

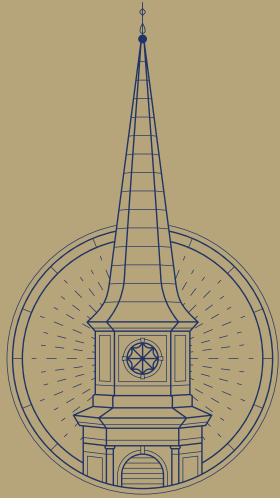


FIRST BAPTIST
OPELIKA

FBCO FOUNDATIONS

A Legacy of Discipleship





A Legacy of Discipleship





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Letter from Our Pastors

IT IS OUR HONOR AND joy to welcome you to the First Baptist Church of Opelika. What started as a gathering of 16 men and women 167 years ago has grown to a thriving, healthy, multigenerational, Bible-believing, Christ-centered, mission focused church that is experiencing consistent growth. To God be the glory!

God has immensely blessed our church and we are committed to stewarding all that He has given and called us to. The gospel of Jesus Christ and His inspired Word serve as the foundation for our faith family. Simply put: We believe that God has called His Church to be a light in our dark world.

In one of our many worship gatherings, you will see a diversity of ages, stages, languages and faces. But what unites us all is that we believe that Christ is our foundation. As we all run our race with perseverance, all of our eyes are fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:1-2). Our unity is found in Jesus.

In this book, you will find information about what makes FBCO unique. You will learn theological distinctives of our Baptist Heritage. You will learn about our strategy to reach our neighbors and the nations with the gospel. You will learn about local ministry opportunities within our church as well as our heart to get the gospel to those who have not ever heard. You will learn about our partnership with over 48,000 other churches to raise up the next generation of ministers, missionaries, and churches. You will read about our commitment to raising up the Next Generation in our church.

We desire for everyone in our faith family to participate in meaningful membership. Because we believe that every Christ-follower has been uniquely gifted by God's Spirit, we seek for each member plug-in and use their giftings for the glory of God in our church. This booklet is designed to teach you about what makes our faith family unique and provide a vision of what God has called us to so you can join in. We thank God that He led you to our faith family and count it a privilege to be an integral part of the faith journey. May God continue to grow you and your family alongside us all at FBCO.

-THE PASTORS OF FBCO





Our Story





Reconstructed sanctuary in the 1920s known as the Big Brick Building.

Our Story

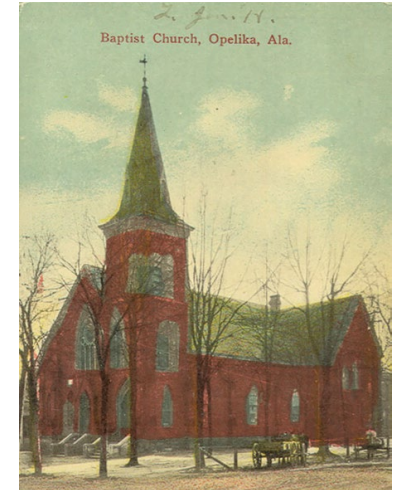
A Legacy of Discipleship

FIRST BAPTIST OPELIKA HAS A rich history of God's faithfulness. Our story reminds us that the church is not just about buildings or programs, but about people transformed by Jesus who passed on their faith so that others might believe. This is the heartbeat of discipleship and the legacy we now carry.

In **October 1859**, sixteen men and women gathered with a vision: to make disciples in Opelika, Alabama, and to leave a spiritual legacy that would outlast their own lives. They called their new congregation Opelika Baptist Church. Though small, their commitment to Christ was large in heart—and it laid a foundation that still shapes us today.



LEFT TOP: The Little White Church was the first Opelika Baptist Church's first building and was built in 1861. **LEFT MIDDLE:** *The Messenger* has connected the First Baptist Opelika family for several decades, sharing worship, prayer, and life together long before digital communication. **LEFT BOTTOM:** The new sanctuary, completed in 1954, alongside the original sanctuary, which was demolished in 1964 and replaced by the current chapel. **BELOW:** The Red Brick Church was erected in 1882-83 after the Little White Church was destroyed by a fire in 1881.



Their first building, the Little White Church (built in **1860**), was more than just walls and a roof. It was a place where discipleship began.

In the years that followed, discipleship and legacy remained central. From **1873 to 1875**, the church ran the Baptist Female College, investing in young women's education. In **1875**, the women of the church formed a Missionary Society, multiplying their influence by sending support far beyond Opelika. These ministries remind us that making disciples always means equipping others to carry the mission forward.

