

Podcast – Season 2 – Afi Kirk

Season Intro

	Music
Jane	Hello, I'm Jane Day, Centenary Development Enabler for Baptists Together
Helen	And I'm Helen Cameron, Research Fellow at the Centre for Baptist Studies at Regent's Park College Oxford. Together we are the co-leaders of Project Violet.
Jane	Welcome to Season 2 of the Project Violet podcast. Project Violet is a research project investigating women's experiences in ministry whilst developing women ministers. We are trying to understand better the theological, missional and structural obstacles women ministers face and identify ways forward.
Helen	In this second season, we will introduce you to some of the women who have taken part in the project and the research they have done.
Jane	We hope that listening to these episodes will help you engage with the findings of the project which can be found on the Project Violet website.

Interview – Afi Kirk

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Helen and Afi	<p>Helen Cameron Today I'm welcoming onto the Project Violet podcast Afi Kirk. Welcome, Afi.</p> <p>Afi Kirk Thank you very much. Thank you. It's good to be here.</p> <p>Helen Cameron I'd like to start by asking you what your current ministry role is.</p> <p>Afi Kirk I'm currently the sole pastor at Blackheath and Charlton Baptist Church in southeast London.</p> <p>Helen Cameron And can you tell me a bit a bit about the church?</p> <p>Afi Kirk It's a community Church, multicultural. Traditionally, it was about 90-95%, Caucasian, but in the last 15 years it's become very multicultural, some people would even described as almost black majority.</p> <p>Helen Cameron</p>

So we're interested in people's stories of how they came into ministry, would you like to share how you came into the Baptist ministry?

Afi Kirk

Yes. So I, my call came in 2000, shortly after my conversion. And I found myself after having been on mission in Spain for a while then in Tadworth. And then the minister realized that accreditation was something that I needed to pursue. And so he commended me for college for training. And because the church had a Brethren underpinning, they would not be really be able to support female leadership. So I went to college, not really knowing what to expect, except that I had a call, and this was it. And Spurgeon's College very kindly placed me in a Baptist church and having come to understand the Baptist tradition, it felt right to actually pursue that ministry, and so here we are.

Helen Cameron

Okay that's a very interesting journey. So the call came before the Baptists bit then

Afi Kirk

Oh, yes.

Helen Cameron

That's great. Now, you were part of the third group of Project Violet co-researchers. Can you share with us the question or the issue that you looked at in your research?

Afi Kirk

So I was looking at how we can understand better the financial barriers that impact women, as they seek accreditation, or even consider accreditation, once their calling is recognized.

Helen Cameron

And why was that topic important to you?

Afi Kirk

Well, I suppose having been at college and seen some of the disparities between those who can afford training and those who are somewhat challenged financially, and the impact that that has on them, sometimes on their families, and also their ability to really engage with what's going on in the lecture hall. Sometimes they would come in from night duty, having worked all night, and having to sometimes take caffeine or whatever else, they can't stay awake, some even falling asleep, but also the impact it has on their academic ability to really produce the work that they would like to produce. So it's a multi-faceted issue in as much as the impact was so significant in hearing my colleagues talk about it, it just made me realize that perhaps, although this had been an area that was very well resourced previously, it is currently not the case. And it was under the radar and needed to be looked at again.

Helen Cameron

Thank you. Yes, I can see why that was so important to you. So can you just share a bit about how you went about doing your research?

	<p>Afi Kirk I suppose it began once I had decided on the topic to then look at some of the issues that I saw affecting my colleagues, and then speaking to some potential participants, hearing their stories and then getting their permission to interview them for the project.</p> <p>Helen Cameron So it was interviewing other women and just listening to what has happened to them. Okay, that's really, really helpful. So I guess the big question is, why do you want people to read your research?</p> <p>Afi Kirk I would say that it speaks into an area that isn't getting the attention that it needs. As a Baptist family and also community of believers, we have a responsibility to invest in each other and add value to each other's lives. And if there's an issue that is impacting some of our brothers or sisters, particularly sisters in this area because it is about women, impacting their ability to be the best that they can be and respond to their call in a way that enables them to impact lives, then I believe it is important that we look at this.</p> <p>Helen Cameron Thank you very much. Well, thanks very much for sharing with us today. We encourage people to go to the website and download your report.</p> <p>Afi Kirk Thank you.</p>
	Music

Season Outro

Helen	Thank you for listening to this episode of the Project Violet podcast. We invite you to go to the website and download the reports if you have not yet done so. www.projectviolet.org.uk
Jane	And don't forget to tell others about the Project Violet podcast. You can follow us on Facebook and X formerly Twitter.
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