



FUTURE TEAM REPORT

JUNE 2024

**Presented to Flat Springs Baptist Church
By the following members of the Transition Team**

Heritage	Mission	Connections	Leadership	Future
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Martha Cagle	Cheryl Boisvert	Mark Love	John Quiggle	Laura Conley
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Mel Shaver	Abby Walker	Linda Wilson	Betsy Phillips	Bill Boisvert
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The goal of this process is to explore Flat Springs Baptist Church in its past, as it exists today, and project what Flat Springs can be in the future. While examining the purpose of the church and its prospects for the future, we are prayerfully and intentionally seeking God’s will for the next Senior Pastor in order that Flat Springs be on mission to further the Great Commission. Each of the teams above produced a written report which was then summarized by the Future Team. This report is being presented to the congregation, and upon approval, will be used by the pastoral search committee in determining who will be the next Senior Pastor to lead Flat Springs Baptist Church. “The Wilderness Journey” was one of the guiding documents from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina that was used during this process.

THE ABBREVIATED HISTORY OF FLAT SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH

November 1905 – September 2023

The fully documented history can be found at flatspringsbaptist.com



On November 27, 1905, Flat Springs Missionary Baptist Church was organized at the home of Amos C. Bridges with twelve original charter members, built on three acres of land donated by Amos C. Bridges. An Order of Business was adopted which provided Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, a Constitution, and a Covenant.

Construction began on the first church (near the site of the present-day Bewey Shaver Fellowship Hall) in 1906 and was received into the SCBA as Flat Springs Baptist Church. A “tower” (steeple) was built and soon after 1911-12, the building was painted white (known as the “little white church,” whenever mentioned in later years). The church was finally dedicated on October 8, 1916.

In the beginning, preaching services were only held once a month, weather permitting.

There was cooperation of the churches in the community including Jones Chapel Methodist Church and Zion Christian from 1917-1928 lending assistance to the establishment of Flat Springs Sunday School.

In 1939, there were two services held each month, and in 1944 the first Vacation Bible School was held. In December 1949, the church adopted a unified budget. In September 1950, a mid-week prayer service was started.

In 1951, new choir robes were purchased, and plans made for a trained church choir.

In 1953, the church adopted the plan of conducting worship services on each Sunday morning beginning a full-time church program. On September 17, 1953 the church voted to adopt the rotating Board of Deacons, and was put into effect in January 1954.

The church voted to build a parsonage on July 3, 1955, and a lot consisting of 1.12 acres, was given to the church by Mr. & Mrs. J.T. Marks and Mr. & Mrs. D.M. Covert.

In 1960, a new Educational Building was completed, and on June 12, 1961, it was dedicated, and the cornerstone laid. In 1960-61, as part of its work in the North Carolina Baptist Church Achievement Program, Flat Springs was named "Church of the Year" in North Carolina.

In January 1965, a new sanctuary was built, and a tape ministry was started. The first service was held in the new building on March 26, 1967. In April 1967, the first baptism was held in the new baptistry.

In April 1971, the first joint Easter Sunrise Service was held with Zion Christian Church.

In April 1972, a bus was purchased for church activities, the Senior Adult Choir was started, and the Constitution was revised. In August 1972, the Youth Choir presented their first musical and Children's Church was established.

In 1973, a Bus Ministry was started, and the cemetery was surveyed and plotted.

In May 1975, the church voted to begin the construction of a new Educational Building & Fellowship Hall. Construction was completed in 1977, along with the paving of the driveway, parking lot and tennis court, and renovations to the Education Building.

In June 1978, the church voted to hire a full-time Minister of Music and Youth, and in January 1979, a sound system was purchased.

In November 1980, the church celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the church. It was the largest attendance, on record, at that time.

In January 1986, doors were installed on the baptistry, and louvers were installed over the speakers in the sanctuary. The church accepted two acres of land as a gift from George & Inez Riddle that adjoined the church property and bought an additional 2.21 acres.

In 1987, the church accepted a gift of chimes, which are still enjoyed by residents of Deep River, who reside within a two to three mile radius of the church.

In January 1993, the church voted to incorporate the church and a Nursing Home ministry was formed. In February 1993, the church Constitution was amended to conform to the Articles of Incorporation as a nonprofit corporation and a trust fund was set up for the cemetery. In April, the church purchased approximately 28 acres of land that adjoined the church property. During this same year, the College Away Ministry (later known as the College Students/Military Ministry) was established to remember our college students and military personnel.

