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Baptist Assembly 2019

In a new initiative for 2019, the Baptist Assembly is being expanded to a 2-day event on 18 and 19 May. The Support Services team will be making use of the additional space in the programme to run a seminar stream which will include sessions on church meetings, church constitutions, church finance and church property.

We are also partnering with Anthony Collins Solicitors to offer attendees a free legal consultation with a solicitor at the event, which can be booked at <https://10to8.com/book/baptistassembly2019>.

Advance booking for the Assembly has now closed. Please check on the Assembly website for details of any tickets which will be available to purchase on the day, at www.baptistassembly.org.uk. We hope to see many of you there.

Please note that if a minister is appointed on the standard terms of appointment recommended by Baptists Together, then the church has committed to cover the cost of the minister's attendance at Assembly.

Pension Scheme Matters

Contributed by the Pension Scheme team (pensionshared@baptist.org.uk). Please note that the Baptist Pension Scheme is operated by Baptist Pension Trust Limited, a separate legal entity from BUGB. See www.baptistpensions.org.uk for more details on the scheme.

With the current Pensions Manager, Mark Hynes, due to retire shortly, we are delighted to announce that Steve Kaney has been appointed as the new Pensions Manager. Steve started his new role at the beginning of March and will work with Mark during a handover period.

Steve has worked in the pensions world throughout his entire career, spanning 35 years, the last 10 of which he was Pensions Manager and Secretary to the Pension Trustees at the Church of Scotland. Consequently, he has a wealth of relevant experience in dealing with the nuances of Church pension schemes. He will be working closely with the Baptist Union Pension Trustee and liaising with BUGB.

Married to Debbie, with two grown-up daughters, Steve lives in Perth where he is a member of the North Church. Amongst his non-work hobbies are

training his fox red labrador pup Ruadh and supporting Stirling Albion (if you look carefully, you will find them in Scottish football's lowest division). 'The Albion' are a fans-owned Club and Steve is a member of the Supporters' Trust Board.

Baptist Pension Scheme Employers' Group

Contributed by the Baptist Pension Scheme Employers' Group, a group established to represent the interests of employers in the scheme. The Employers' Group can be contacted at pensionemployersgroup@baptist.org.uk

Family Solution Update

We are pleased to report that the main provisions of the Family Solution to the deficit in the Baptist Pension Scheme were implemented at the end of 2018, with a contribution of £33m being paid into the scheme by the Baptist Union, which has significantly reduced the scheme deficit. Employers will see a reduction in their monthly debt estimate reported on the employer portal at www.4mystaff.co.uk. The latest updates sent to churches in January and February 2019 can be found at www.baptist.org.uk/familysolution.

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Qualifying criteria for Workplace Pensions

The Employers' Group is aware of instances of churches making errors around pension auto-enrolment for ministers and other employees. Auto-enrolment regulations make clear that employees earning over £10,000 per annum **must** be automatically enrolled into a **Qualifying** Workplace Pension Scheme and re-enrolled every three years.

The Baptist Pension Scheme is a Qualifying Workplace Pension Scheme, and many Baptist churches use it to meet their auto-enrolment obligations. A church is also free to choose another Qualifying Workplace Pension Scheme.

Unfortunately, many personal pension schemes do not satisfy the 'Workplace Pension' qualifying criteria. If a staff member and church agree to use a non-qualifying pension scheme they may still be able to do this by following the correct protocol to satisfy the Workplace Pension rules, which in most cases will still mean enrolling the staff into a Qualifying scheme initially and then the staff member opting out.

The Pensions Regulator have stated that they are monitoring the number and level of opt-outs as they are keen to ensure that retirement provision is being properly made for employees generally.

More detail on Auto-enrolment can be found on The Baptist Pension Scheme website (www.baptistpensions.org.uk/auto-enrolment) and the Pensions Regulator website (www.tpr.gov.uk/en/employers).

HR and Safeguarding Matters

Contributed by the HR and Safeguarding Team at Baptist House (safeguarding@baptist.org.uk)

Safeguarding Audit Tool

If your church would like to review its safeguarding policy and practices, a new safeguarding audit tool is now available on our website (www.baptist.org.uk/safeguardingaudit). This in-depth review tool covers all areas of church safeguarding, and a short checklist is also available.

Increase to National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates

National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) rates increase with effect from 1 April 2019. The new rates are:

25 and over *	£8.21
21 to 24	£7.70
18 to 20	£6.15
Under 18 **	£4.35
Apprentice	£3.90

* You must be aged 25 or over to get the National Living Wage

** You must be at least school leaving age to get the National Minimum Wage

Apprentices are entitled to the apprentice rate if they're either aged under 19 or aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship. Apprentices are entitled to the minimum wage for their age if they are aged 19 or over and have completed the first year of their apprenticeship.

