



First Baptist Church Attleboro

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The mission of First Baptist Church, Attleboro is to invite and include people in the reconciling and healing love of God, as shown us in Jesus Christ.

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In 1894 the Baptist movement of freedom from religious oppression and entrance was long established, and population growth in the Attleborough area warranted a geographic split. This meant the new town, Attleborough (then called East Attleborough) did not have its own Baptist Church. That was soon remedied when on April 14, 1895, Walter Sanford organized a Baptist Sunday school in borrowed space at the Episcopal Church in town. And, says the adage, the rest is history. A lot happens in 125 years, and here we are.



Our Church

Written by Andrea Twombly

A step into the sanctuary at First Baptist Church in Attleboro is a step into a space that is uncluttered, peaceful, and sublime in its simplicity.

Two pianos, one a baby grand, the other a modern electronic instrument flank the front of the sanctuary, and an antique pipe organ in the chancel, are apt symbols for the congregation that

worships in this room. We are traditional, modern, and old-fashioned, all rolled into one compassionate, caring, loving, diverse, joyful community of believers.



Photo of Andrea Twombly and her beloved husband, the late Terry Twombly

We are each Baptists for our own personal, and diverse reasons, and it would be no stretch of the imagination to say we disagree from time to time, but there is one thing we all agree on here: Soul Freedom is the backbone of our faith. We each come to God in our own way, with our own struggles, and our own praises; but we recognize that for each of us, our spiritual journey is a personal one, shaped by our own lives and relationship with God.

Our Church Covenant, written over one hundred years ago, includes the phrase, "Where all who come may find welcome." The thing about our church is that welcoming all is not a formal policy within our by-laws. It is who we are. We are a multi-cultural congregation that supports a moderate theology. We cannot claim to be a truly diverse ethnic community; however, we are a congregation of people who came from a variety of upbringings, with various life experiences and backgrounds. We appreciate and embrace the participation of every person, believing that we all have something unique and beautiful to offer in service to Christ. Skin color, orientation, gender identity, age, marital status - none of these are barriers to worshiping and serving God; therefore, they are not barriers to worshiping and serving at First Baptist Church in Attleboro.

Over the decades we have been a welcoming congregation. You won't find any Cambodian members in our midst today, but in the 1980's during the upheaval in Cambodia, you would have found several Cambodian people participating in our services. There were many members of our church who offered furniture, clothing, household goods, and other needful things to the refugees who settled in Attleboro. And like any worthy nurturing body, we did so faithfully until our friends were ready to fly on their own. They moved on to different cities, good jobs, and settled homes.

They are not the only people who allowed us to be good Samaritans. We have been blessed with two pastors over the last thirty-plus years, one who stayed for twenty-two years, and our current pastor, who will have been with us for more than eight years at her retirement. In partnership with these pastors, just because of who we are and how we choose to honor God, we have launched at least six members into ordination and pastorships. We consider it an honor that we regularly have retired ministers in our congregation worshipping with us. This is not prideful boasting, but something that makes us stand back in awe at how God's love and the power of Christ can spread and grow, not by policy and pretense, but by being in humble service.

Personal Testimonies

Written by Ken St. Don

Having lived in Attleboro in the late 1960's, my parents found First Baptist Church to be a welcoming open door community. After having visited the church many times and speaking to church members, they decided to join First Baptist Attleboro. My father was a Deacon and my mother was involved in women's groups.



Photo of Pam and Ken St. Don

I enjoyed the music during worship time. I found music provided support in both the sermons and scriptures. I joined both the Jr. Choir and Sr. Choir, of which I'm still currently involved. As years passed I came to know God and was baptized. It's where I found a happiness learning through a much deeper and richer understanding of the Bible with its life's stories through current events in the world.

Many years later I found myself having to bury my late wife and both my parents. The church membership was there in support of me in my most difficult time in life. I'll always be grateful for the church support through its many blessings from the membership, prayers, pastor, and God. A few years later, I remarried after finding someone who was just as, and maybe more, hurt through past events in losing their spouse. Together we have found each other strength, respect and understanding. We have found that knowing each other's past allowed us to forge a stronger future together today. The church membership has been there for each other in both celebration and challenging turn of events. Through each others' lives we find support, guidance, patience, and change which makes First Baptist Church more than just a community of members; its's a family guided by spirit and understanding of faith and love in ourselves and in each other.



Photo of fellowship following church spruce up

Personal Testimonies

Written by The Bears Family



Photo of The Bears Family

Sean and Rebecca met in 2006 and quickly fell in love. Soon after we began discussing a lifelong future together with hopes and dreams of marriage. Having lost her father in 2004, walking down the aisle without her dad wasn't something Rebecca felt strong enough to do. Rebecca accepted Sean's daughter Ashley as her own and was fully committed to her role as a proud step-momma. It was important to both of us that we raise Ashley and any other future children within a church community. We regularly participated in Sunday mass at a local Catholic church where Rebecca later became Ashley's CCD teacher for several years.

