



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

ROME

*Seeking His Heart    Being His Hands*

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

## CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

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## LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in First Baptist Church of Rome, Georgia. This document is designed to provide an overview of our church, our congregation, and our community.

Over the past 55 years, First Baptist Church of Rome has been blessed to have had only three senior pastors. Most recently, Rev. Matt Duvall was called as senior pastor in December 2016 and resigned in February 2021. Per the church bylaws, deacon chair Tara Inman worked with personnel committee chair Jason Sanker to identify representative members of the church body to form a Pastor Search Committee. Janice Davis was appointed the chair of the Search Committee, and the ten members were elected by the church in June 2021.

After interviewing the ministerial and church staff, the committee hosted several listening sessions to gather feedback from the congregation to discern the future leader FBC Rome needs. We seek to follow God's guidance along the path that ultimately leads to the pastor God has called for us. Our committee and congregation have been committed to prayer and discernment for this process and our new Pastor, and we trust in God's guidance. The profile that follows is our way of sharing our findings with you. It outlines our church history, values, and aspirations for the future, and the desired characteristics of our new Senior Pastor. As such, it provides insight into our past, present, and future.

The past two years have been challenging for many churches, but despite these challenges, FBC Rome only missed one Sunday of services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the work of our excellent staff and dedicated lay leaders, along with the guidance of our strategic visioning plan, our church has met these challenging times and has found new and creative ways to remain engaged with our congregation and community. Giving remained steady and even increased.

If you feel God leading you to serve in ministry with us, please send an email to [fbcromepastorsearchcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:fbcromepastorsearchcommittee@gmail.com).

### PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

Janice Davis, *Chair*

John Bennett  
Frank Clements  
Jennifer Collins

Jennie Cook  
Tara Inman  
Bobby Jones

Bobby Keith  
Mary Rolan  
Heather Shores



# Pastor Profile

First Baptist Church of Rome is seeking a Senior Pastor who nurtures congregational growth through Christ-centered preaching and teaching, collaborative leadership, responsive congregational care, and focused missions and outreach.

Based on considerable input from our congregation and experienced staff as well as support from the Center for Healthy Churches, we believe the following represents the primary ministry responsibilities and characteristics of the Senior Pastor of FBC Rome:

## PREACHING

- ◆ Prepares and delivers well-focused, biblically-based sermons that honor our traditional approach to worship
- ◆ Speaks to both the churched and unchurched and challenges a multigenerational congregation to live more Christlike
- ◆ Demonstrates intellectual and spiritual curiosity and brings the congregation along on that journey

## LEADERSHIP

- ◆ Commits, as a lifetime learner and teacher, to the continued spiritual development of the congregation, staff, and themselves
- ◆ Shares their wisdom and knowledge as a proven administrator with experience leading a multi-person ministerial staff
- ◆ Supports, empowers, and nurtures the ministers and staff as a collaborative leader
- ◆ Cultivates and inspires lay leadership
- ◆ Maintains cherished traditions while seeking innovation

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE

- ◆ Demonstrates responsiveness to pastoral care needs including visitation, counseling, and personal contact.
- ◆ Shepherds all members with compassion and empathy
- ◆ Remains comfortably accessible, approachable, and well-informed

## MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

- ◆ Serves actively in the local, national, and international mission efforts of FBC Rome
- ◆ Represents FBC Rome well through broad faith-based community involvement
- ◆ Articulates a transformative vision for being the hands of Christ in our community and world
- ◆ Explores innovative ways to engage a more diverse population

I  
PRAY FOR  
OUR CHURCH  
AND WORLD



# Our Beliefs

*“Seeking His Heart . . . Being His Hands.”*

The mission of First Baptist Church Rome is to be a community of believers where we seek to mold our lives after the heart of Jesus Christ, and where we seek to be His hands in missions and ministry.

## OUR CORE VALUES

In character - *Christlikeness*

In service - *Leadership*

In relationships - *Family*

In heritage - *Baptist*

In all things - *Prayer*

## COVENANT OF CHURCH MEMBERS

Led by the Spirit of God to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and having entered into the fellowship of the Spirit through His Church, we, the members of the Church, prayerfully make this covenant with one another and with our Heavenly Father.