When fire destroyed the church in **1881**, the congregation rebuilt—not just a building, but a

Our story reminds us that the church is not just about buildings or programs, but about people transformed by Jesus who passed on their faith so that others might believe.



TOP: FBCO Children's Choir, circa 1961-1963. BOTTOM: Reconstructed sanctuary in the 1920s known as the Big Brick Building.

community of faith. By **1885**, a new brick structure stood, a symbol of resilience and commitment to keep the gospel witness alive for the next generation.

By **1911**, membership had grown to more than *400*. Each person represented not just a name on a roll, but a disciple influenced by those who came before. Renovations, a new sanctuary in 1954, and later additions in the 1960s and 70s all served one purpose: creating space for more people to encounter Christ and grow as His disciples.

By **1976**, over *2,000* members were part of this legacy. And as the church celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2009, it looked back with gratitude and forward with vision, recommitting to global missions and local outreach.

In **2001**, the congregation called Pastor Steve Scoggins to serve as First Baptist's 48th pastor, and he went on to become the church's longest-serving leader. Known for his pastoral heart, Pastor Steve was a true shepherd to the flock.

During his tenure, the church saw significant growth in membership, giving, and ministry impact. In **2008**, the Sanctuary was expanded, and the Adult Education Building—formerly a bank—was acquired. As more families joined, the children's ministries flourished, leading to the dedication of the Children's Building in **2016**.

In recent years, God has continued to write the story of First Baptist Opelika through a legacy of discipleship and faithfulness. When the church voted to call Dr. Jeff Meyers as its 49th pastor in **2016**, he cast a gospel vision and commitment to making disciples who would impact generations to come.

That commitment has led the church to expand its reach both locally and globally. In **2019**, the Korean Ministry was launched, creating new opportunities to share the gospel with the nations in our own community. In **2023**, the Latino Ministry (PIBO) was established, further extending the

church's mission to see every nation and tongue transformed by Christ.

Alongside this growing diversity, God has blessed the church with milestones that testify to His provision and power. In **2020**, First Baptist became debt free, freeing resources for ministry and mission. In **2022**, the Newman Mission House was remodeled to serve as a home for college ministry, intentionally investing in the next generation of disciple-makers. Then, in **2024**, the church purchased a new Mission House, providing

Perhaps most significantly, the story of discipleship at First Baptist has been marked by transformed lives.

a place of rest and renewal for missionaries on furlough from the field.

Perhaps most significantly, the story of discipleship at First Baptist has been marked by transformed lives. From **September 2022 to August 2023**, the church celebrated the highest number of baptisms in its history, with *153* people publicly declaring their faith in Christ. And in **2025**, the congregation reached the milestone of *1,000 baptisms* since Pastor Jeff's arrival in 2016—a testimony that the legacy of faith continues to grow. The Lord called Pastor Jeff home on December 4, 2025.

Today, First Baptist continues to send members into the world—college students across Auburn University, families across our city, and teams across the globe—all carrying the same mission first embraced in 1859: *leaving a legacy of discipleship.*



NOTHING COMPARES TO THE PROMISE I HAVE IN YOU

Our Purpose





The Church

1. What is the Church?

The church is **not a building or an event**—it is a people (Acts 2:42–47).

At its core, the church is the **body of Christ**, made up of all who have repented of sin and trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord (Ephesians 1:22–23; 1 Corinthians 12:27).

The Bible speaks of the church in two ways:

- **Universal Church:** All believers across history and around the world, united as one body in Christ (Ephesians 4:4–6).
- **Local Church:** A specific group of baptized believers who gather regularly to worship, grow in their faith, serve one another, and carry out Christ's mission together (Hebrews 10:24–25; Acts 14:23).

2. Why Does the Church Matter?

God designed the church to be a family—a community where disciples are made, encouraged, corrected, and equipped to live out the gospel in every area of life (Ephesians 4:11–13; Galatians 6:1–2).

The church is the **Bride of Christ**—loved sacrificially by Jesus and being prepared in holiness for the day He returns (Ephesians 5:25–27; Revelation 19:7–9). This reminds us that discipleship is not just about personal growth, but about preparing together for our Bridegroom.

Every member has a role: God has given each believer gifts to build up the body, serve others, and advance the gospel (Romans 12:4–8; 1 Peter 4:10–11).

