

Franklin Baptist Church

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*For more information relating to
FBC's Music Ministry Leader Search, contact:*

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For job description, please see page four (4).



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Franklin Baptist Church

Rev. Dr. Charles Qualls

**Can't Find a Church
That Feels Like Church?**

Come See in 2023!

EST
1871

watchfire

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Who Will Lead Our Music Ministry

Franklin Baptist Church is seeking to fill a staff position due to the retirement of our Minister of Music. Our focus is searching for a talented organist and choir director. We remain open to the guidance of God's Spirit in finding the right person or persons to lead our music ministry, whose skills, experience, and talents best fit our needs. We are in search of the candidates who best help us fulfill our mission, utilizing all the unique skills they offer.

Franklin Baptist Church knows who we are and what we believe. We, like similar churches across our nation, will necessarily have to change post-pandemic to continue to be a viable ministry for our members and the Franklin community. While our programs and missions may change, we do not seek changes to our traditional style of worship.

We are open to the leader(s) of our music ministry being:

- a minister of music with a seminary degree, or a musician educated or trained otherwise
- a combination choir director/organist, or a choir director and organist
- one person or two people
- a full time or part-time staff member
- male or female

We seek a high caliber musician, one who is well trained in choral music and/or organ performance. Experience with additional musical ensembles and instruments (handbells, orchestral instruments, etc.) is preferred. Our congregation places a high value on one who embodies a love for personal and corporate worship, and who inspires the same in others. We also place priority on a candidate who fits well into the overall culture of our congregation's moderate theology and values. We remain open to a variety of ways in which the talents of the individual, who feels called to be the leader of our music ministry, will help us live more fully into our commitment to traditional worship.

Our Vision Oversight Committee begins every meeting with the prayer of indifference. "Our Father, give us the faith to be indifferent to anything but Your will. Not our will, but Your will be done." We are assured of God's guidance in our search, and God's guidance for those who would consider Franklin Baptist their next church home.



Who We Are

Overview

In September of 2022, Steve Gibson, the Associate Pastor/Music of our church, Franklin Baptist, announced his retirement effective at the end of 2022. Steve faithfully served our church for more than 17 years. As a result of Steve's retirement, the church tasked its Vision Oversight Committee with the responsibility of seeking a leader for our music and worship ministry, as our church continues to emerge post pandemic. This profile has been developed to give insight into our church and community to those individuals who have an interest in leading our music and worship ministry.

Franklin Baptist Church is a fellowship of Christians who are Baptist in heritage and practice, inclusive in worship and outreach, intentional in mission, moderate in theology, and progressive in spirit. Membership is open to all Christians, regardless of denominational background. The church has been located in the heart of downtown Franklin since 1871, with the congregation coming from Franklin and the surrounding area.

The church embodies the principles of soul competency, local church autonomy, and voluntary associations. Because we believe that every individual is free and responsible for his or her relationship with God, the congregation places emphasis on lay leadership. As an autonomous church, the congregation is self-governing. We cooperate voluntarily with other churches in Franklin, Virginia and its environs, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, to fulfill our calling and accomplish God's purposes.

Our mission is to provide opportunities for quality worship experiences with the living God; to nurture believers in their walk with Christ through Christian education; to encourage participation in missions through service, giving, and prayer; to demonstrate the love of Christ in this community; and to carry out our mission in an environment of love, joy, and Christian fellowship.

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Franklin Baptist Church

Rev. Dr. Charles Qualls

Been a while?

**Come home to church.
Come home to your faith.**

withMe

Connections

Franklin Baptist Church recognizes the importance of affiliating with other like-minded communities of Christian believers in ministry and missions. Locally, our most active ministry relationships are with the other traditional, mainline Protestant congregations as well as with a handful of key historically African-American churches.

We are affiliated denominationally with:

- Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global (CBF)
- Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia (CBFV)
- Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV)

Missionally, we are perhaps more consistently active on a local basis with:

- Franklin Cooperative Ministry
- Franklin High School
- The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore
- The Village at Woods Edge retirement community

Through our financial contributions, physical ministries and mission activities, the larger picture of our affiliations includes:

- AA, NA and Al Anon all meet in our building weekly
- Grief Support Ministry
- CBF Foreign Mission Partnerships
- Community Living Nativity
- Franklin Cooperative Ministry
- Franklin Habitat for Humanity ReStore
- Franklin High School
- Franklin Social Services Angel Tree
- High Street Senior Citizens
- Home ramp building
- Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia
- Passport Kids
- Passport Youth
- Provision Asia
- Red Cross
- Various disaster relief organizations

Membership



In congregational conversations, or when describing Franklin Baptist to nonchurch members, our members will say that our church is a caring, friendly, and loving church, often describing it as family. This is evidenced by our deacon family ministry through

which the deacons assist with pastoral care, visitation, and contact with members. Most of our members are theological moderates, and we take pride in our respect of the views of others.

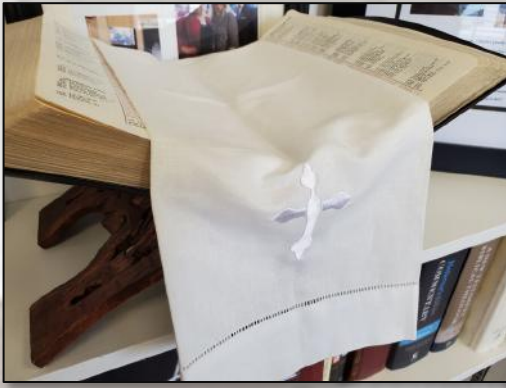
As in other churches, many of our members are above the age of 65. Also, like many churches, our membership has decreased over the last several decades. This decrease is attributable not only to the trending decline in church attendance nationwide, but is also due to the fact that Franklin's economy was drastically affected by the economic slowdown of 2008. Additionally, our local major employer, Union Camp Corporation, was merged into International Paper Company, which subsequently closed our local mill, resulting in the loss of many church families. Irrespective, our church continues to have talented and experienced members offering leadership in the various facets of church life. Currently, we have approximately 715 members with approximately 300 participating members.



What We Believe



Core Values



Our church has a history that might be best described as “historically Baptist.” That is, we honor and practice life as Christ-followers within a tradition that is appropriately autonomous. We do so with a nod toward some central freedoms that are important.

Perhaps Walter B. Shurden’s classic book, The Baptist Identity: Four Fragile Freedoms might sum up our congregation well. Those notions about the freedoms of Bible, Soul, Church, and Religion are at the center of our practice, even if we do not talk about them often.

We respect and encourage the individual rights of practice, especially concerning citizenship and priesthood before God. Yet once gathered here as a congregation, our unity is found in being able to accept differing viewpoints. We believe that God is revealed perhaps most centrally in the sacred scriptures. This is our holy written document, although we prefer to take it seriously more so than literally. We also understand that God reveals in other ways, such as the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Sacred music is another vital avenue toward presence with the Almighty.

Franklin Baptist Church demonstrated some of these commitments more than two decades ago when the church voted to leave the Southern Baptist Convention. We find our closest Baptist home on the denominational level now to be the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Not surprisingly, our closest fellowship with other congregations from our area runs not in Baptist circles. Rather, as a mainline protestant congregation, we relate more often to the Methodists, Congregational Christian, Episcopal or Catholic neighbors.