We respect all faith traditions, but we shall cherish our heritage as Baptist Christians. We shall hold dear the principles of soul competency, the priesthood of all believers, the autonomy of the local Church, and the Bible as our trusted and authoritative guide in matters of faith and practice.

As a group of gathered believers, we understand ourselves to be a part of a family of faith. Therefore, we shall love, forgive, admonish, encourage, serve, and pray for one another—always in the spirit of being sisters and brothers in Christ.

Jesus Christ shall be our model for living. We recognize that none of us shall ever attain his perfection; yet, we shall always strive to grow in likeness of Him. His heart shall be our guide for the way we minister, organize ourselves, conduct our business, and treat others.

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ on earth; therefore, we are the hands of Christ. Knowing this about ourselves, we shall be satisfied with nothing less than being leaders in Christian service. We can only accomplish this goal by serving more. Our Master is our example. We know that we serve Christ himself when we minister to the least, the last, the lost, and the overlooked.

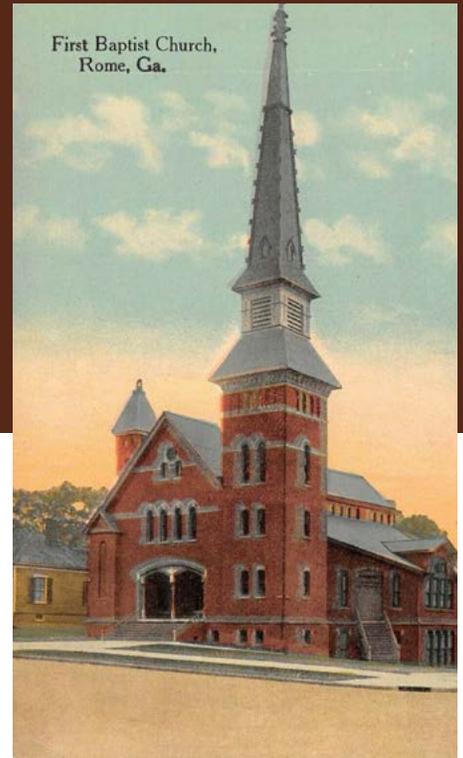
We believe that, on our own, we are not strong enough, wise enough, nor good enough to accomplish our mission as a Church. Therefore, we trust in God's strength, God's wisdom, and God's righteousness to empower us. Only through prayer do we accomplish our mission as a Church.

# Our History

FBC Rome was formed in 1835 and moved to its current location in 1855.

The church's current motto is, "Seeking His Heart ... Being His Hands." In the late 1800's, a similar motto was used, "Saved to Serve." This emphasis on service has been a common theme throughout the history of the church.

For many years, FBC Rome was a leader in the Southern Baptist Convention. In the early 1990s, the church became aligned with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.



## MAJOR CHURCH MILESTONES

- 1835 Six people met for worship in May and established the Baptist Church of Christ at Rome (*now First Baptist Church*).
- 1848 The Sunday School was organized
- 1855 The church moved to a new building at the corner of E. Fourth Avenue and E. First St. The women of the church collected money for a bell, which has been used in all three buildings, including the current one, since it was originally installed.
- 1860s During the Civil War regular services were discontinued from January 1864 to October 1865, during which time federal troops occupied the church and used it as a hospital center and headquarters for a cavalry unit, leaving it in a state of disrepair.
- 1868-1876 Pastorate of Luther Rice Gwaltney, founder of the Cherokee Baptist Female College which later, after gaining the support of church members Col. and Mrs. Alfred Shorter, became Shorter College.
- 1884 Constructed the third sanctuary
- 1930 Sunday morning services of worship first aired on the radio
- 1943 First Vacation Bible School held
- 1958 Constructed the fourth (current) sanctuary
- 1975 Sunday morning services of worship regularly televised
- 1977 First female deacons elected
- 1999 The church undertook a \$5.5 million renovation of its facilities
- 2000 Church website launched
- 2003 William S. Davies Homeless Shelter founded
- 2005 Joined Baptist General Association of Virginia
- 2006 Church Carillon installed
- 2008 First female Chair of Deacons elected



# Our Ministries

## WORSHIP

The love and grace of God compel us to worship. Each week the congregation is led to seek God's presence through biblical preaching and traditional hymns accompanied by piano, the largest pipe organ in Northwest Georgia, and a talented and dedicated choir. Each Sunday morning's worship service is carefully planned around a specific theme. Our Sanctuary Choir, Youth Choir and Children's Choirs, soloists, handbells, and other instrumentalists join with the ministers to guide the congregation.

