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Weekly update from the Association Administrator, Steph Tidy 01444-233431 admin@seba-baptist.org.uk

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New or updated items are **highlighted in yellow/or blue**

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 7: 14

If you haven't visited the BUGB website recently, you will read this when you do:
“As infections continue to rise, the Government recommends continuing caution. Good ventilation, diligence in hygiene, wearing a face covering in enclosed and crowded spaces, and limiting contact with those we do not live with, are all noted as beneficial behaviours.

In the light of this, we recommend that it is both sensible and appropriate for churches to continue to take some measures to limit the spread of Covid-19. Churches have a responsibility to protect their staff, congregations, communities, and other users of their buildings. However, it is now down to each church to determine for itself what these measures should be.”

I want to make a plea that, having those responsibilities, we need to continue with facemasks in church, even for singing (which you are allowed to do from Monday). Some folk will be very reticent to sit next to people they are not in a bubble with, so the opportunity to have seat spaces kept empty should be available, possibly even an area of the church with social distancing if you have the room for this. Facemasks are not worn for us but for others, and there are many vulnerable people who we should 'prefer to ourselves' and show them love by continuing to stay masked-up and keeping appropriate distance. To sing because it makes us feel good, but without showing concern for others, is not worship. Jesus quoted Isaiah (Matt 15.8) "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught be men."

Yes, they have been singing at football matches – and look at the contribution that has made to the current rapid rise in cases.

May God bless you with wisdom, love and grace in these coming days.
Stuart

Prayer requests

Prayer requests are now sent out in a separate emailing, every Wednesday afternoon. If you would like your name added to the list for prayer, please email me admin@seba-baptist.org.uk

Richard Page

We are sad to announce the passing of Richard Page, former Treasurer at Headcorn Baptist Church, who received the call home on Thursday morning.

Please pray for his family, friends and the fellowship at Headcorn.

SEBA Notices

Next week:

Just to let you know, there will be no weekly emailing or prayer emailing next week, as our Administrator is on annual leave. 'Normal service' will resume on 2nd August.

SEB Women's Ministry

SEBWM Newsletter:

The latest newsletter is available to download - click [here](#)

SEBA Training

Safeguarding Training - new system:

Until we are able to return to face-to-face training, the Baptist Union have produced an Excellence in Safeguarding Update film. To book onto the training, please go to our [new website](#) and follow the instructions

Safeguarding Question and Answer Sessions:

Wednesday 21 July 2021, 10am

If you have completed the online Excellence in Safeguarding Training and have any questions that you would like answered this is an opportunity to ask them.

I am running 45-minute sessions on Zoom to talk through any questions you may have. There will be a maximum of 20 places for each session.

Please register your interest now (this can be booked online, once you've watched the film) - I look forward to meeting with you.

Wendy Mann

First Aid Training:

Saturday 24 July 2021, 9.30am-4.30pm

Emmanuel Baptist Church, Gravesend, DA12 1BB

Now that covid restrictions have been lifted slightly and we are able to resume some of our training albeit in smaller numbers due to restrictions, we have a First Aid Training day arranged at Headcorn Baptist Church. This is a full day's training for an "Emergency First Aid at work" qualification.

The course:

- Takes about 6 hours, 9.30am – 4.30pm
- Costs £50.00 per person . Please pay by BAC Payment to Reliance Bank, Sort Code 60-01-73 Account number 00218212 Ref Your name, FA July 17
- Can cater for a maximum of 12 candidates, although during covid restrictions we are only having 8 Candidates so that we don't share dummies.
- Qualifies you for three years although changes in regulations do encourage annual refresher training to be held as well.

- Covers basic first aid suitable for volunteers / staff who are helping with events etc (Understanding the role of a first aider / dealing with unconscious casualties / basic CPR / Wounds and bleeding / choking / shock / minor injuries)
- Please note the course includes both lecture style learning and also practical physical elements (e.g. CPR, and recovery position). You need to physically be able to complete both aspects in order to be able to pass the course. Please wear loose clothing, and trousers, not skirts as you will be down on the floor at times!
- Candidates need to be over 16 years of age.

Please note, spaces are limited, so booking quickly is essential - to book a place, please contact Pam Kerley asap pam.admin@seba-baptist.org.uk (if you are unable to pay via BACS, you can also pay by cheque - please ask Pam for the details).

Please note, there are no other planned dates until the Autumn.

Events (in date order)

Please note - with all events advertised below, whilst we are publicising them, the views and comments expressed are not necessarily approved by the Association - unless they have been organised specifically by the Association.

The Reading Room - a place for women in ministry/leadership to discover and talk about books:

20 July 2021, 11am - 'Theology Brewed in an African Pot' by Agbonkhianmeghe E Orbator

The purpose of the reading room is to build community and learn together. Reading is a beautiful practice and books invite us to explore and to bring into question other worldviews. Our hope is that the reading room will broaden your resource base and creativity in a way that will help you in your own ministry. We recognise that everyone will have their own response to what they read, and we want this to be an activity and community that serves you in your ministry.

Each meeting will last for one hour. For more information, and details on how to join the zoom call, email Jane Day jday@baptist.org.uk

Spurgeon's College - Taster days:

Taster Day for Postgraduate Courses:

3 August, 5-6pm

You are invited to come and enjoy a virtual taster day with staff from Spurgeon's College. You will be able to meet our tutors and learn more about the postgraduate courses we offer. You can also enjoy a partial sample lecture as well as take part in a Q&A session. All you need to do is register via email: admissions@spurgeons.ac.uk

Taster Day for Undergraduate Courses:

5 August, 5-6pm

You are invited to come and enjoy a virtual taster day with staff from Spurgeon's College. You will be able to meet our tutors and learn more about the undergraduate theology courses we offer. You can also enjoy a partial sample lecture and take part in a Q&A session. All you need to do is register via email: admissions@spurgeons.ac.uk

Look forward to seeing you!