In 1996, the church decided to hold Wednesday Night Suppers once a month with a different Sunday School class, Mission Group and/or Diaconate being responsible for the meal.

From 1996-1998, Flat Springs Baptist Church had the most baptisms in the SCBA.

In January 1998, a plan for the new addition to the church was presented to include a new educational wing with a suite of offices and a small kitchen. In October 1999, the contracts were signed and work was completed by January 2001.

In 2002, the Senior Adult Ministry (SAM) was started. June 2002 brought troubled times and a special called Business Meeting was held to explore terminating the current pastor. However, on July 29, he resigned and some of the current members left the church.

Below is a compilation of ministry events added from 2005 through 2023.

Ministries:

- 3 Block Parties/Fall BBQ/Community Outreach Event (with several hundred in attendance)
- 12 Wild Game Dinners (with 300+ attending, at times)
- Mission trips to Atlantic, NC; Gulfport, MS; Goldsboro, NC; Whitley City, KY (several times) *
- Multi-day Churchwide Mission Projects based on 1 Peter 4:10*
- Bread of Life Ministry meals, provided bi- annually*
- Souper Bowl ministry benefitting local Food Banks, participated yearly for the last 8 years*
- 3 Grief Share support groups, with the last one being held in beginning of 2023
- 3 Financial Peace classes, with the last one being held in 2022
- At least 2 Red Cross Blood Drives per year for the last 15 years, now up to 3 per year starting in 2024*
- AWANA (2013-2017)
- Baptist Men's Breakfast (15 years). (Baptist Men had been meeting for 2 years prior, but not on a regular basis)*
- Added the position of full-time Associate Pastor of Family Ministry in 2010
- Ronald McDonald House in Chapel Hill – Baptist Men teams provide monthly meal
- Children and Youth Ministries*
 - Service Projects, Children's Easter Story and Brunch, Christmas Story and Program, Trunk or Treat/Fall Festival
- Family Ministries*
- Sunday School Annual Event

Worship Additions:

- Maundy Thursday service (17 years)*
- Thanksgiving Service (We began when other churches we had previously been holding services with, quit participating.)*
- Children's sermons (approximately 12 years)*
- Began livestream of our Worship and Wednesday Night services in 2021*
- Advent Season: included Hanging of the Greens & lighting the Advent candles*
- 1 Seder Meal
- 2 Moravian Love Feasts

Physical Additions/Renovations:

- Added an electronic sign in front of the church on Deep River Road in 2019
- Updated electronics in the Sanctuary, including audiovisual capacity in 2022, and major additional upgrades in 2024

**indicates ongoing ministry*

The current FSBC facility is approximately 16,360 heated square feet, with over 6,000 square feet in the educational building, and a capacity of 350 occupants in the sanctuary.

CORE VALUES, MISSION STATEMENT AND IDEAS FOR VISION AND MINISTRY PLANNING

The Core Values and Mission Statement are based on the results of a church-wide survey. They are purposeful and intentional for and on behalf of our church membership, the fellowship of Christians who join, study, play, sing, travel, serve alongside, and worship with us who may not yet be members, and prospects who need to be reached by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Core Values

1. We value the **triune God, worthy of our worship.**

We worship God our creator, one holy eternal being, existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2. We value the **Holy Bible**, God's inspired Word.

The Holy Bible is God's inspired word, including the teachings of our resurrected Savior, Jesus Christ, our history, and our place in God's plan.

3. We value **salvation** through God's grace and our faith in Jesus Christ.

Man is saved by God's grace, not by works, but through belief in Jesus Christ.

4. We value **spiritual growth.**

We develop a relationship with God, learn His will for our lives, and gain knowledge and wisdom by spending time with Him in prayer and studying His Word.

5. We value **prayer** to know and do the will of God.

Through the prompting of the Holy Spirit, we have access to God the Father through Jesus Christ our intercessor.

6. We value **the local church as a fellowship of believers rooted in faith.**

Bonds of fellowship are built on faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior who founded the church.

7. We value **homes wherein Christ is the foundation.**

With Christ at the center, families and individual family members are strong and therefore strengthen the body of believers, the Church.

8. We value **sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ** and **demonstrating Christian love**.

Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ are commissioned to share the Gospel, demonstrate love, and pray for all people.

