SENIOR PASTOR
CANDIDATE PROFILE

First Baptist Church of Boone, North Carolina

"Sharing God's love on this corner, from this corner, to every corner…"

375 W. King Street • Boone, North Carolina 28607
boonefirstbaptist.org

The Opportunity

First Baptist Church of Boone, North Carolina is prayerfully seeking a Senior Pastor to lead our congregation with spiritual depth and a collaborative spirit. We are located on the corner of King and College Streets in downtown Boone immediately adjacent to Appalachian State University.

We want to welcome a pastor who will help to lead us into our next chapter with clarity, compassion, and vision: someone who can preach and teach with depth, offer steady pastoral care, and provide skilled administrative and staff leadership, and help us discern together some genuinely open questions about who we are becoming.

To apply to be our Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church of Boone, please send the following information to searchcommittee@boonefirstbaptist.org.

- A cover letter
- A resume/CV
- A link to any sermon(s) that you have given

On This Corner, From This Corner, To Every Corner

As followers of Jesus Christ, we share God's love "on this corner, from this corner, to every corner." We are called to glorify God through worship; to study and honor the Scriptures which bear witness to Jesus Christ; to share the good news of God's love; to be transformed into the image of Jesus; and to love one another and the world in his name and spirit.

We are Baptist Christians who value religious liberty, the autonomy of the local congregation, the priesthood of all believers, and the equality and giftedness of all Christians. We find the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963 a helpful, though not exhaustive, guide to interpreting Scripture and exploring doctrine. Women have served as deacons and in leadership at First Baptist Boone for decades, and the church has affirmed Baptist Women in Ministry Sunday since 2012.

We are affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of NC, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and the Three Forks Baptist Association.

Role and Responsibilities

Preaching and Worship Leadership

- Prepares and delivers sermons that are biblically grounded, theologically thoughtful, and pastorally attuned — communicating the reality, love, and lordship of Jesus through the presence of the Spirit.
- Speaks to the real questions and challenges of living as followers of Jesus in a challenging culture.

- Collaborates on planning and leading worship that honors the congregation's traditional strengths (chancel choir, organ, handbells, lay leadership of all ages and genders) while remaining open to renewal and creativity.

Pastoral Care

- Engages in pastoral conversation with members and families through all seasons of life.
- Visits members who are hospitalized, homebound, or in care facilities.
- Provides guidance and support to individuals or families in crisis or grief.

Leadership and Administration

- Provides overall administrative leadership in partnership with deacons, lay leaders, and staff.
- Collaborates with elected leaders to clarify and implement a shared vision for the church's mission and ministry.
- Empowers, encourages, and guides ministerial and support staff.
- Helps the congregation build the communication and structure needed to let its relational strengths reach further.

Community and Campus Engagement

- Actively engages the town of Boone, Watauga County, and Appalachian State University — building relationships and pursuing the strategic partnership opportunity our university neighbor represents.
- Supports and helps expand the congregation's young adult and campus ministries.
- Champions creative, faithful use of the church's downtown building as a resource for mission and community life.

Guiding the Congregation's Discernment

- Helps the congregation do the ongoing work of naming its identity with clarity.
- Leads with pastoral wisdom and honesty on the unresolved questions the congregation continues to discern — most notably, questions of full inclusion in the life of the church, including the place of LGBTQ+ persons. This calls for a pastor able to hold theological conviction, pastoral sensitivity, and congregational unity together with care.
- Provides steady, proactive leadership that meets the congregation's need for direction and innovation.
- Cultivates an ongoing spirit of prayer and discernment.

Qualifications

Essential

- A vibrant faith in Jesus Christ and a clear sense of calling to pastoral ministry
- A commitment to the Baptist way of being Christian, including our congregation's core values and beliefs
- A Masters in Divinity and Ordained
- Minimum of five years of church ministry experience

Preferred

- Senior/ lead pastor experience
- Experience with a diverse congregation
- Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

Personal Qualities

- Compassionate, kind, and pastorally present
- Warm and approachable, genuinely eager for relationships across generations, backgrounds, and perspectives — including with college students and young adults
- A clear and skilled communicator, in both speaking and writing
- A servant's spirit paired with a collaborative leadership style
- Comfortable holding theological conviction alongside genuine openness to differing perspectives
- Courageous enough to lead proactively, and wise enough to do so gently
- Able to envision new and renewed possibilities for mission and ministry, especially the creative use of a prominent downtown building and a strategic university partnership
- Personal and professional integrity — trustworthy and truthful