Franklin Baptist Church at its core is a moderate, socially progressive congregation. In our pews intersect diverse political, cultural, and social viewpoints. But when the time comes to minister, serve, fellowship, and accept, our people practice a warm openness.



Vision and Mission

Our Vision:

Every Member a Minister

- Christ-like to one another
- Christ-like in the community
- Christ-like to the world

Our Mission:

Franklin Baptist Church is to:

- Provide opportunities for quality worship experiences.
- Nurture believers in their walk with Christ through Christian education.
- Encourage participation in missions.
- Demonstrate Christ's love in our community.
- Live our mission in an environment of love, joy, and Christian fellowship.

Central Practices

For any church to carry out its mission and remain a viable body to share the gospel with others, there must be core values engrained in the fiber of the church body. We feel the following core values embody our beliefs and propel us toward our vision and mission for Christ:

Worship – Traditional Sunday morning services are very important to our members who worship in person or join us by live-stream or radio. The Sunday services and special services throughout the year are our most opportune times for visitors to worship with us – they are the main door to our church.

Spiritual Growth and Maturity – We value our time together and our ability to learn and share Christian experiences with one another. We grow together in Christ.

Prayer – Prayer undergirds our church. We pray together while in church and as individuals. We understand the power of prayer and cherish our ability to pray freely to our God and for the benefit of others.

Christian Education – Sunday school is a very important part of our church life, the anchor for our Christian education. We also use Bible study and discussion groups, leadership training, and in-depth sessions dealing with various topics to improve our understanding of the Bible and our faith journey.

Missions – The church helps support numerous missions throughout the world and close to home through the sending of resources or personal involvement. We have been very supportive of our members who are called to engage in mission programs, whether they are local, state, or worldwide.

Music – We have been blessed over the years to have a wonderful music program that is an important part of our worship services and ministry to others. Our chancel choir, handbell choir, and special concerts are valuable assets to the church.

Stewardship – Giving of our resources, time, and abilities is encouraged in our church.

Fellowship – We are a family that cares for one another in times of joy and sorrow. The support we receive from one another, the affirming of one another, and the relationships we develop are all parts of our church life.

Church in the Community – We are an integral part of Franklin and the surrounding community. Our doors are open to many organizations and individuals. We are a beacon to others and a light that continues to shine.

What We Do



Worship



Historically, Franklin Baptist Church has had a traditional worship service at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings with music led by the Chancel Choir, a service which continues to be the figurative front-door of the church.

The architecture of our sanctuary speaks vividly to the tradition and identity of Franklin Baptist with its divided or split chancel. Lay-readers open our services, leading the congregation in liturgy and then we share in hymns, prayers, choir anthems, and other worshipful movements. With occasional features on our grand piano, the pipe organ is our primary instrument in worship.

Offering an unashamed traditional and liturgical style of worship service now distinguishes us from the majority of churches in the area. While perhaps limiting our appeal to a broader audience, it does help us to remain true to who we are at our core. Several years ago, the church offered a contemporary service, which was ultimately discontinued due to lack of participation.

On the first Sunday of each month, Communion is served. We follow the liturgical calendar including the season of Lent, during which we celebrate a Seder Meal and a Tenebrae Service at Holy Week. In the Advent season, we conclude with a Christmas Eve candlelight service.

Ministers do not robe year-around at Franklin Baptist, but do use robes to highlight certain meaningful moments in the liturgical calendar. Lent and Advent are the primary examples, but robes are also worn for dates such as All Saints Sunday and Pentecost.



Music

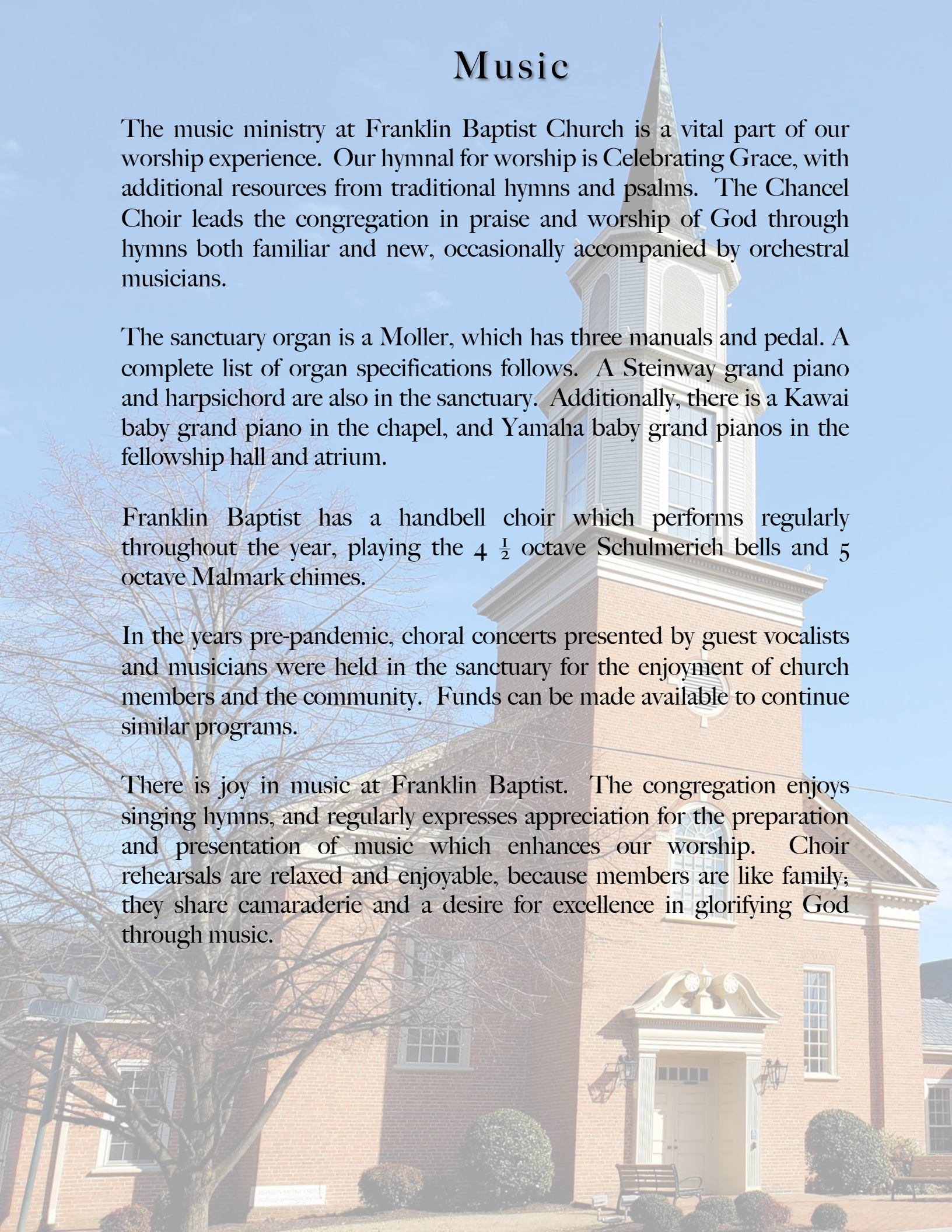
The music ministry at Franklin Baptist Church is a vital part of our worship experience. Our hymnal for worship is Celebrating Grace, with additional resources from traditional hymns and psalms. The Chancel Choir leads the congregation in praise and worship of God through hymns both familiar and new, occasionally accompanied by orchestral musicians.

