's / youth worker to help with are Castlesiders (Messy Church.) and Recharge (Café Church.)
- The relaunch of Castlesiders (Messy Church) and Recharge (Café Church.) In September 2021 with our local schools and children's contacts.
- The reopening of the church building at Wolsingham for the summer of 2021 and fellowship starting to meet together again.
- Psalm 118: 1 - Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures for ever.

Ephesians 1: 15-16 *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.*

(Mike Cross, NBA Prayer Co-ordinator)

Donations Request

Recently, on BBC's Radio 4, on one of the Thought for Today items, the speaker was the minister of a church involved in distributing food for financially despairing people, in a similar manner to the way BABC share it.

The minister had asked many of the recipients what they actually needed most of all.

Though obviously food was high on the list, it wasn't actually first on the list.

Top of the list were personal hygiene products: Soap, toilet paper, shampoos, shaving items, sanitary items, toothpaste, antiseptic and skin creams, hand gels, etc.

If you are in a position to be able to donate items, please consider including such commodities.

They really are important, not only in helping with personal hygiene, but also in maintaining a sense of self-worth for people at a very low ebb.

Thankyou.

An Emmaus Road Benediction

*May the risen Christ meet you on the road,
Lead you into all truth,
Guide you on your path.*

*May the risen Christ feed and sustain you,
Fill you with his presence,
Equip you by his Spirit.*

*May the Risen Christ go with you today,
Be with you through this week,
May you dwell with Christ forever.*

(Howard Carter is a Presbyterian Minister in Whangarei in Northland, New Zealand)

Online Prayer

- 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>

Helpful Links

BABC Sunday Service	https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/babc-sunday-service/
BABC Newsletter	https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/newsletter/
BABC Garden Blog	https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/church-garden-blog/
NBA Sunday Service	https://www.bishopbaptists.co.uk/nba-sunday-service/
BABC Main Website	www.bishopbaptists.co.uk

Please feel free to explore the website and subscribe to [our YouTube channel](#) and those of our contributors to encourage them to continue to provide the valuable content from which we all benefit.