

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.

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

- *Takes place on Tuesdays from 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***

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:

- **Lindsay Street**
- **Hutchinson Street**
- **Durham Street**
- **Hazel Grove**
- **Bishop Street**
- **Wesley Street**

Please also continue to pray for:

- **Church View Nursing Home**
- **Butterwick Hospice**
- **A successful transition to the ending of lockdowns**
- **The people who have received food through our Community Food Share**

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**

Community Day

Our recent Community Day each Wednesday for the past few weeks of the lockdown have been busy and demanding of us.

We are usually meeting with some of the more troubled people of our area, or people who have found themselves in diminished financial circumstances.

There's certainly a lot going on with the food distribution and takeaway meals, the gardening, an area litter picking team, sometimes confidential advice and counselling are sought.

Some come for the free food, and some come because they live alone and this is the only place where anyone talks with them, and some come to put their own troubles away for a while and to help others instead.

Often, we perhaps feel that some of them don't treat the building as the sacred place that it was intended to be, and deserves to be, and don't give it due respect.

Whatever we think of others, our perceptions of them may be wide of the mark, and we too may be far from the perfection and paragons we would like to be.

I used to pray for others to be more understanding, and patient and tolerant, only to realise that they were praying the same about me.

Whatever, we can't judge anyone until we have walked in their shoes.

As it says in Colossians 4 vs 5 + 6 NIV: "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

It also says in Matthew 25:40: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

My Favourite Things

In the scene where a storm frightens the children, Maria's bedroom door suddenly bursts open and one by one the nine children arrive seeking comfort.

The younger girls dive under her quilt (duvet) while the boys pretend to be brave.

As the lightning flashes and thunder crashes Maria tries to distract them.

"When anything bothers me and I feel unhappy" she says, "I think of my favourite things. Like daffodils and green meadows ... Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens... "

So begins one of the most optimistic songs ever written.

It's true though, isn't it?

When we're feeling sad, remembering our favourite things helps us to feel better.

And like *"favourite things"*, our blessings can also be remembered when needed.

Maria sings about *"brown paper packages tied up with string"*.

Often parcels look ordinary but inside there's a great delight.

I think sometimes my best blessings look ordinary because they are so familiar, but they're no less special.

Like spring bulbs after a long winter; a child's giggle; a blackbird singing or seeing precious people.

At home, on our kitchen fridge is a notice that says, *"Count your Blessings"*.

It's there because I need reminding often!

When life feels stormy, I try to remember good things, even those I take for granted.

We all experience life's storms but whatever the circumstances there are always blessings, somewhere.

In the Bible, *"blessings"* usually mean God's good gifts that bring us joy, peace and provision.

Yet sometimes all I can do is thank God that I'm not alone in the storm, because he promises to be with us always – and that's the greatest blessing of all!

So next time, when the metaphorical dog bites, or a proverbial bee stings, remember your “favourite things”, those surprising blessings, and you too “might not feel so bad”.

Dear Lord, when I'm in a storm, please help me to count my blessings, including your promise to be with me always. Amen

(Adapted from an article by Bryony Wood, “GOOD NEWS” magazine, June 2020).

NBA Prayers

We are asked to pray this week for:

- Linda Donaldson and the Northern Baptist College Hub Cranmer Hall.

Also, we are asked to pray for:

- South Hylton IM Church who have had a fire in their building and have sustained considerable damage to the internal fabric of the Church. Thankfully they are fully insured and the building itself seems secure, but it has come as a shock to them and obviously they would value our prayers.

Mike Cross, (NBA Prayer Co-ordinator)

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.”

NBA - Environmental Hub

Green Conversion Launching the Association Environment Network Hub
Thursday 10th June 7.30pm Online via Zoom.

Featuring guest speaker Rev Dave Gregory
(Former BU President and Co-ordinator of BUEN)

“Share in God’s vision to care for creation.”

To book your place please contact Paul Revill.

Events – Hamsterley Baptist Church

A Heart for Hamsterley (Charles Whitfield)

It is 200 years since Charles Whitfield served as Minister at the Baptist Church, and we are celebrating his life and work.

He served as a Baptist Minister for 50 years, preaching and pastoring and baptising, and he started the first school in Hamsterley village.

He organised the building of our present church and he lived in the Manse next door.

Also, he was the founder of several other new Baptist churches across the North-East of England.

.....and why did he do it?

Everything Charles Whitfield did for the people of Hamsterley, he did, from a heart devoted to God and from his desire for them to know his Saviour,

The Lord Jesus Christ.

You are invited to join us at our OPEN DAY, Saturday, 17th July, 1.30 pm - 4.30pm and feel the local history as you browse our church displays, with quizzes for the children!

On Sunday 18th July at 10:30am we can learn more about John Whitfield's faith at our morning worship service.

If you would like to visit us when it is less crowded during the previous week, then please phone us on either 01388 488 970 or 07813 383325 to confirm that the church is open at times convenient for you.

ALL VERY WELCOME - IT'S FREE!

(Hamsterley Baptist Church)

Events – Bishop Auckland Baptist Church

Advance Notice

The John Froud Live Concert

Saturday 11th September, 7.30pm - FREE EVENT

Renown Singer/Song Writer, John Froud

Comes to Bishop Auckland Baptist Church In Live Concert.

If you like Christian music with a country twist
then this is a must-see event!

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A FREE EVENT AND IS OPEN TO EVERYONE.
Donations are also welcome.

THANK YOU to the extra helpers who came along to our Wednesday Community Day last week when several of our usual aides-de-camp were away on holiday or for family reasons. The day went very smoothly and proficiently - we couldn't have done it without you! Well done bonny lads and lasses one and all!

The Closing Prayer for Summer Time

May your worries recede.
May your fears disappear.
May your angers melt.

May God bless you with tears...
To shed for those who suffer from pain,
rejection, starvation and war,

So that you may reach out
your hand to comfort them
And to turn their pain into joy.

Go forth, go into the world.
Go into these warm days of summer.
Enjoy God's creation and all that God provides.

Celebrate the summertime of the earth,
where life is enhanced by rain
and long days of sunshine.

Go forth sharing, witnessing
and living the Good News.

Amen.

(From Church Leaders Guidebook)

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

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