

‘Powerful collaboration’

THE rich 200-year association between Jamaican and British Baptists will be marked by a series of events this year.

The links began when Jamaica invited British missionaries such as John Rowe to support the growth they were experiencing under George Liele, a freed slave from the US who planted the first Baptist churches in the island country.

They continued in the ensuing 200 years, forged through years of slavery, colonisation and the arrival of the Windrush from the Caribbean to the UK.

In more recent years the ties deepened further still with the slavery apology in 2007, delivered personally by a Baptist Union delegation the following year, and the Sam Sharpe Project, which explores the legacy of Sharpe, the Baptist deacon and slave who was instrumental in bringing about the abolition of slavery when he instigated a rebellion in 1831.

Celebrations and theological reflections are being co-ordinated by the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU), Baptists Together and BMS World Mission, and will be

launched at the Baptist Assembly in May 2014.

The first event then takes place on 19 May at Spurgeon’s College, exploring the relevance of Black



Theology to contemporary Britain with leading theologian, and new tutor at Bristol Baptist College, Anthony Reddie. Further events take place next autumn.

The Revd Karl Johnson, JBU General Secretary, said the friendship had stood the test of time and represents ‘a powerful testimonial of mutuality, collaboration, respect and continuity.’ It has, he added, enjoyed a revival ‘primarily linked to the journey you have been on arising out of the Apology’, and should be embraced and studied.

‘There is no doubt in our mind that God has been and will continue to be with us as friends and partners and we can justly invite others to study and embrace our story as a template worthy of

emulation,’ he continued.

The Revd Wale Hudson-Roberts, Baptists Together Racial Justice Co-ordinator, said the partnership models what healthy multicultural relationships should be like - respecting and embracing difference. ‘We have been on an intentional and sometimes

painful journey to relate with our differences. This model is far deeper than compromise. It is a commitment that seeks to embrace compromise.’

He added, ‘Two hundred years ago JBU sought support from British Baptists. Some 200 years later we observe the enormous contribution that Jamaicans have made to British Baptist life from both beyond the pond and in the UK.

‘Their contribution must be acknowledged, enshrined in our history books - written, spoken of, celebrated and reflected upon by past, present and future generations.’

For full details of the bicentenary events visit www.200years.net

Contemporary Stations of the Cross challenge shoppers

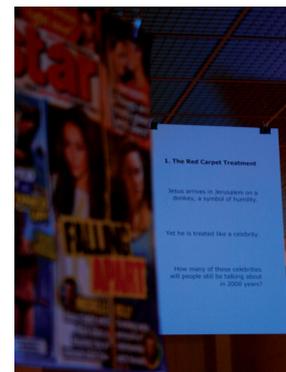
A POP-UP instillation of a contemporary Stations of the Cross received hundreds of visitors in an Essex shopping centre.

Six hundred and seventy-five people came to see the Easter Icons in the Royals Shopping Centre in Southend-on-Sea.

The icons linked the Easter story to aspects of modern life. The first station (pictured) was entitled the “Red Carpet Treatment”. Next to the front page of a gossip magazine, it stated: “Jesus arrives in Jerusalem on a donkey, a symbol of humility. Yet he is treated like a celebrity.”

“How many of these celebrities will people still be talking about in 2000 years?”

The town centre presence was the result of Baptist and Methodist collaboration: Baptist minister the Revd Andy Goodliff has curated a contemporary Stations of the



Cross regularly over the past decade, first in Bunyan Baptist Church, Stevenage, where he was the youth worker and more recently at Belle Vue Baptist Church, Southend, where he is the minister. He explained, ‘One of my deacons said to me two years ago, you need to get this out of the church and into a more public place. I wasn’t sure how to do that.

To find out more about the Easter Icons visit <http://eastericons.files.wordpress.com>

‘So when I was contacted, along with Steven Tinning from Leigh Road Baptist Church, by Hannah Bucke, the local Methodist town centre minister, that she had got use of an empty shop and wanted to tell the Easter story, I jumped at the chance to be involved.

‘We were really pleased to have so many people visit.’

Duffett boost for Pioneer Collective

AFTER the launch of the Pioneer Collective in December, Baptists Together and BMS have been swift in giving financial backing to the vision of releasing 400 new Baptist pioneers.

The Light Project, which employs the Revd Chris Duffett (National Evangelist and former President of our Baptist Union), will receive a grant of £12,000 each year for the next three years to enable Chris to spend a day and half each week for the Collective. Chris will work alongside the co-ordinator, the Revd Simon Goddard, helping to turn the

vision of releasing 400 Baptist pioneers in the next five years into a reality.

Baptists Together and BMS are each providing £6,000 per year to enable Chris to spend this time in a variety of ways:

1. Being an ambassador for the Pioneer Collective, raising its profile through networking, teaching and training opportunities among Baptists Together.
2. Working with Associations and Partnerships helping them to develop unique strategies for identifying, training and releasing

pioneers within their contexts.

3. Working with Regional Ministers to identify a ‘Pioneering Champion’ within each Association to be an advocate for pioneers and help see these strategies implemented.

4. Providing 10 days of training each year for Baptist churches and leaders, helping them to engage with pioneering projects and release the pioneers within their own congregations.

5. Arranging short gatherings twice a year for the growing cohort of pioneers to share stories and mutual support.

Concern at rise in foodbank use

FREE Church leaders have responded with concern to the latest figures from the Trussell Trust, which revealed another marked rise in foodbank use.

More than 900,000 adults and children have received three days' emergency food and support from Trussell Trust foodbanks in the last 12 months, a 163 per cent rise on numbers helped in the previous financial year.

