

<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 are continuing to focus on outdoor activities. Food is available each Wednesday to be eaten outside or taken away and the gardening group is active if you would like to come along and join in.

***Church Services***

- We are 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 – Currently on hold until September***

- 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](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**
- **Blair Grove**
- **Westfield Road**
- **Cockton Hill Road**
- **Newgate Street**

Please also pray for:

- **Sandringham Care Home**
- **Lady Eden House**
- **A measured and successful transition to the ending of lockdowns**
- **The people who have received food through our Community Food Share**
- **Pam** is still suffering pain and mobility problems and she thanks you for the continuing prayers that she is receiving. She cannot receive any treatment for her spinal problems, until her three pelvic fractures are healed but is slowly getting more mobile. However, we are only in the first part of this journey. Please keep her in your prayers.
- **Please also pray for Maureen and John**, part of our Fellowship, who are both suffering from Covid. John's condition has recently worsened, and he has been admitted to hospital

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>NBA Prayers</b>
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We are asked to pray this week for:  
**Blackhill Baptist Church, Consett (Ministered by Rev Dave Etherington)**

***Thanksgiving***

- We're giving thanks at B.B.C for an overwhelming response to our holiday at home project, which exceeded all expectations, with 30 something people (young and old) coming to be together on the first meeting and an equally exciting number due to attend the second. There are three in total

***Prayer***

- That our relationships, as a church, will grow with people in our community and that such ministries as our holiday at home, and our community memorial service due to take place on September the 19th, will afford opportunities to care for one another and join together in prayer and to share.

*(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.

**Save The Date**

**SATURDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER @ 3PM**

**Induction of Revd Hayley Young as  
Transitional Strategic Regional Minister.**

We are currently waiting on Government Announcements and guidance.

It is hoped that we will be able to invite you all to physically join us at Heaton Baptist Church for the service, so please save the date and we will let you know and take bookings soon.

*Elaine Webster (NBA Admin Support)*

<b>Services</b>
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Recently 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 web.

It was lovely to meet in person again and praise the Lord together.

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

<p><b>15<sup>th</sup> Aug ..... Café Church</b></p>
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<p><b>22<sup>nd</sup> Aug ..... YouTube Service</b></p>
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<p><b>29<sup>th</sup> Aug ..... Meet at Hamsterley Baptist Church</b></p>
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We have missed you all and look forward to catching up.

- When we meet for services in the Sanctuary, we would encourage you to wear face masks as part of our protection of attendees.
- Hand sanitiser will be available, and seating may be socially distanced.
- During the services in the Sanctuary, we will be invited to stand for singing even though the present anti-Covid regulations seem to prohibit our singing (this is subject to change as government guidance allows).
- 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.

**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.

Thoughts
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### ***The Power of Words***

*"Actions speak louder than words"*. I hear that quite a lot; but, although I know what is meant, I think it is wrong.

To speak is to act. Language is performative – it does something, it changes something.

For example, it is the speaking of the vows in a wedding that makes the marriage.

The story goes that St Francis of Assisi told his friars to *"Go out and preach the Gospel; use words, if you have to."*

Well... if he did actually say it, was he right?

We use words all the time to think and speak and make sense of the world; so, language matters – words matter... they do something.

The fourth Gospel begins with: *"In the beginning was the word..."*. Go back to Genesis and the word is: *"Let there be."*

A few weeks ago, I convened an online conference led by scientists for a couple of hundred clergy about the current pandemic.

We started off asking why we use particular metaphors as a lens through which to see or think about what is happening.

In brief, why is it that in the UK we often use language of conflict and combat – fighting, struggling, defeating, cowering, bravery, and so on – whereas in Germany, for example, they seem to have used imagery of *"damming a flood"* – particularly pertinent at the moment?

An enemy is personalised, a flood isn't.

We normally just accept the language presented as the frame through which we then interpret what is going on.

But, like cancer and serious illness, words of combat and fight might not be the best.

If your loved one dies, have they been defeated? Were they not up to it?

You see what I mean? Words are never neutral and always carry consequences – think of the impact of blessing or cursing. They also have limits.



One of the metaphors I take from my reading of the Bible is that of *“running the race that is before you”* – and not just because of the recent Olympics.

This image of race insists on agency, seeing value in how I live and behave in whatever circumstances I find myself.

Yet, racing conjures up different notions: a sprint is pure competition; a relay involves both competitiveness and cooperation.

At the heart of all this is an appreciation that we cannot control – or win – everything.

Coming full circle, words matter because they unconsciously shape how we see, and look, and think, and act.

The question I ask myself is:

*“Do I pay enough attention to the words and metaphors I use and the ways in which they affect others and so help to shape the world — are my words helpful or hurtful?”*

*(Based on a Blog by Nick Baines, Bishop of Manchester, on BBC Radio 4, 26th July 2021)*

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***John 21 v5: "Have you caught any fish?"***

Sometimes God uses our failure to get our attention.

In John 21 the disciples 'went out in the boat, but...caught nothing all night. At dawn Jesus was standing on the beach, but, in the half light, the disciples couldn't see who he was. He called out, "*Fellows, have you caught any fish?*" "*No,*" they replied. Then he said, "*Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you'll get some!*" And then, for some reason, they did so, and they couldn't haul in the net because there were so many fish in it. Then the disciple realised who it was on the beach!

*Notice three things:*

**1. *Jesus can do what you can't do.***

As long as you think you can handle things on your own, He will let you try. As long as what worked for you in the past is still working, you won't reach for His help. It's only when you run out of answers you discover: "*You will not succeed by your own strength or...power, but by my Spirit,*" says the LORD' (Zechariah 4:6 NCV).

**2. *God can do more than you can do.***

He told the disciples, '*Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you'll catch some!*' It didn't sound right, but by obeying Him they entered a level of abundance and blessing they never dreamed possible.

**3. *God wants a relationship with you.***

Later, after eating breakfast with the disciples, Jesus told Peter, '*Take care of my sheep*' (see John 21:17).

- **Now fishermen don't take care of sheep – that's what shepherds do!**
- **So, what just happened?**
- **Jesus introduced Peter to his true calling – and He will do the same for you!**

*(UCB WORD FOR TODAY Mon 09/08/2021)*

# The John Froud Live Concert

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> 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

*Maker of all, you laboured over creation,  
and afterwards you rested.  
It was enough, and it was good.*

*And we are creatures formed in your likeness,  
made more for caring relationships than our efficiency.*

*You know our limits, and you watch us tenderly,  
like a parent, even as we sleep.*

*In all the busyness of our todays,  
let there be moments of stillness, of quiet awareness.  
Show us when we have done enough.*

*Where we have become too serious and tense,  
help us to hear your invitation to rest in You.  
And when the day is over may we sleep soundly in your  
embrace.*

*On earth as in heaven  
Your Kingdom Come  
Amen.*

*(Adapted from a prayer by Michael Leunig, "A Common Prayer.")*

<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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