Compensation, Housing, and Logistics

Compensation Package

- Salary to include housing allowance—$100,000–$125,000
- An optional retirement benefit in which the church will match the employee's contribution up to 3% of the employee's annual salary
- A moving allowance to be negotiated

Other Paid Benefits

Additional details available in Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual

- Vacation days starting at 2 weeks prorated for first year, increasing with length of service
- Sick days at a rate of one earned for each month after the first 60 days with a limit of 40 days
- Bereavement of up to three (3) days
- Medical leave (sick and vacation days will be used to cover this leave)
- Jury duty
- Eight (8) holidays plus the day after Thanksgiving and Christmas (If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the holiday will be taken on the following Monday.)
- Covered by Workman's Compensation Insurance
- May be eligible for a sabbatical of up to two (2) consecutive months after five (5) consecutive years of employment
- Maternity leave (up to 6 continuous weeks) and paternity leave (up to 2 continuous weeks) for birth or adoption of child newborn to 5 years of age

Reimbursable Expenses

Based on annual budget planning

- Auto mileage
- Hospitality
- Conferences
- Subscriptions/Books
- Cell phone provided

How to Apply

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA

CHURCH PROFILE

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in First Baptist Church of Boone. This profile offers an honest and, we hope, inviting picture of who we are: our mission and values, our history, our ministries and staff, the community that surrounds us, and the opportunities and challenges we see ahead. We offer it to prospective senior pastors and to anyone who wants a fuller sense of the kind of congregation we are.

We come to this season of transition grateful for a long history of faithful ministry "on this corner" of King and College Streets, in the heart of downtown Boone and immediately adjacent to Appalachian State University — and eager to discern, together with a new senior pastor, what faithfulness looks like in the years ahead.

Our Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Our Vision (John 3:16-17; Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 22:36-40; 1 Corinthians 13)

As followers of Jesus Christ, and because of our long-standing commitment to local, state, national and global missions, we share God's love *on this corner, from this corner to every corner. . .*

> *On this corner:* Our building at the corner of King and College, in the heart of downtown Boone, and adjacent to Appalachian State University is our headquarters for ministry, where we love and serve one another and our neighbors.
>
> *From this corner:* We go in the name and spirit of Jesus to places and people in town, on campus, and in the community to offer help, grace, friendship, and love.
>
> *To every corner:* Because the love of God embraces the whole world, we work in partnership with people and organizations who share our mission to make known the good news of Jesus in word and deed in every corner of the earth.

Our Mission (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:42-47)

We are called to glorify God through worship; to study and honor the Scriptures which bear witness to the purposes of God and the centrality of Jesus Christ; to share the good news of God's love made most clearly known through Jesus; to experience transformation into the image of Jesus; and to love one another and the world in his name and spirit.

Our Core Values and Beliefs (John 1:1-5; Mark 1:9-11; Genesis 1:1; Matthew 6:9; Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 1:8; Luke 21:33; Isaiah 40:8; John 15:12-13; John 13:34-35)

- We acknowledge that our guiding principle is the love of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Lord of all, and the only source of salvation. We seek to spread this love to our members and the world at large through evangelism and missions, serving people in his name and inviting people to confess and follow him as Savior and Lord.

- We are committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Living Word of God, and to the authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the inspired written Word of God, for all matters of faith and practice. We affirm that Jesus Christ is the criterion by which all Scripture is to be interpreted.
- We acknowledge that as individuals and as a church, we are always in the process of becoming more faithful to the will and way of Jesus and truer to his spirit. We are committed to continual growth in faithfulness and maturity.
- We love, encourage, and pray for others in the Spirit of Christ.
- We work together for the vitality, faithfulness, and harmony of the church.
- We are committed to the practice of grateful and generous stewardship of our resources, time, and influence.
- As Christians who are Baptists, we value:
    - *Religious liberty*, expressed as a free church in a free state and as the right of people to practice their faith (or not to practice a faith) without coercion.
    - The *autonomy and congregational self-governance* of the local church, expressed as the right and responsibility to make its own decisions about matters of faith and practice, to choose its own leaders (laity and clergy), to form its own ministry and mission partnerships, and to determine the use of its resources.
    - The priesthood of all believers, expressed as the freedom and responsibility, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to make one's own response to God and to study and interpret the Scriptures for oneself in conversation with other Christians. The priesthood of all believers also affirms the equality of all Christians, who, in the faithful use of their gifts and talents, may serve in any roles or positions for which the church selects them, including those which call for ordination.
    - We find the *Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963* to be a helpful guide to the interpretation of the Bible and to the exploration of doctrine.

