



PASTOR SEARCH

HATTIESBURG

THE FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

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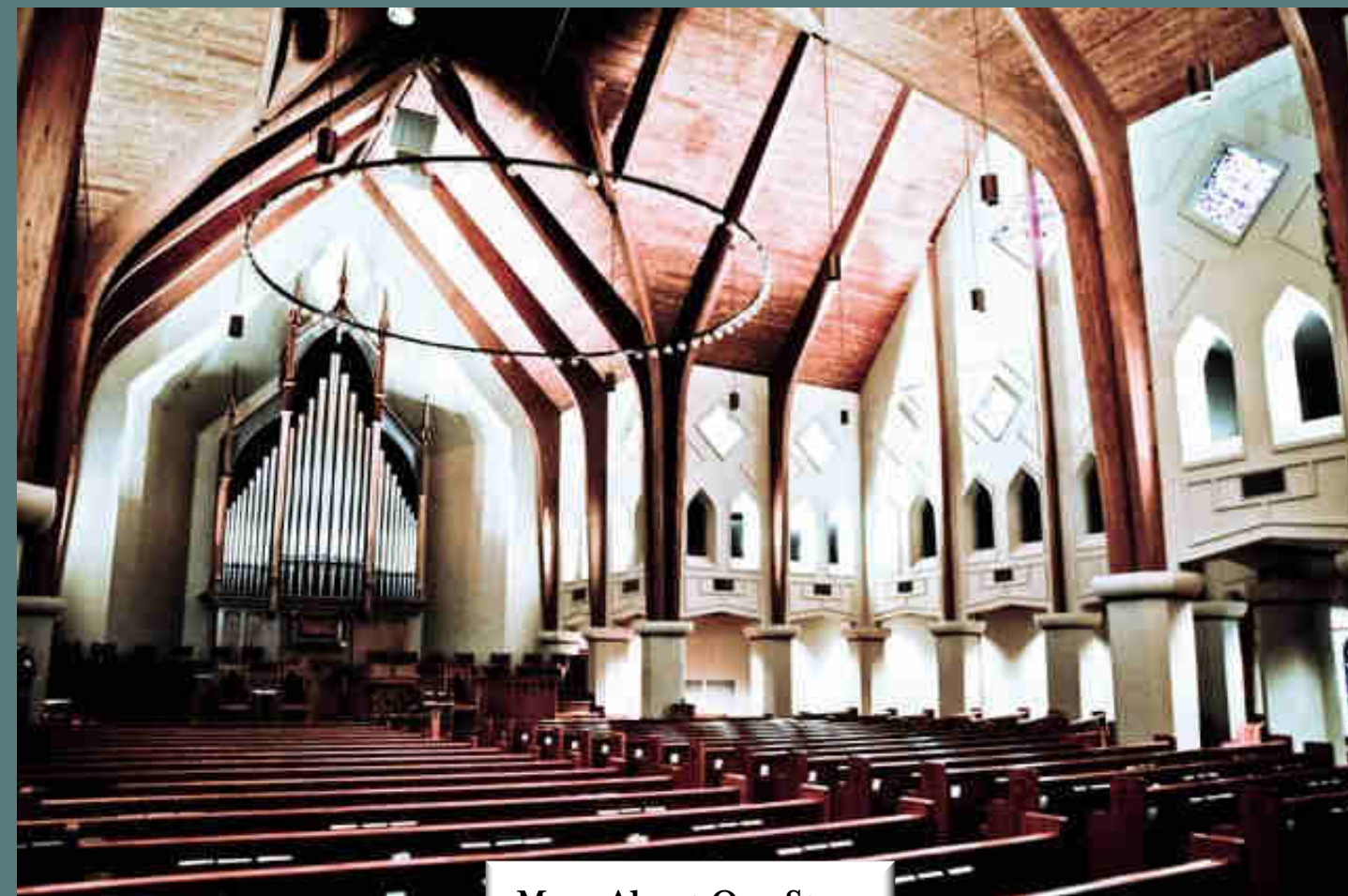
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OUR STORY

First Presbyterian has served as a faithful Gospel witness in the Hattiesburg area for 143 years, during which time we have had only nine pastors. We marvel at the goodness and faithfulness of God! As with all churches, we have had a mixture of joys and challenges, but God has graciously sustained and grown us.

