

# A NAME TO LIVE UP TO

*A resource to accompany the Helen Pankhurst video  
for local churches and associations*

Watch the video: [www.baptist.org.uk/helenpankhurst](http://www.baptist.org.uk/helenpankhurst)



Jane Day asks some wondering questions at the beginning of the film reflecting on the story of Mary who is called by name – Luke 1: 26-36.

Spend some time wondering about God's invitation to you as a church:

-  *When was the last time you said a wholehearted yes to God?*
-  *What did that require of you as a church?*
-  *What change came about in your church life and in the lives of others beyond the church?*



As part of Project Violet, Jane invited Helen Pankhurst to talk about her experience of carrying the name synonymous with women's freedom to vote.



*With what do people associate our name as Baptists? At an international, national level and local level?*



Helen spoke of her name connecting her with the past but also a connection with the future struggle for women's freedom, particularly freedom from violence.

She spoke about listening to the experience of an 18-year-old woman who would not travel alone for fear of being attacked.



Jane spoke about the conversations she'd had with younger women of faith who identify church cultures, attitudes, and structures that have caused them harm on account of their gender.



*As a church, how are you listening to the experiences of women and girls in your church and wider community?*



Helen and Jane used the language of agency and allyship as part of our response to what we are learning.

**Agency:** recognising that we (both women and men) can use our power to help or hinder change.

**Allyship:** recognising that we can partner with others with less power than us, to bring change.



*How might you, as an individual and as a church, exercise your agency? What is in your power to change?*



*What help might you, as an individual and as a church, need from others to change?*

## Read Luke 1: 26-36



Notice how Mary goes from being perplexed and pondering the sort of greeting the Angel has brought, to asking how this can all come about, to a full wholehearted, let it be with me. Mary moves from suspicion and potential shame to an open-hearted acceptance of the change that is coming through her.

As you reflect on these messengers (Jane and Helen) and the manner of their greeting and challenge, be reminded of the Lord's presence with you, and the Holy Spirit at work through you.

Ask that God will help you offer yourselves in response to his invitation, according to his word.

Mary goes and stays with Elizabeth as they both progress in their pregnancies and the change becomes public.



*Who could you share the news of your journey with as you respond to God's invitation?*



*Who could partner with you as you promise to make changes in your culture, attitudes, and structures as a church?*

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[www.projectviolet.org.uk](http://www.projectviolet.org.uk)

