

# CENTRAL NEWS

GOOD NEWS STORIES from the CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Autumn 2017

## Messy Church Does Science

Isn't it strange that someone who believes in God is interested in science?" That's a question Dave Gregory - Senior Minister of Croxley Green Baptist Church and President Elect of the Baptist Union - has been asked time and time again by people who come along to the fun science lab that he runs as the white coated "Dr Dave", part of a monthly Messy Church he helps lead. And now perhaps more folk will be challenged to ask that question as the "Messy Church Does Science" book is published.

Dave says, "I can understand the question - I used to ask it myself. Long ago when I was a teenager, my interest in science led me away from faith. But eventually, it was the wonder of the world that I found through science that started my journey back to becoming a Christian. Using science in our Messy Church, I hope we are doing the



same for the families who come along - children and adults alike. At least we will challenge the idea that science and faith don't mix and if they do it's explosive!"

Funded by Scientists in Congregations, "Messy Church Does Science" is edited by Dave and published by the Bible Reading Fellowship. Containing 100 fun science experiments for people to try out, with simple explanations of the science involved, it also has ideas of how these might be linked to Bible stories or moments of reflection and prayer. Alongside the experiments, ten scientists who are Christian share something of their own personal story of how science and faith interact with their lives.

Dave continued, "All those who have contributed to experiments in the book have found that science is fun, a gift from God that brings joy to life. We want to share that with others, helping them to enjoy the wonder that science reveals about the world and ourselves, and through it something of the God of life who lies behind it all. But you don't have to

know a lot about science to give this ago - just an interest and enthusiasm both about science and Jesus that you want to share with others".

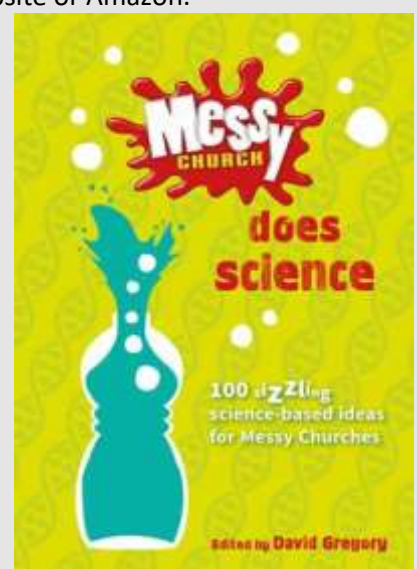
Dave, together with project co-director Lucy Moore and other members of the Messy Church team launched the material at the close of a month long science festival - "From Dinosaurs to DNA" - at Ely Cathedral at the end of June. Over the coming months they are also leading events at The Rutherton Appleton Laboratory near

Didcot and also at the Christian Resource Exhibition in October at Sandown Park.

Dave hopes to share something of a positive engagement between science and faith as part of his year as Baptist Union President from May 2018, especially going beyond a common apologetic engagement to one that enables God to be encountered through the window on creation that science opens. The book is available from the BRF website or Amazon.



Lucy Moore with Dr Dave



# Holmer Green

## Discovering a 'more than Sunday' Church



Like many churches in an Interregnum (ours was 2012-2014) we found that we *could* work together, and were encouraged by seeing some stepping forward as worship leaders. But lots of practical things were neglected even though we had two Moderators leading us spiritually. Everything was status quo with no growth and very few new ideas.



Anthony Smith

rather than through a more conventional ministry 'career' path, and the skills and experienced gained in a very different context have proven significant and effective in changing the course of the church here.

Key to what Anthony helped the church develop was a "can-do" approach. For example, he didn't need to use our Manse so this was let and the income was used to help fund a part-time Families and Youth worker from 2016.

We knew that Church just on a

Sunday morning was not the future model. We already had a "traditional" service monthly on a Wednesday morning for seniors called Time-4-God followed by a "Pop-in" lunch. But we now have a congregation on other days because we did "Church" when it suited other groups e.g. young families. Our Church building is now used nearly every day.

This soon led to "Messy Church" monthly on a

Sunday afternoon and a Youth Club on Friday evenings. We take Church to them at times to suit them and in a style that is attractive. Churches are faced with several generations (of children and adults) with no knowledge of the Bible or who feel no need for Church. Bucking the trend, we re-introduced Sunday evening services with "Prayer and Praise" working with other local

**Anthony helped the Church develop a "can-do" approach**

churches and numbers are amazing. Don't be afraid of a fresh approach underpinned by prayer and spiritual conviction. Change was not easy given our demographics but we now balance traditional with modern worship.

Lessons were learnt, try something and if it doesn't work then stop (e.g.

"Safe Space" for Toddler mums and "Breakfast@9" on Sundays for parents and children). Anthony often comes out with "I've got an idea". We learnt to go with the flow and to challenge pre-conceived ideas.

Prayer however was and still is key. Lots of prayers were said about delivering our vision and the activities to support this. God began to answer, for example, children and young families started coming. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) became one of our cornerstones along with Isaiah 40: 31.



