

<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

- *Takes place on Tuesdays 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:

- ***Berkley Grove***
- ***Lumley Grove***
- ***Balmoral Grove***
- ***Carlisle Grove***
- ***Barnard Avenue***
- ***Newlands Avenue***

Please also continue to pray for:

- ***The Bishop's Palace***
- ***The Auckland Project***
- ***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***

Father's Day

A Fathers' Day Story about Two Sons

The story of the Prodigal Son sheds light on Fatherhood as much as on the role of two very different children.

It relates to all of us, parents and children, because God is our ultimate Parent.

Of course, you know the story of the Prodigal Son - in fact, you might agree that it could be called the Prodigal Sons, since each boy had something to learn. It's equally interesting to study this parable in terms of the Father's role.

At this season of honouring Fathers and Grandfathers, it is wise for a parent to talk about ultimate Fatherhood/Parenthood. Many families are without a Father, or the Father is away, or he fails to give input.

This is all the more reason why we need to see that children cannot be deprived of the best of Fatherhood qualities under any circumstances because we all have the best parent: God.

You might want to review this parable found in Luke 15: 11-32.

The first part of the parable makes it apparent that the Father does not discourage the younger son from his own adventure away from home - he lets him learn, and then, when the boy "comes to his senses," he welcomes him home with a grand celebration.

In illustrating God as the Father, Jesus shows a parental love that is forgiving.

However, the older son sinks into jealousy and pettiness.

Again, the Father reaches out to this son, assuring him that "all that I have is thine."

In other words, look up from your woes, son, and see that you've always had everything you needed...and always will.

And there the story ends, and it is left to us to figure what happens to him.

Ask your youngsters what they think would be a proper response.

Was the older son correct in his insistence that as the good, responsible one, he has been cheated out of a party?

Is he right in feeling less loved?

In parenting, we often see that the needy child gets more time and attention and encouragement, as in homework and sports. But is that fair? Just what does "fair" mean?

But did the older son have to eat farm rubbish? Did he sleep in the cold outdoors? Did he wear rags?

Rather didn't he feel confidence and comfort in his abilities to manage things on his own?

In the book "The Preaching Life by Barbara Brown Taylor", it says, speaking of the Father, and of God as Father: ***"He does not love either of his sons according to what they deserve. He just loves them, more because of what he is than because of what they are."***

God loves because that is truly what He is.

So, are not both sons the beloved children of God?

We are all prodigals at one time or another.

Sometimes we too run away from things.

Sometimes we must admit our mistakes. Like the younger son, we must "come to our self."

And what is the result? A Father who is always ready and waiting to welcome us home.

Note that the Father goes to the son - a good parenting parallel for our reaching out to the wayward one.

This action proves that the son's riotous ways are not recognized as part of him!

Plus, the Father is not interested in the details, he is ready for the reunion with his "lost" son.

No recriminations, just joy. Can we do that under similar circumstances?

What can we conclude about the older son who is so bitter?

Perhaps he too has a lesson to learn.

Whether we are the younger or older son, can we admit a mistake, correct it, and move on without pointing fingers?

Since the story of the older son is not resolved in the Bible, it is up to you and your family to give it an ending.

Try not to choose to let this son just go away angry.

He, too, can "come to himself" in time to rejoice in the celebration of life that the heavenly Father has prepared for us all.

(Caryl W Krueger - www.biblewise.com)

The Top 10 Things You'll Never Hear a Dad Say:

10. "Well, fancy that! I'm lost! It looks like we'll have to stop and ask for directions."
9. "You know Cupcake, now that you're thirteen, you'll be ready for un-chaperoned car dates. Won't that be fun?"
8. "I noticed that all your friends have a certain hostile attitude. I like that."
7. "Here's a credit card and the keys to my new car. Enjoy yourself."
6. "Figure skating is not good enough for you, son. Just go on your PlayStation!"
5. "Your Mother and I are going away for the weekend. You might want to consider throwing a party."
4. "Well, I don't know now what's wrong with your car. Probably one of those something and nothing things that makes it run or something. Just have it towed to a garage and I'll pay whatever charge."
3. "No son of mine is going to live under this roof."
2. "Why do you want to go and get a job? I make plenty of money for you to spend."