'More than 900,000 people needing the help of a foodbank should lead the Government to examine why the post-Welfare Reform benefits system allows so many people to go hungry,' said the Revd Stephen Keyworth, Baptists Together, Faith and Society Team Leader. 'Churches and others are doing sterling work reaching out to help folk in need but this isn't how it should be.'

'It is a great a testimony that so many people have given up time and money to meet this need - it is a great tragedy that so many more families find themselves in such need.'

'It is not credible to deny there are more people who are hungry - these figures should spur us on to address the



important question of why there are more people hungry.'

'These figures should shock and anger us,' added Methodist President the Revd Ruth Gee. 'Hunger should not and need not be a problem in a rich country like the UK - and yet clearly it is.'

'We thank God for foodbanks, which provide a vital lifeline to people who would otherwise be forced to go hungry.'

'Wherever I have travelled in my year as president I have asked the same two questions: do you have a foodbank here and have you seen increased need for it?'

'Wherever I have travelled the answers to both questions have been 'yes' and I am not hearing

about small increases in need; I am hearing about huge leaps in demand and foodbanks that are struggling to keep up.'

The Trussell Trust highlights static incomes, rising living costs, low pay, underemployment and problems with welfare, especially sanctioning, as significant drivers of the increased demand.

Last year the Churches, together with the Church of Scotland, published a report highlighting the myths about poverty in the UK today.

One of the most destructive myths - fuelled by "shirker and striver" rhetoric - is that people who live in poverty are lazy and work shy.

that it sounds arrogant and divisive - but the story of reverse mission is also about the successes of European missions

<http://bit.ly/1mL3qnC>

> In a world filled with darkness and despair, we should take opportunities to spread light and hope

<http://bit.ly/1pww5Pe>

> The resurrection appearances don't simply show that Jesus rose from the dead, but the nature of the relationship we can all have with him

<http://bit.ly/QKAjmo>

> Why a local Kenyan pastor sees better toilets as a way of carrying a spiritual message... and why I am supporting him.

<http://bit.ly/1ig6Llc>

From the www. baptisttimes.co.uk

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

> There is confusion surrounding the term "reverse mission", with some arguing

A reflection

LET me remind you today that you have value. Incredible value.

You are worth more than you think.

You are worth more than others think.

You are priceless.

You have gifts, skills and abilities that were given to you for a reason. Believe it or not but you have something to offer this world that no one else does.

But it's not just your skills and abilities and gifts that can make a difference. It's your character.

Who you are is more important than what you do. No matter how skilled you are. Your character tops it all. Make it a priority.

This world says you have limits, it focuses on failures, it destroys all hope.

But be assured of this - You were created for more. Live life fully. Be who God created you to be and do what he equipped you to do.

Ignore the criticisms, the limitations and the words of discouragement. Live in the adventure. Take risks. Surround yourself with people who speak positively and honestly. People who encourage you.

Go for it. Make every day worthwhile. Enjoy being you. Don't settle for anything less than the high standard you were created for.

Live life. Life in all its fullness.

Evangelist and comedian Tom Elliott is a member of Minchinhampton Baptist Church. For more visit ifeonoverflow.com

Talk about parenting

NATIONAL family charity Care for the Family has launched a new parenting course, which aims to make life easier and less challenging for mums and dads of children aged up to the early teenage years.

Parentalk is a ready-to-run course on DVD and designed to be run by churches and community groups, using a small, informal group setting.

Presented by Care for the Family founder Rob Parsons and UK Director Katharine Hill, both of whom are parents themselves, it features contributions from guests such as broadcaster Diane Louise Jordan and author

Mark Chester and also includes interviews with families, short dramas, real-life 'my story' animations and presenter discussions.

'Parentalk is not about telling parents how they should bring up their children, but about giving positive encouragement and sharing practical ideas that will help to boost children's mental, physical and emotional development and give parents confidence in their roles,' said Katharine Hill.

For more information visit www.careforthefamily.org.uk/Courses/parentalk

JOBS

**Regional Minister, Eastern Baptist Association
Pastoral Care Worker, St Monica Trust**

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

BAPTISMS

Colwell Baptist Church, Isle of Wight: Rose Crisp	1
Counterslip Baptist Church, Bristol: Naomi Tariq	1
Cricklewood Baptist Church, London: Roseanne Edwards	1
Earls Hall Baptist Church, Essex: Shirley Mason, Paul Schofield and Sharon Schofield	3
Friar Lane and Braunstone Baptist Church, Leicester: Bethany Prout	1
Grangetown Baptist Church, Cardiff: Darren Hiatt	1
Greenfield Baptist Church, Llanelli: Brian Davies and Karen Lisk	2
Hertford Baptist Church, Herts: Helen Vinton, Danny Frost	2
London Road Baptist Church, Suffolk: Nick Webb, Sarah Webb, Trevor Stratton, Charlotte Stratton, Roy Phillips	5
Potter Street Baptist Church, Harlow: Pearl Frimpong, Leilani Mildren, Jodi Bridge, Sally Fox, and Heather Smith	5
Potters Bar Baptist Church, Herts: Sharon Abouzarrah, Davie Davidson	2
Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay: Colin Elliott, Isobel Bevan, Lisa-Ann Howell, Jenn Lewis and Ann Earl	5
Watchet Baptist Church, Somerset: Pearl Leyshon, Millie Lyttle, Hannah Levett, Joseph Clifford, Emma Scott	5
Whitley Bay Baptist Church, Tyne and Wear: Shahin Borhanzahi, Emily Carter, Natalia Jaquery	3

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