

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

- Starting on Sunday 4th July at 10:30am we will begin holding fortnightly services in church and continue to use online services in the intervening weeks. We have missed you all and look forward to catching up.
- You will need a mask - sanitiser will be available and we will be socially distancing.

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:

- **Compton Grove**
- **Westfield Road**
- **Bell Street**
- **Percy Street**
- **Clevedon Avenue**
- **Woodhouse Lane**

Please also pray for:

- **St. Anne's Church of England School**
- **St. Andrew's Primary School**
- **A measured and successful transition to the ending of lockdowns**
- **The people who have received food through our Community Food Share**
- **Your prayers are asked for Pam following her recent falls.** She is now in Stanhope Community Hospital. She has been seen by a Doctor & physiotherapist and they are planning to get her mobile again. If anyone wishes to send her a message, in Stanhope Community Hospital, please use this link: www.cddft.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/stay-in-touch.aspx

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**

Services

Last Sunday we opened our Sanctuary for the re- commencement of our Services of Worship there.

As most of you will know, we have been meeting on Zoom and also sharing, through the expert and kind services of our “technical department”, YouTube Services on the www.

However, it was lovely to meet in person again, and praise the Lord together, with the company of some of our Methodist friends.

At present, we can’t meet every week because of other already arranged plans, but here are our intentions for the next few Sundays:

11th July Our “Online” YouTube Service.

**18th July Meet at Hamsterley at 10.30am for their “Charles Whitfield”
Celebration Service (it is advisable to contact David and
Caroline to reserve a seat for yourself.)**

25th July Our “Online” YouTube Service.

1st Aug Café Church at BABC at 10.30am

We have missed you all and look forward to catching up.

You will need to wear a face mask. Hand sanitiser will be available, and seating will be socially distanced.

During the services in the Sanctuary, we will be invited to stand for singing even though the present anti-Covid regulations prohibit our singing.

If the weather is favourable, we hope to use the garden for the Service, and then have a social cup of tea /coffee and biscuits afterwards.

In the occasional unlikely event of rain, we will have to retreat indoors again, but then the refreshments will have to be curtailed and masks will be needed to be worn.

Please share this news with others when you can.

Bible Study

Don't forget that each Tuesday afternoon at 1.00pm - 2.00pm you are invited to our Bible Study sessions which recently restarted.

Now that summer is here, it is hoped that the meetings can be outside in the church garden.

If the weather is inclement, then we will retreat into the building. Masks will be required to be worn in that case.

At present, the meetings are being led by our own Rev Tony, who is covering for John G.

You are welcome to attend no matter where you normally share fellowship.

Anniversary Celebration

Like many churches, Bishop Auckland Baptist Church has had its up and downs and moves over the years but as far as can be ascertained, we are approaching a significant anniversary in the life of the Baptist Church in this town, celebrating when the local Baptists decided to set up a Baptist Fellowship and they advertised for an Evangelist to lead them.

**WE ARE PLANNING, NEXT YEAR, TO CELEBRATE
OUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY (1872 – 2022)**

We would welcome your thoughts and ideas and suggestions to help to make it a time of celebration and a happy occasion.

Please feel free to contact us with appropriate thoughts ideas and suggestions – all will be considered and gratefully received.

Learn To Work With Others

1 Corinthians 1:10, NIV: *"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought." ... Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose."*

There's a legend about a covey of quail that lived in a forest.

The birds were happy there except for their enemy, the quail catcher.

He would imitate their call, and then when they gathered together he'd throw a net over them, stuff them into his hunting basket, and carry them off to market.

Finally, a wise old quail said, 'Brothers and sisters, I have a plan.

When the quail catcher throws his net over us, we should all put our heads into a section of the net together and start flapping our wings.

That way we can lift it as one and fly off with it.'

The birds all agreed, and the next day they did exactly that, making a successful escape.

When the quail-catcher's wife asked him, 'Where are the quail to take to market?' he replied, 'When they all got together there was no stopping them!'

Writing to the Corinthian church, the apostle Paul said, 'Some members of Chloe's household have told me about your quarrels' (v 11).

Then he went on to say, 'Live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions...Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.'

Success in any venture calls for the death of individual ego and self-interest.

So, when a mistake is made, refuse to place blame. Be forgiving, and don't allow an offence to develop into bitterness.

Offer praise for other team members' strengths and offer help in their areas of weakness.

Be conscientious and dependable and stay focused on the bigger goal.

When we learn to work together there's no stopping us!

(UCB Word for Today - July 11th, 2018)

The Taxi Driver's Tale

I'm normally jaundiced in what I come across on "Social Media", but I felt that this one was an exception:

I arrived at the address and honked the horn. After waiting a few minutes, I honked again.

Since this was going to be the last pick up of my shift I thought about just driving away, but instead, I stopped the engine and walked up to the door and knocked.

'Just a minute', answered a frail, elderly voice. I could hear something being dragged across the floor.