Every aspect of the service is worshipful, engaging and hope-filled. Throughout the church year our congregation treasures traditional services that include "Christmas at First Baptist," a concert featuring all choirs and orchestra, our Candlelight Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and a joy-filled Easter Sunday service.





## CHILDREN

From the time a baby arrives, they are welcomed into the church family. A minister helps parents plan for their parent-child dedication service. Resources are provided to help equip parents to nurture their child's faith at every age and play an active role in their spiritual development.

Sunday mornings include Bible Study, where teachers lovingly welcome children and teach age-appropriate lessons to begin building their faith. Infants and preschool children are cared for during the worship hour, while younger elementary children have the option to attend Children's Church, which helps prepare them for worship with their larger church family.

The focus of our family ministry is on educating and empowering children at every age to know that they are an important part of their church family, and that their expressions of faith are valuable and important. On Wednesday nights children gather for music, missions & Bible basics to prepare them to lead in worship & service. Curriculum is chosen carefully based on each age group's specific needs, ensuring that a comprehensive selection of Bible stories & faith concepts are covered by the time they are ready to move to the youth group. Special events occurring throughout the year include baptism classes, 6th grade retreat, Fall Festival, Easter Eggstravaganza, Cool Yule Christmas camp, and more. Passport Kid's Camp, Vacation Bible School & weekly fellowship activities keep us connected through the summer.

First Baptist's Weekday Preschool is a faith-based program for Pre-K aged children that helps them to develop physically, emotionally, socially & spiritually while building educational readiness through the WEE learn curriculum.





## STUDENTS

Students in seventh through twelfth grades will find that faithful learning is linked to service, service is fueled by discipleship, and discipleship produces a whole new way of relating to the world.

Youth retreats, summer camps, Bible studies, local and international mission experiences, and hanging out with people who care are some of the avenues that allow our students to create deep and meaningful relationships with other Christian teens. Students have the opportunity to attend Sunday morning bible study, weekly small groups, and weekly Wednesday night activities during the school year.

A summer packed with special events awaits teenagers each year. Lake days, campouts, mission projects, mystery lunches, bible studies by member's pools and so much more keep teenagers engaged and growing in relationship to each other and with Jesus.

Chapel Choir is open to any youth and normally rehearses weekly. The choir leads in worship periodically and sings for special seasonal services.

Bible study and fellowship opportunities are provided for the college students who come to Rome to attend the local colleges and those studying elsewhere who come home to FBC on weekends and breaks.





## ADULTS

Adults of all ages find enjoyable avenues for the development of their walk with the Lord. A variety of Bible Study options exist on Sunday mornings to allow adults to develop their faith with others at a similar stage in life. Bible Study groups do not just meet on Sundays, but they also enjoy having socials with their families and gatherings with childcare provided by the church.

The church offers seminars open to adults of all ages on Wednesday nights and occasionally on Sunday nights. These five-week sessions take participants in-depth into topics that nurture life-long faith development.

Women of the Church congregate for Bible Study together with a group on Sunday evening and another on Monday morning. These small groups offer intimate connections to members and are also open to the community.

Each year the Men's Ministry sponsors two-three steak dinners with an inspirational male speaker. Other social activities are planned throughout the year to allow the men of the church to connect and grow in their faith together in a variety of informal settings.

## SENIOR ADULTS

The Senior Adult Ministry hosts luncheons with special guests and entertainment. Day trips are planned multiple times each year. The senior adults enjoy traveling together to domestic and international sites.

The time may come when a member is less able to attend worship or church activities. The Extended Family Ministry stays in touch through visits, calls, and cards. Deacons and ministers lead worship and serve communion regularly in local retirement communities and homes.



# Our Congregation

FBC Rome has a resident membership of about 1,200, with an overall membership of about 2,000. The membership encompasses a wide range of ages and longevity at the church. While 30 percent have been members for 30 years or more, about half the current members have joined since 1996. The growth continues. More than 100 members have joined by baptism and 268 by transfer of membership or statement of faith since 2011. Overall, the church has experienced net growth in membership of more than 10 percent since 2000.