Increase in statutory pay rates from April 2019

As of 7 April 2019, the maximum weekly rate for statutory maternity pay, statutory adoption pay, statutory paternity pay, statutory shared parental pay and maternity allowance will rise to £148.68.

Full details of maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave entitlements and obligations can be found in Guideline Leaflet L08: Employment (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/L08).

Increase in Statutory Sick Pay

From the 6 April 2019, statutory sick pay will increase to a maximum of £94.25 per week.

Legal News

Contributed by the Legal and Operations team at Baptist House (legal.ops@baptist.org.uk)

Lightning Strikes

The Baptist Insurance Company publishes the following guidance on its website at www.baptist-insurance.co.uk:

A single bolt of lightning hitting a church can damage the fabric of the building as well as causing fires which can cause massive amounts of damage to the church and its roof. The huge surge of electrical energy hitting the church can cause wires in the building to burn out putting computers, electric organs, alarm systems and audio-visual equipment at risk.

BAPTISTS TOGETHER
SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM

Baptists Together Deposit Accounts

Baptist member churches with savings and reserves are encouraged to lodge these in a Baptists Together Deposit account

Rates up to 1.35%

www.baptist.org.uk/depositaccounts

It's not possible to completely remove the risk of lightning strikes but you can help to protect your church by:

- » Having lightning protection fitted
- » Keeping lightning conductors properly maintained
- » Employ a professional to inspect the church's lightning conductor at least every four years
- » Install surge protection equipment to protect the church's electrical equipment

Any work on the church's lightning protection system should be carried out by a competent contractor such as a member of the Association of Technical Lightning and Access Specialists

Church Minutes and Data Protection

It is important for churches to remember that all church members should be familiar with Data Protection principles. We have a PowerPoint presentation with notes suitable for use in a church meeting available on our website at www.baptist.org.uk/gdpr.

Churches should take particular care in church services and church meetings to ensure that confidentiality and Data Protection principles are observed. Any recording or written record which includes personal data is subject to Data Protection legislation, including audio files and church meeting minutes. We have recently published a new Guideline Leaflet to cover minute taking *C13: Writing Minutes* (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/C13).

General information about Data Protection is available in our Guideline Leaflet *L13: Data Protection* (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/L13).

Finance Matters

Contributed by the Finance Team at Baptist House
(financeoffice@baptist.org.uk)

Stamps and collectibles

Please note that new arrangements are now in place for the handling of stamps and collectibles donated to support Home Mission. Stamps should now

be sent to Meridian Stamps at the following address: Baptist Union of Great Britain, c/o Meridian Stamps, PO Box 6198, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 9XT. You can arrange free collection of quantities of 5kg or more by contacting meridianstamps@aol.com. Other collectable items of value should be sent to Baptist House. More details can be found at www.baptist.org.uk/stamps.

Subscriptions

Baptists Together subscriptions for 2019 are now due at the rate of £4.60 per member, based on the latest membership figures we have for your church. Churches should now have received the subscription request via email or letter, so if you have not received yours, please let us know at subscriptions@baptist.org.uk.

For those churches who pay by quarterly Direct Debit, the second collection is due on 15 May. Should you wish to sign up to this payment method, please download and complete the Direct Debit form at www.baptist.org.uk/directdebit and return it to us at Baptist House.



Baptists Together Loan Fund

Baptist Union member churches can apply to our Loan Fund for help with a variety of projects.

We are able to help churches who are looking to enlarge, improve or redevelop their existing church premises, or who are wanting to buy new premises. We can also help churches to buy a new manse or other residential property for a church worker. The Loan Fund is also able to help churches faced with paying off debt to the Baptist Pension Scheme. In addition we can offer bridging finance which is at a higher rate of interest.

We are here to help Baptist churches with their mission and we also understand the way Baptist churches work. Having been around for many years we have helped hundreds of our churches in this way.

CURRENT TERMS:

- Loans available from £25,000 to over £1m
- Standard interest rate of 3% above Bank of England base rate
- Repayment terms between 10 and 20 years
- Fee free, subject to certain conditions

The BUC is only able to enter into a loan that is a relevant credit agreement (as defined by the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005) as lender for the purposes of the business of a church (or if the church is unincorporated, the business of the church trustees) and not for any other purpose.

