

**Association of Confessional Baptist Churches
in the United Kingdom
Report of Association Day September 30th 2023**

It was a delight to see members from each of the 5 churches of the Association of Confessional Baptist Churches (UK), as well as the host church, Christ Church, Loughborough, gathering together for our first Association Day on 30th September 2023. The day was aimed at fostering the fellowship between the members of the churches, so that we could grow in love and support for one another. It was a truly blessed day, with over 100 people of all ages and backgrounds from across the country, joining together with one heart and mind.

The day was commenced with ministry from our dear brother, Keith Underhill, former missionary to Kenya. Under the umbrella of the title of his recently published book, “Planted by the Providence of God”, Keith shared some aspects of his work in Kenya, in the light of scriptural teaching. He pointed out that the same principles of church planting that applied in Kenya, apply to us here in the UK, and indeed across the world.

We were challenged to see that in church planting, our goal must be to fulfil the great commission. This is done through the centrality of preaching, as well as private ministry in homes. However, the work of church planting is not easy, and there are times when we see few conversions. What do we do then? We must not simply hide behind God’s sovereignty, but examine ourselves in terms of preaching and the ministry of the church, giving ourselves to seeking God in prayer.

Furthermore, in all we seek to do in planting biblical churches, we must see the importance of the providence of God. God is in control, and His providential plan will be worked out in all circumstances.

Keith left us with 6 principles for missions:

1. Go and make disciples of all nations.
2. Pray that this will be fulfilled.
3. Trust God’s providence.
4. Take the opportunities God gives us.
5. Churches must send gifted men to plant other churches.
6. We have a particular responsibility for the unreached.

Following this ministry, we joined together to hear reports from each of the churches present, in order that we might pray for one another. These reports reflected the ups and downs of church life in this present age. Some churches had faced significant challenges; some had seen members leaving; others had rejoiced to add new members through baptism. Generally, the churches had known spiritual growth through these struggles and blessings, and were looking to the Lord for the future. In particular, it was encouraging to hear how all the churches were seeking biblical reformation as directed by our confession of faith, even in the hard challenges of church discipline and conflict.

The lunch break afforded a good opportunity for fellowship, over a tasty “hog roast”. It was great to see folk from different churches engaging together in fruitful conversation, including many little ones running hither and thither! May this fellowship grow over the coming years, as our bonds of unity become stronger through biblical and confessional communion together.

The afternoon was dedicated to the business of the association. The messengers from the churches considered various matters to foster our “peace, increase of love and mutual edification”. The biggest chunk of time was spent discussing how we can work together in the work of biblical missions. Providentially, we were seeking to apply the principles relating to the ministry we had received from Keith in the morning.

We look forward to meeting together again as an association of churches. Any are welcome to join us at these meetings, to observe what we are doing. We pray that we may grow together as churches, as we seek to fulfil the great commission at home and abroad.

Our next planned meetings are:

Tuesday 30th January 2024 at Stanley Park Church, Liverpool

Tuesday 7th May 2024 at Countesthorpe Baptist Church

Trinity Grace Church, Ramsbottom

On behalf of the Association of Confessional Baptist Churches UK