The Deacon Board of First Baptist Rome is composed of 42 active deacons who are divided into three panels of fourteen deacons each. The term of service for deacons is three years. After serving a three-year term, a deacon is eligible for re-election after the lapse of one year. Deacons' meetings are held once a month unless otherwise needed.

The deacons function with their own set of officers and deacon body committees. Each active deacon is assigned to serve on a deacon body committee which is linked to a member of the ministerial staff. The purpose of the deacon committees is to provide support to the assigned minister as he/she carries out the responsibilities of his/her area of ministry.

Much of the work of the church is done through standing committees or ministry teams. Standing committees are comprised of church members and chaired by lay leaders. Committee members are nominated by the Committee on Committees and voted on by the church. Ministry Teams carry out ongoing ministry-related tasks on behalf of the church and meet as needed. Ministry Teams are open to any member of the congregation at any time. A member of the ministerial staff is assigned to each committee and Ministry Team to act as a liaison between the group and the church staff.

A few of FBC's standing committees are the Adult Education Committee, Broadcast Ministry Team, Budget Preparation Committee, Children's Ministry Committee, Health Ministry Team, Properties Committee, and Missions Committee. There are many avenues in which our members choose to serve, all in the name of Christ.

## Our Vision

FBC Rome currently has an established strategic vision in place, *Together We*.

This vision focuses on five components of church life:

*Together We -  
Share, Worship, Serve,  
Connect and Disciple*

We temporarily suspended our work on the deployment of this visioning process in March, 2020 due to the global pandemic.

We are looking forward to seeing how our new senior pastor will lead us as we again focus on the future of FBC Rome.

# Our Stewardship

FBC Rome has a cherished tradition of faithful and generous stewardship. Thanks to the faithful generosity of our members, FBC Rome is accomplishing its mission without the burden of any outstanding debt. Our love for Christ is demonstrated daily by our generous support of our church budget. Even during COVID in 2020 and 2021, our congregation has continued to support FBC Rome financially and enabled us to continue the work of supporting our missions at home and abroad as well as supporting the administrative expenses of FBC Rome.

## 2020-2021 EXPENDITURES

Missions & Ministry	\$340,347
Growing in Christlikeness	\$68,336
Worshiping & Support	\$141,492
Leadership	\$715,894
Office and Clerical	\$333,928
Facility and Administration	\$392,989
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,992,986</b>



<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Leadership	<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Missions & Ministry
<span style="color: red;">■</span> Office & Clerical Support	<span style="color: teal;">■</span> Growing in Christlikeness
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Facilities	<span style="color: purple;">■</span> Worship & Support

Faithful giving provides over 90 percent of our budget in the form of regular receipts, special offerings, and designated funds. The balance of our budget is funded primarily through the generous donations of the FBC Foundation. FBC church leaders and ministerial staff work together to ensure a balanced budget every year. We ended the 2021 fiscal year on September 30th with a surplus of funds.

In keeping with the tradition of stewardship, we have increased our budget for the fiscal year 2022 by 5 percent to help support the many ministries and missions of the church.

## BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

In our 2021 to 2022 budget, we have budgeted \$30,000 to be put in our capital improvements budget in anticipation of major expenses in this area.

The current value of First Baptist Church Foundation is \$4.6 million.

Our Offering for Global Missions goal of \$37,000 has been met for the past several years.

# Our Missions

FBC Rome has a longstanding tradition of supporting missions, both locally and around the world. Our commitment to being the “Hands of Christ” is reflected in our annual budget that allots over 17 percent to mission support. Additionally, Sunday School classes and individual members donate untold personal resources, both financially and physically, to support missions. The current FBC Foundation was established in April 2006 using funds that existed before that organizing date. The Foundation now serves as a vessel for managing perpetual gifts to the church. The proceeds from the Foundation are used to supplement the church’s budgetary contribution to missions. Those Foundation funds double what we can do for missions around the world, and the current value of the Foundation is \$4.6 million.

It is our philosophy that missions be done with a holistic approach. This focus allows individual members to develop into who God has created them to be. As such, we partner with like-minded organizations that work to establish long-term relationships, believe in asset-based planning, and allow those experiencing our partnership to be self-sufficient.

## LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

*Included among our many local partnerships are:*

- ◆ Good Neighbor Ministries, a partner that provides help with temporary housing, utilities, medical, and other unexpected bills.
- ◆ Habitat for Humanity, Coosa Valley, a partner that provides homes and other construction projects for qualifying home buyers. FBC funded and led a build in 2020.
- ◆ William S. Davies Homeless Shelter, a partner that provides men’s shelter and women’s shelter for those in our community experiencing homelessness.
- ◆ Rome Floyd Community Kitchen, a partner that provides a daily hot lunch to Romans in need.
- ◆ Living Proof Recovery, a partner that provides a recovery program and women’s shelter.
- ◆ Restoration Rome, a partner that provides for needs on the front lines of the foster care crisis in our state.
- ◆ Bridges Out of Poverty, a partner that provides a 20 week Getting Ahead program for those experiencing poverty.
- ◆ Hands of Christ Day and Hands of Christ Christmas, annual events that bring members of all ages together to serve the community, rolling up their sleeves from making hospital baskets to cleaning up riverbanks. Christ’s love is shared at Christmas through gifts to families in need.



## STATE AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

*Among the state and national missions we participate in are:*

- ♦ **Disaster Relief** – FBC responds when disaster strikes. We work through existing contacts in affected areas to assess and provide for real needs whether they be people, products, or financial resources.
- ♦ **Morningstar Treatment Center** – FBC provides monthly funding for the organization and has been a hands-on participant in the expansion of their on-site facility.
- ♦ **Student Mission Trips** – FBC students are offered opportunities to work in the southeastern U.S. where help is needed. We've partnered with Habitat, Appalachian Outreach, The Timothy Project, and others.
- ♦ CBF Georgia is a state/regional mission connection.

## GLOBAL MISSIONS

*Globally, the presence of Christ is extended through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship field personnel whom we support through offerings and efforts from mission teams from our congregation. This has fostered relationships in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Kenya, Peru, Thailand, the Caribbean, and North America. Among our global partnerships are:*

- ♦ **Operación San Andrés** – FBC financially supports OSA, and through partnerships with South Main Baptist Church in Houston, Texas and OSA in Peru also sends a support team annually to serve Colliqué citizens.
- ♦ **Refuge of Hope** – FBC provides monthly financial support for Refuge of Hope and its field personnel, made possible by FBC's Doris White Grant for assistance to field personnel.
- ♦ **Kenya** – FBC has a history supporting ministry in Kenya. We partnered with FBC Dalton to build a child development center in Wamaganga, Kenya.
- ♦ **Middle East** – FBC has hosted field personnel from the region several times and has given gifts to their efforts in Lebanon.
- ♦ **RIEI** – This organization, founded by a church member, provides educational opportunities for students from developing countries. Through field personnel, FBC provides monthly funding for RIEI.
- ♦ **Global Missions Offering** – Collected in February, this offering supports the presence of CBF field personnel and usually totals \$37,000 annually.
- ♦ **World Hunger Offering** – Collected on the last Sunday of every month, this totals about \$25,000 annually.
- ♦ **World Vision** – For many years, FBC and its members have supported around a dozen children through World Vision.

# COVID-19

As with most organizations, the global pandemic significantly affected First Baptist.

We immediately formed a Covid Task Force to help us monitor what was happening in our community, medical centers, schools, and other churches. We have followed CDC guidelines throughout, including appropriate social distancing, masking, vaccine education, and hand sanitizing.

As always, our staff was creative and flexible, and we only missed one week of worship. Even during that one week, we broadcast a previously recorded worship service. For the following weeks, our staff and musicians went from pre recording worship mid-week, to live broadcasts with no onsite congregants to limited attendance on Sunday mornings.

Events throughout the week have gone virtual or are meeting outside to help us remain connected. Our Wednesday Night First Choice meals have become drive-through pick-ups, with all the ministers there to welcome those driving thru. Meals are also delivered to some of our extended family members who no longer drive.

Also early in the pandemic, our ministers began posting daily Prayers & Reflections devotionals online for several months, available for anyone. Each took a turn and focused on an interesting and thought-provoking theme.

Our congregation continues to provide options to worship safely in person, online, or by a cable broadcast. We have found some silver linings that have come from these unexpected changes, including upgrades to our technology and broadcast services and being able to better reach those not able to join us in person via virtual means.