Our History

First Baptist Church of Boone traces its roots to a small congregation chartered with just 17 members in the early 1870s, meeting first in the Watauga County courthouse. Though the exact date of organization was lost when early church records burned in 1895, the congregation — then known simply as Boone Baptist Church — has been a continuous presence in this community for a century and a half.

- 1871 (approx.) — Congregation organized with a charter membership of 17; met in the Watauga County courthouse.
- 1875 — First church building erected, a white, wood-framed structure on Rivers Street.
- 1916 — New building constructed on the corner of King and College Streets — the church's home ever since, adjacent to what would become Appalachian State University.
- 1936 — A straw-colored brick sanctuary was built on the same corner; planning began in 1929 but construction was delayed by the Great Depression.
- 1958 — Greenway Baptist Church formed as an independent congregation from a mission Sunday School initially fostered by First Baptist in 1951.
- 1964–65 — Educational wing and chapel constructed, along with an adjoining three-story building on College Street.

- 1980s – Steeple added to sanctuary, a feature that is visible in downtown Boone and surrounding areas.
- 1986 – Christmas Day Lunch established to provide a hot meal and fellowship to the community.
- 1996 – Pipe organ added to sanctuary, which is a central instrument for First Baptist's vibrant music ministry.
- 1995 — The church expanded its denominational affiliations to include the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina (CBFNC), alongside its existing ties to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Southern Baptist Convention.
- 2012 — The church began participating in Baptist Women in Ministry Sunday.
- 2021 — The congregation celebrated its 150th anniversary.
- 2024 – The church hosted Baptist on Mission equipment and teams for several weeks that were central to Hurricane Helene recovery efforts.

Our Facilities

First Baptist Church of Boone owns and meets within an approximately 60,000 square foot, 3-story building at the corner of King and College Streets. The property is at the edge of both Downtown Boone and Appalachian State University.

First Floor

- Fellowship Hall with adjoining industrial kitchen
- Multi-purpose room with bathrooms, including showers
- Music suite
- Corner Provisions area

Second/Ground Floor

- Sanctuary
- Chapel
- Main office area
- Library
- Nursery and children's classrooms

Third Floor

- Adult classrooms
- Youth suite
- Missions room
- Conference room
- Apartment

Grounds

- Large parking lot on corner of King and College streets
- Small parking area behind Fellowship Hall
- Playground
- Prayer Garden
  Tucked between the towering heights of the main Sanctuary building and the Chapel, the Prayer Garden has soothed the hearts and minds of worshippers since its dedication in 1990. Filled with native rhododendrons, dogwoods, hydrangeas, and a delightful mix of flower blooms, this unique space welcomes church members and visitors to a moment of solemnity, gratitude, and prayer. Here, quiet moments and sweet memories are mere steps away from the hustle and bustle of King Street. The gates are always open and the invitation extends to everyone at this sacred garden of prayer.

Structure and Governance

First Baptist Boone practices congregational self-governance. The church calls its own pastors and staff members, elects its own lay leaders, forms its own ministry partnerships, and determines the use of its own resources.

Deacon Ministry at FBC Boone

- Deacons shall be at least eighteen in number and shall be elected for a term of three years. Duties include assisting the Senior Pastor and other ministerial employees in extension of pastoral care to the church members and the larger community.
- They lead the church in support of its worship, educational, and mission ministries.
- They take action to maintain fellowship and discipline in the membership.
- Keep records of meetings and report to the church as the church may require.

Administrative Council

- The Administrative Council shall consist of the chairpersons from these committees: Deacons, Business and Finance, Personnel, Properties; and the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, two at-large members, as well as the Senior Pastor and the Administrator.
- Their duties include reviewing all proposals coming to the church from the church committees to ensure that the proposals are in keeping with the character and purpose of the church.
- Ensure that various proposals do not conflict with each other or with standing practices of the church, unless the proposal is to change such practices.
- Accept or reject such proposals and report to the church in conference a summary of all accepted proposals.
- Nominate new members for the Committee on Nominations and Elections (CONE) each year. The vice moderator shall serve on CONE.
- Act as a liaison between the Church Administrator and the members of the church.
- Act as a sounding board for the Senior Pastor’s ideas on the direction of the church.