In 2010 our son, Blake, was born. Throughout the planning and on the event of Blake's baptism, we didn't feel a sense of unconditional love and acceptance within our church community. As a family, we began to attend other church services to see if perhaps we belonged in a different church.

When we first walked into First Baptist Church of Attleboro in 2012 we immediately felt "home." The love and acceptance that poured from the church membership for each of us, both individually and as a family, was so overwhelmingly wonderful. In 2012, we were married in Florida with Ashley and Blake standing by our sides, they were our two VIPs (Very Important People). On March 31, 2013 Rebecca accepted Pastor Cheryl's invitation to consider being baptized as an adult and it was truly a special day that we will always cherish. While we are



Photo of church members bowling



Photo of ladies gathering

not perfect people and we do not attend a perfect church, we have grown to understand that God doesn't expect us to be perfect. We know that God is perfect and that each of us can only strive to be the best versions of ourselves. We try to live each new day as a better person than we were yesterday. We are a church community who prays for one another, accepts one another, and genuinely loves one another as brothers and sisters. At First Baptist Church of Attleboro, we are a FAMILY who strives to worship and honor God each and every day.

Personal Testimonies

Written by **Bill Miller**

I was in my mid 30's when I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior. I grew up in a small rural town in Maine. Out of all of my friends, only one family attended church, so I grew up without any background in religion.

It wasn't until I met my future wife that I was introduced to Christ and the bible. It took awhile but He won out and I was baptized.

Our Church in Maine was a small American Baptist church with an average attendance of 35-40 people. When we moved to Pennsylvania in 1998, we found an American Baptist church there, with an average attendance of over 100, so that was a big change. We got involved in our new church and picked up where we left off in Maine with involvement in all areas that needed volunteers.

In 2012 after retiring, we moved to Attleboro. We had visited Attleboro many times, as we have a daughter that lives here and a son in Rehoboth. During our visits we always attended church at FBC. Even while being a visitor we found the congregation of FBC to be open and welcoming to visitors. It wasn't a hard decision to choose FBC as our new home church. Coming from a small community just west of Harrisburg, PA, we were used to the traffic and congestion during commuter hour. We found that the city government of Attleboro was easy to deal with and provided a good feeling as far as community welfare. The parks and sports fields are tremendous and offered great areas to take the grandchildren to get fresh air and exercise.

Most people we have met here in Attleboro have been long-term residents which signifies to me that this is a place worth living! Being the jewelry capital of the world, along with major manufacturing there is a lot of history here in Attleboro.

The more we got to know people from the local neighborhood and church we found many reasons to start enjoying our lives here in Attleboro. The infrastructure of the city is excellent with the usual political drama. Trash pickup is very good here, this may sound insignificant, but if you have ever lived where city infrastructure is weak, you can appreciate the little things.

The resources for healthcare is excellent. With Sturdy hospital, and the many medical professionals associated with it, we are at the top of the list in this category. Again, having lived in two other states, I can compare this and appreciate the resources Attleboro offers.

Now it has been eight years since we moved to Attleboro and I can say our feelings for the people of our church are still very strong. We stay involved as a way to give back to the church that has meant so much to us.



Photo of Bill and Mary Miller

What We Believe

We are biblically based. We interpret and deepen our knowledge of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit through scripture, experience, reason, and tradition. Our worship and Sunday School are grounded in scripture.

We **seek to balance an active Christian life** with prayer meditation and social interaction.

We are **mission minded**, expecting great things from God and attempting great things for God. We believe in the Good news of Jesus Christ. By prayers and gifts, we display our concern for our own community and for our American Baptist mission program worldwide as well as other mission programs.

We **practice believer's baptism**, emphasizing the importance of our own personal response of faith and love towards God.

We **respect our interfaith and ecumenical** colleagues. We work with other churches and faith communities throughout the Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative.

We seek to **include all persons**. Understanding that God loves diversity, we see identity and theological diversity as gifts from God. We welcome all into this church community.

We **advocate religious freedom** for all faiths in our society. Our historic Baptist claim to "soul freedom" for ourselves means that we claim for others also.

We strive to be **open-minded and willing to learn from others**. Respect for different points of view within the religious community is part of our tradition.

We invite people to a deeper **personal walk with God** and one another, as expressed in our Church Covenant.

We encourage all generations to learn and worship together. **Passing on the faith to children is central to our mission.**



Church Mission

The mission of First Baptist Church, Attleboro is to invite and include people in the reconciling and healing love of God, as shown us in Jesus Christ.

Through worship, education, fellowship and service, we follow Christ, celebrating the gift of diversity and seeking unity. We believe that the church and individual members have the freedom and responsibility to develop their own faith and practice with God's guidance through the Bible, the Holy Spirit and the American Baptist tradition."

Church Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to profess our faith in Jesus Christ and having been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now solemnly and joyfully affirm our Covenant with God and with each other.