The church is **God's witness in the world:**

- Jesus calls His people to proclaim the good news (Mark 16:15).
- We are to make disciples and teach them to obey His commands (Matthew 28:18–20).
- As ambassadors for Christ, we shine His light in a dark world through our unity, holiness, and service (2 Corinthians 5:20; Philippians 2:14–16).

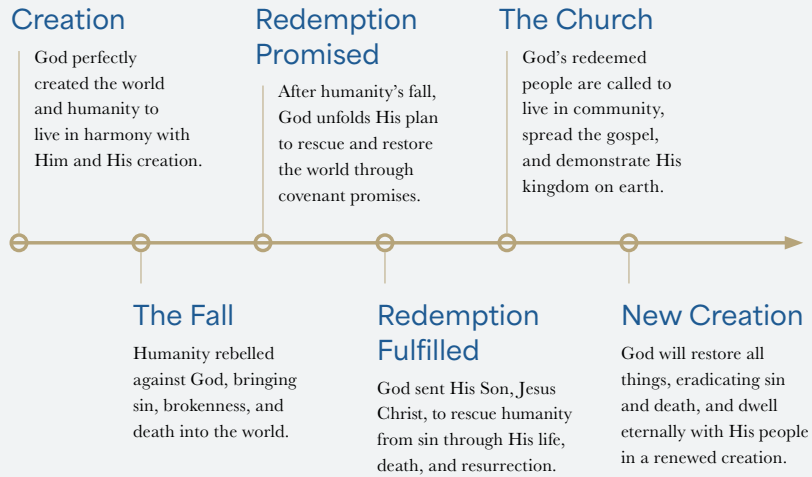
3. The Mission of the Church

The mission of the church is clear:

- **Proclaim the gospel** (Romans 1:16)
- **Make disciples of all nations** (Matthew 28:18–20)
- **Pass the faith on** so that every generation shares in the legacy of Christ (2 Timothy 2:2; Psalm 78:4–6)

The church is where discipleship happens for the glory of God—a family where faith is formed, strengthened, and passed on. Every member contributes to the legacy of faith by discipling others in word and deed.

The Redemption Story

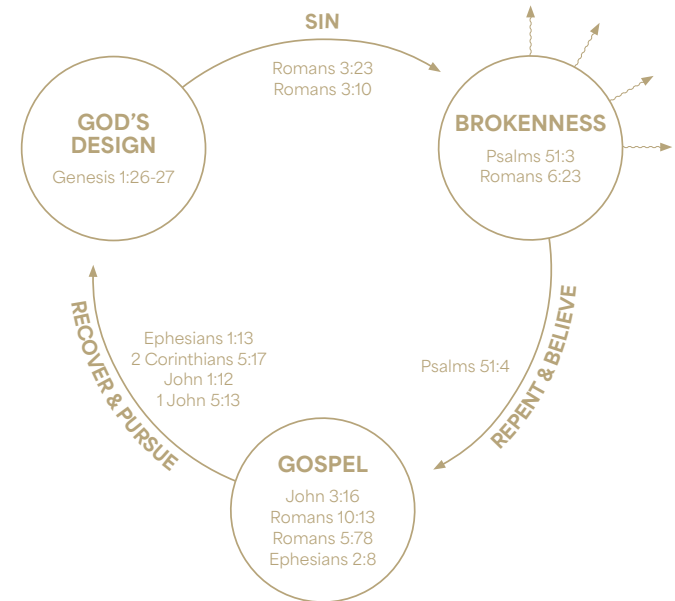


The church exists to carry out God's mission from creation to new creation. In Christ, we are redeemed and called into His family to proclaim the gospel, make disciples, and pass the faith on as a lasting legacy. Empowered by the Spirit, we live as a foretaste of His kingdom while we await the day Christ makes all things new.

The Gospel

THE GOSPEL IS THE GOOD news that Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again so that all who trust in Him may have eternal life. It is the message of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

- Every person is separated from God by sin (Romans 3:23).
- The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23).
- But God, in His love, sent Jesus to die in our place (Romans 5:8).
- By trusting in Christ, we are forgiven, made new, and given eternal life (John 3:16).



This gospel is the foundation of everything we believe and do as a church.



Our Mission

The Great Commission

OUR MISSION IS THE GREAT COMMISSION.

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

MATTHEW 28:18-20

At the heart of our mission is the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). Before ascending into heaven, Jesus gave His disciples a clear charge:

Make disciples

Share the good news so that others may know Christ.