The sanctuary organ is a Moller, which has three manuals and pedal. A complete list of organ specifications follows. A Steinway grand piano and harpsichord are also in the sanctuary. Additionally, there is a Kawai baby grand piano in the chapel, and Yamaha baby grand pianos in the fellowship hall and atrium.

Franklin Baptist has a handbell choir which performs regularly throughout the year, playing the 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ octave Schulmerich bells and 5 octave Malmark chimes.

In the years pre-pandemic, choral concerts presented by guest vocalists and musicians were held in the sanctuary for the enjoyment of church members and the community. Funds can be made available to continue similar programs.

There is joy in music at Franklin Baptist. The congregation enjoys singing hymns, and regularly expresses appreciation for the preparation and presentation of music which enhances our worship. Choir rehearsals are relaxed and enjoyable, because members are like family; they share camaraderie and a desire for excellence in glorifying God through music.



Organ Specifications

Manual I Positiv

8' Holtz Gedeckt
 4' Principal
 4' Koppel Flute
 2' Octave
 1 1/3 Larigot
 III Scharf
 8' Krumhorn
 8' Fagato
 Tremulant
 Positiv 4'

Manual II Great

16' Quintation
 8' Principal
 8' Spitzeflote
 4' Octave
 2' Super Octave
 IV Mixture
 8' Trumpet
 Great 4'

Manual III Swell

8' Viola Celeste
 8' Rhohrflote
 8' Viola
 4' Walden Flote
 4' Principal
 2' Blokeflote
 III Mixture
 II Sequialtera
 16' Fagotto
 8' Trompette
 4' Hautbois
 Swell 4'

Pedal

32' Untersatz
 16' Subbass
 16' Principal
 16' Quintaton (Gt)
 8' Pommer
 8' Octave
 4' Choral Bass
 III Mixture
 32' Coronet
 16' Bombarde
 8' Trompette
 4' Fagot (SW)

Couplers

GT/PD
 SW/PD
 SW/PD 4'
 POS/PD
 POS/PD 4'

4 memory levels
 5 generals
 5 pistons

SW/GT 16'8'4'
 POS/GT 16'8'4'
 SW/POS 16'8'4'



Missions

It is an understatement to say that FBC is mission oriented. The Mission Team, which has more volunteers than any other church team, does not have to seek help from its team members, but instead must work hard to keep up with their requests, questioning "What **more** can we as a church do to support missions locally, nationally and globally?" Whether it is a financial need or volunteer need, there is never a shortage of help when such need arises.

Locally, some of the efforts involve partnering with Cooperative Ministries, Food Bank of Southeast Virginia, Relay for Life, and other churches. Annually, the church provides new coats for middle and high school students, teacher supplies, Santa shopping for seniors, suitcases of supplies for foster children, wheelchair ramps for homes, chemo kits for patients, and the list goes on. Efforts are not limited to church members, as anyone in the community may be a recipient.

Nationally, whenever a disaster strikes, FBC partners with the Baptist General Association of Virginia and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship to provide supplies, donations, and on-site assistance. Members have led feeding kitchens for thousands of disaster victims, and have purchased, packed, and shipped over 3,000 personal hygiene kits to disaster areas.

Globally, FBC has sponsored mission trips to Slovakia and Costa Rica. Plans are currently underway to enter into an "Encourager Church Covenant" to directly support field personnel with prayer, administrative, and financial help. CBF is seeking to promote this partnership as a model among other CBF churches and organizations.

Instead of proclaiming its commitment to missions, FBC lives its commitment to missions daily.



A photograph of a brick church tower with a steeple, set against a clear blue sky. The tower is made of red brick and features a white steeple with a pointed top. The text "Where We Are Going" is overlaid on the image in a black, serif font with a drop shadow.

Where We
Are
Going



As we look to the future of Franklin Baptist Church, we have given thoughtful consideration to the strengths of our church, as well as opportunities for growth. Our impressions reflect not only the opinions of the Vision Oversight Committee, but suggestions gathered from the congregation. While this list is by no means inclusive of all thoughts shared with us, it reveals the prevalent opinions of many of our members.


Strengths

- A rich history upon which we can continue to build
- A clear sense of who we are
- A warm, welcoming, and friendly church family
- Lay leadership that is strong, and functions well through the work of deacons, administrative council and church committees
- A healthy, trusting system of governance
- An excellent staff
- Members who are generous with their time and talents
- Strong financial resources
- Excellent facilities

Opportunities

- Continue to implement the vision plan adopted by the church in 2018.
- Address changes in our post-pandemic congregation.
- Continue to improve communication with our members and prospective members.
- Continue to be good stewards of our finances.
- Address issues of our aging congregation.
- Continue to expand our various mission programs, with emphasis on local missions.
- Nurture efforts which best relate to and serve our community.





What
Our
Ministers
Say

In Memory of our M

Reflections of Senior Pastor, Dr. Charles L. Qualls



Music touches parts of our souls that spoken words and other forms of expression simply cannot. Music is one significant avenue through which we may be led into God's presence. Great church music survives the test of time and is waiting for us as moments of our deepest need may arrive.

One glance at our sanctuary tells so much about our collective story and our identity. Worship "styles" have been the subject of much conversation in decades past. However, our architecture and traditional form of worship is rooted in far more than mere style. Our room, for instance, features a divided or "split" chancel. That is fairly unique for Baptist churches in the South. The room was configured with a lectern and separate pulpit because for generations we have employed liturgy in our worship.

One will also notice in the room our commitment of space to a robust pipe organ. Ranks of pipes flank the choir loft up above our sanctuary platform. The organ console itself is also a visual clue as to the primacy of music in our worship. This significant instrument has historically been predominant in leading our worship, along with a grand piano down on the floor.

These visual traits introduce one to a moderate, mainline protestant congregation. They are consistent with who we are at our core. There is room for innovation and updating, to be sure. The musician we seek will be called to join with the senior pastor in leading our congregation through worship and in other ways, all of which fit within who we are as a people. I welcome a new colleague with whom to partner as we embark on a new chapter of life with Franklin Baptist Church.



Reflections of Rev. Steve Gibson

The following remarks are adapted from Steve Gibson's "Reflections on My Ministry," which he shared with the congregation during the worship hour on December 18, 2022, his last Sunday of service to Franklin Baptist Church:

It was May 2005, when Jane and I moved to Franklin. We were both nervous and excited. Joining the ministerial staff of a church is akin to getting married – you do not know exactly who or what you have until you actually join the church and the staff. At Franklin Baptist, I found a church with a kindred spirit, a spirit that focused on worship, witness and ministry. The members of Franklin Baptist do all of the aforementioned and much, much more. I quickly learned that Franklin Baptist loves its members unconditionally. I also found a church that loves its community in the same manner!

The church has an extremely generous heart for missions and strives to meet the needs of our church family, the Franklin community and beyond. I discovered a streamlined process which functions well to support ministry, without being burdensome. Unlike most churches, the policies and procedures aid and strengthen its ministries. I found this to be a rare occurrence, in that Franklin Baptist is the only church I have served which practiced what it preached. Rejoice in your heritage.