After a long pause, the door opened. A very elderly, small woman stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940's movie.

By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The house looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets.

There were no clocks on the walls, no knickknacks or utensils on the work tops or cupboard. In the corner was a cardboard box filled with photos and glassware.

'Would you carry my case out to the car?' she asked. I took the suitcase to the cab, then returned to assist the woman.

She took my arm and we walked slowly toward the curb.

She kept thanking me for my kindness. 'It's nothing', I told her. 'I just try to treat my passengers the way I would want my mother to be treated.'

'Oh, you're such a good boy, she said. When we got in the cab, she gave me an address and then asked, 'Could you drive through the older areas of town?'

'It's not the shortest way', I answered quickly.

'Oh, I don't mind,' she said. 'I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice'.

I looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. 'I don't have any family left', she continued in a soft voice.'

'The doctor says I don't have very long'.

I quietly reached over and shut off the meter.

'What route would you like me to take?' I asked.

For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as a lift operator.

We drove through the neighbourhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds;

We stopped in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl.

Sometimes she'd ask me to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing.

As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, *'I'm tired. Let's go now please'*.

We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico.

Two attendants came out to the cab as soon as we pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move.

They must have been expecting her.

I opened the boot and took the small suitcase to the door.

The woman was already seated in a wheelchair.

'How much do I owe you?' She asked, reaching into her purse.

'Nothing', I said

'You have to make a living', she answered.

'There are other passengers', I responded.

Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug.

She held onto me tightly.

'You gave an old woman a little moment of joy', she said. *'Thank you.'*

I squeezed her hand, and then walked into the dim morning light.

Behind me, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life.

I didn't pick up any more passengers that shift. I drove aimlessly, lost in thought. For the rest of that day, I could hardly talk.

What if that woman had got an angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift? What if I had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away as they frequently do nowadays?

On a quick self-appraisal, I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments.

But great moments often catch us unaware... beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one.

PEOPLE MAY NOT REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT YOU DID, OR WHAT YOU SAID
BUT THEY WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.

At the bottom of this story was a Facebook request to forward and share it –

I deleted that request because if you have read to this point, you won't have to be asked to pass it along ...you just will.

Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we are here, we might as well dance.

So, I copied and shared as asked to do and I'm getting a bit mocked for doing so.

I wish this was part of my story and I hope that I would act in this way.

For all of you that thought this was my story, I wish it was.

I copied and pasted it.

(Copied from Facebook.

“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)

NBA Prayers

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).

Paul Revill has asked us to pass on this email to you all:

“Charles Whitfield” celebrations at Hamsterley.

Encountering God: Towards a Community of Prayer
Saturday 17th July 2021 at Hamsterley Baptist Church. DL13 3QA
Celebrating Faithfulness: Anticipating Fruitfulness

This historic church is witness to the goodness and faithfulness of God and to the innovation and commitment of His people.

As we celebrate the outstanding ministry of Charles Whitfield, who died 200 years ago, we recognise his significant ministry of 50 years, his impact in the life of the Association and our churches and in the lives of many disciples.

His is an untold story that needs to be rediscovered.

But we don't just look back, we look to God, and to the future He has for us all.

Encountering God: Towards a Community of Prayer

We have sensed a call in Hamsterley to a Community of Prayer focussing on the church at Hamsterley.

We have already used the church for times of prayer and we invite you to join with us as we seek to encounter God in a prayer morning on Saturday 17th July.

We shall worship our God of faithful love, pray individually and together, using the prayer stations on a prayer walk in the village and pray for the area and beyond, share together and engage with the Scriptures.

We meet at 10am for refreshments and will finish at 12.30pm We hope that you will stay for lunch.

You can either bring your own and eat at the church, or book lunch at the local pub, The Cross Keys, where prior Booking is essential. See <https://www.crosskeyshamsterley.co.uk/> or phone 01388-488457

Paul Revill (The NBA)

We are asked to pray this week for: Our Regional Minister, Rev Dr John Claydon.

Thanksgiving

Please give thanks for John's twenty years of effective, gracious and wise ministry as our Regional Minister.

Prayer

Please pray that the Lord will guide and bless John and Janet in the coming days as they transition to retirement with the opportunities and challenges which that brings.

(Mike Cross - NBA Prayer Requests 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 Prayer

Loving Father,

We know that You will never leave us or forsake us, and we are so grateful for all that you have done for us.

Each day reminds us in many ways of your mercy and your love.

Yet there are times in our lives when we have felt lost and alone. We have been hurt and frightened and wondered where you were.

Remind us again of your loving presence.

Place your hands of healing on our lives.

Comfort us when we become afraid, lost, lonely, and fearful.

Guard and protect us each night and prepare us to serve you faithfully all our days.

Be with us now, and in all times of our lives.

In Jesus' Name, we pray.

Amen.

(Nancy C Townley – www.ministrymatters.com)

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.