

NBA

Team News

Dates to note:

Mar

- 4th Safeguarding Training: Level 2 (Portrack)
- 6th NBA Council—please pray for us
- 7th Safeguarding Training: Level 2 (Durham)
- 11th Dementia Training Day at Beacon Lough
- 18th Safeguarding Training: Level 2 (Beacon Lough)
- 25th NBA Council Day—please pray for us

April

- 8th – 11th Rubert Lazaar (BUGB President) visiting the area
- 11th Ministers' Fellowship with Rupert Lazaar
- 22nd NBA Spring Assembly with Dianne Tidball

May

- 2nd Leading Together—for those new to church leadership
- 13th Baptist Assembly in Harrogate

Our Vision

'We are passionate to see God's Kingdom come in power to touch people's lives and shape our society'

Our Mission

'We engage together in developing, encouraging and supporting churches to be creative in mission, and facilitating effective ministries.'

Association and Pastoral News



Half terms breaks have past and we are on the cusp of Lent, although, it has to be said, many Baptists engage more with the day before Lent and tuck into pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. However Lent is both a reminder of our Lord's period of fasting and preparation, and of the temptations that he faced as well as being our preparation for Easter. As we leave February it feels as though the winter is passing by and we begin to focus on Spring and the activities and challenges of the coming months.

We have both exciting and challenging things to look forward to. On 13th May there is the Baptist Assembly in Harrogate. This is the furthest north the Assembly has been in living memory and it would be great to have good support from the northern Associations. In the NBA we will welcome the BU President, Rupert Lazaar visiting the area in March, the incoming President, Dianne Tidball, speaking at our Assembly on 22nd April and the opportunity to vote for John Singleton (as one of the two candidates standing) to be the BU President for the following year. However, we also face challenges. There is the challenge of mission through local church and pioneering opportunities, as we seek to present Christ in a warm, engaging and relevant way. There is also the challenges



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of significant contemporary issues such as same sex marriage. This issue causes us to think deeply, theologically and ethically, and brings particular challenges for pastoral practice and church life. Some guidance can be found on the BU website and we can supply some study material. Then there is the financial challenge that we have faced for several years and is perhaps catching up on us. Possibly as a result of the financial turndown in 2007 and the extra pressures brought by the pension difficulties, churches, the Association and the Union have all faced significant pressures. As an Association our Home Mission giving has held up well, but has risen only slowly since 2007. Although our Association remains a top giver in per capita terms, this is an urgent matter for prayer as we seek God for the resources we need for the mission we are called to engage in.

John C

0191 372 3727. johnclaydon@thenba.org.uk

From the Mission Enabler

As 2017 started, I think there have been three things of significance which I have been involved with. Firstly, I have begun a programme of offering missional engagement on Sundays with churches which have invited me to preach. This has so far involve running a cafe-style service at Headland, Hartlepool, with another one to follow, and planning a 'get out of church Sunday with Morpeth. My hope is that this will enable me and others to engage in more evangelism and demonstration of the Good News through acts of kindness and compassion over the course of the year.



Secondly, I attended the WEBA 're-imagine' training event at the end of January, part of a two-year process which a small group of churches are engaging in alongside this Association, to enable them to become more mission-focussed in their culture and activity. I have been impressed with this process, which offers churches some guidelines but basically gives them freedom to pursue the things which God is calling them to, while reflecting upon the changes taking place and being in a supportive partnership with the Association staff and the other churches on the process. I am

actively seeking for this programme to launch here in our region in January 2018 and am starting o work with the staff in the West of England towards this.

Thirdly, I have met with Roy Searle in his new role as Northern Pioneer Co-ordinator. It is exciting to see Roy's vision and developing plans to bring together those who feel a call towards pioneering new churches and new forms of church and missional projects, and to give training, resourcing and support. We have several potential pioneering opportunities in our region, though our model for funding will in the main require those who are bi-vocational and able to largely fund themselves at least initially. The people are emerging, the need is there – we can now be more active in helping pioneering projects to launch and develop across our region.

Looking ahead, we are once again joining with other Baptist Associations to encourage our churches towards sharing faith between Easter and Pentecost, through Fifty Days of Good News. And for a few days between April 26th and May 1st, we will have Texan Mission teams available to us, as well as some coming in late July and early August. If you would like to use a team of preachers, musicians and youth and children's workers during this time, please let me know.

We hope to run two Lithuania Mission trips this year: a tour of churches and leading the Bible School between 19th -26th June, in partnership with students from Northern Baptist College; and a return to Kaunas children's camp in late July/early August. Again, please let me know if you're interested in getting involved in either of these. There will also be the opportunity of involvement in the Glendale Agricultural Show on August Bank Holiday Monday, in partnership with Crossing places in Wooler – postponed from last year and definitely happening this time around!

May God bless you and give you faith and energy through his Spirit to engage wholeheartedly in God's mission throughout this year.

Paul R

01661 599384. paulrevill@thenba.org.uk