We are currently coming off a painful period in the life of our church, marked by disunity and the departure of a number of beloved former members. Yet, we are experiencing healing and reconciliation and share a renewed determination to better clarify our vision, mission, and aspirations.

We are enthusiastic, hopeful, and excited about what the Lord will do through his people at FPC in the future. We are looking forward to working alongside a lead pastor who will help guide us into greater unity and Gospel mission.



[More About Our Story](#)

OUR CALLING

Vision

A church deeply formed by the Good News of Jesus Christ, experiencing and expressing God’s grace together in Hattiesburg.

First Presbyterian Church of Hattiesburg exists in the heart of Hattiesburg to be a community deeply formed by the Gospel, not simply as individuals, but together. Our identity is grounded in grace; we receive it, are changed by it, and offer it to one another and to our city. We believe that the grace of God is not abstract but something we experience and express tangibly in worship, in community life, and in mission.

We desire to be a people who reflect God’s renewing presence in every part of church life: in worship that is both doxological — directed toward God — and communal — building up one another; in deep, authentic community; and in outward service to the world. This threefold orientation is foundational. When aligned, it fosters a vibrant church culture that is joyful, hospitable, honest, and generous, deeply rooted in God’s Word and

uniquely suited to our place and time in Hattiesburg.

We envision a church where every person, no matter his or her starting point, is welcomed into a process of spiritual formation, shaped over time by worshiping, living, and serving together in the grace of God.



Mission

To make disciples of Jesus Christ who live in His hope, walk in His love, discover His peace, and multiply His grace in others.

- Worshipping Together* Regular, joyful worship that celebrates God’s glory and truth
- Living Together* Deep community life marked by fellowship, spiritual formation, and mutual care
- Serving Together* Mission and outreach initiatives that serve our city and the world with humility and love

These three domains—worshipping, living, and serving together—are the foundational rhythms of how FPC Hattiesburg carries out its mission.

Core Values

These unchanging, non-negotiable values define how we behave and what kind of people we are becoming:

- Gospel–Centered Truth* We celebrate and submit to God’s Word as the anchor of our lives.
- Joyful Community* We believe transformation happens through authentic, shared life.
- Formation Over Performance* We value deep, patient spiritual growth over superficial activity.
- Grace and Hospitality* We aim to be a place where the broken are welcomed and restored.
- Kingdom Mission* We exist not for ourselves but to serve others, reflecting Christ’s love.



OUR ASPIRATIONS

We desire to cultivate a Gospel culture—a community where grace transforms, where people experience joy, peace, and restoration, and where all are disciplined to grow closer to Jesus. We seek to love one another deeply, welcome new faces warmly, and encourage every member to serve according to his or her gifts.

We long to be a church with a clear sense of purpose, vision, and mission: rooted in beauty, truth, and majesty, yet approachable, engaging, and relevant to the next generation. Our worship will blend the richness of tradition with relevance for today, pointing always to Christ.

Together, we are committed to being a simple, missional church—making disciples, investing in the next generation, and carrying the hope of the Gospel to Hattiesburg and beyond, locally and globally. With unity of mind and community of purpose, we believe the Lord will use us to reflect His love and bring glory to His name.

OUR CHURCH BODY

Membership

- 687 communing and 131 non-communing (covenant children) as of October 2025
- 290-300 average Sunday morning worship attendance during the past two years

Leadership

- 14 elders
- 29 deacons
- 15 staff
 - 5 full-time
 - 10 part-time
- [Staff directory](#)

