

CENTRAL NEWS

GOOD NEWS STORIES from the CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2016



- January 1st** **New Year's resolution-more exercise, less cake.**
- January 2nd Bike ride round village. Salad for lunch.
- January 3rd Bike ride round village. Called in fish and chip shop on way home.
- January 4th Had to skip bike ride, no time. Ate sandwich.
- January 5th Bike ride to shops, slipped a bar of chocolate in with fruit!!
- January 6th Popped in car to village school, no time for bike, ate that chocolate.
- January 7th Oh, what the heck, fluffed the new year's resolution for the sixth year In a row. Might as well give up now!!

Does this sound like you? Or a bit like you? I gave up on new year's resolutions years ago. They were never really new, just same old same old I'd always been struggling with, and they weren't really resolutions, just hope against hope!!

But perhaps you're all better than me, or at least I want to challenge you to be so, and you've got plenty of time to plan it and resolve to action it. It doesn't involve exercising or dieting or though it could do. It is all to do with joining in the Association's challenge to you and your churches to take part in "40 days of daring greatly". On the front cover of this newsletter you will see the dates and then it's over to you. A challenge to be creative in bringing the Gospel to your neighbourhood.



Carol Murray

Think about it-you are all part of a community-city, town, village, hamlet. You are all engaged in the lives of the people around you. Why not try stepping out into that community, to those people with God's love in a very intentional way. Think out of the box, off the wall and all those other daring greatly phrases and make it a reality. Put into practice one new, appropriate, sustainable idea that will shine light, bring joy, show justice and exude care.

A big ask? Oh, I don't know, God didn't hold back on a new opportunity when God sent His Son Jesus into the world and look what happened then. Daring greatly has nothing on that!

I look forward to hearing what your church is doing.

Carol A Murray
(Moderator CBA Council)

www.centralba.org.uk
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Diary Dates

SAFEGUARDING

Introduction:

- @Tring, Sat Feb 20th
- @Kettering, March 19th

'Help! I'm a Deacon'

27th February:
Christchurch, Stantonbury

FOOTSTEPS 3 'Multi-cultural church'

5th March: Christ the King
Milton Keynes

Three evenings to inspire us to 'Dare Greatly'

- @ 10th April: Stopsley, Luton with Steve Moody
- @ 24th April: Mount Pleasant, Northampton with Jenni Entrican
- @ 8th May: Union, High Wycombe with Chris Duffett

Women in Leadership

retreat day with Jenni Entrican, Mon 25th April:
Abbey Centre ,
Northampton

CBA Assembly

25th June Whaddon Way,
Milton Keynes

More information for all the above can be found on the web site

central baptist association

BAPTISTS TOGETHER

40 DAYS of DARING GREATLY

"an encouragement to YOU to grow deeper in faith"

"put into practice one new, appropriate, sustainable idea that will shine light, bring joy, show justice and exude care"

"a challenge to be creative in bringing the Gospel to your neighbourhood"

2016

April 6- May 15

www.centralba.org.uk
walking together in ministry & mission



YOUNG PEOPLE DARING GREATLY

Ricky Rew, Youth Minister with Spurgeons BC, Bletchley, talks about an exciting project happening in Milton Keynes

It has been said that young Christians leave the church & their faith not because we demand too much of them, but because we demand too little. During the Autumn half term break we challenge young Christians across Milton Keynes to spend their school break putting their faith into action through an initiative called Hope MK - and they haven't disappointed. Now in its third year, the event saw 157 young Christians (yr 7-13) giving up their school break and investing 6400 hours to serve & bless their city through 14 projects with 25 churches of all sizes, denominations & traditions working together in unity and in partnership with local councils & organisations.

