

Many Pastors Still Undecided About Their Choice for President

With “Super Tuesday I” voting now underway, many Americans are still undecided about their choice for the nation’s next president. Even pastors are among those who haven’t selected which presidential hopeful to support.

But by tomorrow, voters in more than a quarter of the states across the nation will have had to have decided—one way or another.

Although parishioners look to pastors for guidance, spiritual leaders are still making up their minds, too. A LifeWay Research survey found that 48 percent of pastors were undecided about whom to choose for president. Among Republicans, 39 percent were undecided (29 percent were planning to vote for Ted Cruz), while 31 percent of Democratic pastors were still on the fence (38 percent said they would vote for Hillary Clinton).

The American Pastors Network offers pastors events, resources and support as they embark on their calling to lead their churches. Along with the North Carolina Pastors Network, APN is planning the next “U-Turn” event for pastors, ministry leaders and engaged believers on April 14 at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Matthews, North Carolina.

APN President Sam Rohrer says that voting options may seem murky right now, but pastors must lead their churches by faithfully and confidently reminding their congregations to vote biblically.

“In this crucial election, pastors and churches must focus first and foremost on matters of candidate requirements such

as the fear of God, the opposition of bribery and corruption, a knowledge of the biblical definition of justice, a commitment to the Rule of Law as defined and embodied in God's moral law and our Constitution, and the demonstration of character and integrity," Rohrer said. "APN's pastoral and biblical emphasis hones in on these beliefs and this emphasis. And pastors can help guide their congregations by primarily encouraging them to vote—and to vote biblically. We must ensure that in this election, the Christian voice is heard loud and clear."

Rohrer added that election analysts say that if more evangelical voters visited the polls and voted with their values in 2008 and 2012, the outcome may have been vastly different for the country.

"One of the most surprising findings of our survey was the poor showing of Donald Trump (at 5 percent of Republican voters for the January survey)," reported Ed Stetzer, executive director of LifeWay Research. "When it comes to Mr. Trump, there seems to be a huge gap between the pulpit and the pew."

A previous LifeWay survey in 2012 found that pastors in general are wary about being publicly identified with political candidates, with 87 percent of Protestant pastors saying they disapprove of endorsements from the pulpit.

Biblical, not political, the daylong APN and NCPN event, titled "U-Turn: A Roadmap for Renewal—A Conversation with Pastors on Society, Culture and Leadership," will equip, empower and educate attendees about the critical role of pastors, as well as equip pastors, ministry leaders and engaged believers with the essentials to impact culture particularly during an important election year when the church and Christian voters have the potential to make a real difference.

Headlining the April 14 event from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at SES will be social science researcher George Barna and WallBuilders leader David Barton, who were also featured speakers at the inaugural "U-Turn" conference in Pennsylvania in 2015.

Barna has filled executive roles in politics, marketing, advertising, media development, research and ministry. He founded the Barna Research Group in 1984 (now The Barna Group) and helped it become a leading marketing research firm focused on the intersection of faith and culture before selling it in 2009.

Speaking at U-Turn on "The Necessity of Engagement: A Statistical Perspective," Barna currently serves as the executive director of the American Culture and Faith Institute (a division of United in Purpose), and is president of Metaformation, a faith development organization. He has written more than 50 books and his work is frequently cited as an authoritative source by the media. Barna has also serves as a speaker at ministry conferences around the world, on the faculty at several universities and seminaries, and as a pastor who helped start several churches.

Barton heads WallBuilders, a national pro-family organization that presents America's forgotten history and heroes, with an emphasis on America's moral, religious and constitutional heritage. He is the author of numerous best-selling books, with the subjects drawn largely from his massive library-museum of tens of thousands of original writings, documents and artifacts from early America. He also addresses well over 400 groups each year. His exhaustive research has rendered him an expert in historical and constitutional issues. At U-Turn, Barton will speak on "When Pastors Stand for Truth: A Historical Perspective."

Additional "U-Turn" speakers in North Carolina will include:

- Former NFL star and Pastor Paul Blair, president of Reclaiming America for Christ
- Gary Frazier, biblical writer and founder and president of Discovery Missions International
- Jeff Mateer of the First Liberty (formerly the Liberty Institute), who has argued significant religious liberties and marriage cases
- Pastor, pilot and author Steve Scheibner, who tells his gripping story from 9/11
- Bryan Smith, senior manager for biblical integration for BJU Press
- Sammy Tippit of Sammy Tippit Ministries

A pastor who attended the Pennsylvania “U-Turn” event said: “I was really blessed by the U-Turn Conference. ... This was truly life-changing and transformational. I don’t remember the last time I have been so inspired to want to make a difference in the kingdom of God after attending a conference with such great impact. I was thoroughly energized to know what, how and why we should take back our country for Jesus Christ.”

To learn more about the “U-Turn” event, [click here](#). To register online, [click here](#).