

From the editor

We don't have The Baptist Times anymore and I'm not on the internet so it was a really good evening to hear more about what's happening.

This was one of the responses to the Yorkshire Baptist Association prayer concerts featured in our main story this week.

It came a few days after I received a letter from someone highlighting 'the hole there has been in my life' since the demise of the printed, weekly Baptist Times.

'I have no idea what is happening in Baptist circles and I miss it. I am truly at a loss to understand what is happening the wider church simply because I have nothing to guide and stimulate my thinking,' the correspondent, baptised 63 years ago, wrote.

It is a reminder that there is a significant number for whom the internet, let alone social media, is a mystery.

The Weekly Round-up, now one year old, is not a direct replacement for the newspaper but could play a role in filling the aforementioned hole.

It is offered in a format (the booklet format) that is more conducive to printing – could there be those in your congregation who may benefit from a print-out?

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German request

THE Theological Seminary at Elstal near Berlin, operated and fully funded by the Union of Evangelical Free Churches (Baptists) in Germany, requires books and sets of periodicals on Baptist history, especially on the history of the Baptists in Great

Britain and in North America.

If you have books or periodicals on Baptist history to give away, you can contact Dr Martin Rothkegel, Lecturer in Church History at Elstal to check whether these materials exist in Elstal or not: MRothkegel@baptisten.de.

JOB

New jobs posted on The Baptist Time website:

Chaplain and Head of RS, Eltham College

For more details visit: <http://www.baptisttimes.co.uk/index.php/jobs>

DEATH

TOMS Margaret Joyce (Joy)

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Joy Toms, on 17 January 2013, aged 94, whilst living at Upton, Wirral. She died peacefully in her sleep after complications following a minor heart attack suffered just before Christmas. Widow of the Revd Kenneth Toms and beloved mother of Philip. She was predeceased by her sons Andrew and Stephen. Joy will be remembered by many as the wife of Kenneth, serving with him in his ministries at Shrewsbury, Wem, Burnham-on-Sea, Cambray (Cheltenham) and Herne Bay.

A service of thanksgiving will be held on Friday 8 February at 1.30 pm at St. Mary's Church, Upton, Wirral CH49 6JZ followed by cremation at Landican Cemetery.

Donations in Joy's memory to Mildmay Mission Hospital via Alex Taylor Funeral Service, Greenbank, Old Greasby Road, Upton, Wirral CH49 6LT.

JONES, The Revd David Stanley Burnett

The Revd David Jones died on Saturday 26 January 2013 peacefully at home, aged 89 years. His funeral will be at Latchford Baptist Church, Warrington on 6 February at 1.15pm followed by a committal at Warrington Crematorium at 2.20pm. Donations should be made to BMS World Mission.

BAPTISMS

Ashford, Kent (South Ashford): Phillip and Deborah Coles. 2
Bishop Stortford: Miranda Kingston Hepner, Hannah McCafferty 2
Waltham Abbey: Gary and Sherrie Farnsworth 2

Total 6

Send notifications of baptisms, ministerial changes, deaths and testimonies to editor@baptisttimes.co.uk

THE BAPTIST TIMES



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YBA unites in prayer

BAPTIST churches in Yorkshire have been experiencing a 'deeper sense of family and belonging' following a series of prayer concerts.

The Yorkshire Baptist Association (YBA) has so far held five concerts on Sunday evenings throughout January.

A further two are scheduled in early February, with the first at Cottingham Road Baptist Church in Hull on Sunday. The final event takes place at Skipton Baptist Church the following Sunday.

It is expected between 300-400 people will have gathered by the final concert.

A key theme to have emerged from the Futures Process was a greater emphasis on networking among Baptist churches - and the aim of the Yorkshire prayer concerts has been to draw local Christians together, explained the Revd Graham Ensor, YBA regional minister team leader. 'It's been about walking with each other watching over each other.

'Our aim was to draw people together within Association life at the beginning of the year - strengthen the interdependency not just for our own congregations but outwardly too, and having prayer as the foundational building block.'

The evenings followed the same structure, beginning with



thanksgiving followed by prayer focused on local, national and international life.

Messages from the Revd Jonathan Edwards, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Revd David Kerrigan, general director of BMS World Mission, have been played at each concert.

There have been slots for open prayer, small groups, and both a prayer and a prophetic table.

In the smaller regions where there are just a handful of churches around 25 people gathered. In the larger areas representatives from as many as 12 churches prayed together.

Hopes and aspirations have been shared and prayers said in small groups and corporately,

while candles have been lit representing the YBA churches and Christ at the head.

There has been encouraging feedback, with many experiencing 'a deeper sense of family and belonging', said Mr Ensor.

One comment was, 'We were really blessed with the worship last night. It was great to share with other local churches and also to feel our role in fellowship with churches in the wider association of Yorkshire and Britain.'

The Revd Jane Day, regional minister for mission, said the concerts had brought Association staff into contact with people with different gifts.

'It has been great to meet new people from within our churches,' she said.

'On our first night someone came up to me and offered her skills and gifts in the area of cross-cultural mission. She has a real heart for Muslims and wants to be available to 'serve'.

'Had we not done the prayer concerts, I would not have known about her and so we met yesterday to chat about where her gifts might be best used.'

A prayer and fasting day is planned latter in the year.

In addition the YBA regional ministers are hoping to make a tour in the autumn.