Baptize them

Welcome new believers into the family of God through baptism.

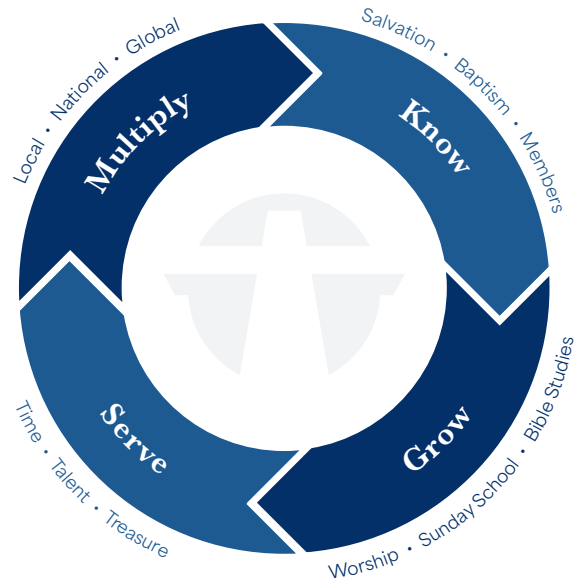
Teach them

Help one another grow in obedience to all that Jesus has commanded.



Our Strategy

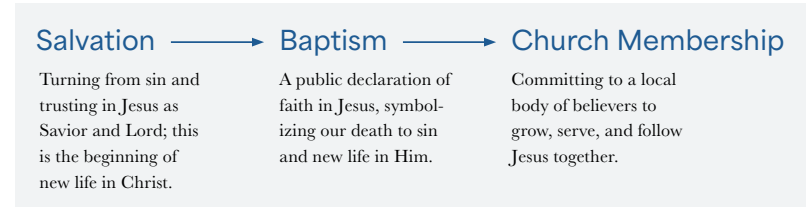
OUR DESIRE IS TO BE A church that is faithful to the Great Commission by making disciples who *know* Jesus, *grow* together, *serve* faithfully, and *multiply* to the ends of the earth – so that the legacy of Christ continues through us to future generations.



OUR STRATEGY

Know Jesus

THE FIRST STEP IN FOLLOWING Jesus is to truly know Him—not just know about Him. This begins when we turn from our sin and trust in Him as Savior and Lord. Through salvation, baptism, and joining the church, we publicly declare our new life in Christ and our commitment to follow Him. Knowing Jesus is the foundation for everything else in the Christian life—it’s where discipleship starts and eternity begins.



Know Jesus

This is where the legacy begins: every disciple starts with a personal relationship with Christ.

Grow Together

We grow in community so that faith is strengthened and passed on.

Serve Faithfully

By giving our time, talent, and treasure, we model for others what it means to live as a disciple, leaving a legacy of faithfulness.

Multiply to the Ends of the Earth

Disciples make disciples. Our legacy is not complete until we reproduce faith in others locally and globally.



OUR STRATEGY

Grow Together

Worship

Worship is the central response of the church to God's glory, grounding the community in adoration, thanksgiving, and submission to Him. It forms and unites believers around the gospel, shaping their faith and mission as the body of Christ.

Our worship gatherings are grounded on three priorities: Praise, Prayer, and the Preaching of the Word.

- **Praise** – We cultivate a multigenerational worship environment where every generation can lift their voices together in song. (Psalm 96:1–3; Colossians 3:16)
- **Prayer** – We create space for both personal and corporate prayer, drawing near to God as His people. (Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16; Acts 2:42)
- **Preaching of the Word** – God's Word is faithfully proclaimed so that, as 2 Timothy 3:16–17 teaches, we are equipped, encouraged, and sent out to love God and our neighbors. (Nehemiah 8:3; Romans 10:17)

“Worship is our willing response to God’s own self-revelation.”

– DR. JEFF MEYERS

Sunday Schools and Bible Studies

At FBCO, we are committed to helping adults grow in their faith and understanding of the word of God. To support that goal, we offer both Sunday school and seasonal Bible studies. While both are valuable opportunities for spiritual growth, they serve different purposes and offer unique experiences.

Sunday School

Sunday School organizes the local church to ensure every member is actively involved in a loving, caring class that fulfills the church's mission.

Role:

Provides a consistent, year-round platform for adults to engage in biblical teaching, discussion, and fellowship, fostering regular spiritual growth and community.