And the number one thing you'll never hear a dad say:

1. "What do I want for Father's Day? Don't worry about that. It's no big deal." (actually they might say this, but they don't mean it).
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"A HEART FOR HAMSTERLEY" - Charles Whitfield

It is 200 years since he 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 Northeast 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 we can learn more about John Whitfield's faith
at 10.30 am at our morning worship service.

*If you would like to visit us during the previous week, when it is less crowded,
then please phone us to confirm that the church is open at times convenient
for you on either: 01388-488970 or 07813-383325*

ALL VERY WELCOME - IT'S FREE!

(Hamsterley Baptist Church)

We invite all of our NBA Churches to use this prayer as we celebrate on 18th July, the remarkable life of Charles Whitfield.

May the same Spirit who inspired him to pioneer for the gospel, reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ, seek the wellbeing of others and develop our common life inspire us as we move in the next chapter of our Association life.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit: We thank You: -

- For all the people You have called by name, who have gathered here;
- For speaking a new Word to us here;
- For gently touching the places that are wounded or as yet un-transformed within us;
- For calling us to remember the ancient paths and to ask where the good way is and walk in it;
- For bread broken and wine outpoured;
- For the peace passed and joy shared;
- For relationships reconciled and feet washed;
- For the harmonies of brothers and sisters, singing with one voice;
- For the silence which has held us and allowed deep to call to deep.

Living God,

Remind us that to everything there is a season; That we are a people of pilgrimage rooted in You, and not in bricks and mortar, wood and stone;

We will trust You; Help us to journey beyond the familiar and into the unknown; Give us the faith to leave old ways and to break fresh ground with You;

We believe You for our future, chapter by chapter, until the story is written;

You are our God; And our times are in Your hand; Our times are in Your hand.

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

Amen.

(From the Northumbria Community's closing liturgy in the Hetton Hall Chapel prior to moving to their new Mother House, October 2010).

NBA Prayers

We are asked to pray for Spennymoor Jubilee Independent Methodist Church

Please Pray For:

- The opening of our church - it's been a long time in darkness and helplessness.
- Hopefully we will see the light again.
- Our ministers and leaders of the church especially for Ken and Barbara who worked so hard to clean and have everything in place when the church opens on 20th June 2021.
- That we all will be safe and protected from Covid viruses.

Thank you for praying for us.

Pamela Johnson
(Church Secretary)

(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."*

The John Froud Live Concert

Saturday 11th September

at 7.30pm

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!

FREE EVENT - OPEN TO ALL

Donations are also welcomed.

Closing Prayers For Father's Day

Heavenly Father,
Today we ask You to bless our earthly fathers,
for the many times that they have reflected the love, strength, generosity,
wisdom and mercy that You exemplify in Your relationship with us, Your children.

We honour our fathers for putting our needs above their own convenience and comfort;
for teaching us to show courage and determination in the face of adversity;
for challenging us to move beyond self-limiting boundaries;
for modelling the qualities that would turn us into responsible, principled, caring adults.

Not all fathers live up to these ideals.
Give them the grace to acknowledge and learn from their mistakes.
Give us the grace to extend to them the same forgiveness that you offer us all.
Help us to resist the urge to stay stuck in past bitterness,
instead, moving forward with humility and peace of heart.

We ask your blessing on those men who serve as father figures in our lives when our biological fathers aren't able to do so.
May the love and selflessness they show us be returned to them in all their relationships and help them to know that their influence has changed us for the better.

For all those who are fathers, we ask for wisdom and humility in the momentous and crucial task of parenting.
Give them the strength to do well by their children and by You.
In Your name, O God, God our Father, we pray.

Amen.

(Tony Rossi - www.xavier.edu)

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.