- With the Church Council, conduct an annual evaluation and, if necessary, recommend to the church any changes in the organizational structure of the church.
  Serve as an arbitrator in the event of a conflict between committees.

Church Committees

- The church shall elect standing committees as deemed necessary to implement the programs of the church efficiently and effectively.
- All new committees must be approved by a majority of the members present at the church conference and dissolution of any standing committee must also be approved by a majority of the members present at the church conference.
- Standing committees include Business and Finance Committee, Committee on Nominations and Elections (CONE), Personnel Committee, Properties committee.

Church Conference

- Church business shall be conducted in church conference, except where otherwise authorized in these By-laws, using the latest available version of Robert's Rules of Order.
- The church shall meet in regular conferences each quarter. Reports from deacons, organizations, and committees shall be submitted as needed. Special church conferences may be called by the Senior Pastor or Moderator.
- Any church member may propose any action from the floor of the church conference. At the Moderator's discretion, such matters may be referred to a church committee, the deacons, or a church officer for further consideration. The Moderator may ask that any such proposal be submitted in writing.

Women and men alike serve as deacons and in every level of lay and staff leadership, consistent with the congregation's long-held conviction that women may be called and ordained to ministry.

Without having to follow mandates from any outside body, the church supports and partners with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (and the CBF of NC) and the Southern Baptist Convention (through the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the local Three Forks Baptist Association). Baptists on Mission has been, and remains, a valued partner for hands-on-mission endeavors.

Our Staff

During this season of transition, the church is being guided by committed ministerial and support staff:

- ### Billy Ralph Winkler — Music Ministry Director

  Billy Ralph is a lifelong member of FBC. He taught public school music for 34 years, primarily as a band director, but also including choir, orchestra, jazz, and music theory. He first served as interim Music Director at FBC from 1994 to 1997, then served an interim position at

Rumple Presbyterian Church in Blowing Rock from 1998 to 2002 before returning to the second of three interims at FBC Boone. Since 2012, he has served as the permanent Minister of Music.

- Joseph Franklin — Church Organist

  Joseph has served as the church organist since August 2025. He is a senior at Appalachian State University Hayes School of Music, majoring in Organ Performance and Instrumental Music Education. His responsibilities include preparing prelude and postlude music, accompanying the choir, leading congregational hymns, and addressing any other musical needs that arise for church services.

- Faye Ayers — Organist Emeritus

  Our Organist Emeritus, Ms. Faye Ayers, faithfully served FBC for 41 years. Faye earned her first Music degree at Appalachian State in 1964 where she taught Music Theory and served as accompanist for various soloists and ensembles. Before coming to work at FBC Boone, she served Lower Creek Baptist Church in Lenoir, Rumple Presbyterian in Blowing Rock, and Boone United Methodist Church. Faye became our organist in May of 1984 and remained until her retirement in early 2025.

- Carol Lea Liles — Administrative Associate

  Carol Lea is a life long member of FBC Boone. She sings in the Chancel Choir, and studied voice at Appalachian State University under Hoyt Saffritt, who was the Minister of Music here at FBC. She has one son, Kaden, who is 23 years of age, and Ziggy the Aussie and Sox the cat. Before coming to serve as the Administrative Associate at FBC in 2013, Carol Lea was a Branch Manager with BB&T Bank. Previously she held several other roles in management and sales. Carol Lea enjoys assisting our church members and our community!

- Thomas Mason — Custodian

  Thomas began attending First Baptist Church with his family in 2004. After spending several years away from the Lord and the church, the past year has been a season of tremendous spiritual renewal and growth in his life. He's developed a deeper love for God's Word and a growing interest in theology, church history, and the historic confessions of the Christian faith. Thomas began his role as custodian in 2025.

- Associate Pastor

  This position is currently open, but is not expected to be filled before the Senior Pastor is called. FBC has historically had various Associate Pastor positions.

- Financial Assistant

  This position is currently open, but is being filled temporarily by Billy Ralph Winkler.

