

New year JPIT Truth and Lies event

A FREE, one day event in York entitled *Truth, Lies and the Spirit Level* will take place in York on 31 January 2014.

As the name suggests, the event was inspired by the *Truth and Lies* report of the Joint Public Issues Team of the Methodist Church, United Reformed Church and our Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the book *The Spirit Level - Why Equality is Better for Everyone*.

The event focuses on poverty and inequality in the UK and aims to help join the dots between the rhetoric, evidence and practical actions that can be taken.

It will be chaired by The Very Reverend Vivienne Faull, Dean of York and the speakers include Prof Jonathan Bradshaw CBE FBA one of the foremost experts in the field of poverty and social exclusion in the UK, Dr Paul Edmondson-Jones MBE Director of Public Health and Wellbeing for the City of York, Prof Kate Pickett co-author of *The Spirit Level* and Paul Morrison from JPIT.

It is hoped that the day will be informative and also inspire people act to challenge the current destructive narrative around poverty and its causes.

The event is timed to coincide with Poverty and Homelessness Action Week.

For more details visit <http://www.comehear.org/>

World's largest employer?

A NEW biography charting the life of an influential but forgotten Baptist from the Victorian era has been published by the Baptist Historical Society.

Hitting the Buffers tells the story of Samuel Morton Peto (1809-1889), whose varied career included building Nelson's Column, rebuilding the Houses of Parliament, constructing railways across the UK and Europe and becoming an MP aged 38.

Not only was Peto, a generous Baptist, said to have employed the largest workforce in the world, he was also extremely considerate to his workforce, believing that all employers should act honourably towards their men. He did this by providing funds for sickness benefit, small grants to dependents of former employees and housing for his workers.

He became very supportive of the Baptist Missionary Society, serving as Treasurer 1845-1867, and gave generously to its work.

TEARFUND has invited Christian bloggers in the UK to be a part of a storytelling trip to Cambodia in early 2014.

Bloggers are invited to apply to join the trip by writing a sample post explaining why they want to travel to Cambodia and how they expect to attract people to give regularly to help churches transform their communities.

BAPTISMS

Aldwick Baptist Church, Bognor Regis: Stephanie Lander and David Bradbury 2
Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay: Melissa Hayman and Di Shorto . . . 1

Send notifications of baptisms, ministerial changes, deaths and testimonies to phobson@baptist.org.uk

He was generous, too, to many churches and funded the building of Bloomsbury Baptist Church.

His business empire, along with his fame and celebrity status, evaporated in the financial crash of 1860s.



The Revd Douglas Sparkes, former Deputy General Secretary to the Baptist Union of Great Britain, authored the biography. He said, 'It is a name almost unknown today, but in the 19th century Samuel Morton Peto was quite a celebrity, especially

in Baptist circles. Though there were failings on Peto's part, he did much good, and his story deserves to be better known.'

***Hitting the Buffers, Samuel Morton Peto 1809-1889, Railway Builder Extraordinaire* has been published by the Baptist Historical Society.**

It is available at £18, incl of p&p (£22 after 28 February) from the Revd S Langford, 6, Tracy Close, Whitchurch, Bristol BS14 0SP

THE BAPTIST TIMES weekly NEWS ROUND-UP

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The Pioneer Collective

AN initiative which seeks to identify and support 400 new Baptist pioneers over the next five years launched this week.

The Pioneer Collective aims to encourage, equip and release pioneers, those who are called to beyond the fringe of church and share the Good News of Jesus in fresh and creative ways.

The initiative seeks to reclaim 'our pioneering Baptist heritage' according to a press statement accompanying the launch, and comes in the wake of new General Secretary the Revd Lynn Green calling for 'an explosion of pioneers' earlier this year.

Its national co-ordinator is the Revd Simon Goddard, the co-author alongside Chris Duffett of last year's *Big Hearted*, and who begins as new Regional Minister for the Eastern Baptist Association (EBA) in January.

He explained that the vision of the Pioneer Collective is '400 new Baptist Pioneers: GOING to where the church isn't, DOING what Jesus does and SEEING what happens.'

'Over the next five years (2014-2019) we want to release a tribe of 400 Baptist pioneers to engage in creative and entrepreneurial mission beyond the fringe of existing congregational life in the UK, to seek the Kingdom of God



in new ways, new cultures and new contexts.'

People like Louise Froud, who after her own life-changing encounter with Jesus, wanted to share what she'd found with others. She started making up some flasks of soup and brought some loaves of bread into the High Street. 'We soon got to know the local rough sleepers and addicts and began meeting the same faces each week. This progressed into weekly hot meals... healings, addictions broken and some of the guys coming to know Jesus!'

The collective will provide coaches (mentors) for pioneers, as well as signposting training and enabling pioneers to access the "Equipped to Pioneer" training framework, the framework for national recognition within our Baptist Union of Great Britain.

The steering group of the Pioneer Collective includes representatives from Urban Expression Incarnate Network Light Project, and BMS World Mission. Urban Expression provided the initial funding to appoint Simon as the Co-ordinator, and the EBA made it possible for him to continue this task within his new role as Regional Minister.

The Fellowship of Baptists in Britain and Ireland Mission Community was chosen as a strategic place to share the vision of the Pioneer Collective with representatives from Baptist Unions and Associations across the UK. The Pioneer Collective is partnering with our Union to work out how Baptists Together might help turn the vision into a reality.

Visit www.pioneercollective.org.uk

‘Exemplary leader in all respects’ - tributes to Nelson Mandela

TRIBUTES have poured in from across the Baptist world for Nelson Mandela, who died last week aged 95.