Budget

- Budget of \$1.825 million for the 2025 ministry year



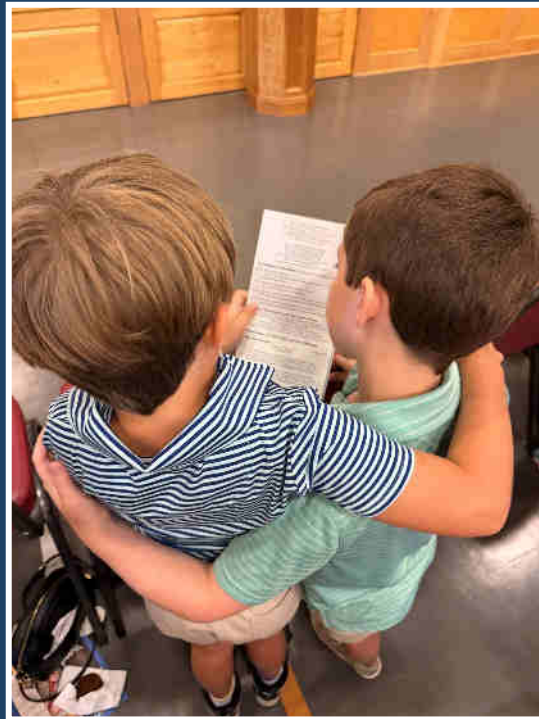
OUR MINISTRIES

Children

FPC's children's ministry is one of our biggest strengths, drawing young families to our church. Always seeking to find creative ways to engage our children with the Gospel, the children's ministry is showing the love of Christ to and making a difference in the lives of our covenant children.

Using curriculum from Great Commission Publications, we seek to nurture and instruct children age 2 to 6th grade in God's Word, teaching them the Bible as the true revelation of God's plan of redemption and encouraging them to see their need of a Savior by faith alone in Christ alone to the glory of God alone.

A highlight each year is Vacation Bible School when typically 300 children from within and without the church hear the gospel through creative means. We are currently using a curriculum based on The Chronicles of Narnia.



Students

Those children then enter the Student Ministry in 7th grade well-grounded in Biblical knowledge and eager to participate in the ministry of the church. The focus of our Student Ministry is to disciple our students as they grow in grace and seek to become more Christlike.



Students in 7th - 12th grades meet for fellowship, singing, and Bible study on Wednesday nights during the fall and spring and have opportunities to participate in small group studies, youth retreats, and community service projects throughout the year.

Women

The wisdom and unique giftedness of women in their various stages of life are highly valued and relied upon in our church. Women serve alongside men in various ministries and committees. We seek to encourage women in their walks with Christ by holding weekly Bible studies, social and special events, as well as many service opportunities. Our women find great joy in showing hospitality as well as supporting ministries such as Reformed University Fellowship and Palmer Home for Children.



Senior Adults

Comprising 15% percent of our membership, senior adults are treasured members of this body of believers. First Presbyterian Church ministers to our senior adults through regular times of food, fellowship and Bible study.

Music

We are grateful for a joyful and vibrant music ministry that invites everyone to join in worship through song. At the heart of our services is the voice of the congregation — the most important instrument we have!

We cherish the timeless hymns and songs of our Reformed and Presbyterian tradition, while also embracing newer



music that reflects our faith and theology. Our worship is richly supported by instrumental accompaniment including piano, organ, and other instruments that enhance and support congregational singing.

Our Sanctuary Choir helps lead the congregation each Sunday morning, and our children are encouraged to lift their voices too through our children’s choirs. There’s a place for every voice in our worship!

Adult Education

FPC has a number of excellent and gifted teachers. We currently have a variety of Sunday school classes, both mixed gender and gender specific. This includes classes for college students, singles and young adults, and special needs adults. We also offer Bible study on Wednesday evenings.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Adult Bible Fellowship (*singles and couples*)
Study: Book of Revelation

Dorcas (*women*)
Study: The 23rd Psalm

Asaph/McIntosh (*singles and couples*)
Study: Book of Ecclesiastes,
Joshua, II Corinthians,
“A Christian View of Man”
by J. Gresham Machen

Leonard Lowrey (*men*)
Study: “How Jesus Runs the Church”
by Dr. Guy Waters

Priscilla and Aquila (*singles and couples*)
Study: The Minor Prophets

Caleb/Lucas (*singles and couples*)
Study: Book of Matthew

Sojourners (*younger singles and couples*)
Study: “What Then Is Wise?”: A Study of Proverbs



College Ministry

Our partnership with Reformed University Fellowship dates back to 1973 when the first RUF chapter began at the University of Southern Mississippi. We enthusiastically support this ministry and aspire to welcome more students to worship and fellowship with us during their college years.