I was acquainted with Franklin Baptist. One might say that it was the musical tradition of the church that attracted me, and that would be correct; however, I experienced so much more than a quality musical tradition. I had the privilege of knowing and working with the members of Franklin Baptist.

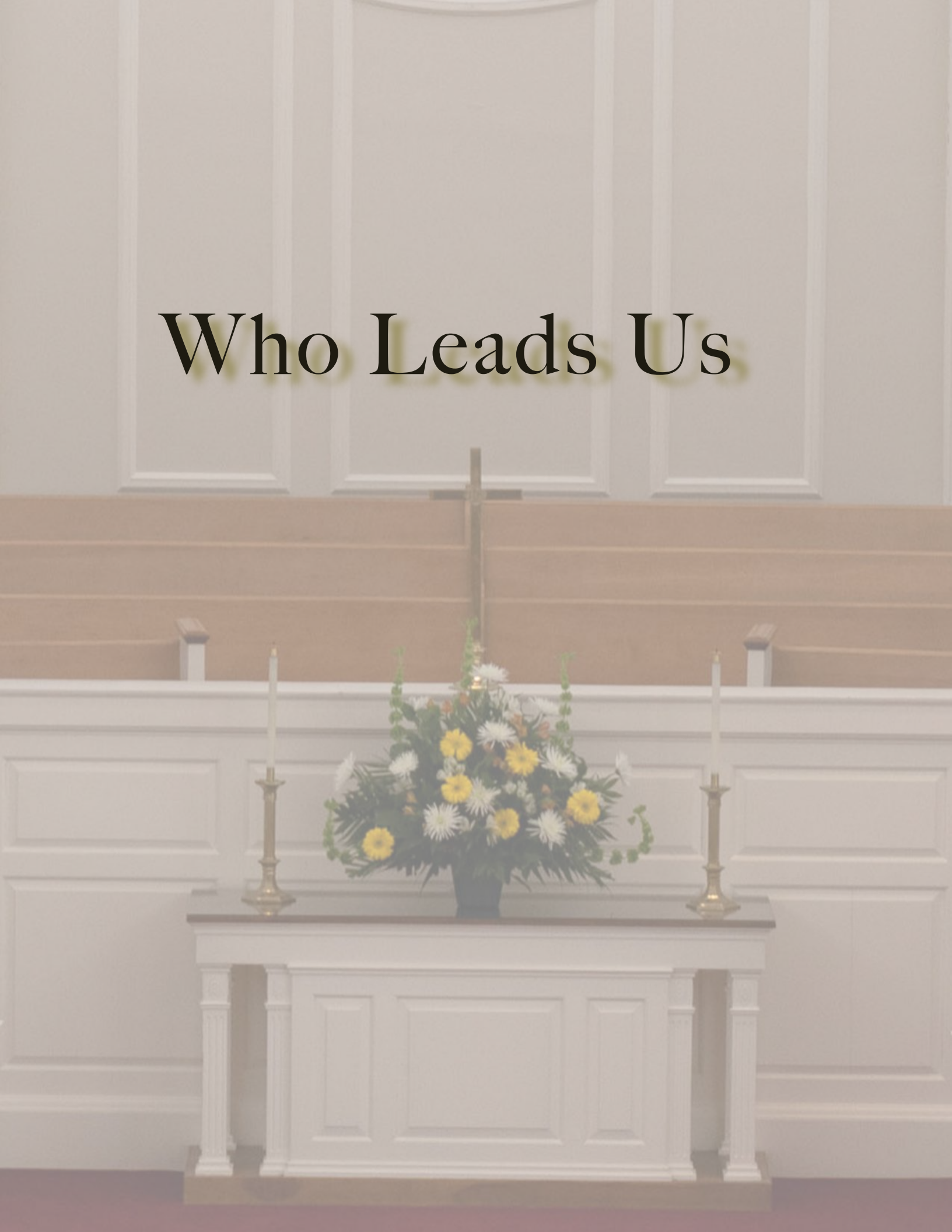
As I conclude my ministry with Franklin Baptist, I would like to share some of the distinctions about our church.

- Franklin Baptist is a healthy church. Finding this is difficult in today's church climate and is considered a rarity. While we may not agree on every item of theology or doctrine, we allow for differences of opinion.
- Franklin Baptist has the resources to expand its ministry. We are always ready and willing to assist ministries, both in our community and beyond. We have a compassionate and willing spirit.
- We have a deeply committed leadership team and they align themselves with competent consultants. The Center for Healthy Churches has proven themselves to be a tremendous asset. They assisted in our pastoral search, and now are assisting with the search for my replacement.

I encourage you to continue to pray for our church and its leaders.

I rejoice in the love that God has for each of us and the love that we have for each other. Remember, the same God who called me to join your pastoral staff is preparing you for the next person's arrival.

Who Leads Us



Church Staff

Franklin Baptist is staffed by a blend of full and part-time employees. The Senior Pastor is Dr. Charles Qualls. A native of the Atlanta area, he was raised in the small rural town of Roswell. There were about 2,400 residents when he was born. Today, there are about 100,000. It was on this rare seam, where country meets burgeoning city, that he formed his views on life, Church and Spirit. His undergraduate degree in sociology and management came from the University of West Georgia. Along with an MDiv, he holds an earned doctorate from Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology.

He loves to say that he is married to the world's least likely librarian, Elizabeth. Among his hobbies are travel, culinary adventuring, baseball history and trolling thrift stores for quality clothing. He reads for curiosity and information more than for enjoyment.

He has had the honor of taking about 200 couples through five weeks of private marital enrichment and has guided over 50 groups of divorcees through 8-16 weeks of divorce recovery. He is the author or co-author of nine books, all published through Smyth and Helwys.

Senior Pastor

Secretary

Secretary

Maintenance Supervisor

Custodian

Child Care Provider

Sound/Livestream/I.T.

Sound Livestream

Dr. Charles Qualls

Josephine Rabito

Patricia Howell

Joe Benn

Harrison Drumheller

Trina Stout

Scott Culpepper

Miller Zurfluh

Administrative Council

The idea for the creation of an Administrative Council was born during visioning in the late nineteen nineties, subsequent to the church's \$2,000,000 renovation of its facilities in the early nineties. Forward thinking church members realized that a committee, or other organized group, needed to have oversight of our newly renovated facilities so that they could be maintained and updated as needed. It was also felt that it would be beneficial to have more oversight of church finances than could be given by the deacons who were becoming more focused on family ministry. Thus, the Administrative Council was conceived, and looking back, it could not have come at a more opportune time.

Franklin Baptist voted to create the Administrative Council at its fall business meeting in 1999, which was held at the Franklin Presbyterian Church due to the fact that our facilities were extensively damaged, and unoccupiable for several months, as a result of flooding created by Hurricane Floyd which devastated downtown Franklin. The first meeting of the newly created council was held in January 2000, and its first order of business was to oversee the restoration of our buildings.