Goals:

- Deliver broad, ongoing Christian education through a variety of topics.
- Promote long-term spiritual development.
- Build and maintain a sense of community among members.

We offer classes for every age and stage of life along with a variety of teaching styles and methods – all of which are rooted and derived from the Bible.

Bible Studies

Bible Studies are offered in addition to Sunday Schools as an opportunity to help our members dive deeper in studying Scripture or living the Christian life.

Role:

Offers short-term, intensive studies focused on a specific book of the Bible or topic, designed for deeper, concentrated learning.

Goals:

- Facilitate in-depth exploration of specific biblical content or themes.
- Encourage intensive spiritual growth through focused study.
- Provide a structured environment for deep, specialized learning.

OUR STRATEGY

Serve Faithfully

ONE OF THE clearest marks of a disciple of Jesus is a willingness to serve faithfully. Service is not simply something we do as believers—it is central to who we are as God's people. Serving both blesses others and deepens our own growth and maturity in Christ.

At First Baptist Opelika, we believe that serving is not confined to one ministry or one kind of person. Instead, God calls every believer to serve with their time, talent, and treasure.

What does it look like to serve faithfully at First Baptist Opelika?

Time

The first way we serve faithfully is by giving of our time. Our lives are filled with family, work, school, hobbies, and friendships, but following Jesus requires that we be willing to lay aside our own schedules to put others first.

When we offer our time to serve, we demonstrate that Christ—not convenience—is our highest priority. Whether it's teaching children, greeting guests, mentoring students, or helping behind the scenes, giving time is an act of worship and discipleship.

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.”

- 1 PETER 4:10

Talent

“But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.”

1 CORINTHIANS 18:20

Every member of the church has been uniquely gifted by God. The Lord has intentionally placed each of us in this congregation with gifts, passions, and skills that contribute to the health of the body.

Serving faithfully means using those gifts—not hiding them. Some may serve by teaching or leading, while others serve by encouraging, organizing, caring, or creating. All gifts matter, and all are needed.

At FBCO, we want every believer to discover their God-given talents and find a place to serve.

What are some ways that you can serve with your time and talent at FBCO?

- NextGen Ministries (Preschool, Kids, Students, or Young Adults)
- Special Needs
- Pastoral Care
- Hospitality
- Men and Women's Ministry
- Media
- Worship
- Security and Emergency Response
- Connections and Guest Experience
- Missions, Evangelism, and Outreach

Treasure

We serve faithfully through our giving. Stewardship is part of discipleship, and when we give financially, we are:

- **Obedying the Lord**
- **Participating in His work** locally and globally
- **Demonstrating commitment** to the mission of our church

The Bible gives us clear guidance on how to give:

- **Cheerfully** – “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).
- **Proportionately** – “Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 16:17).
- **Sacrificially** – The widow “out of her poverty put in all she had to live on” (Luke 21:3–4).

At FBCO, giving goes beyond paying bills—it fuels ministry. We have several areas of giving, including:

- **General Fund** – The General Fund is FBCO's main operating account that covers everyday expenses like staff salaries, utilities, maintenance, and ministry programs. It is supported by regular tithes and offerings.

- **Fellowship (Benevolence) Fund** – The Fellowship Fund provides temporary financial aid to individuals and families in crisis, covering needs like housing, utilities, groceries, medical costs, or transportation. It is funded by special monthly collections and member donations.
- **Future Opportunities Fund** – This fund provides for future ministry opportunities that God may give FBO during the year that was not budgeted for in the general church budget.
- **Lottie Moon Offering** – Established in 1888, this supports international missions and sends missionaries to unreached people groups worldwide. Every dollar given goes directly to funding and sustaining international missionaries. This offering is given through the International Mission Board.
- **Annie Armstrong Easter Offering** – Supports North American missions, helping fund more than 3,000 missionary families across the United States and Canada. All contributions go directly to missionaries on the field. This offering is given through the North American Mission Board.

“The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

- 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-7

OUR STRATEGY

Multiply to the Ends of the Earth

AT FIRST BAPTIST OPELIKA, OUR heartbeat is mission. Every believer is called to live on mission daily, making the Gospel known wherever God has placed them. This mission stretches across our streets and around the world, uniting our church family in purpose and vision. We give generously, send faithfully, and stand alongside our partners to advance the Kingdom of God.

Local: Reaching Lee County

We believe missions happen both across the ocean and across the street. FBCO partners with a variety of local ministries, offering hands-on opportunities for members to serve and share the hope of Christ in our own community.

