

Weekly News

16 JULY 2025

Lessons From A Learning Collective

Last month a group from NBC completed a two-year course called *The Learning Collective*. This was a course aimed at leaders in the church to equip them with some foundational theology. It was organised and delivered by Regent's Park College and Southern Counties Baptist Association, with NBC hosting one of three groups meeting across the region, and connecting together online with a number of online participants from across the UK. It was the first time a course like this has been run, so we were pioneers! The NBC group of 9 also had the opportunity to meet together with Peter for an hour to reflect on that month's main session. Below is some of the feedback from the group:

I knew that the course was aimed at enhancing the skills of the participants for their individual ministry or mission, whatever that might be and to help us think more deeply about our Christian faith. However, when I looked at the list of topics to be covered in the course, I really didn't have a clear idea about what we would learn and how it would help me. To illustrate – Reflective Practice, Pastoral Leadership, Practical Theology. "What do these titles mean?" Nevertheless, I was pleased to join.

One of the highlights for me was the modules on Spirituality, which unpacked six dimensions of our faith and practices that have contributed to Christian tradition over the centuries: the Contemplative Tradition (or prayer filled life), the Holiness Tradition (or the virtuous life), the Charismatic Tradition (or the Spirit-empowered life), the Social Justice Tradition (or the compassionate life), the Evangelical Tradition (or the Word-centred life) and the Incarnational Tradition (or the sacramental life). These so-called traditions were illustrated and explained by the examples of "saints" both ancient and modern whose lives exemplify the particular aspect of spiritual living. A key takeaway for me was that there is only one person in history whose life exemplified and integrated each and every one of these streams and that, of course, is Jesus Christ.

Probably due to my personal make-up and preferred learning style, I most appreciated the follow up sessions chaired by Peter. These were wonderful opportunities for those in the group who were able to make it each month to rehearse what we had learnt, to share our reflections, and explore how to apply it in life and more specifically what it might mean for NBC.

What's more I enjoyed getting to know my fellow participants better. It really was like being part of a Small Group and directionally even better in that we were being tutored by people who are experts in their particular fields. Such a blessing. **David**

I joined TLC to deepen my faith and theological understanding, strengthen my relationship with God and positively impact my service within the church. I learned about topics i never would have chosen to study myself (Baptist History & Principles!) and I have been pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed them!

WHAT'S ON @ NBC

CHURCH SOCIAL

SUNDAY 27 JULY, 12:00PM
GAMES & PICNIC, VICTORIA PARK

PRAYER WALKS FROM NBC

SATURDAY 19 JULY, 11AM
FRIDAY 25 JULY, 2PM

FIRST THURSDAY AFTERNOON TEA

THURSDAY 7 AUGUST, 2:00PM
[BOOK HERE](#)

[continued from P1]

We were blessed by hearing from some really interesting tutors who are really passionate about their area of specialism and sharing that with other people.

It has been a great networking opportunity to get to know other Baptists across the associations. There have been practical techniques to try out as well as academic teaching to ponder.

The week after each session we met with Peter as the NBC contingent to further unpack the teaching and think through how it relates to and is relevant to us at NBC.

Finally, the food was AMAZING! - thank you Bruce and Val! **Sarah**

For me the best part about the TLC course was getting to spend time with people from church that I don't usually get to meet regularly with - it was really nice getting to know them better. I also liked how the course gave us a space to talk about things I wouldn't normally think about in day-to-day life. Having the time set aside to properly reflect on them together with others was really helpful. **Jenny**

I think my favourite sessions were the ones which focused on mission and justice. There are a few thoughts that have stuck with me, including the following phrase, which is a good challenge to prioritise where our focus is: "Jesus called us to be fishers of men and women, not to take care of an aquarium."

This one from Bonhoeffer, about justice and our responsibility "not to simply bind the wounds of the victims under the wheels of injustice, but to drive a spike into the wheel itself". This puts so much extra responsibility on us as Christians to get involved in justice issues, such as global warming, immigration, and poverty (to name a few). It highlights our duty to petition decision makers as we have stewardship over the world and a responsibility to protect and nurture it and its inhabitants.

During our session on Mission the speaker spoke about his "vision statement" for a church where he had been working, based on Revelation 21. He used the first few verses to conjure up a contemporary version of a new Southend, where the drug use, alcohol addiction, violence, homelessness, broken relationships, hatred and division had been replaced with unity, a care for the environment, sharing of resources, loving of neighbours, affirming relationships and love, with God at its centre. It helped me envisage what a wonderful place the world could be with Jesus returned and living by his values and rules. It gave me a drive to seek a similar vision for Newbury & gave a real sense of hope.

At the end of the first year of TLC we met at Baptist House in Didcot to join in prayer, worship and presentations (22nd June 2024). Claire Hooper did a session on children in church and highlighted that we need God-connected kids, not God-smart kids. It's good that children know about the bible, but they need to have a personal relationship with Jesus and that is a challenge for us as adults to make space for them in church.

During the day we shared communion and spoke a Prayer of Confession, which I really love. I don't know who wrote it, but it evokes such strong emotions that I can't help feeling moved every time I read it and challenged to try to walk more closely on God's intended path for me (*see [prayer page](#) to read the prayer of confession*).