Care at site of Bristol tandem bike tragedy

A BAPTIST minister interrupted his church's evening service to be at the scene of a tragic accident in which a young couple on a tandem bike were killed.

The Revd Peter Cook of Hanham Baptist Church in Bristol was in the area when Ross Simons, 34, and wife Clare, 30, were thrown off their bike as they cycled along Lower Hanham Road on Sunday.

Their bike was hit by a car fleeing police. They died instantly.

'I was just told about it when I was about to start my evening service and I really thought the person telling me was having me on,' Mr Cook said.

'We stopped the service and prayed for what was going on - it seemed just so implausible.'

He went to the scene, and there he met Ross's father, friends of the family and

members of the community. He also spoke to reporters, expressing the community's shock and incomprehension at the tragedy.

'We weren't actually the nearest church to the incident, but I am the only minister in the area with only one church, so I was the only one who could take the time out to be there for the family and community,' Mr Cook explained.

'It was a really tough day, but amazing how open people were to God. It is just where we want to be as a church too - right at the heart of the life of the community into which God has placed us.'

A 38-year-old man later handed himself into a police station.

He has since been charged with causing death by dangerous driving.

Nepali landslide help

NEPALI schoolchildren have planted over 2,000 trees to save their communities from landslides and help heal the environment thanks to a Christian project supported by BMS World Mission.

Landslides claim countless lives every year in Nepal. Thin, shaly soil in the mid-hills belt where many poor communities live is easily washed away by seasonal rains, creating a danger to all who live there.

Thanks to a BMS grant, children at three schools in the districts of Doti, Rukum and Dhading have planted 2,000 trees which will, through their

care and nurturing, anchor the soil and protect it from erosion, reducing the danger of landslides.

The children are working together, sharing ideas and getting hands-on experience as part of a project, led by BMS partner United Mission to Nepal (UMN), called Green Ambassadors.

The trees these young Green Ambassadors plant will eventually grow to be useful in other ways, too. As they mature, they will provide income for the schools as they provide fodder for animals and in some cases fruit.

Kitchen joy

A BAPTIST church in Sussex was delighted to complete the final phase of a major building project in time for Christmas.

The provision of a fully fitted, and enlarged modern kitchen enabled minister the Revd John Western of St Leonards Baptist Church to cook Christmas dinner for a number of members and friends who otherwise would have spent Christmas Day alone.

This was one of his final acts as minister of the church before leaving to his new role as minister of Westcliff Baptist Church in Essex.

When John came to St Leonards over 12 years ago, the church had drawn up plans to make the church more accessible to all.

John has overseen the provision of a lift for access to the lower levels; the introduction of an Induction Loop system for those using hearing aids; the provision of a ramp to provide access to the church; the installation of accessible toilets; and the removal of the pews to open the church up.

The kitchen was the final phase. It also entailed replacing an old glazed roof with a new slate roof.

This was an expensive project and John said that it would not have been possible without 'the generous support of national and local charities, to support money raised by members of the congregation'.

Janet Mardell, the lay minister at St Leonards Baptist Church, said she was delighted to see the kitchen opened.

What if the church saw blood and organ donation as part of its giving?

THE Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) has lent its support to a groundbreaking new campaign which is calling on the church to increase the number of blood and organ donors in the UK.

Founded as a two-year partnership between creative agency KORE and NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), the initiative aims to profile the need for more blood and organ donors and encourage regular blood donation as an alternative way of personal giving within churches.

Sponsored by Give.net and in association with denominations, organisations and festivals including BUGB, the Church of England, Salvation Army, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church, Hope and Evangelical Alliance, the fleshandblood campaign marks the first time the NHS has worked alongside the Churches on a national initiative of this kind.

Lorna Williamson, medical director of NHSBT said, 'All major faith groups support donation in the spirit of giving and we're excited to explore this



7000
units of blood
are needed
every day to
meet hospital
demand

fleshandblood.org

in more detail by working with the Christian Church.

'By raising awareness amongst its members and community about the daily need for blood transfusions and organ transplants across the NHS, we hope to banish myths, educate people and encourage blood and organ donation. Donating blood, joining the Organ Donor Register, or consenting to organ donation from a deceased loved one is a unique gift and one that can truly save lives.'

Every day 7,000 units of blood are needed to meet hospital demand, with approximately 225,000 extra blood donors needed each year to maintain consistency.

More than 1,000 people die each year in the UK waiting for an organ transplant.

The church, which has a long history of giving and generosity and has millions of people across the country as its members, is ideally placed to raise awareness and help to meet the need for blood and organ donation in the UK.

This unique campaign seeks to equip individuals and churches as advocates for blood and organ donation enabling them to raise awareness of this key issue with their family, friends and community and potentially help to save thousands of lives each year.

The Revd Stephen Keyworth, Faith and Society team leader at the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) added, 'BUGB is happy to add our support to fleshandblood and encourages local churches to consider getting involved in their area.

'Caring is at the heart of who we are as Christians, prepared to do something for others and this is one way of offering a priceless gift in our communities.'

Visit www.fleshandblood.org

From the www. baptisttimes.co.uk

Recent stories and comment pieces on *The Baptist Times* website

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not disclosing who we really are, we rob ourselves of what salvation really is.

<http://bit.ly/X7KBIZ>

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> Treasure hunts and tutorials – Chris Duffett in the North West
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> The harm caused by blaming the poorest. Important report from Church Action on Poverty
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