

Introducing hope

A NUMBER of key events organised as Hope 14 are set to take place in the next couple of weeks.

A day-long free celebration and mission event called the "Shropshire Hope Explosion" will be held at the Telford International Centre on Saturday 5 July.

It features a presentation from Saltmine Theatre Company, primary school choirs, evangelist Eric Delve, Youth for Christ and the launch of the Shropshire Hope Community Youth Awards.

The event is one of a year-long series of Shropshire Hope 14 activities, designed to share the love of Jesus across the county. They have been backed prayerfully and financially by all the main denominational leaders (the Heart of England Baptist Association has contributed a grant of £3,000). One of the main organisers is Stephen Derges, Pastor of Bridgnorth Baptist Church.

He said, 'Shropshire Hope 2014 is the culmination of a vision many of us have had to bring local churches together and celebrate both our faith and recognise some of the amazing talent we have in the county.

'Despite the way the Christian



faith is often portrayed in the media, we believe it is still active and alive and relevant to everyone.'

Hope 14 is a national initiative to inform and inspire people about Christianity and provide practical expressions of faith - and many Hope events are taking place elsewhere.

Churches in Brighton and Hove have organised a week-long series of activities (2-7 July) to 'bring life and light to our city', including painting, decorating, gardening, driving, praying, and children's work. Already more than 150 people had signed up, donating around 1500 hours throughout the week.

Holland Road Baptist

Church is right at the heart of it, and associate minister Tim Vellacott said Hope 'is all about - partnering with other churches, serving our city, so that people discover the amazing good news of Jesus Christ.'

In Eastleigh, Hampshire, 14 churches have teamed up for a week of social action and outreach (7-11 July).

A range of events have been organised in Huddersfield throughout the year, some of which will link to the Tour de France beginning in Yorkshire next week.

And of course, many events have already taken place. As part of Hope churches in Devonport, Plymouth hosted their first ever missions week last month, which saw quiz nights, music nights fun days, joint services and the launch of a new toddler group and Messy Church. Until this year the churches had never even had a joint prayer meeting.

'It has been a really awesome week of working and sharing together,' said Devonport Community Baptist Church minister Michael Shaw. 'In the process God has started to move, there have been commitments, recommitments, prayer ministry and also lots of fun together.'

Sudanese Christian Meriam Ibrahim released - then detained again

A SUDANESE Christian woman who was sentenced to death for apostasy has been freed - and then rearrested.

The appeal court reviewing the case of Meriam Ibrahim, sentenced to death for apostasy and 100 lashes for adultery on 11 May, this week quashed the original verdict and declared her innocent of all charges.

She was released on Monday along with her two children, the youngest of which she gave birth to while in prison, and reunited with her husband.

On Tuesday she and her family were arrested again at Khartoum Airport. They were initially detained by the Sudanese National Intelligence Security Service (NISS) and taken to the NISS offices near Khartoum Airport, before being transferred to a police station in Khartoum.

The police refused to release the family on bail and stated they require 24 hours to conclude their investigation. Mrs Ibrahim has not been charged with any offence; however



the police are investigating alleged irregularities with her travel documents, according to Christianity Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), one of the organisations which campaigned for her release.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, 'We are deeply concerned by the news that Mrs Ibrahim and her family have been detained less than 24 hours after she was declared innocent and freed from prison.

'We urge the Sudanese authorities to release this family. Holding them without charge

amounts to arbitrary detention and is in violation of article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Sudan is a signatory.'

Mrs Ibrahim's initial sentence sparked worldwide outrage, with UK political leaders such as David Cameron, Nick Clegg and David Miliband among those speaking out, and concerns remain over religious freedoms in Sudan.

While welcoming news of her acquittal, CSW warned that she and her lawyers remained in danger.

'Make climate manifesto pledge'

AS PARTIES begin to draw up their manifestos ahead of next year's General Election campaign, Christian Aid and its supporters are demanding that action to tackle climate change be at the heart of parties' plans for government.

Climate change has long been the scourge of poor people around the world, but the reality of global warming

was brought to UK shores last winter as floods caused misery and destruction to many parts of England.

This led to leaders from all parties to voice their concern about the impacts of climate change

Barry Johnston, Christian Aid's Senior UK political advisor said, 'They have all talked the talk, but if these warm words are

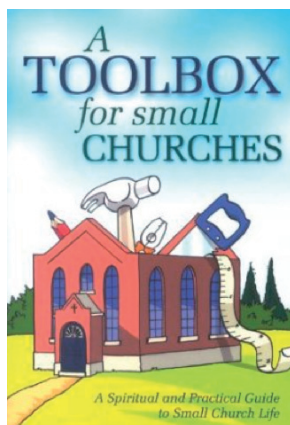
to mean anything party leaders need to back them up with action.

'We're calling on the British voting public to use their voice and ask their MPs, from whatever party, to ensure climate change is at the heart of their party manifestos.'

People can join Christian Aid's One Million Ways campaign by visiting www.christianaid.org.uk/climate.