TLC has been great to be involved in. I've enjoyed the fellowship and getting to know the others from NBC better. I've loved our discussions and how it has made me consider my faith and how God is calling me. I've valued the catch ups with the NBC participants and our varied discussions. I'm grateful for the support that NBC has given us in providing the venue and Val & Bruce's amazing soup each month. **Jo**

Notice Board

Family Social Events

During the school holidays there are several social events planned - a chance to get together and enjoy the summer! Please do pick up a flyer We hope you're able to join us.

27th July - 12:00 - Victoria Park. All-age picnic & games

4th August - 12:00 - Snelsmore Common. Meet by the picnic tables for den building & games

22nd August - 10:00 - Northcroft Lido. Book online via the [Northcroft Leisure Website](#)

31st August - 12:00 - Victoria Park. All-age picnic & games

6th September - 18:00-20:00 - Back to School Movie Night at church. Wear your PJs and enjoy pizza while we watch a movie. [Book on the church website](#). £5 per person or £10 per family

CAP Money Coaching Course

The CAP Money Coaching course is designed to help people understand their spending habits and create their own personal budget. The course can help anyone live within their means including students, employed people, families, retirees and is for anyone, not only those with unmanageable debt.

The next course, run by Helen and David from NBC, is at 7pm on August 13th, 20th and 27th at St Nicolas church hall. Register for free at capuk.org/trymoneycoaching and enter the postcode RG14 5HG.

Save the Date

On Saturday 11th October we're planning a fun church family social event.

Our working title is "NBC's Got Talent"! More details will follow nearer the time but we'd like as many people to come as possible, so put the date in your diary to make sure you don't miss it!

As the title implies, it will be an opportunity for members of our church family to delight, amuse and entertain us with their talents. We want to have as much variety as possible so, if you can sing, dance, perform, recite, play an instrument or otherwise surprise and entertain us for a few minutes, either solo or in a group, please talk to Julie or Steve as soon as possible and before the end of July.

We want to construct a programme for the evening that is entertaining, with a variety of acts from performers of a variety of ages and cultures. It may be that in order to balance the programme we have to hold some acts for a next time. We will let the successful performers know in early August to give them an opportunity to rehearse/practice.

Watch this space for more information! Julie and Steve



MONTH OF PRAYER

We are halfway through our month of prayer!

Have you been out to pray for your neighbourhood yet?

Have you checked out our Prayer Scavenger Hunt or our interactive map to see if anyone else from NBC lives in your neighbourhood?

Our two prayer walks from NBC have been well-attended from a variety of people, with opportunities to pray in various parts of the town. It would be great to see you at one of the final two taking place in the next fortnight.

If you have any questions please speak to Jo: JoI@newburybaptistchurch.org

PRAYER WALKS FROM NBC

SATURDAY 19 JULY, 11AM

FRIDAY 25 JULY, 2PM

Whilst these walks are taking place, the church will also be open for 'stay and pray' sessions, with some guided material provided to help focus our prayers.

PRAYING FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

When was the last time you prayed for the neighbours on your road?

We are challenging everyone to take at least one walk around your neighbourhood to pray for it.

Why not join up with other church members who live nearby? If you're unsure if anyone lives near you, we have created a special online map to show the geographical spread of the church. You can find this on the member's area of the website.

Exact locations and details have been anonymised, but if you see there are pins near to where you live, contact Emma in the church office and she will help make the necessary connections.

If mobility is an issue, why not invite a friend over for a cup of tea and a prayer together?

PRAYER SCAVENGER HUNT

We have designed a scavenger prayer hunt as inspiration for families and small groups to use.

It helps us search for God in the ordinary, everyday things around us. It can be downloaded from the 'Pray' section of our website.





THE LEARNING COLLECTIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (SEE PAGE 2)

So many journeys begin with good intentions,
So many years begin with new resolutions
So many calls upon our lives we begin with the best of ambitions, but then...
Even when you have parted waves of troubles and led us safely to the other side somehow, among the next steps taken we turn from the fire and cloud.
Sometimes we leave unfollowed Christ's footprints on a road less travelled
Sometimes we leave abandoned opportunities for deeper discipleship
Sometimes we leave unattended promises to serve and sacrifice
Sometimes we left unspoken prayers for others, words of comfort and confrontation
Sometimes we leave unread our studies and scriptures
Sometimes we leave unshared out testimonies of grace and witness
Sometimes we leave unchallenged old assumptions and preconceptions
Sometimes we leave unacknowledged the aching of our body, the anxieties of mind
Sometimes we leave unheeded fresh promptings of the Spirit
Sometimes we leave justice tilted, mercy forsaken and humility rejected
Sometimes we leave unsung songs of innocence and experience, of guilt and possibility
Every time you seek us out:
Every time you serenade us with forgiveness
Every time the unforced rhythms of grace
Every time the gift to echo afresh the theme of heavens repertoire, reverberating hearts and minds in choruses of welcome, of embrace and shelter
Psalms of liberation, celebration and of victory
Every time you sing us home and rehearse us again in the harmonies we were born to perform
Move among us and within us God
Renew us and restore us to the songs of our salvation
With hymns of a past forgiven, anthems of a future redeemed, Symphonies for this moment filled with faith and hope and love. Amen.

CHURCH FAMILY PRAYERS

Lyn S - In Basingstoke Hospital.

Vivien S - Recovering from surgery on a broken hip.

Brian C - Recent poor health.

John P - Recent poor health.

Audrey P - Ongoing radiotherapy & immunotherapy.

Brian M - Who has recently moved into Willows Edge Residential Home.

Jonathan E - Following recent spell in hospital.