It's worth quoting Anthony himself here: "Church is about bringing all the gifts we have both naturally and supernaturally as individuals and as a body of believers to work in harmony for God's glory as His Spirit leads."

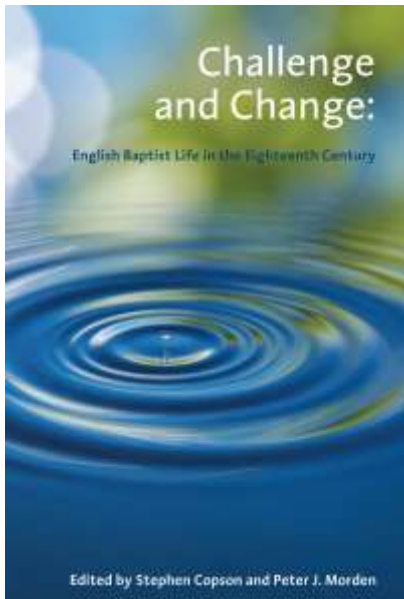
We are growing, our website is well used as are our social media feeds. We pride ourselves on our friendliness, we have fun and great fellowship. We have now become a 'more than Sunday' Church.

**by Roy Allcorn  
Church Secretary**



# CHALLENGE AND CHANGE:

English Baptist life in the Eighteenth Century



range of understanding on scripture, salvation, mission, worship and political engagement. New insights paved the way for support of the abolitionist cause, basic education for the poor through Sunday Schools and evangelism through the Missionary Society.

The Evangelical Revival brought new life and enthusiasm to many Christians in the United Kingdom. Many Baptists were invigorated. They explored ministry; they formed fresh collaborative initiatives between churches; they started new movements. But these were also parents, painters, partners, printers as well as pastors and preachers. This volume invites the reader into family life, worship, politics and culture, formation for ministry and much more.

History is never only about the past. It is about who we are, how we think, what we do. So too with the story of Baptists. "Challenge and Change" looks at the life of Baptists in the eighteenth century. It was a period that started with Baptists only recently allowed legally to organise and worship. How did they respond to the new freedoms?

There was a rich diversity in Baptist life. Sharing a common conviction on believer's baptism and the nature of the gathered church, there was a

Of course, you cannot take the lessons of one era and simply drop them into another context. But as Baptists in our generation face the challenge of changing times, there may be encouragement in knowing that our Baptist forebears have been here before.

This story is told in a collection of pieces edited by Peter Morden (former Vice Principal of Spurgeons College) and Stephen Copson. It is available through [www.baptisthistory.org.uk](http://www.baptisthistory.org.uk) at £25



## Latest Home Mission Video: GRETTON Baptist Church

can be viewed and downloaded at [www.vimeo.com/222121651](http://www.vimeo.com/222121651) or simply visit the CBA web site and follow the link.

Rev Peter Lloyd gives an insight into a small rural church and some of the unique challenges that are faced by churches in such contexts who are seeking to bear witness to Christ.

Please remember to pray for all our smaller churches as they seek to be effective witnesses, often in contexts where numbers, energy and age seem against them.

With smaller churches in mind please see poster below advertising the next small church day, at Caddington BC near Luton. Entitled 'Let's talk MISSION' the intention is to encourage a conversation about how small churches can best impact their communities.

**FOOTSTEPS PATHWAY COURSES** Developing your preaching skills and mission CBA in partnership with Regent's Park College

### Developing Preaching Skills

*a seven week course*  
at Croxley Green Baptist Church,  
225 Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green,  
Rickmansworth, WD3 3LH

- for those experienced in preaching and those just beginning
- looking at the principles of preaching God's Word
- developing skills and confidence for effective preaching

**Wednesday 8pm for 8.10pm till 9.45pm**  
**27<sup>th</sup> September**  
**4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October**  
**1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November**

LED BY REV. DR ANDREW OPENSHAW,  
MINISTER OF NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH, TRING

£50 for the course (£40 if unwaged)  
Book church group of 4 (£200) - 5th place free

For more details and application forms go to the Central Baptist Association website, or contact Church Facilities, Croxley Green Baptist Church, office@croxleybaptist.co.uk, 01923 710780 or Anne Laine, Tutor in Community Learning, BPC, Oxford, anne.laine@bpcrps.co.uk

**OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS**

**SATURDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 2017**  
**FORCES OF FAITH!**  
**APPROACHING SCIENCE WITH CONFIDENCE**

REV. JOHN WEAVER, FORMER PRINCIPAL OF SOUTH WALES BAPTIST COLLEGE, Dean of The John Kay Institute, Connected Environment, Science and Christianity

Exploring conversations to discover faith's positive answers to the questions raised by science

- In what ways can the Bible and Science speak with each other?
- What does the Christian faith have to contribute to today's 'hot topics' such as renewable energy, fracking and genetic engineering?

Can science offer us an understanding of suffering in an imperfect world?