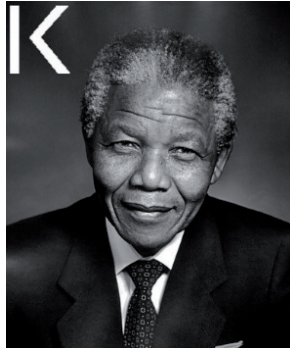
A lawyer, activist and political prisoner for 27 years, Mr Mandela became the first black President of South Africa and one of the world’s most respected statesmen.

The Revd Lynn Green, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, said, ‘It’s hard to imagine someone in our lifetime who has had such a significant impact on the world stage in terms of justice and leadership. His love for his people was always so evident, and his life embodied giving himself to others.’

‘He inspired a generation, not just in South Africa but throughout the world by the way he stood for forgiveness and reconciliation and building a new nation.’

‘We join the whole world in giving thanks for his remarkable life, as well as praying for his family and his nation at their time of loss.’

The Revd Wale Hudson



Roberts, Racial Justice Networker for the Baptist Union of Great Britain, emphasised his leadership qualities. ‘Nelson Mandela embodied the suffering servant, in so much as he was unequivocally committed to seeing justice in South Africa and beyond, and that nearly cost him his life.’

‘He was an exemplary leader in all respects.’

The Revd Dr Neville Callam, General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, said the world has lost ‘a remarkable emancipator’.

‘As a citizen of Jamaica, the first country in the world to impose a trade embargo against apartheid South Africa, and as one who was privileged to serve on the team of United Nations observers at the 1994 elections, when Mandela was elected as South African president, I offer praise and thanks to God for the gift to humankind that President Mandela was.’

‘With the passing of this great man, the world has lost a remarkable emancipator. Mandela dug a trail of respect for human dignity and human rights.’

‘We cannot afford to forget the unbounded passion for freedom, the relentless striving for justice and the unshakeable commitment to peaceful human coexistence that Mandela exhibited.’

‘Let us take time to ponder the legacy of this great world leader and let us be prepared, whatever the cost, to devote our lives to loving our neighbours, forgiving our enemies, and pursuing all that makes for justice and peace in our communities.’

Turning up the volume for Syria

ON International Human Rights Day (10 December), as the world mourned a great champion of reconciliation, a petition urging all those with influence and power to do everything possible to protect the lives and freedoms of all the people of Syria, and in particular safeguard the future of the Christian communities, was presented to the United Nations.

The petition was signed by

309,195 people from 99 different countries and organised by Open Doors, an international charity supporting persecuted Christians worldwide.

In Europe, Open Doors CEOs from France and Germany presented the petition to MEP Elmar Brok, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, and in London,

an Open Doors delegation sat down for tea with the Russian Ambassador.

Baptist Stephen Rand, Open Doors UK Advocacy Director said, ‘The petition has helped us to amplify the voice of Christians in Syria. We will continue to make sure these voices are heard whenever the future of Syria is under discussion; especially in Geneva next month.’

Parish nursing birthday celebration

THE tenth birthday celebration of Parish Nursing in the UK saw the commissioning of a Baptist minister as the charity’s new chief executive.

The Revd Dr Helen Wordsworth, formerly regional minister (mission enabler) with the Central Baptist Association, was commissioned along with a team of regional co-ordinators at the Parish Nursing Ministries UK celebration at Hothorpe Hall.

Helen’s commissioning was led by her former CBA colleague the Revd Colin Pye, who also led the music and worship at the event, supported by members of the worship group from Rugby Baptist Church.

Parish nurses are appointed by churches and support people and communities towards whole person healthcare, care for the person’s overall well-being, incorporating body, mind and spirit.

From small beginnings a decade ago, it is now a multi-denominational ministry across the UK.

‘Over the last ten years we have seen slow but steady growth, to the point where 80 churches now have active Parish



nurses,’ said Helen (pictured), ‘32 of which are Baptist churches. The commitment and dedication of these nurses is inspirational.’

She said there had been many high points along the way: visits to parish nurses in Chicago and Milwaukee in 2005; the Florence Nightingale celebration with involvement in the Songs of Praise programme and tea at Claydon House; and the recognition of parish nursing as a form of accredited ministry by our Baptist Union of Great Britain.

Even when parish nurses

have retired, they have often left ‘a church that is continuing to reach out in a more effective way through its volunteers.’

Helen has completed a Doctor of ministry degree in applied theology, studying the effect of Parish nursing on the outreach of the church, and is convinced that it offers churches ‘a very relevant and appropriate way of engaging with the local community in health ministry to offer both practical and spiritual care, enhancing whatever can be offered through statutory services.’

She hopes the charity will grow in awareness and resources.

‘For the future, we eventually want to see every person in the UK have the possibility of access to a parish nurse... but to achieve that we need more resource for the national charity, and more publicity so that more churches and nurses get to hear about it and receive the support they need to get it going and to sustain it.’

Helen is happy to visit with and speak at any church or group of churches that would like to know more.

**Contact 01733 233546
or visit the website www.parishnursing.org.uk**

From the www.baptisttimes.co.uk

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

> Nelson Mandela’s life has redefined, inspired and shaped the life of a nation. His life and

example were also instrumental in defining, shaping and inspiring mine, writes a UK Baptist minister who now co-leads a multi-racial church in one of Cape Town’s most disadvantaged communities
<http://bit.ly/1dmyhyw>

> South Africa is forever grateful to God for its iconic leader, says Baptist Convention of South

Africa General Secretary
<http://bit.ly/1TCPmS>

> Nelson’s Column, the Houses of Parliament, railway builder extraordinaire - the life of a forgotten but influential Baptist
<http://bit.ly/1btS0sW>

> Holy oil and the Holy Spirit: the miracle of Chanukah
<http://bit.ly/1gmxUZQ>