Here is a list of ministries that we have partnered with:

- The Way 2 Serve
- Mercy Medical
- Harvest Evangelism
- Youth for Christ - Juvenile Justice Ministry
- Women's Hope
- Christian Women's Job Corp
- BigHouse Foundation
- Friends of Internationals
- Soul Winning Team
- Prayer Team
- Love Lee County

National: Reaching Domestically

Church Planting:

We support church planting by helping start new congregations in communities that need a strong gospel witness. Through prayer, resources, and encouragement, we are committed to seeing churches thrive across the nation.

Partner Church Plants:

- Life Community Church, Weymouth, MA
- Southside Gospel Fellowship, Montgomery, AL

Disaster Relief:

Many of our members are trained and active in the disaster relief ministry. With state-of-the-art equipment and vehicles, we are equipped to respond quickly to crises and serve those in need with compassion in the name of Christ.

Port St. Joe:

For nearly two decades, our college ministry has faithfully invested in Port St. Joe. Each summer, students take jobs to support themselves while serving alongside WindMark Beach Church. During Spring Break, hundreds of students join in to make an impact through construction projects, block parties, evangelism, and discipleship.

International: Reaching Globally

Through the generous giving of our members, FBCO supports mission efforts worldwide. These gifts empower ministries in pastoral training, Christian business education, feeding families, gospel film production, Bible translation and distribution, church planting, medical missions, orphan care, well digging, malnutrition recovery, water purification, addiction recovery, and more.

Beyond financial support, we send members on both short-term and long-term mission opportunities, ensuring that our church is personally engaged in taking the Gospel to the nations.

Global Partners:

- Faith Comes by Hearing
- Orphanage Emmanuel
- Lovelink Inc.
- Scatter Christ
- Four Corners Ministries
- Business As Missions
- The Gate Church, UK
- Christian Medical and Dental Association
- InStep International

Countries & Regions We Have Impacted:

- Costa Rica
- Honduras
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- United Kingdom
- Canada
- India
- Uganda
- North Africa
- East Africa
- Middle East
- Eastern Europe



The Southern Baptist Convention and the Cooperative Program

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OPELIKA is a cooperating church within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The SBC is not a denomination, but a network of nearly 47,000 like-minded churches working together to advance the Gospel.

Most SBC churches are small—three out of four have fewer than 100 attendees—making it difficult

for them to send missionaries, plant churches, or train pastors on their own. Through cooperation, churches of every size contribute to these efforts.

The primary funding stream for this work is the **Cooperative Program**, which pools resources from local churches and distributes them to SBC entities that carry out ministry and mission initiatives. These include:

- International Mission Board
- North American Mission Board
- Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission
- Lifeway Christian Resources
- Guidestone Financial Resources
- Executive Committee
- Women's Missionary Union
- Six theological seminaries.

Through our partnership with New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, the First Baptist Opelika Church School of Ministry offers residents the opportunity to combine classroom learning with real-world ministry experience. While serving in our church, residents can earn up to 25% of the credit toward their Master's degree.

Southern Baptists affirm the *Baptist Faith & Message 2000*, which FBCO also affirms.

Unlike many denominations, every SBC church is fully autonomous. The SBC holds no financial or theological control over its churches, allowing each congregation—including FBCO—to remain self-governing while cooperating for the sake of missions.

The Cooperative Program fuels missions, ministry, and theological education.





NextGen Strategy

THE THEME VERSE FOR NEXTGEN MINISTRY is Psalm 78:4: “We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about His power and His mighty wonders.”

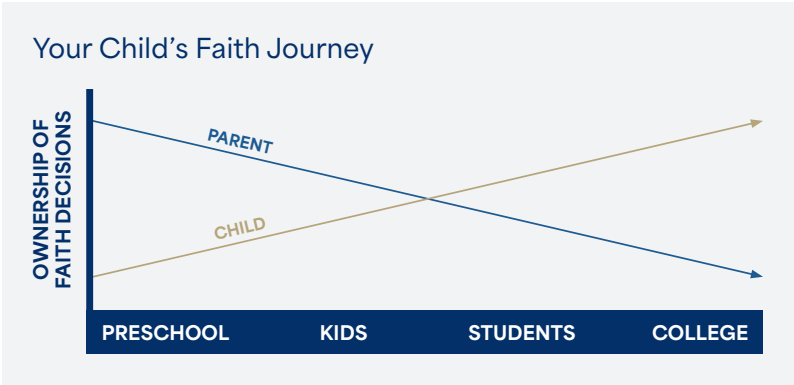
Our ministry philosophy is that we come alongside you as you disciple your kids. It’s never too late to invest spiritually in your child—simple practices like prayer and reading Scripture together build a strong foundation. You don’t have to be perfect; your children learn by watching you follow Jesus.