Relaunch – a bespoke retreat for Youth, Family and Children's Workers:

Wednesday 25th August (PM) to Saturday 28th August (PM)

Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre, TN33 9AD

book before the 30th June to received the early bird price of £190 which includes accommodation and all meals

At Crowhurst we recognise that some time away to re-focus on God and His priorities for ministry is essential. This summer we are offering space to be with God on our bespoke retreat "Re-launch". Re-Launch will have a focus on 'Being in the glory of God, working in the glory of God and bringing in the glory of God'.

We are thrilled that Daniel Miles will be leading the retreat. He has a heart for prayer ministry and for seeing the power of God move in people's lives through healing miracles and the prophetic.

To book call 01424 830204

or <https://www.crowhursthealing.org.uk/retreat.php?retreat=588>

Advice, Resources & Information

Petition - Provide additional funding for redistributing surplus food:

A few weeks ago on the 18th June, the Government made a decision that many people are very disappointed about. They had been approached in April by the members of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee (EFRA) which

involves one MP in the South East who is Rosie Duffield in Canterbury. The EFRA Committee had made a series of recommendations and one of them was that the Government should provide ongoing funding to FareShare and other charities, so these groups can continue to redistribute surplus food from the farmgate and across the supply chain to frontline food aid providers. The food redistribution was proposed to help to provide nutritious food to those who might not otherwise have access to it, as well as minimising waste from the organisations with surplus food. Sadly the Government has chosen to block this suggestion and so a few days after their decision Ian Chisnell (former Sussex Ecumenical Officer) set out to form a petition to call for their decision to be reversed. The title of the petition is "Provide additional funding for redistributing surplus food" and the challenge now is to obtain enough signatures for the Government to respond. Every signature will move us closer to a response!

To read more about this issue, check out Ian's blog <https://ianchisnell.blog/2021/06/22/victoria-prentis-and-mps-must-reverse-the-government/>

To sign the petition, click here <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/589500>

Information & support from the Baptist Union

Coronavirus Essential Guidance:

"On 12 July, the UK Government confirmed the move to step 4 of their Covid-19 recovery roadmap for England from 19 July. This will remove outstanding legal restrictions including:

- All remaining limits on social contact are removed. People may meet with whom and with as many as they wish, both indoors and outdoors.
- Social distancing is no longer demanded in any setting.
- All restrictions on the numbers at and activities within weddings, funerals and other life events are removed.
- Face coverings are no longer mandatory in any setting.
- There are no restrictions on singing.

Nevertheless, as infections continue to rise, the Government recommends continuing caution. Good ventilation, diligence in hygiene, wearing a face covering in enclosed and crowded spaces, and limiting contact with those we do not live with, are all noted as beneficial behaviours.

In the light of this, we recommend that it is both sensible and appropriate for

churches to continue to take some measures to limit the spread of Covid-19. Churches have a responsibility to protect their staff, congregations, communities, and other users of their buildings. However, it is now down to each church to determine for itself what these measures should be.

We are reviewing all our guidance documents and several have been updated on Thursday 15 July with suggestions of questions that churches should now consider and recommendations of best practice. We will then continue to monitor and review going forward.

The Coronavirus section of our website will be maintained to help churches practically and spiritually during these changing times. We are acutely aware that the process for making decisions going forward has the potential to be divisive. In some respects it was easier when rules were more restrictive but at least definite. How we make decisions may prove to be as important to churches as the decisions themselves. We appeal to everyone involved to be kind to each other, to listen well, to appreciate the pressure leaders are under, and to compromise accordingly. This is a very vulnerable time for churches and we ask you to recall the exhortation in Ephesians 4 to '*be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace*'. "

The guidance has been updated, and the following has been added/amended:

- [Guidance on re-opening Baptist church buildings](#) (updated 15 July)
- [Template for risk assessment prior to re-opening your church building](#) (updated 15 July)
- [Guidance on church worship](#) (updated 15 July)
- [Advice for ministers – pastoral visiting](#) (updated 15 July)
- [Coronavirus advice: Children's, youth and families ministry](#) (updated 15 July)

Please do keep checking back on the essential guidance page, to ensure the advice you are using is the most up-to-date

https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/570475/Coronavirus_essential_advice.aspx

Jobs & Vacancies

Vacancies to represent SEBA across the area:

SEBA have some vacancies on groups that you may be interested in (see list below).

- Three SACRE vacancies - on the panels, who provide input into how Religious Education is taught and collective worship is undertaken in our schools - the vacancies are in LEA areas of [Surrey Medway](#) and [West Sussex](#)- click on the area for the role description. If you would like more information about the role of a SACRE representative, our current East Sussex SACRE rep, Peter White, is more than happy to have a chat - if you would like his details, please contact Steph Tidy (admin@seba-baptist.org.uk)
- up to two Trustee vacancies for the Kent Workplace Mission - the KWM work in Kent, Medway, Bromley & Bexley supporting people of faith, at work; developing chaplaincy ministries in workplaces and helping local Christian communities to actively engage with their local economic community. For more information, [go to their website](#)

If you are interested in being involved in this way, please email Steph admin@seba-baptist.org.uk

If you would like to add a church-based, or Christian charity vacancy to the weekly emailing, please let me know admin@sebabaptist.org.uk

Please note, we cannot post vacancies for Church Minister positions, as these should go through Revd Stuart Davison, and the Settlement system.
