

First Central Baptist Church
A Profile of our Church Community

First Central Baptist Church, founded in 1830, is an independent fellowship of believers in Chicopee, Massachusetts. Characterized by many visitors and newcomers as a friendly and loving body of believers, we are also known as a church that is steadfast in preaching and teaching sound, biblical doctrine.

Chicopee, one of the oldest communities in Western Massachusetts, is located at the crossroads of two major highways, the Massachusetts Turnpike and Interstate 91. Our city lies halfway between Boston, MA and Albany, NY and is directly north of Springfield, MA, within ten miles of the Connecticut border. This multi-ethnic community has a currently population of almost 55,000 with a median income of \$44,284. Chicopee's religious profile identifies as predominantly Roman Catholic and one fourth of the population claims no identity with any church.

The Chicopee public school system is comprised of 15 schools and about 7,800 students. This includes one early childhood program, nine elementary schools, two middle schools, one alternative school (grades 6-12), and two newly built high schools.

First Central draws the majority of its approximately 330 members from Chicopee, but a good number of our church families commute from surrounding communities, including northern Connecticut. Our church body is made up of a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds and a wide range of ages.

The church body currently is led by Associate Pastor Timothy Jones and a 12-member Deacon Board. Our pastor is assisted by a paid staff consisting of: a church administrator, one full-time and two part-time secretaries, a treasurer, and a custodian.

Identical morning worship services are held on Sunday at 8:30 A.M. and 11:00 A.M., and an evening service is at 6:30 P.M. We have a Sunday School for all ages with an average attendance of about 250. Our Wednesday evening programs include prayer meeting, AWANA, and teen programs. A variety of classes and Bible studies for adults are scheduled periodically. A well-staffed nursery is provided for most worship services as well as other major ministries.

Music is an integral part of worship at First Central and includes both contemporary music and hymns. We have several worship teams, senior and junior choirs, and many talented singers and musicians.

In 1995, First Central completed a major building program which added a gymnasium, a library, offices, more classrooms, an elevator, and a commercially-equipped kitchen. The sanctuary seats about 250. Almost all areas of the church are air-conditioned and handicapped accessible.

Our outreach ministries include AWANA (pre-school to grade 6), Teen Ministries, Women's Ministries, Men's Ministries, The Lord's Pantry, Clothing Closet, Senior Saints Luncheon, Nursing Home Ministry, MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers), and Vacation Bible School. There is also co-ed volleyball, Men's Basketball, a Church Softball League, and a Bowling League. A number of men's and women's prayer groups and/or Bible studies are hosted at members' homes or held at the church.

First Central is a missions-minded church. We currently support 33 missionary families and additional missionary organizations. We are partners in local ministry with Child Evangelism Fellowship, The Springfield Rescue Mission, and the Pregnancy Care Center of Springfield. We also host an annual Missions Conference. A number of men from our church family have been called into pastoral ministry and several of our members have chosen other full-time ministries. In addition, many of our teens and members of our church family have participated in short-term missions trips.

For additional information about First Central, please access our website at www.firstcentralbaptistchurch.com.

Drafted by the Pastoral Search Committee – July 2010