Small Groups

We dedicate one Sunday evening each month for fellowship groups, providing opportunities for members to build relationships, share life together, and grow in faith. Each group is guided by an elder and has the flexibility to set its own meeting schedule. This is a ministry area we aspire to strengthen.



Missions

From its beginning, FPC has been a missions-minded church. We currently support nearly 60 missionaries and organizations as a way of extending the Gospel into our world. We also believe that our response to the Gospel involves praying and going as well as giving; therefore, we sponsor local and international mission trips, develop connections with our missionaries through regular reports, and have hosted an annual missions conference for over 50 years.

Local mercy ministries we support include The Lighthouse Rescue Mission (home for women and children) and Christian Services (help and support for the poor). We seek to bring a gospel witness to bear in our community by partnering with a local public school in an under-resourced area that is named for one of our first members (in 1903!).

Fifteen percent of our 2025 budget goes to support local, national, and international ministries.



OUR COMMUNITY

The population of Hattiesburg is approximately 50,000 with approximately 150,000 in the Pine Belt region. The University of Southern Mississippi has approximately 16,000 students and William Carey University has approximately 4,400 students.

Hattiesburg is called the “Hub City” due to its proximity to Jackson, New Orleans, and the Gulf Coast.

First Presbyterian Church is in Grace Presbytery and one of three PCA churches in the city. Our campus is situated on 11 acres along Hardy Street/U.S. 98, the primary east-west corridor through Hattiesburg.

Schools

FPC families send their children to Forrest County or Lamar County public schools, homeschool, or private school.

Many choose to send them to [Presbyterian Christian School](#), a K-12th grade school with a lovely campus approximately 15 minutes from the church.

Hattiesburg is home to Camp Shelby (a major military base), and two sprawling medical facilities, Forrest General Hospital and Merit Health Wesley.

Residents enjoy rich arts and cultural events as well as sporting events.

The Longleaf Trace (pictured) is a 41-mile stretch that runs from downtown Hattiesburg westward to Prentiss. It is perfect for walking, running, or biking.

Hattiesburg boasts great shopping, dining (both casual and upscale), and most amenities of big cities—just without the hassle!

[Click here for a detailed overview of Hattiesburg and the Pine Belt region.](#)

PASTOR PROFILE

His Qualifications

- **Strong Biblical character** consistently exhibiting spiritual maturity, integrity, purity, humility, and life above reproach with a prayerful dependence on God.
- **Expository preaching of the Scriptures** that is committed to reformed and confessional theology.
- **Ordained** (or eligible for ordination) in the PCA with significant pastoral and leadership experience.

His Attributes

- A preacher with the spiritual gift of faithfully exegeting and expounding the Scriptures to engage the hearts and minds of both believers and non-believers.
- A visionary servant leader who
 - Has the spiritual capacity to inspire, motivate, and align ministries for the glory of God.
 - Aims to honor and celebrate the ways the Lord has worked through First Presbyterian Church while embracing His sovereignty and moving forward into the future with faith.
 - Is focused on multi-generational evangelism and discipleship, locally and globally.
 - Is loving and bold in sharing Biblical truths and providing honest answers to sincere questions about today's key cultural issues.
 - Has multifaceted ministry experience with a collaborative style of working with the Session and staff.
- A humble shepherd who is intentionally relatable with the spiritual and emotional awareness to love and cherish the people of God, offering encouragement and praying for them faithfully.

Please see [Our Pastor's Character & Oversight](#) for an in-depth description of our aspiration for our next senior pastor.



APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply or recommend a candidate, please contact one of the following:

Rev. J. Edward (Ed) Norton of McGowan Global Institute (MGI):
ed@mcgowanglobal.com or (901) 461-8206

The Pastor Search Committee of FPC:
pastorsearch@fpchattiesburg.org

To learn more, visit fpchattiesburg.org/pastorsearch.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[FPC Hattiesburg](#)

[City of Hattiesburg](#)

[Grace Presbytery](#)

[Visit Hattiesburg](#)

[USM RUF](#)

[The Area Development Partnership](#)

[Presbyterian Christian School](#)

[University of Southern Mississippi](#)





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