We pledge to serve Christ in the fellowship of this congregation. We shall endeavor to love one another, to remember one another in prayer, to share in each other's joy, and to sustain each other in times of distress. We aspire to be a fellowship of the concerned, where the lost may find Jesus Christ, sinners may find pardon, seekers may find meaning for their lives, and where all who come may find welcome. We shall strive to be responsible church members through faithful attendance, study and giving.

We shall seek to be obedient to Christ in our daily living. Within our homes, in our labor, and while at leisure we shall strive for attitudes and actions which will reflect God's Spirit working through us. Believing that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, we shall endeavor to avoid experiences and habits, which defile the body and hinder our witness.

Bound together in a fellowship of faith with all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we shall pray and labor for a spirit of unity among all Christians.

Believing that our call to be a church is a call to witness in the world, we dedicate ourselves anew as servants of the Lord of all life. Whenever people are in bondage to ignorance, poverty, fear, or prejudice, we shall strive for justice, freedom, dignity, and peace. Whenever people are separated by barriers of hostility and distrust, we shall be ministers of God's reconciling love. As we pledge our support to the work of our missionaries throughout the world, we commit ourselves to the mission to which God calls us all.

Acknowledging our human frailties and ever-seeking forgiveness, we profess our need of the Holy Spirit, and commit our lives to Jesus Christ, and through him to the care, the judgment, the deliverance, and the mercy of Almighty God.

Our Church Life

Our present ministries at First Baptist Church of Attleboro consist of a variety of efforts that are near and dear to the membership of the church. Our members are committed to caring for our own. All members benefit from a strong support network. This is exhibited through visitation, coffee hour, meal preparation, sending and receiving cards and lifting each other up in prayer. We are a community that loves social interaction. In the Summer, we get together for our annual outdoor worship service at Capron Park. In the Springtime, we host a combined church yard sale and plant sale. Throughout the year we celebrate many milestones and events. Our local community also benefits from our ministry. Our church regularly hosts a weekly soup kitchen. Currently, during the Coronavirus pandemic, the church building is utilized 5 days per week to distribute to-go meals to over 100 people per day. Every month our Missions Board requests specific food items, at the end of the month these items are given to a local food pantry to be distributed to the homeless or others in need. Our Missions Board is very active and committed to promoting local mission movements and offering program support worldwide. The First Baptist Church building is also utilized for other programs. Regularly, the local AA group uses our facility weekly to hold their meetings. Until just recently, Habitat for Humanity had an office located in our church. Creativity and music are important to us; local artists perform throughout the year during our community open mic events. One of our church members is a pastor who speaks Spanish and hosts a weekly Sunday night service for the Spanish community. The Linsey Woolsey Quilt Guild is a regional quilting group that meets in our building on Saturdays and some weeknight evenings. Each year, we celebrate Christmas with an annual Christmas concert that is widely attended by our local community and other churches in the area. This event is usually standing room only and is a testament to our music committee who signs and hosts artists from various parts of MA. We are also very proud of our hospitality committee that has been providing food, not only during our weekly coffee hour, but also supplies food and organizes catering services for funerals and special celebrations. Our men's group (Faith in Action) holds a monthly breakfast for the men of the church. The men also offer their services to church members for small house projects to help defray the costs of hiring a professional. The women's group conducts monthly and seasonal meetings with guest speakers, social gatherings, and also engages in book discussion.

Youth Sunday School –Runs from September through May @ 9:30am

La Iglesia Bautista- The Reverend Billy Ojopi is the pastor of a separate Spanish speaking worship service each Sunday from 3-6pm

Women's Fellowship meets regularly to deepen relationships

Men's Group- "Faith in Action" meets first Sundays for breakfast from September to May. In addition to fellowship, the men, voluntarily perform small home projects, at no cost, for any member of the Church

Missions Committee– Guides the church in four American Baptist offerings annually and many other charitable donations throughout the year

Small group Bible study - Usually on a specific topic for a set number of weeks. Attendance varies, but there is a core group of people who participate regularly

Alcoholics Anonymous meets Wednesdays from 7pm-9pm

Food n' Friends program- hosts a weekly hot, nutritious meal each Thursday at 4:30pm, of the Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative. All are welcome to share a meal and fellowship with others

FBC Attleboro is an **Ecumenical and Interfaith Partner** with Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative (AAIC). We join with other organizations for the annual CROP Walk for Hunger and Christmas giving tree

Linsey Woolsey Quilt Guild enjoys FBC Attleboro as their home base

Children's Express Child Care, Inc. enjoys FBC Attleboro as their home site

Our Worship Life

At FBC Attleboro, we encourage youth to explore their faith and to be an active part of the worship service. However, childcare services are made available by request during worship service. We believe children are the present and make every effort to include them in all aspects of the life of the church. Youth read scripture, play music, serve as ushers and are welcome to participate in Holy Communion. We include a children's time in worship, including contemporary songs in addition to traditional hymns. Twice per year, we are honored to be led by the youth when they are responsible for the entire worship service. Children and youth are invited to consider baptism at an age (at least 12 years old) when they understand the meaning of their decision to follow Jesus Christ.