The event runs from 9:30am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday, and closes with a celebration event on the final evening. Morning see everyone gather for a time of fun, games & team building activities, worship, prayer, teaching & preparation. After lunch the young people head out to serve communities around Milton Keynes through social action & community building projects; everything from gardening, decorating, running family drop-in sessions, sports & community clean-up activities to evangelism & healing, and many things in between. We equip them to take every opportunity to engage in



conversational evangelism. There is a firm focus on mission in word & deed.

When we create the opportunities for young Christians to 'get out of the boat' and encourage them to go beyond the things they believe they're capable of, they not only realise that they're more capable than they thought, but their faith becomes more vital.

Whether they're blessing people with free doughnuts or offering prayer & healing on the streets, they grow in confidence as they see God at work through them, and sense Him at work in them.

At the end of the week we ask the young people to rate various aspects of the weeks activities. The following comments were shared under the heading 'best bits':

- 'gaining more confidence from God and being able to express my faith'
- 'actually feeling able to talk to people and not feel weird'
- 'being able to learn more about how God wants me to serve Him'

Some young people who joined us for the week came to know Jesus for themselves for the first time, others expressed how their faith was deepened through the experience, and for some it was their self-confidence which grew. Some parents have commented about how their child has been transformed through their experiences at Hope MK.

As part of Hope MK they become aware that they are a vital part of Jesus' church now. They are not simply in waiting to be the church of the future, they are the future of the church.

'Hope MK has given me a hunch about the future of the Church in the UK.' - Rev. Chris Duffett

To find out more about Hope MK and see a video of what we got up to in October half term, head to www.hopemk.com



DARING GREATLY 2016

Coming soon, we in the CBA will be joining in with a National initiative from the 6th April for 40 days leading up to Pentecost. Called '40 Days of Daring Greatly' (inspired by Jenni Entrican's Presidential theme). The aim is to encourage churches to consider doing something with a mission heart that is out of their comfort zone. We all know how easy it is for our faith communities to imperceptibly disengage from the culture in which God has placed us.

I am challenged when I see the courage of younger people (such as in HOPE MK) impacting their communities in the name of Christ, and deep down wishing I had a little bit more of their get up and go. Of course many of our churches are already doing great things, but sometimes it is helpful just to have that gentle nudge from the wider Christian community. Hence this initiative.



What might this look like? Jenni Entrican suggests a couple of ideas...

Dare to ask yourself "What does following Jesus look like?" Over the 40 Days pick one of the gospels and look carefully at what Jesus did, how he spoke to people, what he said, who he hung out with, what his take was on organised religion ... and ask yourself, what might following this Jesus mean for me?

As a church, dare to examine your comfort zone? Think about the things that constrain you. Where did these boundaries come from? What might it look like if you were open to enlarging your boundaries? Where might God be calling you to adventure with him beyond your comfort zone?

We will in due course be offering more suggestions as to what this might look like on the ground, but just for now please begin to consider whether this is something you & your church could engage intentionally in.

Colin Pye.

FREE! Resources for Small Groups to prepare to Dare Greatly



faith pictures from the church army. "Faith Pictures is a short course designed to help Christians talk naturally to friends, neighbours and colleagues about what they believe. The heart of the course is about helping people to identify a single picture or image that embodies something of their faith. This is because the kinds of communication which best stick in the mind are concrete and rooted in story. The course aims to be accessible and light-hearted, without jargon or inflexible methods."

www.faithpictures.org



mission shaped intro "is a six part course that helps people to reconnect with the communities they are called to serve and to re-imagine the forms of church that are needed for the 21st century. It takes you on a creative and reflective journey looking at the need for new ways of being church." msi is available as a free download (registration required) from www.freshexpressions.org.uk/msi or to purchase as course notes and DVD and participant workbooks.

RADIO CARVER

I can trace my seeing that fictional stories sometimes point to God, to a childhood spent reading Superman comics. While not wishing to portray myself as a theological child prodigy, it seemed obvious to me that the Superman story of an otherworldly child come to live among us who would save us was remarkably like the story of Jesus. The next stage in this process was meeting with a group of young people at Fuller Baptist Church, Kettering when Paul Sheppy was the Assistant Minister and Peter Strong one of the young people after we had all gone to see One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest. We were asked to discuss whether or not McMurphy was a type of Christ.