Support for small churches

Small churches can feel neglected - which is why I've set up a blog specifically dedicated to resourcing them and sharing their stories, writes Hilary Taylor



Small church is a big issue. Not only for our Baptist Union, where approximately 1000 of our churches have a membership of 40 people or less, but for many other countries around the world. Small numbers of God's people are meeting in many strategic places and making a big impact in their communities.

My job title is 'Small Church Enabler' for the London Baptist Association and my task is to encourage the 100 or so churches in London with 40 people or less. This is done in many ways, by visiting, resourcing, leading services, away days and leading the Baptists Together Re:Focus programme. I also head up the Small Church Connexion, the network which hosts events twice a year for the small churches, sends out newsletters and

organises the LBA database for preachers and worship leaders.

A few years ago, we were constantly being asked for good resources for small churches. There are plenty of resources for small groups, which are not the same thing at all! Most resources are designed for larger numbers.

I was moaning about this lack of resource to God one day, as I was heading into London on the tube. What could I do to help? There are no resources. I felt Him say 'Stop moaning, and write one!'

So with help and advice, I did and in October 2007 A

Toolbox for Small Churches was published. So far, nearly 4000 copies have been distributed throughout the UK and abroad. I was visiting a minister in 2008 and he encouraged me to think globally about the book. 'It's a good resource that needs to be shared' he told me. He set up a blog for me on wordpress.com.

I haven't really done anything with it until this year when the blog was resurrected in May.

The plan is to put useful ideas, resources and stories on the blog and ask people to share their ideas with me. Small churches often feel neglected, weak and powerless and so need to be built up.

Church really isn't about numbers, it's about health. A small number of people can be a healthy growing church.

I am passionate about giving the small churches a helping hand to fulfil their calling from God in their location, in their community.

Hilary Taylor is the Small Church Enabler for the London Baptist Association

Visit <https://smallchurches.wordpress.com/>

happened next raised some serious questions
bit.ly/1yNQpNL

> Stress, anxiety, burnout - Shaun Lambert remembers his experience of the condition which forced England batsman Jonathan Trott home last year
bit.ly/1meTgWd

> "Living Generously -

becoming the people God wants us to be." Report from the recent Yorkshire Baptist Association Assembly
bit.ly/1sESLhG

You pray ages for a miracle - consistent prayer has led to a miraculous breakthrough for BMS World Mission workers in France
bit.ly/1yNRsgX

From the www. baptisttimes.co.uk

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

> I cringed when a lady began to evangelise loudly on a packed bus. But what

Mission conference at Spurgeon's

A MISSION conference to explore how missionaries and pastors from the majority world can work in partnership with indigenous white Christians takes place at Spurgeon's College on September 6.

The conference theme is partnership in mission, and the questions asked will be:

What are the challenges that need to be overcome for partnership between the majority world and indigenous British Christians to be effective?

How can we develop dialogue as equal partners with British church leaders?

It is organised by the Centre for Missionaries from the Majority World, whose team includes: Revd Israel Oluwole Olofinjana, Dr Harvey Kwiyani, Tayo Arikawe and Peter Oyuge.

The speakers include the Revd Dr Roger Standing, principal of Spurgeon's College; the Revd Yemi Adedeji, Director of One People Commission of the Evangelical Alliance; and the Revd Celia Apeagyei Collins, founder of Rehoboth Foundations and Vice President of Tearfund.

To register visit www.globalconnections.org.uk/pim14

Further enquiries to israelolofinjana@yahoo.co.uk

Missional Dragons' Den

A COMPETITION to find the best new ideas for missional enterprises in the land has launched.

A partnership between the Church Mission Society and Greenbelt, the competition has been devised to encourage Christians to 'imagine innovative and creative ways to communicate the gospel while developing a financially sustainable model of funding'.

Entries close on 18 July, and the finalists will pitch to a 'Dragons' Den' style event at Greenbelt Festival in August, aiming to win a place on CMS's annual Missional Entrepreneurship week in November.

The prize of attending the CMS Missional Entrepreneurship week is worth £400. It also forms a module on CMS's Pioneer Mission Leadership Training course.

Jonny Baker, the course leader and director of mission education at CMS, said, 'Through our work with pioneers, we are convinced there are lots of Christians who have wonderfully creative ideas to engage afresh in mission.'

'We want to give them the tools to enable this to happen and help them develop funding models that are both realistic and sustainable.'

To enter the competition: visit pioneer.cms-uk.org/competition

JOBS

Chief Executive Officer, African Pastors Fellowship

For more details visit: <http://www.baptist.org.uk/jobs>

NOTICE

Baptism course

Would you like a good video based baptism course to use in your church? We need help. A group of Baptist film makers are working on one and need testimonies and footage of baptisms to add to the talks which are already filmed.

The finished course will comprise a website, videos to download, small group and 1:1 outlines, and other resources ... We are keen to film baptisms and testimonies. If you have a baptism coming up in your church and the person may be 'up' for being filmed then please contact Peter Dominey peter@dominey.org.uk

We may be able to use existing footage you have but it needs to be HD quality and well filmed

BAPTISMS

Newport Pagnell Baptist Church, Bucks: Sean McBride. 1
Totteridge Road Baptist Church, Enfield: Hyacinth Rhone, Constantine Rhone, Israel Johnson, Emmanuel Ayoola, Tobi Asseez 5

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