Lay leaders participate in every service with announcements, Call to Worship and prayer requests. This includes Responsive readings and other participation in the service. The Lord's Prayer is prayed in unison every Sunday. Sometimes other prayers are read in unison as part of the service.

An abbreviated portion of our Church covenant is read in unison as part of our monthly communion service, after which attendees greet each other and exchange blessings. People greeting and welcoming each other is a regular occurrence before and after worship service each Sunday.

Our Church Choir is a small group of approximately seven people who gift us with their talents each week. In addition to traditional hymns, we utilize praise songbooks on a regular basis. We are fortunate to have an excellent organist and piano player that plays solo sometimes, as well as accompanies all singing by choir or congregation.

Each Sunday, our Pastor lifts up the prayer concerns of the people. Additionally, we have an email prayer list that is sent out weekly. We are a congregation of prayer warriors. During the pandemic, we have participated in a weekly prayer meeting via Zoom on Wednesday evenings that we hope will continue.



Photo of Dr. Pedro Reis and FBC Choir



Photo of annual outdoor worship service at Capron Park

Congregational Style Indicator



Photo of Annual Yard Sale

Our church takes direction from our pastor. 70% of our congregation is 50 or older; therefore, the pastor is relied on for leadership of the congregation.

Our church seeks to avoid conflict and confrontation. Not to say that conflict doesn't exist, but primarily our congregation comes to church to worship and enjoy fellowship. We have known people to have left the church rather than deal with a conflict. The area of conflict resolution is something we strive to improve upon.

Our church is influenced by history and tradition. Our oldest church member is 95 years old; we also have two members who joined in the 1940's. As we are preparing for our 125th anniversary celebration, we are excited to recognize that long-term membership is the norm at our church. We have a great respect for our church's history and traditions.

Our church's approach to social issues is basically educational, leaving any action to individual conscience. While the church hasn't developed a church wide program of participation, we have a large member participation in annual events such as the Crop Walk. We have welcomed awareness groups within our church who have presented social issues such as "All Hands In". Our church membership includes participation by transgender and gay people and when our Pastor offered a bible study on LGBTQ and the Bible, it was reliably attended. This Bible Study, similar to most Bible studies, evoked stimulating conversation and while not everyone agreed, it did not negatively affect relationships. Participants came away knowing each other better and loving each other for having had a frank conversation on the subject.

Our church feels ethical decisions should be based on absolute standards. We are fortunate that we have not had to face any hard ethical decisions. As a church, when we have made decisions, we have found strength and comfort in what the Bible offers for a standard of behavior.

Our church emphasizes ABC relationships locally, nationally and internationally. Our Missions Board has been successful in keeping the membership apprised of and engaged regarding the activity of our denomination. Our church has been willing to support the wider mission of the American Baptist denomination.

Our church is seldom involved in community affairs. While our church does not generally take a formal active role in ensuring that the church itself participates in community affairs, our church does encourage knowledge and information regarding community affairs and individualized participation as appropriate for each member.

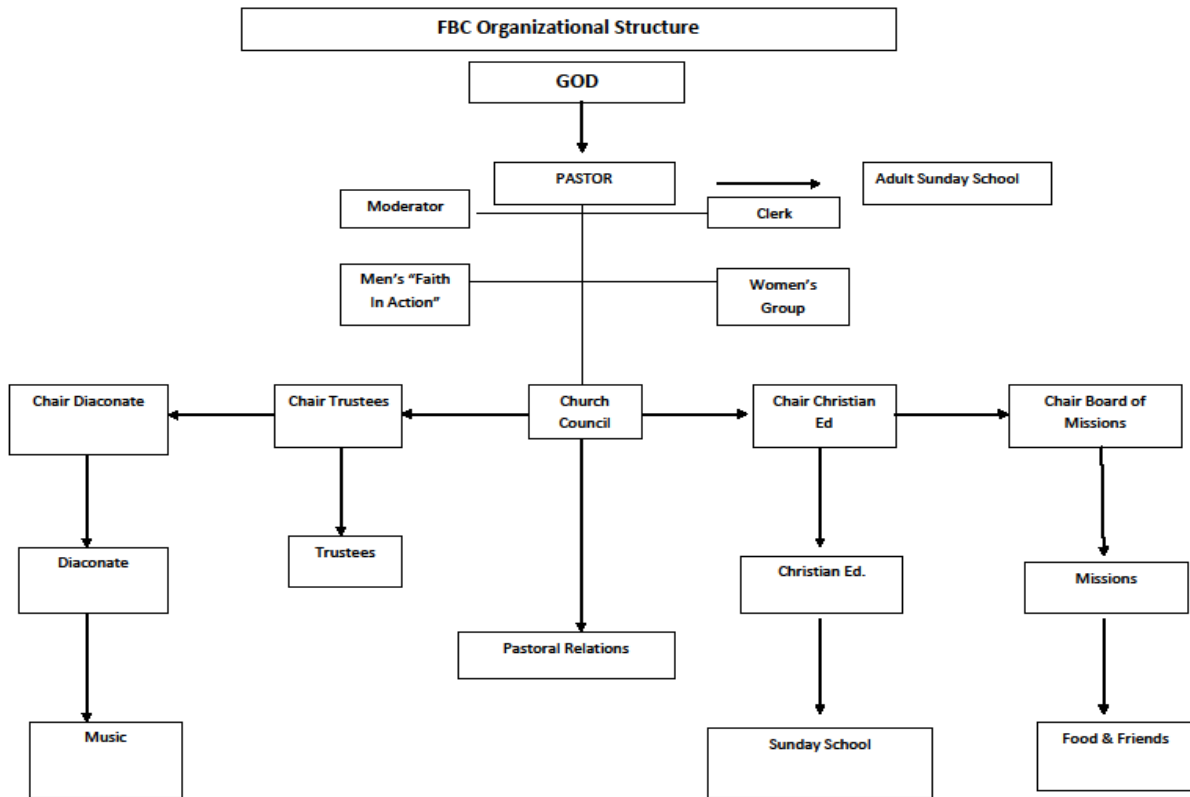
Our church ideas and plans are made by the responsible board, committee or task force. We have an excellent structure that flows from the boards, committees, and individual to the Church Council. The Council is made up of all board chairs and one person at-large. Ideas are thoroughly vetted and, if necessary, taken to the congregation for a vote.

