



Ministries

Contributed by the Ministries team at Baptist House (ministries@baptist.org.uk).

Members of the Ministries Team may be contacted through the Team's [contact page](#).

Many will be aware of the sad and sudden closure of Spurgeon's College in July 2025. The Ministries Team is working hard with the other Baptist Colleges and the Associations to continue to support those who were training through Spurgeon's for Accredited Ministry or Recognised Local Ministry. We encourage churches not to let this event put you off from identifying and nurturing those among you who may have a call to serve God as Baptist ministers. We have a great need for more women and men to come forward to experience ministerial formation and so equip them to fulfil their calling. Your Regional Minister can guide anyone exploring a call.

Ministers should be conducting their annual **Continuing Ministerial Development** (CMD) audit in the autumn - see www.baptist.org.uk/cmd. We encourage churches to support their minister's CMD by making clear that they welcome the minister taking time to nurture the five CMD habits and by making at least £500 a year available for development activities. (Newly Accredited Ministers will already be practising the five CMD habits by engaging with their NAMs' programme.)

We strongly recommend that any church preparing for a new minister should appoint them as an office holder using our **recommended terms of appointment**, rather than employ them using an employment contract. Our [recommended terms of appointment for full and part time ministers](#) can be found on our website. Please contact the Ministries Team if you have any queries about these.

Isabella Senior continues to gather together interns from across our churches. If your church has an intern starting (or continuing) this autumn, please encourage them to connect with Isabella at isenior@baptist.org.uk. If you are thinking of setting up an internship scheme or hosting an intern, please see our [18-35s resources pages](#).



Legal and Operations

Contributed by the Legal and Ops Team (Legal.Ops@baptist.org.uk)

Martyn's Law

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (otherwise known as Martyn's Law) has received Royal Assent. It contains measures intended to keep the public safe in the event of a terrorist attack. Whilst we know the final form of the Act, the Act is not expected to come into force until April 2027. This is so that regulations can be made and the framework in which the Act is expected to operate can be put in place. We have published a [new guidelines leaflet about the Act](#) and protective security generally. This leaflet contains the key information that we have so far. The leaflet will be updated as and when more information becomes available.

Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (DUAA) has received Royal Assent. It updates key aspects of data protection law, including a requirement for organisations to take steps to help people who want to make complaints about how you use their personal information, such as providing an electronic complaints form. Complaints will need to be acknowledged within 30 days and responded to 'without undue delay'. Guidance is due to be published in Winter 2025/2026 on how to handle data protection complaints following the requirements introduced by the DUAA and we will provide further information on this in due course.

You can [find more information from the ICO website](#) on the changes introduced by the DUAA.



Environmental Issues

Contributed by Dave Gregory, Former President, Baptist Union 2018-19, Convenor of Baptist Union Environment Network (BUEN) and Director, John Ray Initiative – Connecting Environment, Science and Christianity

Environmental Issues

Forest fires across the world and extreme weather continue to be a feature of the news as 2025 continues to be warmer than historical norms. In the summer, the UK Met Office's [State of the UK Climate](#) reports that UK summers are now warmer and drier, while winters are warmer and wetter, with extremes of weather becoming more frequent. This is all down to the continued rise of carbon dioxide in the air due to the use of fossil fuels, again emphasising the need for Baptist churches and Baptists Together to travel the road towards net-zero carbon and to play our part in moderating climate change and share in God's on-going mission to care and sustain creation.

Baptist Insurance's 'A Guide to Climate Change and your Church' gives an overview of different approaches towards reducing the environmental impact of church buildings, including brief summaries of different technologies that move away from using gas towards electricity to power and heat our buildings. There is also a link to funding providers who may help towards the cost of energy transition. [The booklet can be viewed here on the Baptist Insurance website.](#)

Moving towards a more sustainable church life and mission needs to be done within a church's overall environmental policy and plan. ARocha has examples of these on their [Eco-Church website](#) including approaches for both small and large churches.

Pensions

Contributed by the Baptist Pension Team. Routine queries should be directed to baptistpensions@broadstone.co.uk and non-routine matters directed to pensionshared@baptist.org.uk



Baptist Pension Scheme: More Than Just Retirement Savings

Did you know that the Baptist Pension Scheme offers valuable insurance benefits as well as retirement savings?