9. We value **Biblical stewardship**.

Being good stewards of all God has entrusted into our care requires our faith and Christ-centered decision-making.

Mission Statement

Flat Springs Baptist Church is a family of believers seeking ...
To Glorify God,
To Guide others to Christ,
To Grow in our faith, and
To Give of ourselves

Ideas for VISION and MINISTRY PLAN

Ideas for Flat Springs Church VISION

- To bring people to Jesus Christ
- To provide a genuine worship experience invites the work of the Holy Spirit
- Education of believers
- Equip believers to be disciples of Christ
- To serve the community in love
- To provide for and meet needs in Jesus' name
- To provide an atmosphere where all people are welcome
- To meet people where they are

Ideas for Flat Springs MINISTRY PLAN

- Educating Believers
 - a. Learning and implementing our individual Spiritual Gifts
 - b. Intentionally equipping new Christians, new members, youth, and children
- Putting Growth into Action
 - a. Serving the community with robust outreach
 - b. Inviting
 - c. Welcoming
 - d. Supporting
 - e. Leading
 - f. Using music as a universal language to draw believers
 - g. Encouraging children and youth to draw believers

LEADERSHIP

This section focuses on (1) defining leadership, both subjectively and objectively, (2) the models and culture of leadership at FSBC, both current and desired in the future, and (3) leadership qualities that should be prioritized in the next pastor.

DEFINING CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

1. A Principled & Faithful Follower of Christ

The definition of *principled* reads, “acting in accordance with morality and showing recognition of right and wrong; based on a given set of rules.” There is no greater set of rules than the Ten Commandments.

2. A Leader with a Spiritual Attitude

- a. *Positive in the face of adversity.* Everyone in life, including those in leadership positions will face adversity. How a leader reacts to the adversity can make all the difference in their witness, and the outcome of the situation. Effective leaders should mirror the positivity that Christ showed in the face of adversity.
- b. *Confident, yet humble.* The paradox of being both confident, yet humble is a powerful combination for a leader. A strong Christian leader should project confidence, but not be proud or arrogant. They should possess the self-confidence to admit when they are wrong and accept constructive feedback from others.
- c. *Grateful and graceful in all situations.* It is easy to be grateful when times are good, but being grateful and graceful in time of difficulty takes someone with faith that God is at work and in control. When a leader displays his faith through gratefulness, people are naturally drawn to follow.

3. A Situational Leader

A situational leader demonstrates patience in certain situations while employing biblical based principles in all situations. Good leaders can observe the people and situations they encounter and react appropriately in-line with God’s will.

4. A Servant Leader

Christian leaders are put on this earth to serve God’s Kingdom, to shepherd His flock, and to share the gospel with compassion and love. Matthew 20:26 “If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest.” Christian leaders display a servant’s heart when they demonstrate empathy and compassion towards others.

5. An Effective Communicator

Christian leaders must recognize that what they communicate is viewed under a powerful microscope within the church and in the community, in which they serve. An effective leader strives to truly understand the concerns and needs of those they serve. Christian leaders must communicate clearly and simply to assure that the message will be received exactly as presented.

6. Skillful Motivator

Effective Christian leaders should motivate members to put God first in their lives, attend and support the church and its ministries spiritually, physically, and financially. They should follow Jesus' example of leading by constantly displaying all the qualities listed in the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, goodness and self-control. No better example has ever been demonstrated than that of Jesus Christ.

Leadership is a God empowered ability to set goals in accordance with God's purpose and to motivate others to work together voluntarily and harmoniously to accomplish those goals for the Glory of God.

THE CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP AT FSBC TODAY AND TOMORROW

FSBC is blessed with a congregation of individuals with God-given talents. It is congregation led, with deacons and committees operating within the confines of the church constitution and policy manual, but decisions are made by congregational vote. The following points provide a summary of the current leadership culture at FSBC, for which we aspire to achieve in the future.

