

Tributes to Nathan

TRIBUTES have poured in for a student at Spurgeon's College who died in the early hours of Monday morning.

Nathan John, 21, was a first year theology student at the College. He was found in his bed after suffering a possible seizure. The emergency services were called immediately, but sadly pronounced Nathan dead on their arrival.

The Revd Dr Roger Standing, principal of Spurgeon's College, said, 'In his time with us at Spurgeon's Nathan had become a valued and much loved member of our community, fully involved in a variety of ways from playing drums in chapel to preaching in local churches.

'His loss is sharply felt by both students and staff.' Dr Standing requested prayer for all who have been affected by Nathan's death, including family, friends and colleagues.

Prior to joining Spurgeon's, Nathan had spent a year at Soul61, a Christian leadership course based at Soul Survivor Church in Watford. He blogged about his time there, explaining his calling to Christian leadership. In the blog he also revealed how he had been born with serious heart defects, had undergone two extensive open-



heart operations, and lived with epilepsy and an aneurysm. Despite this, he wrote, 'I have been involved in so much, so far from St John Ambulance Cadets to volunteering at a local National Trust Property; from taking part in the local amateur dramatics group to helping to entertain large groups of children, and I have also been in paid employment with the YMCA.'

'He embraced all that God had for him,' said the Revd Mark Jennings who baptised Nathan six years ago at Pershore Baptist Church. Nathan's family are members at the church.

'He didn't see barriers, but opportunities, and he seized them with both hands. As well

as what's been mentioned he also presented a weekly programme on the local hospital radio for some months, and was a regular when we took youth groups to Soul Survivor.'

Mark added, 'He had an incredible passion for God, was very open to praying with people, and often had a prophetic word for them.

'He was really well liked, and judging by the feedback on his Facebook page, his impact on so many people across the generations was far and wide.'

In a report in the *Worcester News*, parents Jacqui and Steve said they 'hadn't realised the depth and breadth of the relationships he had and the influence he has had on people.'

'All we can say is that we are immensely proud of him. He was where he wanted to be and it is a miracle that he made it there.

'He has climbed many mountains physically and metaphorically. He is an inspiration to all those people who have trouble in their life but don't let that define them.'

A thanksgiving service will be held on Monday (14 April) in Pershore Abbey, led by Mark and colleague the Revd Kerry Birch, minister of Carters Lane Baptist Church, Halesowen.

Growing calls on politicians to end hunger fast

THERE are growing calls for politicians to address the issue of hunger in the UK.

This week the Evangelical Alliance called on David Cameron, Nick Clegg and Ed Milliband to do what it takes to ensure their parties put the issue of hunger in the UK firmly on the political agenda.

It also urged the cross parliamentary inquiry into foodbanks and food poverty in Britain, led by the Bishop of Truro, to include in its terms of reference an investigation on wage level stagnation, food price rises, and benefit changes and failures, as they relate to the rise of hunger.

EA general director Steve Clifford said the new statistics set to be released by The Trussell Trust, the UK largest Christian food aid agency, later this month are "astonishing and disturbing" because of the "quantum leap in the number of people going hungry since last year".

'Hunger in the UK is a real issue which must be of concern to us all, including the Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and the Labour Party,' said Mr Clifford. 'We normally associate malnutrition with developing countries wracked by food shortages and poverty, but it's disturbing to learn that malnutrition is right here on our own doorsteps.

'Last year more than 5,500 people were admitted to UK hospitals suffering with malnutrition. No one should be allowed to go hungry in Britain.'

Mr Clifford and other



directors of the Alliance in England, Wales, NI and Scotland are participating in the 4 April fast to help draw attention to the serious hunger crisis facing the UK. The national day of fasting has been organised by the End Hunger Fast Campaign, and is supported by Baptists Together. General Secretary Lynn Green participated in a fasting relay last week.

By pledging to join the fast, supporters call on the government to ensure:

*** That the welfare system provides a robust last line of defence against hunger in Britain**

*** That work pays enough for working people to properly provide for their families**

*** That food markets function, promoting sustainable and healthy diets, with no one profiteering off hunger in Britain.**

The regional campaigning group North East CALL FOR ACTION (NE-CAP), declared its support for End Hunger Fast this week.

Dr David Golding CBE, a longstanding member of Whitley Bay Baptist Church, is NE-CAP's Development Coordinator. He cited the words of the late Cardinal Basil Hume, originally used with reference to Third World Debt: "Those who could be blamed the least, the poorest people, have suffered the most", stating they also now apply to the UK.

Dr Golding added, 'The charge we lay at the government's door is that it has failed to protect the poorest and most vulnerable in our community.'

**People can register their support at:
<http://endhungerfast.co.uk/>
 and are particularly asked to join the fast on 4 April.**

Taking action on climate change

A familiar phrase so easy to gloss over, yet indicative of a worsening reality – so what can I really do about climate change? **By Sarah Croft**



Christian Aid's new report Taken by Storm chronicling the impact of climate change can be found at <http://bit.ly/1mDalvN>

I have become immune to the words 'climate change'.