The Administrative Council consists of seven at large members elected by the church, together with the chair of the deacons and the chair of the finance subcommittee. The staff liaison is the senior minister. It has general oversight of the financial operations and property of the church. Effectively, it operates as an executive committee between church business meetings. Its duties consist of:

- Coordinating the monetary recommendations and requests from membership, staff, committees, councils, and boards of the church to facilitate the appropriation of necessary funds to further the ministry and mission of the church.
- Approving for presentation to the church at its fall business meeting a comprehensive budget proposal, prepared by the Finance Committee, of the financial requirements of the church for the following church year. The council shall coordinate the activities of all church committees needed to devise the ways and means of securing the necessary income to meet the budgetary requirements of the Church.
- Managing all church property and the use of church facilities.
- Overseeing the purchase or sale of stocks, bonds, or other securities of the Church, and investing the assets of the church not under the auspices of the Endowment Committee.
- Managing church personnel in coordination with the Senior Pastor in the employment of support staff and the establishment of policies, job descriptions, and compensation relating to support staff and ministerial staff.
- Acting in the stead of church membership to conduct all church business between its two annual business meetings or called business meetings.

It is our understanding that conducting church business through an Administrative Council in the manner described herein is unique in Baptist circles; we have found it to be a most efficient style of business management.

Deacon Ministry

With the creation of the Administrative Council in January 2000, the Deacon Ministry responsibilities became more focused on family ministry. The deacons are responsible for the spiritual growth and welfare of our church. Our church's deacon ministry is comprised of fifteen church members who are called to assist in pastoral care, visitation, and contact of church members. Deacon meetings are held the first Monday of each month.

Through family ministry, each deacon supports a portion of the membership, ensuring that every member of Franklin Baptist Church has a direct point of contact for any needs or communications.

Each deacon also serves on one of the following committees:

- Caregivers' Support
- Church Activities
- Worship

The Caregivers' Support Committee continues its mission to help meet the needs of church members who are caregivers for loved ones. The committee organizes a rotation for various needs of the congregation including, but not limited to, transportation to scheduled medical appointments both locally and out of town, running errands for those who need small things done around town and are unable to do this for themselves, and the procurement of medical equipment as needed by members of the congregation.

The Church Activities Committee plays a varying role of planning, assisting, or supporting the various church activities throughout the year; for example, Shrove Tuesday and the annual church picnic.

The Worship Committee supports the church staff by scheduling members to lead the congregation in the responsive reading and the Lord's Prayer during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

The deacons of Franklin Baptist are a committed, enthusiastic group who are dedicated to serving our membership with gladness. Each has accepted the call to serve, and truly embodies the belief that Every Member is a Minister at Franklin Baptist Church.

Vision Oversight Committee

Lighting God's Path

Lighting God's Path was the spiritual guidance theme developed in 2018 for creating a vision for Franklin Baptist Church. The plan spanned the years from 2018 to 2023.

At the beginning of the process, the Vision Committee worked diligently to understand current trends in the City of Franklin and surrounding counties during this time period. They wanted to gather as much information as possible about the community that we serve in order to assist them in the vision. Interviews were done with community leaders in the areas of business, government, schools, and emergency response.

As a result of the visioning process, three teams were formed with specific goals and activities for each. A Vision Oversight Committee was also created to assist the teams in reaching their goals. Members of this committee are the Senior Pastor, Administrative Council Chair, Deacon Ministry Chair, Endowment Committee Chair, and three church members. A Lighting God's Path fair was held to introduce the vision to the congregation and to give church members opportunities to join teams that best fit their interests and talents. Prior to Covid in 2020, the teams were very active and were making significant progress in reaching the goals set forth in the plan. Listed below are some of the accomplishments.

Missions Team

- Partner with Cooperative Ministries to provide food and clothing
- Foreign mission trip to Slovakia
- Partner with Food Bank of Southside VA to pack lunches
- Partner with Franklin City schools to assist with clothing for students
- Provide chemo kits to cancer patients
- Provide disaster relief hygiene kits
- Build ramps for disabled church members
- Provide meals to sick church members via Meal Train
- Monetary support for Angel Tree donations to the Salvation Army

Worship Team

- Initiated Live Stream availability on Facebook
- Created a Living Nativity community drive-through depicting the Christmas story
- Adopted an Associate Member policy to join Franklin Baptist Church
- Partnered with The Village at Woods Edge to provide Wednesday morning Bible study
- Assisted in the purchase and creation of the new church sign

Discipleship Team

- Assisted the Senior Pastor with the creation of Faith on Draft outreach ministry
- Visitation to shut-ins and nursing home residents
- Hosted the Sunday School Teacher Appreciation luncheons

Vision Oversight Committee

Lighting God's Path

continued

The pandemic shuttered our church for significant periods in 2020 and altered our program offerings in 2021. The Administrative Council and staff took a cautious and responsible approach to the pandemic and utilized our Live Stream capabilities to offer worship services remotely instead of in our beloved sanctuary and church campus. During these two years, we gained 13 new members but also lost 36 due to deaths, some of which were Covid related.

As the church began to reopen post-Covid, the Vision Oversight Committee met to revitalize our visioning plan, and through much discussion, realized that the post-Covid church was very different from the pre-Covid church, which established the vision. Before we could make any decisions regarding revitalizing our vision, we felt the need to understand the post-Covid church locally and nationally. We contracted with Center for Christian Education to gain perspective from Dr. Bo Prosser, who met with us on two different occasions to discuss the challenges that we are facing at Franklin Baptist Church as well as churches across the country. These challenges stem from a variety of reasons; some are Covid related, and others deal with the demographics of our community, and how they relate to who we are as a church.

There are no easy answers to solve the challenges that we are facing; however, Dr. Prosser left us two very important things to consider. First, pray intentionally for God's guidance and listen for His leadership. Second, we must examine who we are within the context in which we find ourselves. Our priorities should be internal growth, and how best to accomplish this, as well as to continue our external ministries and missions in our community. Being the best of who we are as a church and keeping our focus on God's will for us are key to a successful vision plan.

We have just completed the 150th celebration of Franklin Baptist Church and the legacy that is ours to continue. Now we need to look forward and claim a new vision than embraces tradition with one hand and reaches for innovation with the other.

An aerial photograph of a church building with a prominent steeple, surrounded by other houses and a street. The church has a brick facade and a white steeple. The surrounding area includes a sidewalk, a lawn, and a street with a few cars. The text "Where We Live" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Where We Live

Community Characteristics

Nestled in the Coastal Plains of southeastern Virginia, at the head of the navigable portion of the Blackwater River, the City of Franklin offers the charm and hospitality of small-town life at its best, but with facilities generally not found in a community its size. Our city has a modern hospital, state of the art YMCA, a public/private country club with an 18 hole golf course, and a preeminent retirement community available to its residents. City amenities are but a few minutes away.

Approximately 50 miles to the east are Norfolk and Virginia Beach with their beaches, water sports, historical attractions, world-class museums, excellent restaurants and unique shops. Within an hour's drive northwest are the historical attraction of Richmond and Petersburg. Two hours to the south are the fishing and swimming resort areas on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. To the north is the famous restored Colonial Williamsburg. But while these areas are wonderful to visit, the residents of Franklin cherish returning to their small town with its attractive business district, low cost of living, tree lined streets, affordable housing, and relatively slow-paced lifestyle.

First incorporated as a town in March of 1876, the first official census of 1880 indicated a population of 447 inhabitants. The population today is approximately 8,200 people. Franklin's climate is mild with an average annual precipitation of 47 to 48 inches and a temperature average of about 40 degrees in January and 77 degrees in July.