1. Current Process of Identifying and Developing Leaders

- i. Identifying leaders at FSBC is heavily based on the following factors:
 - a. Prayer
 - b. One's willingness to serve
 - c. One's involvement/visibility at church
 - d. Follows 1963 Baptist Faith and Message
- ii. Processes established to place individuals in roles:
 - a. Nominating Committee: identifies individuals to fill open positions on committees outlined in the Constitution
 - b. Personnel Committee: searches, interviews, recommends to the church for hire and oversees all staff except the senior pastor. The deacons oversee the senior pastor who is recommended to the church by a pastor search committee.
 - c. Individual Committees: nominate committee chairs
 - d. Deacon Nomination: congregation nominates deacon candidates based on criteria outlined in scripture
 - e. VBS has volunteer training specific to the roles of that ministry
- iii. Documents established to develop and support leaders:
 - a. Constitution & Bylaws
 - b. Nominating Committee Report
 - c. Staff Job Descriptions and Covenants

2. Suggestions to Improve the Process of Identifying and Developing Leaders

- i. Identifying Leaders

- a. Provide “Using Your Spiritual Gifts In Ministry” or an organized leadership training program for all members and encourage everyone to attend prior to being involved in a committee/leadership role
 - b. Provide the roles and responsibilities to the parties responsible for nominating or electing leaders
- ii. Developing Leaders
 - a. Clearly document roles and responsibilities for each committee/leadership position
 - b. Yokefellows (mentorship program) – young people of good character and strong faith who work alongside and under the nurturing supervision of the active deacon body to minister to the needs of the church. They participate in all services of the church and pray for its activities.
- iii. Areas to Address
 - a. Process for which leaders/committee members are identified
 - b. Review and evaluate effectiveness of church’s governing documents, policies and procedures designed to support leaders
 - c. Church’s role and support of members identifying their spiritual gifts
 - d. Ensure the spiritual beliefs of our leaders align with God’s Word
- iv. The church Constitution and Bylaws needs evaluating, reviewing, and revising

3. Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities

- i. Strengths- FSBC uses bible-based theology with gospel centered worship. The church is in an excellent location with an attractive campus and facility and ample space to expand. The church has qualified staff and dedicated volunteers who assume roles of vacant staff readily. FSBC is blessed with generous donators of items requested for mission projects and community needs. Another strength is our community outreach ministry opportunities and new neighborhood development. The church has active committees, Sunday School, WMU, Baptist Men, Summer VBS, Youth and Children’s groups. In the absence of an Associate Pastor, volunteers are leading Youth and Children’s groups as well as other important initiatives.
- ii. Weaknesses - FSBC’s biggest weakness is the lack of senior leadership and lack of communication between entities of the church. Programs for training leaders and potential leaders are needed. For a welcoming church environment, all parties should act with intention to be hospitable, helpful, and encouraging to every soul entering and exiting the church grounds/campus. From the Diaconate to Directors and other church leaders, every effort should be made for outreach, clear communication, discipleship, and fellowship. Planning and participation in church activities and attendance at those activities should be modeled by Deacons, Directors and church leaders.
- iii. Opportunities -Earnestly search to fill vacant positions with qualified staff and pastors. All members be conscious to become a more friendly church to new members and visitors. Incorporate more enthusiasm and joy in worship services and become more future-oriented and open to change. Encourage more communication between all church entities and work together to reduce

misunderstandings and resolve conflicts. Committee members should strive to work together as a committee and not as individuals. Ministry needs for children, youth, young adults, and senior adults should all be addressed. Deacons and leaders should lead by example by attending scheduled services and special events. All members should take responsibility in supporting the church financially. Members should feel free to speak in business meetings and feel valued and respected. Our website needs restructuring making it more current, user friendly and inviting to potential new members and visitors.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL SEARCH

God's desire is for FSBC to effectively carry out the Great Commission, which will require that the next lead pastor is an effective leader with experience, demonstrating the leadership qualities outlined above. Based on the Pastoral Leadership Expectations survey and the work of the leadership team, the results indicate our church needs a Pastor who:

1. Is an effective preacher and teacher
2. Makes pastoral calls to people in hospitals, nursing homes, and homebound residents
3. Has a strong commitment to teaching the Bible and is rock solid on the gospel and biblical truths
4. Helps people work together in solving problems and conflicts
5. Builds a sense of fellowship among the people in the church
6. Is committed to the Great Commission
7. Is a compassionate and caring person, sensitive to other's needs
8. Maintains strong moral character
9. Helps people develop their personal spiritual life
10. Has a strong prayer life
11. Maintains confidentiality
12. Presents the gospel as a servant with the love of Christ
13. Is fully present and engaged with the challenges of this world and our local community and supports outreach missions
14. Serves the local community and is a shepherd of the congregation, setting an example for others
15. Embraces the role as spiritual leader of the church and the associated responsibilities:
 - a. Sets strategic direction
 - b. Develops organizational talent
 - c. Delegates responsibility efficiently
 - d. Manages conflict effectively

CONNECTIONS

Connections refers to all relationships built outside the church itself, including denominational connections at a local, state, and national level, as well as community connections we support financially, or by mobilizing volunteers or resources to partner with them. These connections are a vital part of guiding our search for the right pastor, and providing clarity for who we are as a church body, and what we support. Below is a summary of each connection, how FSBC supports them, how each aligns, or does not align with FSBC's core values and mission statement.