In making decisions our church is governed by boards. All the board meetings are open to all; any church member is welcome to present ideas for projects, ideas or missions. The boards are comprised of members of the congregation.

Decisions are communicated formally through worship, bulletins and newsletters. FBC uses bulletin boards, weekly church bulletins and our bi-monthly newsletter to communicate with our membership. We also have an active Facebook community where church members communicate.

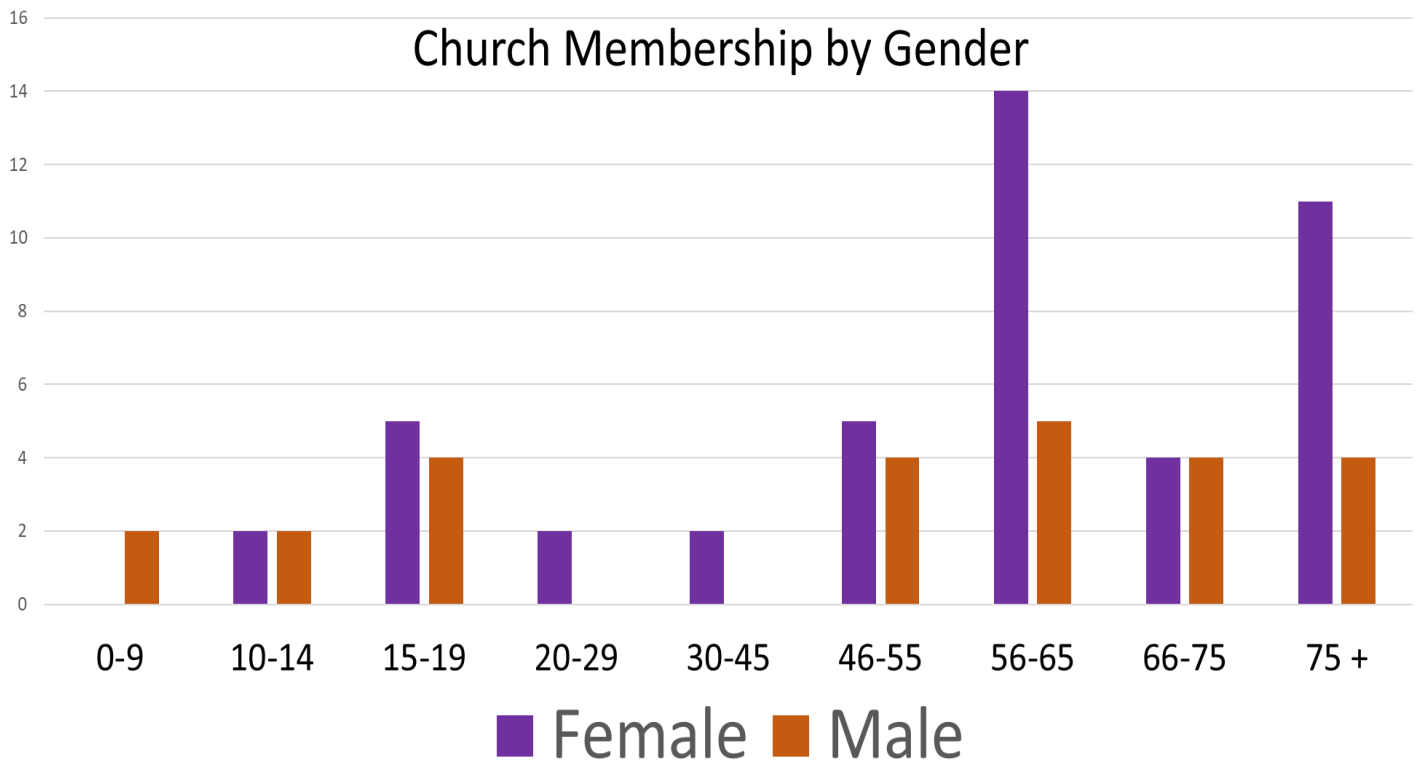
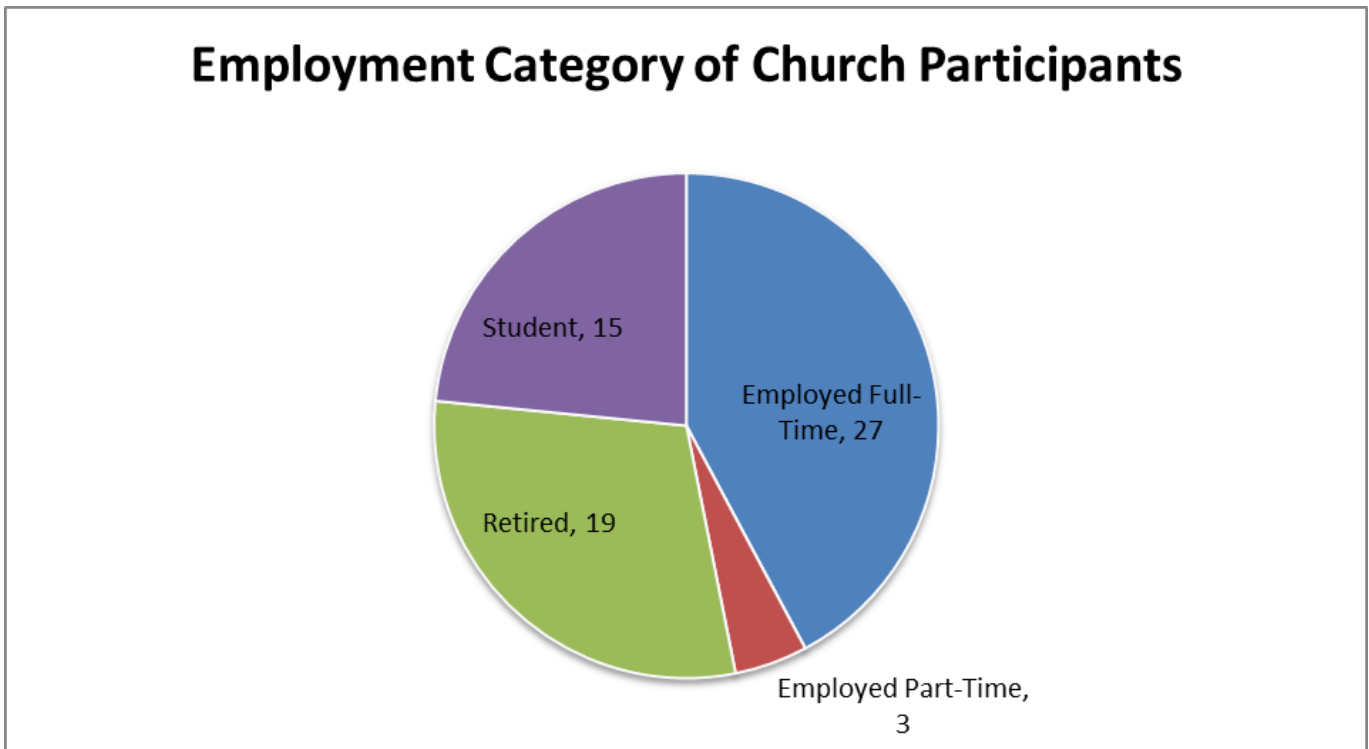
Our church places much emphasis on giving to ABC national and world missions. First Baptist Church of Attleboro has an outstanding record on giving; we are a very generous church for our size and income. This is part of our legacy.