Ministries, Missions, and Connections

Ongoing Schedule

- Sunday Morning Bible Study — 9:30 a.m.
- Sunday Morning Worship — 10:30 a.m.
- Wednesday Night Meal — 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Night Bible Studies (all ages) — 6:00 p.m.
- Prayer Group Mondays – 10:00 a.m.
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal – Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
- College Street Handbells Rehearsal - Sundays at 5:00 p.m.
- Corner Provisions Food Pantry – 3rd Monday of the month from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Kristel's Closet – Last Monday of the month from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Deacons Meeting - 3rd Sunday of month at 3:30 p.m.
- Administrative Council and various other committees meet regularly

Age-Based and Life-Stage Ministries

Children

The heart of children's ministry is to teach kids who God is and how God's word applies to their lives in creative, memorable ways. Through engaging teaching, supportive small-group classes, and plenty of fun, children come to know that where God is, life is more joyful.

Youth

Student ministry helps young people develop a personal faith in Christ as they discover their place in the story God is writing with their lives, through honest conversation, questions welcomed, and a community that listens for God's leading.

Young Adults

Given our location immediately adjacent to Appalachian State University, our Young Adult ministry offers college students and other young adults a place to study, gather, build lasting friendships, and grow in faith — a front door to the campus community that few churches our size enjoy.

Senior Adults

Senior adults enjoy fellowship, community events, and trips together, staying connected to one another and to the life of the church.

Music Ministry

First Baptist Church of Boone has a long tradition of offering and supporting the Music Ministry as an integral part of worship. Currently, the church employs a part-time Minister of Music and a part-time organist. In the recent past, the staff also included an Assistant Music Director who often doubled as pianist and Children/Youth Music Director.

The primary ensemble of FBC Boone is the Chancel Choir, consisting of adults, college students and sometimes youth. The age of membership ranges from teenagers to several in their early 80s. Currently, 32 individuals are involved, with actual average weekly participation at approximately 25. In 2026, 12 ASU students are actively involved in the Chancel Choir.

The repertoire of the Chancel Choir is primarily traditional with cantatas and special productions during Advent and Lent. A variety of musical styles are often incorporated as appropriate.

FBC has a College Street Handbells group. Other ensembles currently on hold but optimistically anticipate expanding the handbell choir ministry, as well as Children's and Youth Choirs.

Missions and Local Outreach

The church's corner location is a constant reminder of our calling to serve and love our neighbors in Jesus' name.

Ongoing local missions and outreach:

- **Corner Provisions** – a food pantry located inside First Baptist Church providing fresh and shelf stable food items and open to the community once a month.
- **Kristel's Closet** – a hygiene and household supplies pantry located inside First Baptist Church that is open to the community once a month.
- **The Christmas Day Lunch** – hot meals provided to the community in the Fellowship Hall or through delivery on Christmas Day.
- **Adopt-A-Family** – gift boxes given to local families or individuals in need filled with gift cards and food items for a Christmas dinner.
- **Disaster Relief** – various opportunities including meal preparation, laundry services, and property maintenance organized through North Carolina Baptist on Mission.
- **NC Serve** – local projects such as deck and roof repair, yard work, and other assistance during the month of August.
- **Emergency Assistance** – various bill payments for individuals and families in need largely funded by the 5th Sunday Loose Change Offering.

Community partners:

- **Hospitality House** – provides housing, food access, and crisis assistance to individuals and families in need.
- **Hope Pregnancy Center** – provides free medical services and support for unplanned pregnancies.
- **F.A.R.M. Café** – a non-profit, pay-what-you-can community café providing high quality meals in Downtown Boone.
- **Back to School Festival** – an annual August event that provides donated school supplies, new shoes, socks, backpacks, and more to families in need.
- **Resort Area Ministries** – a non-profit providing home repairs and maintenance for low-income Watauga County residents.
- **AppFaithHealth** - partnership between UNC Health Appalachian, local faith communities, and various community partners working together to promote better health in the High Country.

First Baptist Church has a long history of involvement with missions and ministries beyond the local community.

Ongoing domestic and international missions:

- **New Song Mission Nicaragua** – a non-profit and church network providing outreach, discipleship, and education in Nicaragua, Central America.
- **Operation Christmas Child** – annual packing of gift filled shoeboxes sent to children in need overseas, accompanied with the Gospel message.
- **Appalachian Backpacks** – backpacks filled with school supplies, cleaning products, blankets, and coats for children in West Virginia communities.