Denominational Connections

1. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) is a network of churches, individuals, and partners equipping each other for ministry and seeking the transformation of God's world. CBF takes a modernist/liberal religious view (more freedom in interpretation of Scripture). Their understanding of Baptist faith and practice is expressed by emphasis on freedom in biblical interpretation and congregational governance, the participation of women and men in all aspects of church leadership and Christian ministry, and religious liberty for all people. FSBC currently supports CBF with \$5,000 per year.

2. Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)

Southern Baptist Convention is a collection of like-minded churches working in cooperation with one another to impact the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ. The cooperative program provided fuel for this mission of reaching every person with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their views are outlined in the Baptist Faith & Message 2000.

3. Baptist State Convention of N.C.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts to support the Baptist State Convention of NC and the Southern Baptist Convention missions and ministries. These gifts are used by SBC entities to send and support missionaries, train pastors, and assist other ministry leaders. FSBC currently gives \$4,200 to the cooperative program yearly. These funds are divided among national and state conventions and can be designated to only state if we wish. The following are three programs FSBC are closely associated.

I. Baptists on Mission

Baptist on Mission (BOM) exists to Glorify God by involving churches and Christians in meeting human needs in Jesus' name. There are 19 ministries of Baptist on Mission. FSBC currently gives \$5,000 annually to Baptists on Mission.

II. Student Mobilization- Deep Impact

Deep Impact Missions weeks are pre-packaged weeklong mission experiences for middle and high school students. Youth get the opportunity to participate in a variety of missions including construction, VBS, sports, evangelism, prayer walks, and more. FSBC youth have taken part in these mission trips in Red Springs, and Oak Island (Caswell) and are planning to take part in an international trip with Deep Impact in summer of 2025. FSBC children in grades 1-5 participated in the half-week Children's Deep Impact program at Munda Vista in 2019.

III. Baptist Children's Homes of NC

Baptist Children's Homes of NC (BCH) offers hope and healing to children and families in crisis and has existed for more than 130 years. BCH serves all 100 NC counties with locations in 30 communities throughout NC, SC, and Guatemala. FSBC participates in BCH food roundups, donates non-perishables and paper goods, as well as monetary donations.

4. Sandy Creek Baptist Association (SCBA)

Since 1758, their purpose is to partner with local churches and provide assistance, training, resources, mission opportunities, and more as they seek to fulfill the Great Commission in their communities. The SCBA is a network of over 50 Baptist churches in Chatham and Lee counties and offer support for church strengthening, missions, and leadership development teams. FSBC contributes \$4,700 annually to SCBA.

Community Connections

1. Reach Out Pregnancy Center (Included in annual budget)

Reach Out Pregnancy Center is a local, non-profit, life-affirming, Christ-centered ministry. They provide a safe environment for the spiritual, emotional, and practical well-being of any woman in an unplanned pregnancy. FSBC gives \$2,200 annually to this organization. We also volunteer for yard workdays, cleaning and organizing the center's offices and boutique, hosting baby showers to support the center's needs, and collecting items off their monthly needs list.

2. Bread of Life Ministries (Included in annual budget)

Bread of Life Ministries is a non-denominational community outreach. Their purpose is to help and listen when needed, teach those who need it, provide positive role models, feed the hungry, clothe those who lack, encourage the downcast, and walk alongside neighbors until they can walk on their own. Their vision is to see lives renewed, and to restore hope, joy, peace, purpose, and fulfillment through the practical and hands-on demonstrations of God's love. FSBC gives \$2,500 per year financial support. We also provide volunteers for workdays as needed, and the outreach committee sponsors meals quarterly for their Saturday meal program.

3. Christian United Outreach Center (Included in annual budget)

The purpose of this organization is to provide the basic needs of food, clothing, or spiritual guidance during crisis situations to residents of Lee County. FSBC gives \$3,300 per year financial support. We also collect canned goods at least 1-2 times per year and have held at least two “Purse Parties” where used purses are collected and stuffed with hygiene items and donated for women in crisis.