Franklin is a great place to visit, but an even greater place to live.

Demographics

Information concerning community demographics can be found at the following sites:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/franklincityvirginia>

<https://viriniaworks.com/docs/Local-Area-Profiles/5104000620.pdf>



Community Challenges

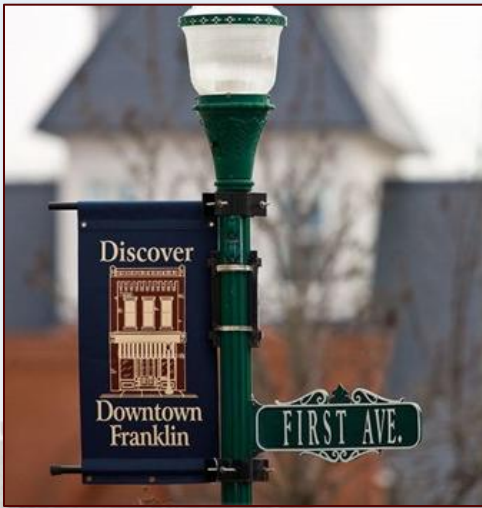
Franklin is a great place to live, but it is not without challenges. In May of 1999, Union Camp Corporation, a local lumber and paper company founded in 1887 by the Camp family, which had grown into a Fortune 500 company, was merged into the conglomerate International Paper Company. Virtually all the executives were transferred. Gone were many community leaders who were volunteers in community, civic and church activities. Hundreds of students were pulled from our award-winning schools, leaving our school system populated with a high percentage of students from low-income families.

The full impact of the loss of Union Camp had not been fully realized when the community was hit with another disaster. In September of 1999, Hurricane Floyd's torrential rains drove the Blackwater River out of its banks flooding the downtown business district. There were 182 businesses inundated with flood waters as high as 16 feet. Many of these businesses did not return.

Yet another community tragedy occurred in 2010 when International Paper Company shuttered the mill at a cost of in excess of 1,500 jobs, causing another exodus of local families. The company repurposed the mill in 2011, and to date, approximately 520 jobs have been regained through International Paper, Franklin Lumber, and S T Tissue.

As a result of these unfortunate economic and natural disasters, Franklin has changed significantly in the last two decades. These events created many challenges for our community; however, challenges create unique opportunities for success. Community leaders feel confident that the city is moving in a positive direction.

Community Growth



Franklin is rebounding from the setbacks experienced in the first decade of this century. Its future is bright and filled with a myriad of opportunities. Investments in parks and recreation are being made by the city, including the development of Riverwalk Park, a recreational trail along the Blackwater River; Blackwater Park, a 300-acre parcel that allows one to explore the Blackwater Swamp along a raised 300-foot boardwalk; and the replacement of the armory with a new state of the art recreational facility.

Downtown is thriving again, with distinctive shops and restaurants occupying in excess of 90% of the storefronts - a remarkable statistic for a small rural community. Our business development center, a 40,000 square foot mixed-use business incubator, a unique entity in and of itself, is 100% occupied, nurturing small business entrepreneurs.

D. R. Horton, America's largest homebuilder, seeing Franklin's growth potential, has begun building new homes, honoring its commitment to build a minimum of 300 homes within the next few years. An international company, Global Concentrate, recently purchased 170 acres in our industrial park, on which it will build its largest processing operation in the United States, an investment in excess of 120 million dollars.

Franklin has proven itself to be resilient. Its future is bright. Opportunities abound.



On Another Note

Crisp, with energy

The first system of music is written for piano in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a non-legato articulation. The lower staff features a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes. The system concludes with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking.

The second system of music continues the piece, starting at measure 5. It features a more active melodic line in the upper staff with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the lower staff provides a steady accompaniment of quarter notes. The system ends with a whole note chord in the upper staff.

The third system of music begins at measure 9. The upper staff has a melodic line with eighth notes, and the lower staff continues with quarter notes. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is placed above the upper staff in the fourth measure of this system.

The fourth system of music starts at measure 14. The upper staff features a melodic line with eighth notes, and the lower staff has a simple accompaniment of quarter notes. A mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking is placed above the upper staff in the second measure of this system.

Organization and Governance

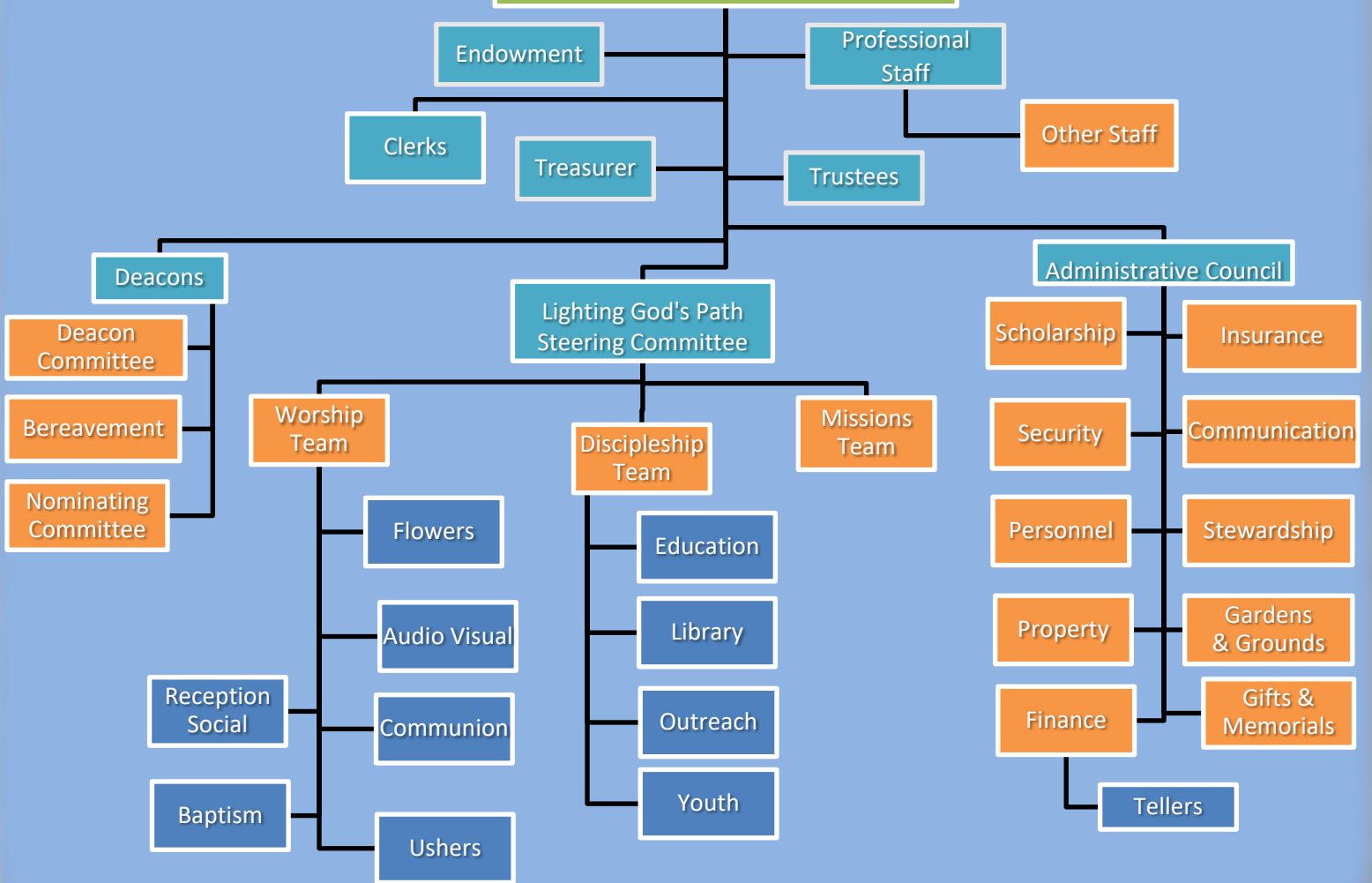
Franklin Baptist is governed by “congregational polity.” All major decisions are made by the church in regular or called business meetings. Historically, the church membership has been a harmonious group, which tradition continues today. This is best evidenced by the fact that the church has only two congregational business meetings a year in February and November, with called business meetings as needed from time to time.