Having settled in a church in Oxford, I found I was amongst a group of colleagues who were interested in the coming together of theology and film. A book was published – Flickering Images – to which I contributed a chapter on Terminator 2. I had already begun broadcasting on Radio Oxford – reviewing the religious press and talking about spiritual insights in film. Since moving to St Albans, I have been doing the same thing on Premier Christian Radio as a monthly guest on the Inspiration Breakfast Show for the last eight years. I also have a weekly film review slot on our local community station, Radio Verulam.

I've been grateful to have seen and heard God speak through so many different stories and it has been good to be able to share this with both Christian and secular audiences over the airwaves.



Simon Carver

If you think that you would like to speak on

a radio station, you will probably find that this is not too hard to do. Community and BBC Local radio stations will probably welcome someone wanting to get involved. BBC Local Radio stations will often have a Sunday morning show that has space for contributions. Find out who presents or produces the show and contact them with a suggestion for something that you would like to say. If it's interesting, they will probably ask you on. IF they like you, they might then ask you again! Radio work has some big advantages in that the best preparation is done in the head, rather than on paper. Having the odd name written down to avoid that awful moment of mental block is useful, but a script rarely works well. You will usually be having a conversation with the presenter. They are unlikely to want to catch you out with a tricky question as that won't come over well for their audience, so trust them. And talk with a smile on your face, as that does come across. Although one Premier listener did say that they liked my voice ... I sounded just like Jack Dee!

Simon Carver is Minister of Dagnall Street Baptist Church, St Albans

Baptist Insurance launches church insurance guides

Caring for a church is an honour, but it comes with a number of obligations and responsibilities. Baptist Insurance understands that many churches are dependent on the support of volunteers who are often full time work and other competing priorities.

That's why the company have launches a new set of straight forward guides for churches designed to help them to meet their legal liabilities and make sure everything is taken care of.

The five guides cover:

- **Administration** - what you need to know about maintaining your policy, what documentation you should have and how to pay premiums
- **Events** - an overview of what churches need to consider when they are planning events
- **Community Outreach** - a straightforward guide to insurance and risk management issues that can arise with outreach projects such as foodbanks
- **People on church premises** - a short review of the key issues that need to be addressed to keep people safe while on church premises
- **Church property** - advice on what churches can do to reduce the risk of loss or damage to churches and their contents

The guides aim to demystify insurance and its terminology; copies can be downloaded from the Baptist Insurance website www.baptist-insurance.co.uk/guides



Your Church Insurance

A guide for churches for administering your church insurance

Introduction

Welcome to our short guide to administering your church insurance. The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the church has adequate insurance in place to cover its legal liabilities in the event of an accident and injury to any users of church buildings, as well as to protect the buildings themselves.

In this guide we give you an overview of your insurance policy, explain what documentation you should have, how you can pay your premiums and other useful information.

For help, call our dedicated customer services team (lines have your policy number available) on **0345 070 2223**

Monday to Friday 9am-5pm excluding bank holidays

Email us at enquiries@baptist-ins.com

For more information and guidance, go online at www.baptist-insurance.co.uk

Find out more information on our website when you see this symbol

Baptist Insurance
Experts in home and church insurance

You may have noticed that the Rugby World Cup took place in the UK this autumn with some of the games in our area at Stadium MK. It's possible as well that you were one of over a thousand churches who took the opportunity of this nationwide event to reach out into your local community.

It was my privilege to head Engage 2015, a network of denominations and Christian agencies working together to produce ideas and resources for churches to engage in outreach around the World Cup. Among the activities that took place were community festivals, special worship services, schools work, various guest events (usually including a meal), sports quizzes, Holiday Clubs, screening games, and much more.