In the Ministers' and Staff sections of the Scheme, members benefit from income protection cover—which provides a regular income if they're unable to work long-term due to illness or injury—as well as death in service benefits. These benefits are funded from the employer contribution and would be difficult to match for the same cost through personal insurance policies. They offer real peace of mind, especially during life's unexpected challenges.

The Basic section of the Scheme, designed to meet auto-enrolment requirements, also provides death in service benefits, though at a lower level.

We encourage you to highlight these important benefits to your ministers and staff as you support them in planning for both their future and their families' security.

As always, if you have any pension-related queries or if you would like any additional information regarding the insurance benefits of the Scheme we'd be pleased to help you. Routine queries should be directed to the dedicated administration team at Broadstone at baptistpensions@broadstone.co.uk whilst non-routine matters should be directed to the in-house Pensions Team at pensionshared@baptist.org.uk



Taxation Topics

Contributed by the Baptist Union's Tax Advisers. Please send any tax related queries to financeoffice@baptist.org.uk

HMRC and Making Tax Digital

HMRC have recently announced significant changes for Ministers of Religion Holding Office and other employees to take control of their tax affairs.

Some of these changes are:

- New PAYE service to make tax system simpler and easier for around 35 million workers.
- At least 90% of customer interactions with HMRC to be digital by 2030.
- Reducing post and letters to save £50 million a year – equal to almost 1,500 full time nurses.

The new online service for all PAYE taxpayers will make it simpler and easier to check and update your income, allowances, reliefs and expenses, and will be available via their Personal Tax Account or through the HMRC app.

Further information about HMRC's Transformation Roadmap is available online.

Tax Return 2025

Hopefully you have filed your 2025 Tax Return including the Minister of Religion Schedule together with any other schedules required such as the Property Schedule.

Ministry Gifts, Funeral Fees and Love Gifts

You may have received some or all of these during 2024 to 2025 and they all have to be included in the Minister of Religion Schedule.

Ministry Gifts may have been received for preaching in another church

Funeral Fees may have been received for officiating at a funeral

Love Gifts may have been received in your role as a Minister of Religion Holding Office. For example as a token of appreciation for pastorally supporting a family through a difficult time. The gift hasn't been solicited. The only exception to disclosure is when specific permission has been given by HMRC in writing.

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.



At Utility Aid, we stand with the causes that matter most, protecting our heritage and supporting places of worship. Behind every energy bill is a church, chapel, cathedral, or historic site working tirelessly to serve congregations, preserve history, and strengthen communities.

With almost 30 years of experience, we don't just provide services—we earn trust by delivering results. Utility Aid exists to help charities and not-for-profit organisations source energy. We use our knowledge and experience. We anticipate and solve problems. Above all, everyone at Utility Aid is united by their desire to do more good for our stakeholders and that sets us apart in terms of how we are as a business.

How can we help you?

- [Energy switching](#)
- [Online switching \(for single meter sites\)](#)
- [Collective Purchasing](#)
- [Account management](#)
- [Bill checking](#)
- [Net zero and carbon reporting](#)

As a member of BUGB you can benefit from a free consultancy session with Utility Aid, whether you need support with understanding your bills, checking whether you are paying the correct VAT or if you need advice on starting your journey to Net Zero.

[Contact a member of the Utility Aid today!](#)



Empowering Churches: Free Webinars from the Baptist Insurance Company

This autumn, Baptist Insurance is partnering with the BUGB Support Services Specialist Team to deliver a free series of Zoom webinars. These sessions are designed to help churches better understand their insurance, improve safety, and access funding through the Baptist Insurance Grants Programme.

Session One: Understanding your Church Insurance Policy

Monday 22 September 19:30

Get to grips with your cover, learn when to contact your insurer, and gain the confidence to manage your policy effectively.

Session Two: Keeping People Safe

Monday 27 October 19:30

Trustees carry key responsibilities. This session covers risk assessments, health and safety policies, and legal obligations by signposting you to practical tools to make safety simpler.

Session Three: Financial Support for Churches

Monday 17 November 19:30

Explore how to fund your church's mission. Anne Bishop, Chair of the Baptist Insurance Grants Committee, will share what makes a strong application and highlight other financial resources available.

Whether you're a trustee, church secretary, administrator, or simply looking to better support your church community, these sessions are designed to provide clarity, confidence, and practical insight.

Let's build stronger, safer, and better-supported congregations, together.

[Click here to register.](#)

www.baptist-insurance.co.uk

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