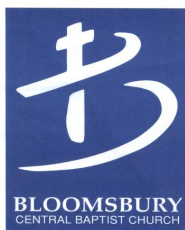


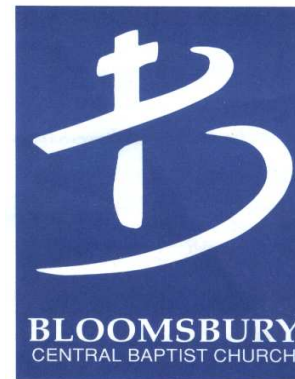
Several thousand members of the Baptist Convention of Telugu Churches (BCTC) gathered in Ongole, South India, on January 15, 2008, to celebrate the uniting of two divided factions.

The BCTC is a reconstituted body that replaces the Samevesam Telugu Baptist Churches (STBC), which split into three factions. As a result of the disputes, STBC was suspended from membership within the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and the Asia Pacific Baptist Federation (APBF).

Two of the three factions have now reconciled after several years of negotiations.



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As a church, Bloomsbury belongs to the London Baptist Association, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the European Baptist Federation and the Baptist World Alliance.

We are part of a regional, national and an international community of Baptists. This leaflet is one of an occasional series to help us keep up to date with events around the world.

European Baptists and Human Trafficking

Following a conference held in Copenhagen towards the end of last year, local congregations and national Unions are looking at ways of being more involved in resisting this trade, and in helping those damaged by it. Two staff members have been hired for a period to help raise awareness, and to aid groups in knowing what they can do. There are some projects already in place.

Hungarian Baptist Aid has a home for women who have escaped from prostitution. Such projects are in the planning stage in some countries. Vienna Baptists are planning to found an aid society, "Herzwerk", with the aim of demonstrating God's love in word and deed to prostitutes.

'Dive Deeper' 15th Baptist Youth World Congress Leipzig, Germany Wed 30 July - Sun 3 August

Every five years Baptist Youth people meet somewhere in the world - this time in Leipzig, Germany.

The Baptist Youth World Conference brings young people together for fellowship, worship, cultural exchanges, networking, evangelism and missions. It provides opportunities for mission, partnerships, cross cultural relationships and ministries. Each participant will have an opportunity to fellowship with internationals in small family groups.

Bloomsbury already has a number of young people interested in participating. If you'd like to know more contact the Church Office.



NEW BAPTIST COVENANT

January 30 -February 1 sees a very significant gathering in Atlanta, Georgia. Over 30 different Baptist groups, representing over 20 million members from all sorts of racial, theological and geographical backgrounds, will be represented by 20,000 delegates.

US Baptists have faced controversy and divisions over the last years, and this is an important coming together to rebuild broken relationships, and discover again how to be a community of the people of God.

The official material describes the gathering this; "Representatives of these Baptist organisations have reaffirmed traditional Baptist values, including sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and its implications for public and private morality, as well as their obligations as Christians to fulfil the biblical mandate to promote peace with justice, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, care for the sick and the marginalized, and promote religious liberty and respect for religious diversity."

Taking Jesus' words in Luke 4;18-19 as the basis, the gathering will consider the topics of

Unity in Seeking Peace with Justice
Unity in Bringing Good News to the Poor
Unity in Respecting Diversity
Unity in Welcoming the Stranger
Unity in Setting the Captive Free.

The meeting will have its impact just in the fact of it happening, but it will also matter in the way in which ideas will be developed and taken forward later. Thank God for all the possibilities that will arrive.

Amsterdam 400

When: 24 - 26 July 2009 **Where:** RAI Centre, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Who: All are welcome!
Celebration of 400 years of Baptists in Europe. More information to follow from May 2008.