Some 15,000 copies of Luke's Gospel & Acts with testimonies from current Christian players were distributed, and 1,200 copies of the resource DVD were purchased. Some of these resources travelled beyond our own shores, even as far as the Pacific Islands, and one of the video testimonies has been translated into French.

A group of church leaders from Japan, where the next Rugby World Cup will take place in 2019, came to observe what the UK church was doing and went home full of ideas for four years time. With help from the UK they have already set up Engage 2019, and are planning major outreach around both that tournament and the Olympics in 2020.

Exciting as that may all sound, what really counts is



David Chawner

the impact that these activities have had for God's kingdom. Gathering such information from churches across the UK is never easy, but already we are receiving reports of people starting to attend church and signing up for ALPHA and Christianity Explored courses.

Over the next month we will be gathering more feedback. So if you had an RWC 2015 related event and have not sent a report, please get in touch on dc@engage2015.co.uk. Then next summer for our final report we will go back to everyone to attempt to analyse the effects one year down the line and to discover whether it has produced "fruit that will last".

But perhaps you're wondering whether you missed an opportunity (much like England did!). You can still view many of the resources at www.engagemediahub.com or purchase them via www.gameofliferesource.co.uk. They're still usable and will become relevant again during the Six Nations competition in February/March.

Or maybe you've never even thought of the relevance of a major sporting event as a potential platform for outreach. There will be further opportunities this year for screening games, schools work and sports quizzes with football's European Championship (10th June to 10th July).

Stay alert for information about resources produced around this event and the Rio Olympics. These could prove just the opportunities you've been looking for to reach your local community.

David Chawner, UK Coordinator, Engage 2015, is a retired Baptist Minister living in Northampton.

SANDY: a Home Mission Story



I am by nature a fairly ordered person and like to be able to have things planned and well organised, dare I say under control even. Ever since I joined Sandy Baptist Church seven years ago, God has been persistently and gently challenging me in this area. Living in the muddle and mess of life is a phrase which could sum it up quite well. Our church is only small, but with huge buildings and we are set in the centre of our small town, which has more than its fair share of struggling and disadvantaged families. The church is not rich, but we do choose to be generous with all that God has provided us with. Home Mission has supported us for all of those years, enabling us to do creative things for God's kingdom.

Here are some of the amazing ways God has been working with us and through us this year.

"we are very small, but with a large presence in the town"

After a freezing winter and I mean in our church, we knew it was time to take the plunge and raise money for a

brand new heating system, £12,500 was 'all' that was needed.

After raising £5,000 ourselves, we were encouraged to apply for some grants, from outside of the Baptist world and as a result we received a grant for £6,500 and then a further one for £2,000 from the Gale Trust. This has encouraged us so much not least of all because many community groups use our facilities and they were struggling with the poor heating too. Warmth during the week was as important as warmth in a Sunday. God has warmed up our environment then now he is warming up our outreach in some unusual ways.

As I said we are very small, but with a large presence in the town. There are some ways in which we as a church group can share God's love, through our Toddler Group and Saturday King's Café and other usual church activities, but there is only so much a small number of people can do. For the last few years one of our buildings has been used by unemployed volunteers as their work base, morning and evening as they go out on gardening projects. This winter I have been contacted by Tesco's Community worker, who wants to run an afternoon tea party for elderly in the town and was looking for a venue, we said yes, in addition I am free to go and give a brief talk. So tea provided by Tesco, paid for by Tesco and staffed by Tesco, that's God grace and provision. Another church want to run a soup kitchen, we have facilities they do not have and so yes we are letting them use our buildings to serve the community in a way we would love to do, but do not have the resources to do so, but we are free to join with them.

This is the beauty of the creativity of God's Kingdom when you try to move out of the driving seat and be a passenger just trying to go where he leads. It is both an amazing blessing and a huge challenge, but God remains faithful and His grace and provision continue.

Beth Powney: Minister of Sandy Baptist Church



Beth Powney