Demographics and Finance

The figures below come from the church's membership and financial records, most recently compiled for a congregational conversation held in February 2026 as part of our transition process. We share them here in the same spirit of honesty that shaped that conversation. The data has been updated to the dates shown.

Membership

As of October 31, 2026, First Baptist Boone's membership roll included:

Category	Count
Active Full Members	143
Inactive Full Members	160
Watchcare Members	1
Associate Members	2
Total on Roll	306

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Membership Report, as of October 31, 2026.

Like many congregations, our roll includes a substantial number of inactive members alongside a smaller, more engaged active membership — a gap worth a new pastor's attention as part of any effort at membership renewal or roll-cleaning.

New Members and Departures, 2021–October 31, 2026

Year	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*	*2025*	*2026*
Members Gained	*10*	*5*	*13*	*7*	*7*	*1*
— by Baptism	*3*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*4*	*0*
— by Transfer of Letter	*6*	*5*	*9*	*6*	*2*	*0*
— by Statement of Faith	*0*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*1*	*1*
— Watchcare/Associate	*1*	*0*	*2*	*1*	*0*	*0*
Members Lost: Transfers/Removals Out	*2*	*9*	*0*	*2*	*2*	*7*
Net Membership Change	*+8*	*−4*	*+13*	*+5*	*+5*	*-6*

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Membership Report, 2021–October 31, 2026.

Over this six-year window, new members have come more often by transfer of letter than by baptism in most years; 2025 was the exception, with a greater number of baptisms (4) than transfers (2) for the first time in this six-year period. Net membership change has been positive in four of the last six years, with 2022 and 2026 (a net loss of 4) the only down years, coinciding with a spike in those who transferred their membership to other congregations (9 and 5).

Worship and Sunday School Attendance

Average weekly worship attendance has grown very modestly but steadily since 2022, the first full year of data collected after in-person worship fully resumed following the pandemic closure (the church was effectively closed from March 2020 to April 2021, with sporadic in-person worship resuming through the rest of 2021):

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Average Weekly Worship Attendance	113.9	135.5	138.8	140.4	114.9

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Sunday Morning Worship Attendance Report, 2022–October 31, 2026.

That is roughly a 23 percent increase in average weekly worship attendance from 2022 to 2025 — a genuinely encouraging trend for a congregation in transition, and one worth naming plainly alongside the harder data below. The downturn in 2026 may be due to not having a permanent Senior Pastor.

Sunday School attendance (tracked by academic year beginning Fall 2021) tells a more mixed story:

School Year	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025	2026
Adults	31.5	41.4	43.6	45.4	42.8	41.7
Youth	3.2	4.3	7.6	7.1	6.3	5.4
Children	6.5	11.4	8.3	7.6	3.4	1.9
Total	41.2	57.1	59.8	60.0	52.6	44.1

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Sunday School Attendance Report, 2022–October 31, 2026.

Adult Sunday School attendance has grown fairly steadily. Children's attendance, however, peaked in 2022–23 and has declined in each period since, falling to an average of 2.2 in the Fall of 2026 — well below where it stood three years earlier. Youth attendance has held up better but also dipped in the three most recent periods. A new pastor and this congregation will want to look closely at what is behind the decline in children's and youth participation even as worship attendance and adult Sunday School have grown.

Finances

The church's total budgeted and actual income from 2020 through October 31, 2026 was as follows:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Budgeted Income	$633,200	$633,200	$628,041	$660,668	$663,770	$658,375	$411,225
Actual Income	$582,854	$593,610	$558,932	$601,706	$593,993	$570,874	$334,630

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Income, Budget vs. Actual, 2020–October 31, 2026. (Figures for this table were transcribed from a chart image rather than a data file; the transition team should verify exact figures against the church's financial records before this profile is finalized.)

Actual income has fallen short of the budgeted amount in every one of the last six years, by margins ranging from roughly $50,000 to $70,000 annually. The budget itself has stayed relatively flat — within about 5 percent of $650,000 — across the whole period, and actual income has fluctuated within a comparatively narrow band as well, generally between $558,000 and $602,000. This is a pattern a new pastor should understand clearly: giving has been consistent but has not kept pace with budgeted expectations, which has practical implications for staffing, facilities, and mission spending decisions. Note: the budget for 2026 was adjusted down to $548,300 to more closely match the expected giving trend.