For more information visit

www.baptist.org.uk/loans

If you have not signed up to pay by Direct Debit please remit your payment as soon as possible, either by electronic transfer (our bank details are Sort Code: 40-19-35 and Account No: 41083635) or cheque (payable to Baptist Union of Great Britain) and send to Baptist House, PO Box 44, Didcot, OX11 8RT. Please quote your 'S' reference number (found on your subscription request) on all payments.

Taxation Topics

Contributed by Philip Cooke FCA, our Honorary Taxation Adviser (philipjcooke@aol.com).

Gift Aid Donor benefits

The rules relating to the disallowance of Gift Aid where a donor is provided with a personal benefit have been simplified with effect from 6 April 2019. In the case of a gift of £100 or less the value of any benefit provided to a donor should not exceed £25, and in the case of a gift exceeding £100 the value of any benefit should not exceed £25 plus 5% of the amount by which the gift exceeds £100.

Gift Aid Declarations

With a view to reducing the 'tax gap' which arises where Gift Aid may have been incorrectly claimed because insufficient tax has been paid by a donor, charities are encouraged, wherever practicable, to obtain the full forenames (and not just initials) of donors on new gift aid declarations, and to include these details on gift aid claims submitted to HMRC.

Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme (GASDS)

A reminder that as from 6 April 2019 the limit on a single small cash donation qualifying for GASDS is increased from £20 to £30 – but the annual limit of such donations remains at £8,000.

Form P11D

Treasurers are reminded that the annual value of manse accommodation provided for the better performance of a minister's duties, along with payments of the associated council tax and water charges, are not required to be shown on form P11D. Similarly, tax allowable expenses incurred or reimbursed by the church (including the 'church business element' of

manse light and heat expenses) do not have to be reported on form P11D. And because the personal element of reimbursed manse light and heat expenses are dealt with through the PAYE system as additional pay for tax (but not NIC) purposes, many churches may no longer have cause to complete a form P11D.

There might be an exception if a minister could benefit from what is known as the 'manse service charge cap' - which applies if total reimbursed energy expenses exceed 10% of net ministerial income before deducting the 'church business element'. In such circumstances it would be necessary, in order to benefit from the 'cap', to complete form P11D rather than deal with the personal use element through the PAYE system - see section 1.12 of Guideline leaflet X03: *Taxation Guidance Notes for Churches and Ministers* (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/X03) for further details.

Please also note that taxing reimbursed personal manse light and heat expenses through the PAYE system should NOT be confused with the procedure for 'payrolling' certain benefits in kind, for which prior registration would be necessary. The reimbursement of non-tax-deductible expenses should be treated as additional pay rather than a benefit in kind.

Solar panels fitted to a church-owned manse

For the avoidance of doubt – if a church manse has been fitted with solar panels, the amounts received in respect of 'feed in tariff' represent a source of income to the church rather than the minister and will not be offset against the actual energy costs for the purpose of determining the quantum of any taxable benefit.

These notes are offered to provide general information for Baptist churches. We hope they will be helpful in highlighting new guidance and providing reminders about other important matters relating to the life of a local Baptist church. Although every effort is made to ensure that the information is correct at the time of publication, we make no representations, warranties or guarantees (whether express or implied) that the information is accurate, complete or up-to-date. Further, these summary notes are not intended to amount to advice on which you should rely and cannot be a substitute for formal professional or specialist advice. We do not assume and will not be liable to any party (who has either taken or refrained from taking action in reliance on these notes) for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, whether resulting from negligence or any other cause. If you want to ask detailed follow-up questions, please contact us through the Baptist Union website.

Church tax returns:

Because charities are exempt from tax on investment and property income or capital gains, churches are not routinely required to submit a tax return, though there are exceptional occasions (such as the receipt of certain trading income) which might trigger a charge to corporation tax – but see below for details of an increase in the exemption for small-scale trading activities. With a view to keeping track on the activities of charities, HMRC randomly issues notices requiring them to make a return of income, and they have recently announced that they intend to do so more extensively this year. If a notice is received, you may find it helpful to refer to section 11 of Guideline Leaflet X03: *Taxation Guidelines for Churches and Ministers* (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/X03) for some initial guidance.

Small-scale trading activities:

A charity engaging in a trade in fulfilment of its charitable purposes is not chargeable to tax on any profits arising, but if a charity, such as a church, is engaged in a trading activity which is neither a primary or ancillary purpose of the charity, there might be some exposure to tax – subject to an exemption which applies to 'small-scale' activities. As from April 2019, the limits for the level of turnover which a charity can receive from non-charitable trading without tax implications will rise to £8,000 or 25% of the charity's **total incoming resources if greater**, up to a maximum of £80,000. See section 11.3 of Guideline Leaflet X03: *Taxation Guidelines for Churches and Ministers* (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/X03) for further guidance.