NextGen Ministries offer entry points for kids of all ages. If you’ve missed a milestone, we’d love to help you find an alternative that fits your family.

Faith ownership shifts as children grow—parents lead in the early years, while students take greater ownership by middle and high school, with the church walking alongside to support and equip families.

Every story is different, and we want to walk with you in yours—cheering for your family each step of the way.

We exist to raise up the Next Generation to be devoted followers of Jesus.



Ministry Transitions

Each transition from one ministry area to the next is significant. We put special emphasis on each ministry transition because we understand how it shapes the next step of development of an individual’s spiritual journey.

Preschool to Kids

The move from PreK to kindergarten is a big and exciting step. To prepare, KidsMin staff visit preschool classrooms and lead tours of the new space, helping ease nerves before the transition upstairs. The next six years bring fun experiences and meaningful relationships that lay a strong foundation for kids and their families.

“We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about His power and His mighty wonders.”

- PSALM 78:4

Kids to Students

The shift from 5th to 6th grade is a milestone for both students and families. In Student Ministry, teens learn to grow in their relationship with God, build Christ-centered community, and begin leading and serving. The staff partners with parents to provide opportunities for mission, service, and spiritual growth throughout these important years.

Students to College

Moving from high school to college is a vital step toward independence. The College Ministry begins walking with seniors in the spring, inviting them to mission trips, senior events, and Graduation Sunday. Freshmen are encouraged to join retreats like Oaks and the Freshmen Retreat, where they begin forming Christ-centered community and connecting to the ministry at FBCO.

College to Young Adults

The Young Adult Ministry helps those staying in Auburn/Opelika for graduate school, professional programs, or new jobs find community beyond the undergraduate experience. It offers connections through Sunday school, Bible study groups, and fellowship events.



Our Structure

Beliefs

OUR CHURCH ADHERES TO THE doctrinal statement called *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000*. To read the full statement, please visit bfm.sbc.net.

The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1; Psalms 2:7; 110:1; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5, 20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26,27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28,29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29,39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.



The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2:3; 21:2-3.

Baptism & The Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.



Governance and Structure

THE GOAL OF OUR STRUCTURE is to create a balance of spiritual leadership, organizational accountability, and congregational participation.

The Congregation

The congregation is the final authority in church governance. As members of the body, they vote to approve major decisions such as committee appointments, budget approvals, acquiring debt or property, and the calling of pastors and deacons. They also serve on committees, participate in ministries, and uphold the church's mission through active involvement and support.

The Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor leads the church spiritually and operationally. He provides vision, shepherding, and oversight to the church staff and ministries. He works closely with committees (especially Personnel, Nominating, and Finance) to guide staffing and church direction, and collaborates with the Deacons to ensure leadership decisions align with biblical principles and the church's mission.

The Deacons

The Deacon Body serves as a supportive leadership team. They assist the Pastor, provide spiritual guidance, and help oversee business matters like finances, personnel, and membership. Deacons play a key role in committee oversight—each committee includes at least one active Deacon—and serve as a bridge between church leadership and the congregation.

The Committees & Officers

Committees carry out specific tasks related to missions, staffing, finance, education, and more. They function under the authority of the bylaws and are accountable to both the Deacons and the congregation. Committees include church members, involve collaboration with staff, and help ensure transparency, stewardship, and shared responsibility in decision-making. There are five standing committees: nominating, personnel, finance, missions, and Academy. Additionally, other officers include trustees, clerk, and treasurer.

In summary:

<p>The Pastor leads, teaches, and directs vision.</p>	<p>The Deacons support and hold accountable.</p>	<p>The Committees implement, advise, and administer.</p>	<p>The Congregation affirms, serves, and ultimately governs.</p>
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Committees

COMMITTEES AT FBCO FUNCTION AS collaborative bridges between the church staff, members, and the Deacon body. Each committee includes at least one active Deacon to ensure alignment with church leadership and governance. Committees work alongside staff to support and execute ministry goals—such as budgeting, hiring, missions, and education—often providing oversight, recommendations, or approvals. Church members serve on committees, allowing them to actively participate in the life and leadership of the church. This structure ensures that decision-making is both representative and accountable, blending pastoral leadership with congregational involvement.