How the Budget Is Allocated

Total expenses have tracked closely with, but consistently below, the budgeted amount every year since 2020:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Budgeted Expenses	$633,200	$633,200	$628,041	$660,668	$663,770	$658,375	$411,225
Actual Expenses	$519,465	$529,581	$553,738	$601,707	$593,995	$570,873	$331,221
% of Budget Used	82.0%	83.6%	88.2%	91.1%	89.5%	86.7%	80.5%

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Budget vs. Actual Expenses Analysis, 2020-October 31, 2026.

The church has spent within its budget every year of this period, using between 79 and 91 percent of what was budgeted. That gap between budgeted and actual spending has generally tracked the same gap seen on the income side — in most years, actual income and actual expenses have landed within a few thousand dollars of each other, indicating a congregation that has adjusted spending to match giving rather than drawing down reserves or running deficits.

Looking at 2025 actual expenses by category shows where the budget goes in a typical year:

Category	2025 Actual	% of Total
Personnel	$314,962	55.2%
Buildings & Grounds	$115,105	20.2%
Administration	$37,438	6.6%
Missions	$25,487	4.5%
Programs	$17,375	3.0%
Tithing Plans (CBF, Local Missions, SBC)	$16,113	2.8%
Christian Education	$13,480	2.4%
Music	$10,570	1.9%
Evangelism/Outreach	$8,775	1.5%
Kitchen/Meals/Recreation	$6,291	1.1%
Other	$5,277	0.9%
Total	$570,873	100%

Source: First Baptist Church Boone 2025 Actual Expense Breakdown by Category.

As in most congregations, personnel and facilities together account for the large majority of spending — about three-quarters of the total budget in 2025 — leaving a smaller share for missions, Christian education, music, and other program ministries. Personnel costs have grown somewhat unevenly across this period (from roughly $280,000 in actual spending in 2020 to a peak near $352,000 in 2024 before settling at $314,962 in 2025), while Buildings & Grounds spending has grown more steadily, from about $91,000 in 2020 to $115,000 in 2025. Spending in the smaller ministry categories — Missions, Christian Education, Music, and Programs — has fluctuated from year to year without a clear consistent trend, generally ranging between about $6,000 and $10,000 per category annually, aside from a one-year spike in the Missions expense line in 2024.

Designated Gifts

Beyond the operating budget, the congregation receives designated gifts — funds given for a specific purpose outside the general budget. Total designated giving has varied considerably year to year:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Grand Total Designated Gifts	$63,574	$26,730	$33,352	$71,458	$104,131	$43,232	$10,973

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Designated Gifts Analysis, 2020–October 31, 2026.

Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Missions (SBC, CBF, Lottie Moon, etc.)	*$10,427*	*$12,073*	*$11,878*	*$8,804*	*$12,948*	*$7,827*	*$6,606*
Local Missions	*$23,047*	*$5,654*	*$17,743*	*$17,686*	*$74,053*	*$31,018*	*$3,342*
Ministry Areas	*$2,100*	*$2,730*	*$3,731*	*$10,678*	*$7,800*	*$4,387*	*$1,225*
Specific Projects	*$0*	*$6,273*	*$0*	*$34,290*	*$9,330*	*$0*	*$0*
Estate Giving	*$28,000*	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*

Source: First Baptist Church Boone Designated Gifts Analysis, 2020–October 31, 2026. Local Missions include missions team support, emergency and disaster relief, and food pantry giving. Ministry Areas include youth, children, college, bereavement, music, and flowers. Specific Projects included the 150th anniversary celebration, a digital sign, and the Ingrained Project.

Two things stand out. First, local missions giving spiked dramatically in 2024 (to just over $74,000), driving that year's designated total to its five-year high of $104,131 — worth understanding in more detail, whether that reflects a particular disaster response, a capital need, or a sustained shift in giving. Second, a single $28,000 estate gift in 2020 was a one-time event rather than a recurring source of income, a reminder not to build ongoing budget assumptions on gifts of that kind.

Our Community

The Town of Boone

Boone is the county seat of Watauga County, sitting at 3,333 feet in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina — the highest elevation of any town its size in the eastern United States. Boone is a designated North Carolina Main Street community, and our building sits at the corner of King and College Streets in the heart of that historic, walkable downtown, one block from the Appalachian State campus.