Our Church Organization

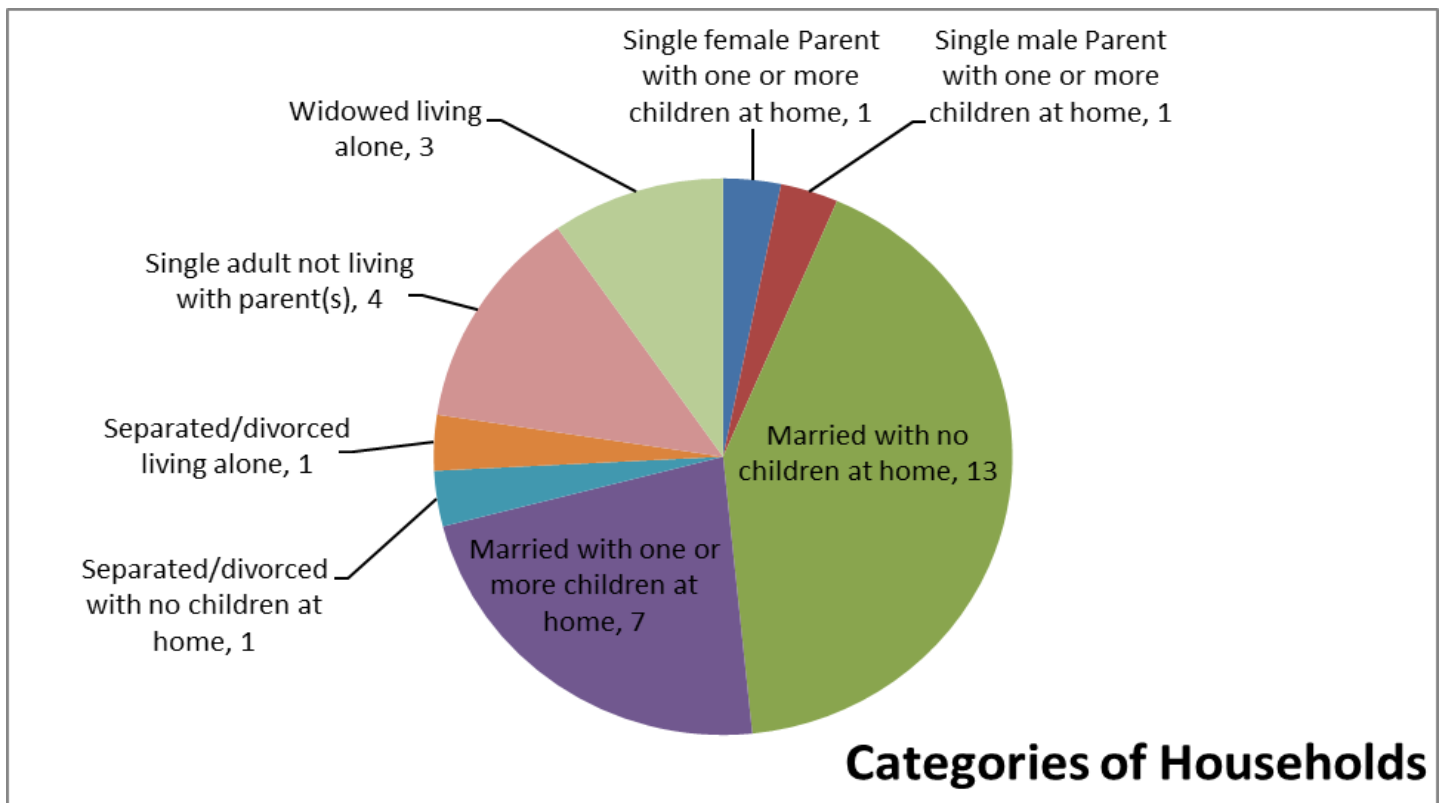
