

Presidential Election Survey 2017 – Candidate Information

Two nominations have been received for the position of President of the Baptist Union in 2018-19. Please do prayerfully consider which candidate you believe should serve our Union as President. Both the candidates have merit, both are skilled and both have the potential to serve our Union well. The question to consider is who is the most appropriate candidate for this particular season in our Union's life.



David Gregory

David has been Senior Minister of Croxley Green Baptist Church since 2010. Previously he held posts as Associate Minister of Loughton Baptist Church – a large multi-cultural church in Milton Keynes – and as a Home Mission funded student minister at St Andrews Church in Bletchley while training at Regents Park College.

With a heart for mission, he seeks to enable churches to embrace a fresh view of life with God and one another, encouraging them to greater engagement with their local community. Currently at Croxley Green he is exploring how our Baptists Together values might shape the future journey of the church, its leadership, life and mission. Sharing in wider Baptist life, while in Milton Keynes he served as chair of the North Bucks Baptist Forum of the Central Baptist Association, and more recently on the Association Home Mission Grants Group and Council.



Growing up as part of Forest Street Baptist Church in Nottinghamshire, the Apollo moon landings inspired an interest in science, leading him to leave God behind. Yet found science drawing him back while studying Physics and Astrophysics at the University of Leicester! He became a Christian while at Imperial College in London researching thunder storms after which he worked at the Met Office and European Weather Centre in weather and climate research for fifteen years. As a member of Easthampstead Baptist Church, he led the planting of a new congregation into a local estate which resulted in him exploring pastoral ministry.

“While exploring my call I was asked ‘How has working at the Met Office prepared you for ministry?’ I think I can answer that in two ways. It left me with a passion for helping people to embrace the adventure of wholelife discipleship, encountering God and making a difference for the Kingdom in whatever sphere of life they are in. I have sought to encourage this within local church life, including co-ordinating an ecumenical group of churches in Milton Keynes in partnering with The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity’s Imagine project.

Secondly, my love of science continues and has shaped my ministry over the past 15 years.”

David teaches science and faith on the Footsteps training programme in the Central and Southern Counties Associations, as well as to schools, churches, community groups and Bible Colleges and in 2015 organised a CBA workshop “Science for Ministers”. Having previously contributed to the book “Hope in God’s Future – Christian Discipleship in the Context of Climate Change”, on sabbatical in 2013, with Carolyn his wife, he travelled to Peru with BMS looking at environmental mission, recently sharing insights in the Baptist Ministers’ Journal.

At Croxley Green, David helps lead the monthly Messy Church where, as “Dr Dave”, he runs the “Messy Science Lab”, using simple experiments to help children, parents and carers to enjoy science and through it connect to God and faith. He is also helping to co-ordinate the national “Messy Church Does Science” project – part of the “Scientists in Congregations” initiative at St. John’s College, Durham – inspiring Messy Churches to use science in exploring faith, a resource book being launched at the Ely Cathedral Science Festival in June 2017.

*“I am grateful to Croxley Green Baptist Church and my colleagues for being willing to release me to this wider role in Baptist life. If called to serve as President I would want to **encourage churches to consider how our Baptist Together values might inspire the life and mission of the local church as well as our wholelife***

discipleship. Alongside this, in an age where science continues to influence our lives and world, I want to positively explore science's ability to help shape faith and spirituality, providing a window through which people of all ages might encounter God."

David is married to Carolyn and they have two adult daughters. In his spare time, he enjoys reading, cooking and going to local theatre groups, along with mountain walking, holidays in Italy, visiting ancient ruins and anything to do with Star Trek!

John Singleton

I was blessed to be brought up in a Christian home in Erith, Kent, on the outskirts of Greater London, my father being bi-vocational, a structural engineer by day and leading a missional church plant in a deprived area in his spare time for 30 years! I came to faith at the age of 13 responding to an appeal by Billy Graham on a live link from one of his crusades, accepting Christ as my Saviour and Lord, and subsequently being baptised at Queen Street Baptist Church and joining the membership.



Also during these teenage years I met my future wife, Enid, and we were married in 1966 and have just celebrated our Golden Wedding anniversary. After leaving school and working in some very junior jobs in banking, I started on a career in sales. We moved house to the Medway towns in the early 1970's and it was during the 15 years we were at Frindsbury BC that I grew spiritually, serving in a number of lay leadership roles, which included preaching, church secretary, deacon, BB officer and Sunday school teacher. A number of people at Frindsbury encouraged me to train for the ministry but we knew that the time was not right for that.

It was also during our time in the Medway towns that I joined IBM as a salesman and had a successful career for 17 years with them. My final appointment was as an account manager on the Midland Bank team (now HSBC), based in Sheffield, commencing in 1988. We lived in the Doncaster area and after joining the Baptist church at Conisbrough I felt that God was now asking me to train for the ministry and was accepted on the distance learning scheme run by Spurgeon's College, studying at night and during the weekends for 3 years.

I left IBM at Easter 1992, took my Cambridge Certificate final exams and became the student pastor at Thorpe-le-Soken BC near Frinton on Sea, Essex. After 2 further years of study at Spurgeon's I was invited to stay as the fulltime pastor and remained at Thorpe for a further 8 years, during which time the Lord blessed us with increased attendance, numerous baptisms and doubling of the church membership.

I was appointed as regional minister responsible for mission in the Northern Baptist Association, working alongside the Rev Dr John Claydon, commencing the role in January 2003. I became involved in all aspects of the work of the NBA and John Claydon and I wrote a church health resource called 'Springboard' which is still being used. I became a BU Council member and served on the BU Ministry Executive and Mission Focus group. Working with the BU Mission department and gifted friends from the NBA, we produced a DVD and study guide to encourage small churches in their ministry and mission. I also studied at Durham University and obtained an MA in Theology and Ministry in 2010 - my first degree!

We forged links with a Texan Baptist Association and with the Lithuanian Baptist Union and worked in teams on mission in the NBA, Texas and Lithuania.

I retired from the NBA in August 2012 and have since served as interim pastor at Basford Road, Nottingham (14 months) and Oundle BC, Peterborough (17 months). We have now resettled at our home church, East Cleveland BC in Redcar, where I have been asked to work with the 2 ministers recently appointed to look after East Cleveland BC and South Bank BC, Middlesbrough, ensuring that as they work together in each of the churches we iron out any problems and make best use of their differing gifts. I am also starting to accept preaching appointments and to help the NBA when asked.

My interests are all kinds of sport (watching) with supporting West Ham for 50 years my main crime! I enjoy walking the dog, spending time with our 5 grandchildren, reading crime novels, eating out and going to the cinema. We have always travelled, visiting the States at least once a year and continue to do that, spending time with ministry colleagues who are now firm friends.

If I were to be elected to the presidency, my focus for the year would be on Unity and I would hope to be able to develop a resource to help churches improve their unity. The main focus would be concerned with the lack of unity which is to be found in many of the churches I have come across. The one place where sacrificial love and acceptance of differing opinions should be seen seems to be the place where infighting, cliques and fall outs are commonly found. That blunts our effectiveness as Christians and churches and I would like to address how that might be changed through repentance and by the power of God's Spirit.