4. Crossroads Kentucky Ministry (Included in annual budget)

Crossroads Community Baptist Church is a ministry in Stearns, KY that is active in a variety of outreach ministries, including The Lord’s Café (food ministry), and The Light Community (housing). The Lord’s Café serves free lunches to the community and The Light Community is a homestead-based ministry composed of tiny homes for individuals and families during tough times. FSBC gives \$1,500 per year financial support. In the past, we have sent groups to help with the Thanksgiving meal at the Lord’s Café.

5. Samaritans Purse- Operation Christmas Child (OCC)

The mission of OCC is to demonstrate God’s love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan’s Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations. FSBC partners annually by providing packed OCC shoe boxes as well as shipping costs.

6. Salvation Army of Lee County

The Salvation Army is an international movement, an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible, its ministry is motivated by the love of God, and its mission is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in His name without discrimination. They offer local programs that will invest in optimizing spiritual, physical and emotional health within a community. FSBC partners with Salvation Army of Lee Co. each year participating in their Angel Tree ministry and providing bell ringers for the “red kettle” Christmas collections.

7. HAVEN

HAVEN is a non-profit organization committed to providing safety to victims and survivors of domestic violence and rape/sexual assault. FSBC has partnered with HAVEN providing hygiene kits, women’s care kits, children’s activity kits when needed.

8. Outreach Mission of Sanford NC

Outreach Mission Inc. is operated by a board of directors that oversee the Men’s and Women’s homeless shelters. They work to link clients with needed services and job openings to lead them on a path to successful permanent housing. FSBC has partnered with OMI collecting needed items with groups like Hands & Feet WMU.

9. Stevens Center

Provides services and programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Many programs are offered through the center including NC Innovations that provides a variety of services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities avoiding institutional care and promoting independence, control, and community integration. FSBC

supports the center by providing youth volunteer servers for their biggest fundraising dinner of the year and their “First Friday” game nights.

10. Global Outreach International (GOI)

Interdenominational missions sending agency that partners with the church in the sending of cross-cultural missionaries. Their vision is to send the Good News to every nation and their mission is showing and sharing God’s love. FSBC had been supporting financially when Jon & Jess Bridges were serving with GOI in Ethiopia.

11. The Forsaken Children (TFC)

TFC is a foundation that Joe Bridges founded while on mission in Ethiopia. Their work rescues Ethiopian children from the streets, restores them to family, school, and rebuilds young lives through education and the Gospel.

Community Profile

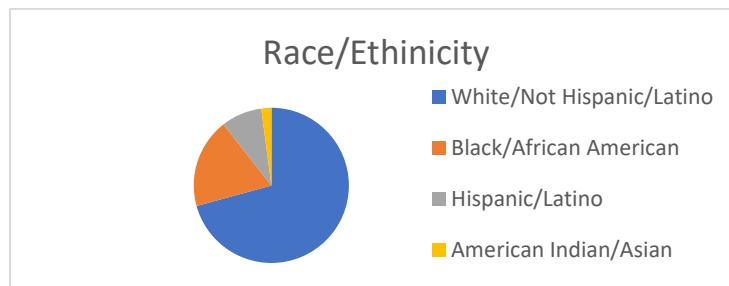
Rural Location

Flat Springs Baptist Church sits in the heart of the Deep River Township on Old U.S. Highway 1 in the northern most part of Lee County in the central Piedmont region of North Carolina. Lee County, outside the city of Sanford, is 90% rural. Our corridor leads north to the capital city of Raleigh (44 miles to Raleigh-Durham International Airport) and south to Southern Pines/Pinehurst (37 miles to Pinehurst Golf Resort), as well as to Fayetteville, home of Fort Liberty and the 82nd Airborne Division and Special Operations Command. Our church is in the flight path of the Raleigh Executive Jetport which is 35 miles from Raleigh and 3.2 miles from the church.

The Local Neighborhood

According to the 2020-2022 U.S Census Bureau, the Deep River Township has a population of 2,547 with median household income of \$75,086. Most residents are typically families and retirees, with up to 80% owning their homes.