# Our Staff



## KEITH REAVES

### *Senior Associate/Minister of Worship*

Rev. Reaves began serving as Minister of Worship/Music in 1999. The additional title of Senior Associate was added in 2012.

A native of Arkansas, Rev. Reaves' degrees include a B.A. with a combined major in Political Science and Journalism from the University of Arkansas in 1984 and a Master of Music from the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1994. Before entering seminary, Keith worked as a copy editor at a Little Rock newspaper and as Special Assistant for Health and Human Services in the Arkansas Governor's Office. During seminary he served on the music staff at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. After graduation, he served as Minister of Music at the First Baptist Church of Atmore, Alabama, where he was ordained in 1995.

Keith is responsible for planning and leading meaningful corporate worship experiences and for developing resources among the congregation to provide vital worship. He currently conducts the Sanctuary Choir, the Youth Choir, the older Children's Choir, and the First Baptist Ringers and oversees a full graded choir program. Senior Adult Ministry also is part of his work and he has enjoyed planning luncheons, day trips, and adventures all over the world for this group. As Senior Associate, he assumes responsibility for staff coordination, decision leadership, and pastoral care whenever the pastor is absent.

Keith is married to Hilary, an elementary school teacher. They have two grown children and a brand new grandson. Graham lives in Atlanta and works as an occupational therapist; Ellen, a speech therapist, and her husband, Logan, along with their newborn son, Owen, live in Smyrna.



## TAMARA TILLMAN SMATHERS

### *Minister of Education/Administration*

Rev. Smathers began serving as Minister of Education and Administration in April 2007. She came from the national office of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, having served as the Associate Coordinator for Missions Education from 2000-2007, and as one of their global missions field personnel in the Middle East (Jordan) from 1995-2000.

Tamara's degrees include a B.S. in Early Childhood Education from Samford University and a Master of Arts in Christian Education from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. She has served the First Baptist Church of Eufaula, Ala., as Minister of Education and Youth, and the First Baptist Church of Dothan, Ala. as Minister to Children. Currently, she serves on the Board of Good Faith Media and is a Certified Strengths Coach with the Gallup organization.

The dual role of education and administration requires equal energy invested in each. In adult faith formation she offers general leadership to Sunday morning bible study, Wednesday evening seminars, special studies, small groups, and teaches a weekly community bible study. In administration, she provides supervision and direction to the maintenance staff and the food service staff, as well as offering ministerial guidance to committees responsible for budgeting, facilities, hospitality, and education.

Rev. Smathers was ordained by First Baptist Church of Rome in 2008. She is married to Jeff and has one step-son who is married and lives in Texas.



## JOHN ULDRICK

### *Minister of Students and Missions*

Rev. Uldrick joined the staff of FBC Rome in 2007 as Minister of Students. In 2010, he added responsibilities and became Minister of Students and Missions. He received his B.A. degree in sociology from Clemson University and his Master of Divinity from Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology.

John has served churches in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. His primary role is guiding the social, emotional, and spiritual development of youth in grades seven to twelve. He also works with college students and is in charge of the missions programs at FBC Rome. He serves as the staff connection to the men's, television, and health ministries. In our community, John serves on boards of the Community Kitchen, Davies Shelters, and as a member of the Rome City School Board.

He has been married to his wife Jennifer since 1997 and they have two children: Charlie, born in 2000, and Annalise, born in 2002.



## KRISTEN POPE

### *Minister of Faith Development*

Rev. Pope began serving as Minister of Faith Development in 2017. She received a B.A. with a double major in Psychology and Religion from the University of Transylvania in Lexington, Kentucky, followed by a Master of Divinity degree from McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia. Kristen served as a ministry intern at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville and at Smoke Rise Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, where she was ordained in 2017.

Kristen approaches the role of Minister of Faith Development with a holistic approach, seeking to minister to the entire family. This includes emphasis on equipping parents to be an active and primary leader in their child's faith development. She also encourages children to see their importance as followers of Jesus at every age. Kristen coordinates Sunday morning Bible Study and Wednesday Night programming and also supervises the First Baptist Weekday Preschool Director. She coordinates fellowship & discipleship events throughout the year, from Vacation Bible School to baptism classes and retreats.

Kristen is engaged to be married to Ben Mathis.