**FOOTSTEPS Pathway Day**

for more information please see CBA web site: [www.centralba.org.uk](http://www.centralba.org.uk)

**OPEN TO EVERYONE** living out their faith in local churches and communities  
£33 (see booking form for concessions) Bring your lunch, drinks provided  
**The Church of Christ the King, Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, MK7 6HG**  
9.30 am for 10.00 am till 4.15 pm

**CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**  
[www.centralba.org.uk](http://www.centralba.org.uk)

## SMALL CHURCH DAY 2017

Colin Pye with Carol Murray will be leading a day of CONVERSATION around MISSION QUESTIONS faced by smaller churches

**Saturday Nov 11th**

Venue: Caddington Baptist Church, LU1 4AF  
9.30am (for 10am start) - 3.30pm  
Cost £5 - please bring your own lunch

**let's talk MISSION**

please email [colinpye@gmail.com](mailto:colinpye@gmail.com) to book your place

## “The ‘hidden homeless’ on the move”

### Waterways Chaplaincy - coming alongside the marginalised on the canals and rivers in CBA.

Many of us are familiar with poverty on our streets, but there is little known about the marginalised ‘hidden homeless’, who use the 2,000 miles of the UK’s inland waterways and canals. I am sure I am not the only one, who until recently, was totally unaware of these vulnerable people, and the opportunities for local Christians to ‘be there’ for them.



Living near the Grand Union Canal (GUC) in Kings Langley, I never really thought about the boats that silently passing through my local community, only 5 minutes from where I worship at Christ Church Baptist. A fast-growing initiative called ‘Waterways Chaplaincy is seeking to develop its network of local chaplains to ‘be there’ to listen to and support these folks. As a trainee Waterways Chaplain myself, once a week, I prayer walk and chat to boaters passing along the GUC between Apsley Marina and Hunton Bridge.

As an increasing number of people are moving to the waterways, believing that it will be a cheaper and better way of life, many sadly find that the reality is somewhat different. Many face daily issues with employment, financial concerns, physical & mental health problems and difficulties with the upkeep of their boats. Here in the Central Baptist Association (CBA), this is especially evident on the Grand Union Canal (Croxley, Watford, Kings Langley, Hemel Hempstead through to Milton Keynes) and the River Lee and Stort (Cheshunt to Hertford and Ware). Our fast-growing Waterways Chaplaincy and local Waterways Chaplains are responding to the needs of many in our region and beyond, as best we can, but if we had more Chaplains, we could reach so many more.

“We were grateful for the day when the Waterways Chaplain popped a card under our door.

The Chaplain assisted with our immediate problems and stayed in touch with us until we were back on our feet” (Canal boat resident)

Waterways Chaplains, ordinary locals, walk their nearby stretch of canal or river, offering a non-judgmental and listening ear and sometime practical help to those they meet. The Chaplaincy is based at a charity called Workplace Matters ([www.workplacematters.org.uk](http://www.workplacematters.org.uk)) situated at the Anglican Diocese of St Albans offices that supports chaplains at London-Luton Airport and Luton G-Casino.

Two years ago, we appointed our first National Senior WWC Chaplain Revd Mark Chester, to spearhead the development of WWC to ‘go national’. Apart from those of us based here in CBA there are now WWCs across the Basingstoke Canal, Rivers Wey & Kennet and Avon,

further north across the Birmingham Canal networks. Our vision is to have 200 Chaplains across the UK by 2019.

Mark says ‘To offer a listening ear, in Christ’s name to those in need on the waterways, is a precious gift. By being ‘His presence’ to the vulnerable when they need it most are discipleship and mission in action, beyond the walls of the local church. To find out more about WWC and even considering becoming a Waterways Chaplain, please visit [www.waterways.org.uk](http://www.waterways.org.uk) or contact me [amandaallchorn@gmail.com](mailto:amandaallchorn@gmail.com)’

Here in CBA, our WWCs meet monthly for fellowship, prayer, training and sharing stories at Waterways Experience, Nash Mills (Kings Langley). It would be brilliant to have a few of you prayerfully reading this, to come and join us!

#### Amanda Allchorn

(Trainee Waterways Chaplain and member at Christ Church, Kings Langley)



Amanda Allchorn



### Guides to Church Insurance

Church insurance can seem confusing which is why BIC has created a series of guides to help churches understand their insurance cover, legal liabilities and the types of insurance cover that might be needed.

The guides (found at : [www.baptist-insurance.co.uk/guides-to-church-insurance](http://www.baptist-insurance.co.uk/guides-to-church-insurance)) answer the most frequently asked questions received by the Baptist Insurance Company and include links to helpful checklists, templates and sources of further information. Examples include:

#### Church property

Advice on what churches can do to reduce the risk of loss or damage to church and their contents

#### Legal Expenses Insurance

An overview of your cover, which is included within your Church Insurance policy, some real-life examples and details of how to get legal advice or make a claim

#### People on church premises

The key issues that churches need to consider, along with the health and safety responsibilities, to keep people safe while on church premises

#### Community outreach

A straightforward guide to insurance and risk management issues that can arise with outreach projects such as foodbanks

#### Organised events

An overview of what churches need to consider when they are planning events

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