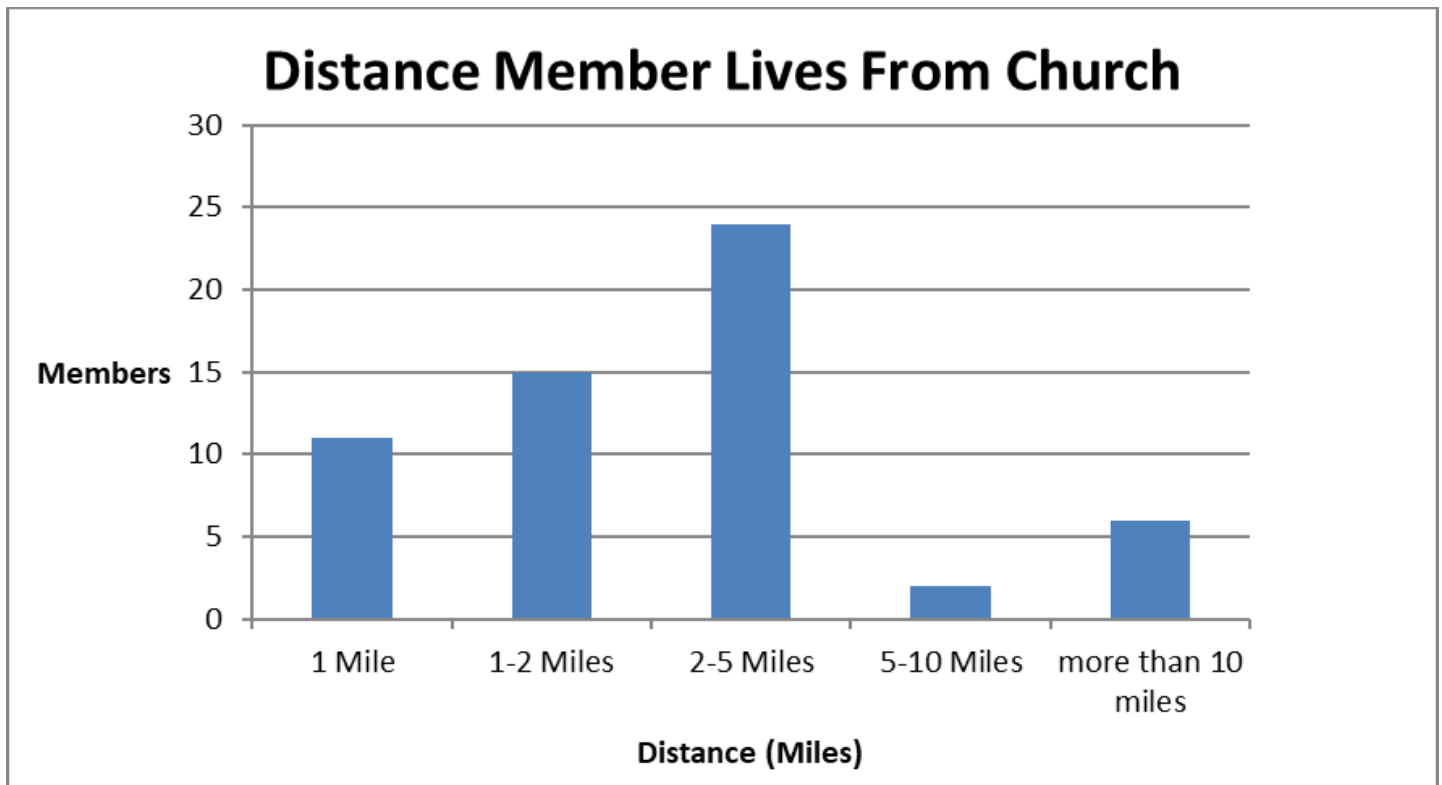