## GWEN STEPHENS

### *Minister to Extended Family*

Ms. Stephens has served as the Minister to Extended Family since 2012. Her role as minister is to foster relationships with senior church members who are presently living in assisted living centers or with those who are homebound, helping them feel a sense that they still are a vital part of the congregation, even when they can't attend church in person. She also provides connections and support for their families.

Prior to her retirement in 2015, Gwen was a music educator with experience in teaching all grade levels. She has served in interim ministry roles that include FBC Rome as Minister of Music (1996-1997), Minister of Youth (2000-2001), Minister of Music at Towne View Baptist (2000), and as Minister of Faith Development at FBC (2015-2017). Gwen has also held part-time positions as Minister of Music at FBC Rockmart (2007-2008) and North Broad Baptist (2008-2012).

From time-to-time, she leads music in worship at First Baptist when the Minister of Music and Worship is on vacation or sabbatical. Most recently, Gwen served as supply pianist when the FBC pianist was on a leave of absence.

Gwen's hobbies include watching Braves baseball, antiques, and painting.



# Our Community

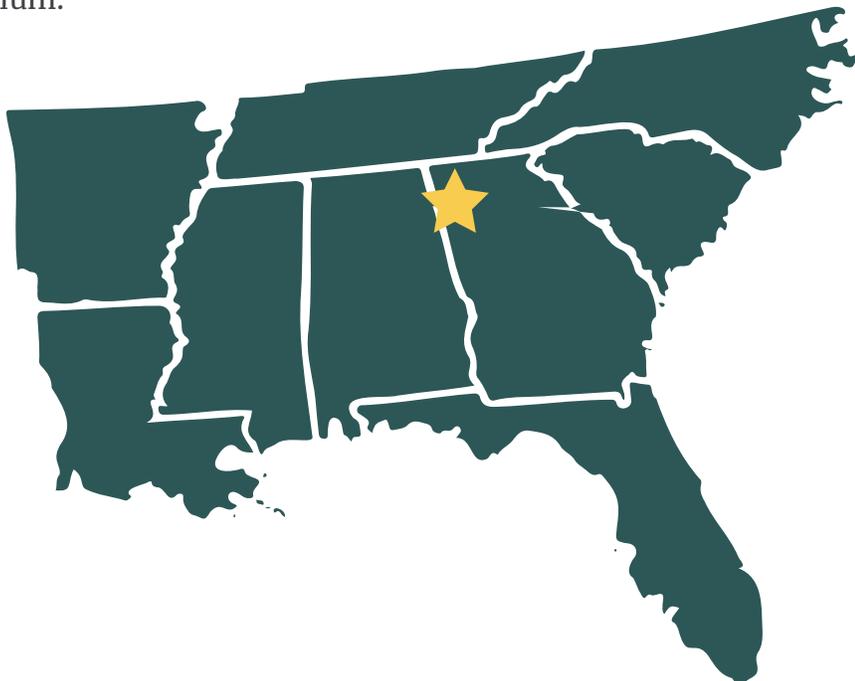
## ROME AND FLOYD COUNTY

Rome is the largest city in Northwest Georgia, conveniently located nearly equidistant from Atlanta, Birmingham, and Chattanooga. With a population of just over 37,000 in the city and 99,000 in Floyd County, Rome maintains a small-town feel while still providing access to larger metropolitan amenities.

Rome is defined by its seven hills and three rivers which converge in the center of a thriving historic downtown that FBC Rome calls home. Nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Rome is full of natural beauty and is an oasis for outdoor adventure with over 50 miles of trails and waterways to explore, including the 26,000 acres of Berry College, the largest contiguous college campus in the world. Rome's charming downtown is filled with historic buildings, eclectic shops and restaurants, and frequent community events. Downtown Rome has received numerous accolades as one of the "best small-town main streets in America" over the past 20 years.

With two regional hospitals, a third-year residency program, and a large multi-specialty medical clinic, Rome boasts more physicians per capita than any other similar-size community in the U.S. With four colleges and universities, two public school systems and five private schools (including an international day/boarding school), Rome is also a major educational hub for the region.

In addition to healthcare and education, Greater Rome has a robust manufacturing base and recently ranked among the top 10 cities for manufacturing in the U.S. according to SmartAsset. Tourism generates over \$150 million in economic impact in Greater Rome, much of that through major regional and college sporting events held at the world-class Rome Tennis Center at Berry College and Barron Stadium.





# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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