Because of the consistently harmonious relationship of its members, the church has elected to operate without the constraints of a Constitution and By-Laws. The church relies upon professional staff and office staff to run the day-to-day administration and operations of the church, with input as needed from lay leaders. Church administration is led by the senior minister overseeing, either directly or indirectly, other professional staff members and office staff.

Church finances are overseen by the Administrative Council, as are the church facilities. The Administrative Council meets once a month, with the chair interacting with staff in the interim as needed. The Deacon Ministry, comprised of fifteen ordained church members, is responsible for the spiritual growth and welfare of the church and its members. As does the Administrative Council, the deacons meet once a month, with the deacon chair interacting with staff in the interim as needed.

Members of the Administrative Council and Deacons Ministry are elected by the church membership, as are members of the various committees that oversee specific aspects of church missions and ministries. Also elected by the church are Endowment Committee members; however, the endowment fund is operated independently of church finances. An organizational chart of the church follows.

Franklin Baptist Church



Financial Status

Franklin Baptist Church has a tradition of faithful and generous stewardship. Thanks to the generosity of our current members, and those who have come before us, our church is blessed with resources which allow us to continue the ministries and missions that have historically been associated with our church, as well as new ministries and missions. While we have not had a formal stewardship campaign in the last few years, our members, and friends of the church, have been most generous with their resources. Our annual projected budget in recent years averages approximately \$500,000, and we have special funds approaching \$200,000 designated for specific purposes such as missions, music ministry and staff continuing education. Our average annual receipts allow us to meet our budgetary expectations, while contributing approximately 10% of our receipts to various local, state, and international mission programs.

The generosity of our members, supported by our endowment, allows us to accomplish our ministries and missions without the burden of debt. Our endowment fund, begun in 1969, assists the church in maintaining its facilities as well as supporting the ministries and missions of the church. Thus, our church has needed to resort to capital campaigns in recent history only in times of major renovations (the building of the atrium and the renovation of our entire plant in 1992), natural disasters (the flood of 1999), and the need for extraordinary repairs, updates, and improvements from time to time. Our endowment is currently valued in excess of \$5,500,000, which includes a scholarship fund of approximately \$500,000.

History and Heritage

The history of Franklin Baptist Church dates from 1871 when the Methodist and Baptist, who had jointly established a Union Sunday school shortly after the Civil War, elected to separate due to contrary issues which developed over the ordinance of Baptism. A council of the Portsmouth Baptist Association was convened to organize Franklin Baptist Church. Charter members were 16 in number, including seven men and nine women. The new congregation began meeting in the Masonic Hall located on South Main Street. The first church building was erected on the corner of Fourth Avenue and Main Street in 1872. As Franklin grew from a crossroads community on the Blackwater River into a thriving town, so did Franklin Baptist Church.

The membership of the church increased to approximately 250 members by the turn of the century. To accommodate the increase in membership, the church erected a new church building on the corner of Second Avenue and High Street in 1903. In 1916, a Sunday school addition was constructed to house Sunday school attendance approaching 500, and church membership in excess of 550. During the 1940s, the church added another Sunday school building and a fellowship hall along Second Avenue. In the 1950s and 60s, the church continued to grow with membership increasing to more than 1,000 members. A new sanctuary was constructed and dedicated in 1962. The old sanctuary was remodeled and became the chapel. With the exception of the 1948 Sunday school building being replaced in 1991 by the building that is now known as the atrium, this complex of buildings continues to serve as the physical plant for Franklin Baptist.

Franklin Baptist Church, however, is more than just buildings. From its inception, the church has been mission oriented, contributing generously monetarily, as well as participating in mission projects in the local community, state, and globally. In our history, there have been direct mission ministries including local partnering with Habitat for Humanity and the Franklin Cooperative Ministry, statewide mission ministries, and national programs such as disaster relief.

Franklin Baptist was a member of the Blackwater Baptist Association until it dissolved in 2022. From its beginning, it has had an affiliation with the Baptist General Association of Virginia. Formally, the church was associated with the Southern Baptist Convention; however, the church elected to leave the SBC in 2001, subsequent to the revision of the Baptist Faith and Message, containing statements of beliefs which did not align with the historical beliefs of Franklin Baptist Church. In 2002, the church formalized its partnership with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia. Ministers of the church, as well as its lay leaders, have served in leadership positions in all the organizations with which we have been, or are currently, affiliated.

History and Heritage

continued

The church has been blessed with strong pastoral leadership and, likewise, strong lay leadership. Recognized as being a progressive and moderate church, Franklin Baptist has benefited from the active involvement of women for over a century, serving in professional staff positions as well as lay leadership positions. In 1982, the church ordained its first women deacons. Church history is replete with members, both male and female, who have been ordained and have served our church, or have gone forth to serve in other churches and mission fields.

Our current era saw the arrival of Dr. Charles Qualls as our twentieth senior pastor in 2017. In his time, we undertook an extensive process with the Center for Healthy Churches to collect a fresh overall Vision Plan. That major initiative was adopted by churchwide action in the summer of 2018. Three major teams emerged from that process to lead us in Worship, Missions and Discipleship.

A new Faith on Draft program began meeting locally in the fall of 2018 at a downtown restaurant. In 2018, we also initiated an ongoing and very active partnership with our local high school. Our Wednesday night dinner and a full array of programs were revived and became robust. Christmas of 2018 also saw the first of our annual Living Nativity portrayals downtown, a community-wide offering that Franklin Baptist coordinates. Live streaming of worship services began in the fall of 2019. An overseas mission trip to Slovakia to work with the Parks family of the CBF also happened in 2019.

Although as with most congregations, the Covid Pandemic derailed much of our momentum, still we managed our way through in a cohesive and intentional fashion. Livestream became the church's lifeline for worship and study. Still, our Mission Team kept a particularly active and meaningful slate of commitments even through the pandemic. In 2022, our church took up its Covid-delayed plans and celebrated its 150th Anniversary with seven months of celebratory activities that included special worship opportunities, a community day of service, concerts, commissioned musical pieces and much more.

Financially, our church continued to be supportive of our budget even during the challenging Covid time. Our 2022 contributions were some \$30,000 above the previous two years' gifts. We have emerged with attendance that has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Our Vision Leadership group continues to assess and to recommend best ministry strategies in light of the present church realities. Franklin Baptist Church has had a vibrant and proud history. Its heritage provides a solid foundation upon which to build, grow, and move forward.