Nominating Committee

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Recommends candidates for:
 - + Missions, Finance, Academy, and Personnel Committees
 - + Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Clerk
- Includes at least one active Deacon
- Members serve staggered 3-year terms

Relationship to Pastor, Deacons, and Congregation:

- Senior Pastor & Deacon Chair nominate committee members
- Deacons and congregation vote to approve members
- Supports congregational involvement by helping select leadership across church governance

Missions Committee

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Promotes missions involvement among members
- Provides training, leadership, and resources for mission efforts
- Collaborates with FBCO staff and members

Relationship to Pastor, Deacons, and Congregation:

- Works alongside staff to align mission strategies with church vision
- Includes at least one active Deacon for accountability and guidance
- Encourages and equips the congregation to engage in missions

Finance Committee

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Prepares and presents the annual budget
- Monitors monthly financial performance against budget
- Recommends financial changes when needed
- Provides financial oversight of the church

Relationship to Pastor, Deacons, and Congregation:

- Collaborates with staff and ministries to build and manage budget
- Presents budget to Deacons and church for approval
- Helps the congregation steward resources faithfully and transparently

Personnel Committee

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Oversees hiring, reviews, and terminations (excluding Academy and Bright Beginnings)
- Creates and approves employment handbooks and policies
- Recommends salaries and staffing budgets to the Finance Committee

Relationship to Pastor, Deacons, and Congregation:

- Works closely with the Senior Pastor to manage staff structure
- Coordinates with Deacons on ministerial staffing decisions
- Provides accountability in personnel decisions that affect the congregation's ministries

Academy Committee (First Baptist Academy Auxiliary Advisory Board of Directors)

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Governs the operations of First Baptist Academy
- Adopts bylaws consistent with the FBCO Constitution
- Provides spiritual and academic oversight of the school

Relationship to Pastor, Deacons, and Congregation:

- Operates under the direction of the Deacons
- Works with the Education Pastor (church staff) and Headmaster
- Extends the church's ministry into Christian education for families in the congregation and community



Our Membership

Church Membership

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP MEANS THAT A Christian has formally joined a local body of believers. The significance of membership is beautifully described by the apostle Paul in *1 Corinthians 12:12–17*:

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.” (ESV)

When someone becomes a member of First Baptist Church Opelika, they publicly declare that they belong to Christ and are part of His Church. The local church serves as the visible, earthly expression of the universal Church.

You may wonder: *Why become a member if I can already participate in much of what the church does?* At FBCO, we believe membership is more than participation—it is a commitment. By joining, you are pledging yourself to the body of Christ here and sharing in both its privileges and responsibilities.

Requirements for Membership at FBCO:

1. Profession of faith in Jesus Christ
2. Believer's baptism

When you become a member of First Baptist Church Opelika, you are not just joining an organization—you are stepping into a story bigger than yourself. You are taking your place in a **legacy of discipleship** that continues today through every member who knows Jesus, grows together, serves faithfully, and multiplies the gospel.

Baptism

BAPTISM IS BOTH A PUBLIC declaration of faith and a symbolic act of the transforming power of the Gospel. It proclaims that a person has been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and now belongs to Him. Jesus Himself modeled baptism when He was baptized by John the Baptist (*Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:32–34*).

Scripture presents baptism as a vivid picture of the believer's union with Christ:

“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”

ROMANS 6:4–5

“Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

COLOSSIANS 2:12

At First Baptist Church Opelika, we affirm three biblical convictions about baptism:

1. Baptism as a Requirement for Church Membership

In Acts 2:41, those who received Peter's message were baptized, and then added to the church. We understand this to mean baptism precedes entrance into the local body.



2. Believer's Baptism

Because baptism is a public testimony of faith in Jesus, it follows salvation. At FBCO, we baptize only those who have confessed Jesus Christ as Lord.

3. Baptism by Immersion

The New Testament consistently presents baptism by immersion, and the symbolism of being “buried with Christ” and “raised with Christ” is only fully expressed in this practice. Thus, we baptize by immersion as both biblical obedience and testimony to the Gospel's power.

Baptism marks the start of a disciple's journey. Each baptism is not only a celebration of new life in Christ but also the beginning of another chapter in the legacy of discipleship at.



Know Jesus

Grow Together

Serve Faithfully

Multiply to the
Ends of the Earth



FIRST BAPTIST
- OPELIKA -