They are the words that I got taught in a geography lesson at school aged 11 where I learnt how to draw diagrams of the greenhouse effect with my new coloured pencils. These were words that a fisherman mentioned to me when I was standing next to his boat, aged 21, on a trip to Sierra Leone. And these are the words I heard on the news a couple of months ago when I saw pictures of flooded families from Somerset.

They are words that are now so ingrained into my everyday life that I all too easily pass over them when skimming a newspaper article or when hearing politicians debate on the radio.

On Monday, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report examining the reality of those

two words. Instead of skimming over it, I am going to make sure I take the time to pause and reflect on our changing world.

I am going to remind myself that climate change isn't just a geography class term, or a news topic. Climate change is affecting communities worldwide, with the poorest countries being hit first and the worst.

But I will also remember that some communities across the world are already acting to create a sustainable, fair and secure future for everyone. For example thousands of Christian Aid supporters have sent emails to David Cameron and Nick

Clegg over the last couple of weeks demanding they hold firm on their climate commitments at European talks.

I am going to remind myself of the power of the church to bring about change. A church that provided welfare before there was the welfare state, the church that has a history of speaking out on behalf of the world's poor.

I am going to remind myself of a climate of hope. The hope of a new kingdom on earth and the hope that change can be achieved. I am going to remind myself of the Robert Kennedy quote:

'Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he sends a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.'

I have a choice, to skim over climate change... or to pause, reflect and take action.

Sarah Croft is a campaigns officer at Christian Aid

After a moment of reflection, he replied: 'Gratitude.' I think this sums up it up." Ernie Whalley's final blog as President <http://bit.ly/1gqs0S0>

> Five reasons why I think the church should probably have little or nothing to do with Mother's Day <http://bit.ly/1hk98V4>

> Such a stimulation and support for my ministry – highlighting the achievements of Ministry Today UK, which recently celebrated its 20th birthday <http://bit.ly/1QlWCq>

> A report from Baptist Union Council <http://bit.ly/1hEcSFj>

From the www. baptisttimes.co.uk

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

> "Recently a Christian leader was asked by an audience: 'Why do you go to church?'"

Light up lives this Easter

CBM UK, the overseas Christian disability charity is launching a special Easter campaign called 'Light up Lives', which seeks to raise awareness and funds for CBM's eye care work in the poorest countries of the world.

CBM is asking the public to pray for their work and the people they reach out to overseas by supporting their 'Light up Lives' campaign at www.cbmuk.org.uk.

By signing up to the campaign people will be able to show their support by sending a personal prayer to those who the charity serves overseas.

Each prayer card will carry a personal prayer to someone who has lost their sight.

The charity will arrange for all of the prayer cards to be displayed in three of their projects across the world, with the aim of inspiring those receiving help and to protect the sight of others in the developing world.

Songs of Praise presenter Diane Louise Jordon is supporting the campaign.

She said, 'It's shocking to think that over 39 million people are blind worldwide, yet 80 per cent of all blindness can be avoidable.

'Via this campaign we can all send our faithful support as well as practical action to transform lives.'

To find out more about the campaign visit www.cbmuk.org.uk

Devotional for Baptist men

A DAILY devotional for Baptist men around the world is now available on the website of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

A project of the BWA Men's Department, it invites participants to reflect on God,

life, faith and discipleship.

Preparers included Ayoola Badejo, president of the All Africa Baptist Men's Fellowship, and Lucky Ray, president of American Baptist Men USA.

Visit <http://bit.ly/1mMG4NX>

NOTICE

Resolutions at the Baptist Assembly

A document outlining the Resolutions to be taken at the 2014 Annual General Meeting of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, held during the Baptist Assembly, has been posted to the Baptists Together website. For more visit www.baptist.org.uk/assembly

JOBS

Executive Director, Wycliffe Bible Translators
Full-time Café manager and Part-time Volunteer Co-ordinator/ Assistant manager, Hawick Community Cafe
Pioneer Mission Enabler, Southern Counties Baptist Association

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

DEATH

MORGAN, Clarice died 22 February aged 95. A service of thanksgiving took place at Carey Baptist Church Moulton 24 March at 2.30pm, led by the Revd Nikki Jenkins.

Clarice played an important role in the denomination, from the Bristol Young Baptist Union in the 1930s to Baptist Women's League, Chairmanship of the Women's Committees of the BU, Vice Presidency of the European Baptist Women's Union and representation at Baptist World Alliance congresses - at least once as a speaker. She was married to the Revd Cyril Morgan, who ministered to churches in Slough, Hornsey, Northampton, Welwyn Garden City, Battersea, and Oxford. They had two children, Deri and Eiluned.

IN MEMORIAM

TYDEMAN - Garwood (Rev) - In loving memory of our dearest Dad and Grandad who died 4th April, 2001. Always in our thoughts, love from all his family. 'Great was his faithfulness'

BAPTISMS

Haywards Heath Baptist Church, West Sussex: Margaret Holt, Louise Viney, Ian Vineyard 3
London Road Baptist Church, Suffolk: Tracy Scott, Ann Londs, Cath Bye... 3
Teignmouth Baptist Church, Devon: Tony Holmes, Kieron McBride 2
Walmer Baptist Church, Kent: Suzanne Purton-Smith 1

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