The MissionInsite tool from the Baptist State Convention in 2023 indicated the population within five miles of our church address is 6,552, with 2,607 households. Median age in Deep River is 51.7 vs. 36.9 in Lee County. Lee County claims 24.0% children under 18 years old to Deep River's 15.6%. English is the primary language spoken in Deep River homes with 4-6% speaking Spanish. There are 2,221 registered voters for the Deep River Precinct according to the Lee County Board of Elections, with voters trending conservative.



Schools, Higher Education, and Job Training

The local K-5 elementary school was named “Head of the Class” by the Lee County Educational Foundation three times since 2016, including in 2024, and serves 500+ children. Within 50 miles, multiple colleges, universities, and community colleges are easily accessible. It is common for students to commute to local community college locations, Campbell University, Duke University, North Carolina State University, and UNC-Chapel Hill. Central Carolina Community College’s (CCCC) Sanford campus is located within 11 miles and is a public accredited community college serving Lee, Harnett, and Chatham Counties.

Business and Industry

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that the two Industries in Lee County with the highest total annual payroll are Manufacturing and Educational Services. The economy of Lee County employs 28.4k people. Central Carolina Enterprise Park is located 3.5 miles from the church

with neighbors including Caterpillar, Astellas Pharma, Inc. GKN, and Pfizer. Other prominent companies in Lee County include Coty, Static Control, and Pilgrim's. Four additional industrial parks are proposed including one in Moncure, which will be the largest economic development in our state's history, creating 7,500 jobs by year 2027.

Churches

Between Lee County/Sanford/parts of Harnett County, there is a record of 171 churches as of June 2024. In the Deep River Township, there are at least eight including Flat Springs Baptist Church, a United Methodist Church, two independent Christian Churches, and several primarily African-American churches.

Sandy Creek Baptist Association (SCBA)

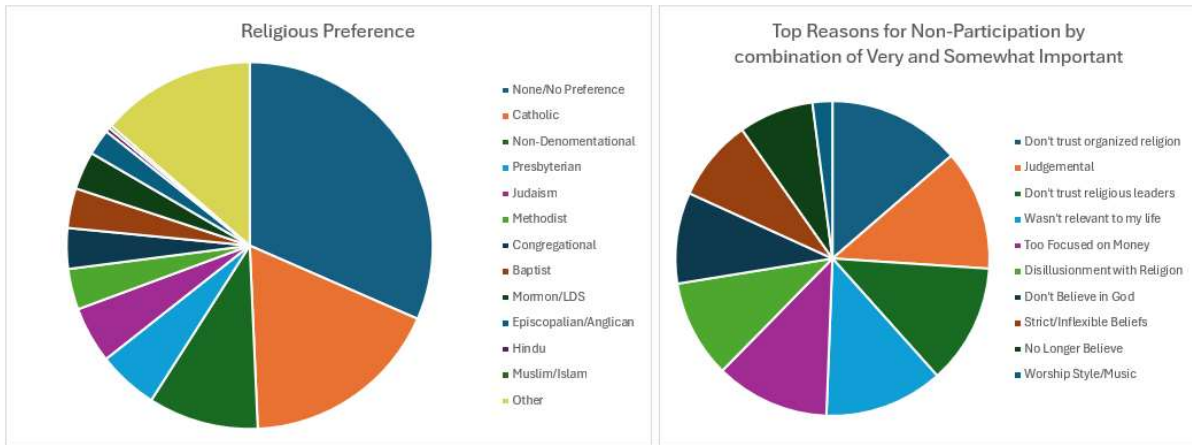
Flat Springs Baptist Church, as well as Moncure Baptist Church, originated from mother church Gum Springs Baptist Church, and all three are members of the SCBA. The stated purpose of the SCBA is to partner with churches providing assistance, training, resources, and mission opportunities. The Association maintains and deploys a rapid response trailer for disaster relief and when partnering with Baptist Men/Serve NC of the State Baptist Convention.

Religious Preferences

The following information is from the 2021 MissionInsite *American Beliefs Study* of the 7.5 mile study area around our church address for religious preferences, reasons for non-participation, beliefs about God, beliefs about Jesus, and social and moral issues.