The town has a population of roughly 20,000 (swelling considerably during the academic year with the arrival of App State students), and the surrounding High Country draws visitors year-round for hiking, skiing, fly fishing, a multitude of festivals, and mountain scenery — the Blue Ridge Parkway, Grandfather Mountain, and countless trails and waterfalls are all close at hand.

Watauga County

Watauga County had a population of about 54,000 at the 2020 census. It is one of North Carolina's most mountainous counties, historically known as one of the state's "Lost Provinces" for its isolation from the rest of North Carolina. The county has no interstate highway; the Blue Ridge Parkway and state highways carry much of its traffic. The county's economy centers on education, tourism, retail, and food service — driven in large part by Appalachian State University.

Appalachian State University

Appalachian State University, founded in 1899 to expand access to education in North Carolina's mountain "lost provinces," is now one of the largest universities in the UNC System, enrolling nearly 22,000 students (about 19,700 undergraduate and 2,000 graduate) as of fall 2025. ASU employs 3,600 core faculty and staff not including additional parttime and student positions. The university is a defining presence in Boone — economically, culturally, and demographically — and its proximity to our building is one of the congregation's most distinctive assets and most consistently named strategic opportunities.

First Baptist Boone has a long relationship with App State — the university itself traces part of its origin to the same era as our church's early history, and generations of our members have studied, taught, and worked there.

Watauga County Schools

The Watauga County Schools system consists of 11 schools. There are 8 pre-K 8th grade schools, one K-8th grade school, one high school, and one Innovation School for grades 9-12. The system services 4,658 students, has 335 teachers with a total employment of approximately 700 people. The student enrollment of the pre-K 8th grade schools range in size from 10 to 854, the high school has 1,289 students, and the Innovation high school has 292 students.

Watauga Medical Center

Watauga Medical Center is part of UNC Health Appalachian. It has 121 staffed acute-care beds (soon to be 165), and offers comprehensive acute, primary, secondary, and specialty services, including helicopter services to Winston Salem, Charlotte, and Johnson City hospitals. The total system employment is around 900 to 920 people.

Appalachian State's School of Nursing and Watauga Medical Center also have a partnership for students interested in pursuing nursing careers to gain practical experience.

Samaritan's Purse

Samaritan's Purse is a non-denominational Christian non-profit organization committed to serving in Jesus' name around the world. The international headquarters campus in Boone, along with a nearby campus in North Wilkesboro, NC employs 800+ people in a variety of ministry, support, and professional roles. Samaritan's Purse provides the Gospel message, alongside tangible support to people in need around the world through a variety of projects including Operation Christmas Child, World Medical Mission, Children's Heart Project, North American and International Disaster Response, and Operation Heal Our Patriots.

Opportunities and Challenges as We Move Forward

In the spring of 2026, First Baptist Boone undertook a season of congregational listening to name, honestly, where we are and where God may be calling us. Several themes emerged that we believe a prospective senior pastor should know — both as an honest account of where we stand and as an invitation into what could be ahead.

We developed a list of opportunities and challenges that the membership thought could/should be addressed.

The opportunities list includes the following:

- A better relationship with ASU
- Connecting with the city of Boone
- Making better use of our facility, for example:
    - Using it for mental health awareness
    - Allowing ASU to have student music recitals
    - Providing senior adult ministry
    - Involving more members in the day-to-day care of the church

The challenges include the following:

- Wednesday night prayer meetings which include meals along with the distribution of meals to those unable physically to attend
- Questions surrounding LGBTQ+ and membership
- Organizational affiliations
- Increasing our membership—in particular, younger couples
- Increasing our youth numbers
- Finances
- Care of our older facility
- Better use of technology

There are two challenges that will need to be addressed early on. The first is the questions that the membership has regarding LGBTQ+ membership, the extent that they may serve on committees, serve as Sunday School Teachers, and marriages and weddings. The Second is the affiliations that FBC has with other organizations. The Preamble to our current By Laws has us “affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of NC, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Southern Baptist Convention, Three Forks Baptist Association, and other organizations for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church.” Currently, there is not a consensus of the membership regarding all these affiliations.

We should note that we recognize that often opportunities bring new challenges, and, likewise, challenges often bring new opportunities.