Buildings and Grounds

Franklin Baptist Church is located in the heart of downtown Franklin, adjoining the city's Main Street business district. The physical facilities of the church consist of four interconnected buildings comprising approximately 68,000 square feet. The church facility has the following features:

Sanctuary Our sanctuary seats approximately 575 with 125 of those seats located in the balcony. An additional 44 seats are located in the choir loft.

Chapel Our chapel, the original sanctuary, seats approximately 200.

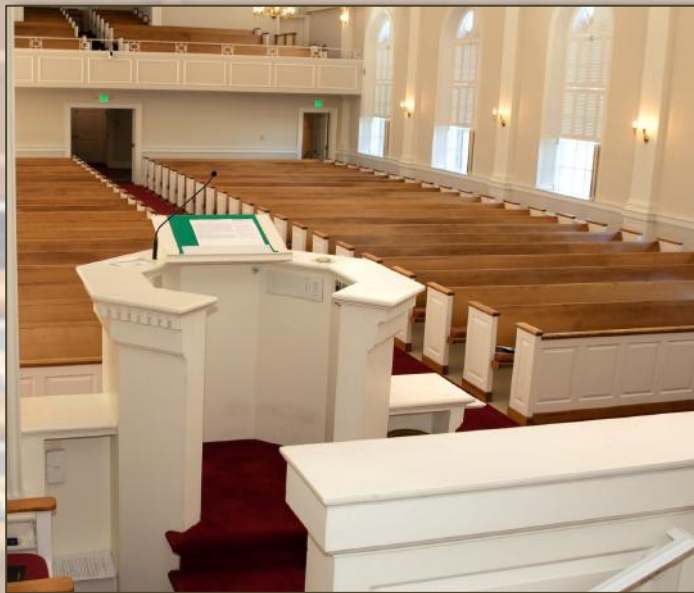
Garden Chapel Our garden chapel will accommodate 12 people.

Fellowship Hall Our fellowship hall can accommodate approximately 250 people seated at tables. It can accommodate 400 people when chairs are arranged as an auditorium.

Atrium Our atrium can accommodate 100 + people for special occasions or events.

Memorial Garden Our memorial garden is located between our sanctuary and chapel. When cremation is chosen by a church member, the family may elect to scatter ashes within the garden. A memorial plaque is located in the breezeway.

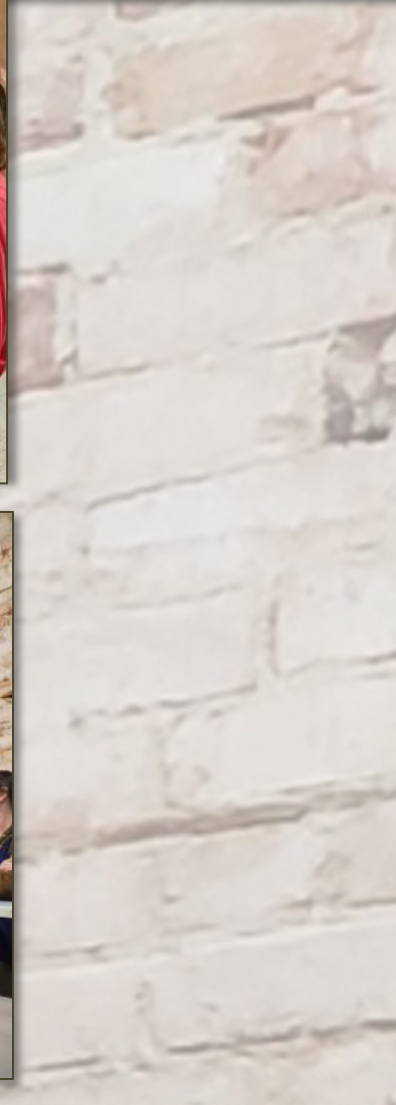






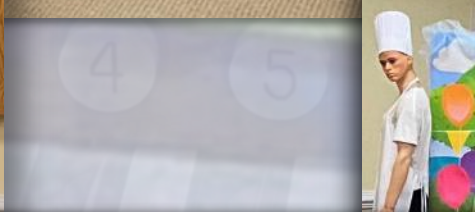
Sunday School





Faith on Draft



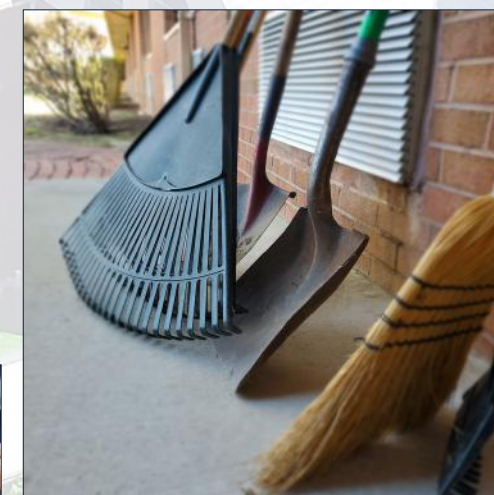


Vacation Bible School



Motivated For Missions







Festivities and Picnics



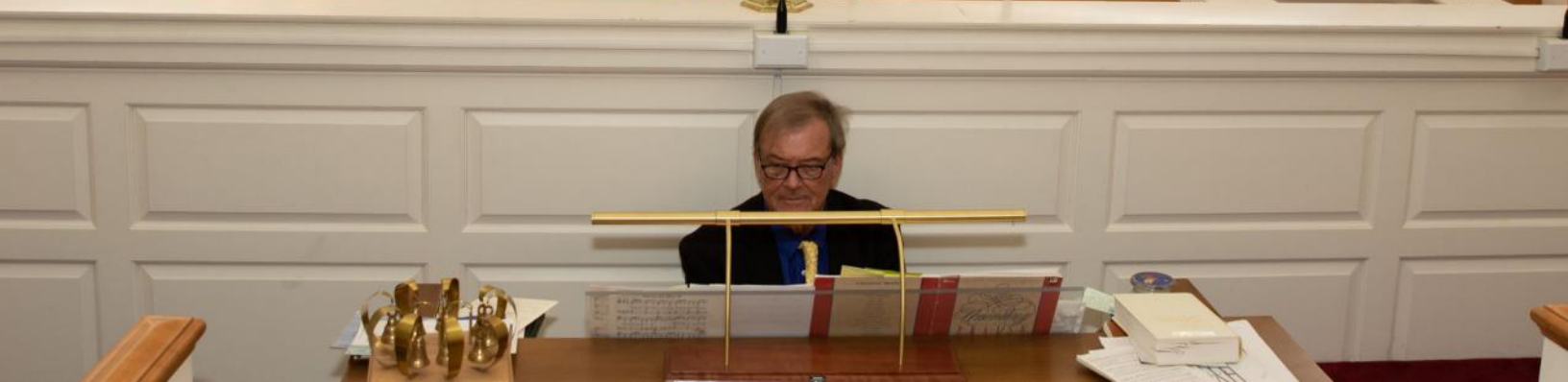


Celebrations and Traditions





Music Ministry





*Christmas
Eve*



Holiday Traditions





*Reaching
Out
Beyond
the Pews*

