

SEPTEMBER 2012



IBN NEWS

Autumn Programme

September 13

Morning with Alec Judd

October 10-11

Visit of Dr Ian Randall

November 9

Prophetic Voices Conference

December 1-5

Visit of Asatur Nahapetyan from Armenia

Details of these events are provided in the newsletter and on the website: www.ibnetworks.org

Notice of

IBN Annual Meeting

4th December 2012

at 6.30 pm in

Hollywood Baptist Church

An evening of fellowship and conversation around a meal incorporating our AGM.

Special guest

Asatur Nahapetyan, Pastor and General Secretary of The Union of Evangelical Christian Baptist Churches of Armenia.

Please note this date in your diary.

Sharing the Vision

If you would like someone from IBN to come and speak to your church or group about the vision of IBN and building relationships with the wider Baptist family please contact:

david.mcmillan@ibnetworks.org

ABCI celebrates 100 years of witness and ministry!



Nazareth Baptist Church

Report by David McMillan

No, not the Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland, that centenary was back in 1995, but the Association of Baptist Churches in Israel. Last September I had the privilege of going to Nazareth to attend the European Baptist Federation (EBF) annual Council meetings hosted in 2011 by ABCI as part of special centenary celebrations.

While the Association of Baptist Churches in Israel was not formed until the 1960s the

story of Baptist witness begins in 1911. A year earlier in 1910 Shukri Musa from upper Galilee travelled to the USA, was converted and later baptised by Rev George Truett in First Baptist, Dallas. He returned to Palestine in 1911 and in May of that year baptised his first convert. Shortly afterwards he moved to Nazareth and planted the first Baptist church in the town. Despite initial persecution Musa's ministry was fruitful and after the First World War the Southern Baptists supported the work in Nazareth, which led in turn to the planting of Baptist churches in Jerusalem and Haifa. The work in Nazareth continued with the establishment of a school in 1935, which to this day is considered one of the leading schools in the country providing education for children of all backgrounds. However, following the war of independence in 1948 and the establishment of the state of Israel many Arab believers were displaced

or had to leave the country, profoundly affecting Baptist witness. In the following years there were many ups and downs but in 1965 an Association of Baptist Churches was established. Today the work continues to grow with 20 member churches and the witness to the gospel remains strong. You can learn more about the history and witness of Baptists in the Holy Land at www.baptist.org.il.

Do pray for our Baptist brothers and sisters as they seek to continue to witness to Christ in difficult situations within the state of Israel and the Palestinian territories. For example, in February this year Jewish extremists attacked the Narkis Street Baptist church in Jerusalem spraying the walls and cars with threats against the believers. The land where Jesus lived is not an easy place to witness to his death and resurrection.



Asatur Nahapetyan

Asatur Nahapetyan, Pastor and General Secretary of The Union of Evangelical Christian Baptist Churches of Armenia will be visiting as a guest of IBN in late November early December 2012.

Asatur was born and raised in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. For many years he attended the only Baptist church in the capital without making

any commitment to Christ, indeed, at the same time as attending the church he was progressing through the ranks of the Young Communists. It was while serving in the Soviet army's propaganda unit in East Germany that Asatur began to seriously question the communist ideology and when the Berlin wall came down Asatur returned to a very different Armenian society. Not long after his return he came under strong conviction of the Holy Spirit and committed his life to Christ in 1991. One of Asatur's

first discoveries as a new Christian was that the church had been faithfully praying for him from the first time he attended and throughout his service in the Soviet forces. Asatur took up theological and pastoral training and in 1998 was involved in the formation of the Union of Evangelical Christian Baptist Churches of Armenia.

In 1990 there were only 4 local Baptist churches with a total membership of 350. (contd. over)

Armenian Baptist Leader to visit Ireland

10th – 11th October Visit of Dr Ian Randall

Ian Randall has had a distinguished ministry in pastoral and theological academic life. Over a period of two decades from 1992 he taught in Spurgeon's College London and the International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS) Prague.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and has published almost 100 articles, presented many conference papers and published around a dozen books which include the histories of Keswick, F.B. Meyer and the mission agency OM. He has also published extensively on British and European Baptist history. His most recent publication *Rhythms of Revival: The Spiritual Awakening of 1857-1863* was published by Paternoster in 2010.

Dr Randall will be meeting with some local Baptists on Wednesday 10th October, and on 11th October will be addressing the Irish Baptist Historical Society on the theme: *The Creation of a European Baptist Community: Pan-European Developments from the 1840s to the 1920s*.

Further details of his programme will be available on the IBN website.



Armenian Baptist Leader to visit Ireland (Cont'd from page 1)

Five years later this number had doubled. In 1998 there were around 30 churches and groups consisting of 1100 Baptists. Today there are some 5000 Baptist members in 150 local churches and groups.

The Union of Evangelical Christian Baptist Churches of Armenia is conservative evangelical and non-ecumenical. They are deeply involved in mission both within Armenia and in the neighbouring countries. As a small community within a small population (Armenia's population is 4 million) and bordered by historically hostile states, the Baptists of Armenia greatly value their links and fellowship with Baptists across Europe and beyond.

Asatur will share something of his own testimony, tell of the work of the Armenian churches and their mission activity in the surrounding countries and minister God's word.

Due to the sensitivity of the mission work of the Baptist Churches the sessions will not be recorded.

The website (www.armbaplife.am) provides more information on the history and ministry of the Baptists of Armenia.



News Bites

On the website

Audio files from IBN's Pastoral Ministry Today Day Conference in November 2011 with Derek and Dianne Tidball are available. Just go to the home page – www.ibnetworks.org – and follow the link.

There is a report on the visit to Northern Ireland of Marc Owen, Church Life Secretary and Director for Mission of the Baptist Union of Wales.

IBN visits IBTS. Some of those involved in IBN visited the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague during the month of May. The visit incorporated the opportunity to meet with staff and students from across Europe as well as visit the city of Prague and learn of its historical significance from the Hussites of the 15th Century to the events of WWII.

IBN & EBF

IBN will be represented at the EBF Council meetings in Berlin in September 2012. A decision will be made at the Council on the acceptance of IBN as an Affiliate Network Member of the EBF.

IBN has been able to make modest financial contributions to First Baptist Church, Belgrade and to EBF for humanitarian relief in Syria. Thank you to our supporters.

Reflections on Ministry with Pastor Alec Judd

13th September

11am–2pm

Moira Baptist Church

You are invited to join us for a morning of reflection on ministry with Alec and Joan Judd on from 11am–2pm on Thursday 13th September in Moira Baptist Church (kindly granted).

Alec Judd has at various times ministered in England, Ireland and Northern Ireland. Well known and respected among Irish Baptists Alec is well placed to reflect on a lifetime of ministry in different cultural settings and differing church contexts.

The morning begins with coffee following which Alec will speak and there will be time for discussion.

If you plan to join us for the morning please email:

stephen.adams@ibnetworks.org
or call Stephen on 028 92699079 to facilitate with catering arrange-

Prophetic Voices from the Margins

9th November

Ballynahinch Baptist Church

A day conference with Stuart Murray Williams of the Anabaptist Network and Roy Searle of the Northumbria Community at which they will explore the contemporary significance of the Anabaptist, Celtic and new monastic traditions.

The conference is organised jointly with Contemporary Christianity Ireland.

For details of the programme and booking arrangements email: info@ibnetworks.org. Full details will appear on the website www.ibnetworks.org in the near future.