Beliefs about God	AGREE	DISAGREE
God is love and invites the world into a loving relationship	56%	16%
I have a relationship with one living God	47%	23%
I believe God created a literal Heaven/Hell	33%	37%
I don't believe a god exists	18%	57%
I believe there are many gods	16%	53%

Beliefs about Jesus	AGREE	DISAGREE
Belief in Jesus does not require participation in church	63%	12%
People in the church do not behave as Jesus would behave	61%	8%
Jesus was both divine and human	50%	18%
Jesus actually rose from the dead as the Bible teaches	43%	24%
Jesus rules now and always as Lord of heaven and earth	41%	26%
I have a personal relationship with Jesus	40%	34%
Jesus is the only way for human salvation from sin	35%	35%
Jesus was the expected Jewish Messiah	34%	17%
Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life while on earth	32%	30%
Jesus was a good and wise moral teacher but no more	22%	44%
Jesus was a great prophet only	15%	45%



Social and Moral Issues (in no ranking order)	AGREE	DISAGREE
I believe abortion should become illegal	22%	63%
I believe marriage is a relationship between one man and one woman only	35%	49%
I believe same-sex marriage must remain legal and protected	60%	20%
I believe religion must play a primary role in shaping social morality	40%	36%
I believe some form of amnesty program for illegal immigrants who have been working and living in this country should be implemented	62%	21%
I believe strong families are key to social stability	79%	4%
I believe the science that says humans are affecting climate change	39%	33%
I believe we must be good stewards of the environment even if it means restricting natural resource development	67%	16%
I believe we need to promote sensible gun laws to reduce gun violence	66%	18%
I do not believe children are adequately taught good moral standards today	69%	13%

Implications of Growth

With the rapid growth of business and industry in and near the Deep River Township, we anticipate the immediate need for additional housing and community resources and amenities. Population Trend data predicts a significant increase in population and in the number of households by 2033. MissionInsite data points to optimism with over 53% agreeing they have “great hope for the future of their community.” We pray that Flat Springs Baptist Church will be a lighthouse pointing to Jesus Christ and that the Spirit will lead us to and through opportunities to grow in our faith and to grow disciples.

OUR VISION

Our heritage shows that Flat Springs Baptist Church has always had very devoted Christian volunteers and staff leading the church. Our vision is to continue that legacy and rebuild our staff and membership. To achieve this vision, we need to provide an inviting environment to all worshippers where all members are friendly and intentional in welcoming visitors and making a place for them. When families move to a new community, the first place they look for a new church home is online, so we propose that we update our church website as well as add a member portal for more detailed, clear communication between all entities of the church.

The Mission Team identified the core values that our church is already operating under and assessed that these values are indeed scripture-based and God-centered. The Future Team proposes the following simplified mission statement: We exist to Glorify, Guide, Grow, and Give.

The Leadership Team focused on identifying the characteristics, style and leadership qualities most desired for the next Senior Pastor. The team identified strengths and weaknesses of our current leadership and obtained congregational feedback on pastoral leadership qualities desired. As a result, the Leadership Team recommends (1) review of the church constitution, as soon as possible, and every five years moving forward, (2) development of leadership training programs as well as mentors for leaders and future leaders in our church, (3) educate and inspire members to be intentional and financially responsible for their tithing and giving, and (4) ensure our services are spirit-filled and self-assess our current style of worship to make sure it is meeting the spiritual needs of the current members, visitors, and community.

The Connections Team identified the relationships we have with different associations, groups, and ministries at the local, state and national level. The church supports some organizations through the annual church budget process using tithed monies, and others are supported by designated offerings, donations of physical items, and/or volunteerism. The Connections Team has made two strategic recommendations. (1) Discontinue financial support of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, which is no longer aligned with our church values and recommend to the finance committee to reallocate funds. (2) Continue support of the Salvation Army but discontinue supporting the Angel Tree project, which currently does not ensure equitable gift-giving.

In summary, the Future Team believes the work of these four transition teams demonstrates that Flat Springs has been an integral part of the Deep River community as a witness and example to help further God's Kingdom. The church has been an important part of outreach into the community and a place to train and equip believers, in addition to serving as a house of prayer and for worship, fellowship, solace, and support. The church now needs to grow stronger and broaden our impact on the community, the state, the nation and the world with such scripture as Acts 1:8 in mind. We need to be prepared to share and impact the community with the gospel, especially as the community is growing and changing. The church needs to be willing to adjust to changes and evaluate current services, schedules, programs, style of music and worship, and order of worship to better serve and reach our church and surrounding community, providing a place to hear the Gospel and worship Jesus Christ. Our goal is to fulfill the Great Commission as well as provide an environment of worship filled with God's presence and the Holy Spirit.