There is such a high percentage of active members at our church that it is difficult to individually recognize each person. We look forward to introducing our future pastor to all of the wonderful lay leaders in our beloved church.

Church Membership



Church Membership



Demographics and Socio-Economic Data-Attleboro, MA

Median Home Price: \$338,200 **State:** \$464,900

Population: 45,000 +

Median Household Income: \$74,225 **State:** \$77,385

Median Age: Male 35, Female 37.2

Population: Male:49% Female: 51%

***Ethnic Data:**

White 83.2%

African American 2.9%

Asian 4.6%

Hispanic 7.2%

Other 2.0%

^Education:

High School Graduate or Higher: 89.6%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 32.3%

*The ethnic classification data of Attleboro mirrors our church.

^Attleboro schools have a great reputation. Please let the Pastoral Search Committee know if you would like more information on the local school system.



Our Next Pastor

At First Baptist Church-Attleboro, we are seeking an **effective preacher**. The church is looking for a Pastor who will be able to deliver inspiring sermons. Our Pastor must possess the philosophy that ALL people are loved and accepted by God. Someone who has a **joyous personality** and is **friendly to all** who enter our church is essential. We hope our next pastor will be a **leader** that the members would feel comfortable approaching and will provide a **vision** for our church. It is imperative that the candidate be **strong** in **character** and possess a **good work ethic**.



We seek a Pastor who will listen and respect others; together we will work collaboratively to help the church grow. We believe our current congregation needs to engage more with the local Attleboro community, while connecting with potential participants to help others see how special our church community is.

New Opportunities



Our Pastoral Search Committee is offering ideas as potential opportunities for our church; however, we would be most interested in what ideas might arise under the leadership of our new pastor. We believe that our church would benefit from outreach to expand our church membership. Within the outreach, we may want to reach out to previous members who may have left due to decisions made by the church in the past. Because our church is large and contains a fully equipped kitchen, we could potentially open up our building to the greater Attleboro community. Our building could also be used as a place for public forum information. Some of our church members would like to add newer, upbeat music during our Sunday service. We see additional opportunities for church fellowship in both large and small group gatherings, such as Bible study and shared meals. Another ministry idea would be to further expand our church's advocacy for social justice issues, such as helping people who are victims of human trafficking. These are just our thoughts; however, we anticipate and hope that our new pastor will have ideas for how we can grow our ministry. Additionally, our current pastor ran a spiritual assessment not long after she

joined our church. A new pastor may want to consider leading us in this opportunity again, as it is an excellent tool for getting to know the congregation as well as an enlightening experience for the participants.

Compensation Terms

First Baptist Church Attleboro is prepared to offer a comprehensive and equitable benefits package to a pastoral candidate who meets our needs. This package is designed to be aligned with published compensation guidelines from [American Baptist Ministries](#). Total compensation package will be commensurate with years of service and prior experience.

Compensation package will include (except where noted as optional):

- Cash Salary – dependent upon years of service and prior experience
- Housing Allowance – value determined by what can be supported/documented by candidate (per IRS regulations and rules)
- MM Retirement at 16% of total cash salary and housing allowance
- A Social Security Offset is provided at 7.6%
- Books/Periodicals/Continuing Education: \$500 / year
- Conventions/Hospitality/Professional Dues/Other: \$500 /year
- Time off is included but not limited to: Continuing Education & Conventions, Vacation, Sick leave - (4) Sundays, including weekly pastoral care to be addressed with the Deacons
- Secular Holidays: office hours not required

Moving Costs:

Moving costs may be negotiated at the time of hire

