Meet Tim & Celeste Guthrie



A closer look at Tim and Celeste, their ministry background, their own responses to questions, and the Executive Pastor search process.

LOVE GOD. LOVE PEOPLE. MAKE DISCIPLES.
KNOW. GROW. SHOW. GO.

Executive Pastor Search & Role

How the Personnel Team conducted the search

The Personnel Team reviewed and updated the job description, evaluated résumés, and conducted two rounds of questionnaires centered on the **5 C's: Character, Calling, Competency, Capacity, and Chemistry.** The process continued with video interviews and in-person interviews, culminating in a unanimous decision to present Tim Guthrie to the church.

Executive Pastor role overview

The Executive Pastor serves alongside the Lead Pastor to strengthen ministry leadership, staff coordination, church administration, and accountability. The role helps align the daily work of the church with its mission to love God, love people, and make disciples.

Official job description: The complete approved job description is reproduced in the appendix, following the candidate responses.

Finance Team–approved package

Salary and housing: $97,000 | **Benefits:** Health, dental, vision and life insurance | **Annuity:** 10% of base salary.

Meet Tim Guthrie



Tim brings more than 35 years of pastoral ministry experience, including Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor roles. His work has included discipleship, church administration, staff development, financial stewardship, and pastoral care.

Most recently, he served as Pastor of Discipleship and Education at Immanuel Baptist Church in Tallahassee, Florida. Previously, he served as Executive Pastor at Bradfordville First Baptist Church, with additional pastoral service in Tennessee, Alabama, and Louisiana.

Academic preparation & ministerial credentials

Master of Legal Studies, Church & Ministry Management, Trinity Law School (*summa cum laude*); **graduate studies** in Pastoral Ministry, Trinity Theological Seminary (no completed degree stated); **Bachelor of Science**, Liberty University. Ordained Southern Baptist minister; affirms the Baptist Faith & Message (2000).

Tim | In His Own Words

How did God call you into ministry?

“God got my attention while I was stranded in a hotel in Houston, Texas, during an ice storm on a recruiting trip. At the time, I was scouting high school players for colleges and speaking to FCA groups following my recovery from an injury while playing college baseball. With no television to watch and nowhere to go, I picked up a Gideon Bible. God used that time in His Word to make it clear that it was time for me to surrender to His calling into vocational ministry.”

What excites you about First Baptist Richmond?

“Having watched from a distance, spoken with Pastor Travis, and then had the opportunity to meet with the Personnel Team, I’ve seen a clear vision, an intentional plan of action, and genuine excitement for the work God has called First Baptist Church to do. Seeing that passion and commitment is exciting to me, and I look forward to the possibility of being part of what God is doing there.”

What would you want our church family to know about your heart?

“If there is one thing I want the people of First Baptist Church to know about my heart, it is that I am a true church guy who loves the Lord and loves serving alongside His people. I genuinely love the local church and the opportunity to love, encourage, and serve others as we follow Christ together.”

What does a typical Saturday look like?

“During football and basketball seasons, you’ll likely find us cooking or grilling something special each week to enjoy while watching our favorite teams or catching the best matchups. You might also find us working in the yard or simply getting out and about, making the most of the day.”

Meet Celeste Guthrie



Her story, faith, and hopes for First Baptist Richmond
Celeste was born in England, grew up in a military family, and accepted Christ at age six. She enjoys cooking, baking, gardening, sewing, quilting, and spending time with family and friends.

Tell us about your background and interests.

“I was born in England and grew up as a military kid, moving every two to three years throughout my childhood. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior when I was six years old while we were stationed in California. Outside of church, I enjoy cooking, baking, gardening, and sewing and quilting. I find joy in creating things with my hands, spending time with family and friends, and finding ways to make our house feel like home.”

Who or what has shaped your faith?

“As a child, Mrs. Michaelis was instrumental in discipling me and helping me grow in my new faith. Over the years, the Lord has continued to shape and strengthen my faith through various Bible studies and the people He has placed in my life. Through our family’s journey in ministry, God has taught me that He is Jehovah Jireh, the God who provides. He has also taught me the importance of becoming increasingly dependent on Him rather than relying on my own abilities, understanding, or reasoning. Time and again, He has reminded me of His faithfulness and that I can trust Him to provide exactly what we need, when we need it.”

What are you looking forward to at First Baptist Richmond?

“I am looking forward to meeting my new church family, developing meaningful friendships, and getting to know the people who make First Baptist Richmond such a special community. I am also excited to discover how God will use my spiritual gifts, talents, and life experiences to serve the church and become involved in what He is doing here. Most of all, I look forward to growing together in faith and being part of this church family.”

Candidate Weekend | November 20–21, 2026

Friday, November 20 — 11:00 AM: Staff Meet & Greet Lunch
Saturday, November 21 — 8:30–9:30 AM: Deacon Breakfast & Meet & Greet
Saturday, November 21 — 10:00 AM–12:00 PM: Church-wide Meet & Greet; Q&A begins at 10:30 AM.

Official Job Description & Original Résumé

The appendix reproduces the official three-page Executive Pastor job description, followed by Tim’s supplied résumé and cover letter with personal phone number and email address removed.

Executive Pastor

Classification: Full-time, senior staff, exempt

Reports to: Lead Pastor

Supervises: Ministry and support staff, in cooperation with Lead Pastor

Work schedule: Sunday-Thursday, but can be flexed according to special events and needs of the church (or negotiated by Lead Pastor)

Minimum Qualifications

Faith:

- Individual must believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and be an active member of an evangelical church
- Individual must be ordained
- Individual must be willing to become a member of First Baptist Church, Richmond, Kentucky
- Individual must be willing to agree to the Baptist Faith and Message and actively support the church vision and mission

Education:

- Bachelor's degree in general business, administration, communication, human resources, or other applicable discipline, or show gifts of leadership and administration with experience
- Degree from accredited seminary or equivalent institution preferred

Experience/Skills:

- Called to lead from a supporting role under the leadership of the Lead Pastor
- 3-5 years of supervisory experience
- 5 years of experience preferred in church administration or financial oversight position
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
- Effective team player and ability to positively interact with staff and church members

- Proficient in current office technology (i.e., Microsoft Teams, Outlook, Zoom, Planning Center)
- Evidence of leadership, including delegation and decision-making

Responsibilities/Job Duties

Pastoral/Discipleship:

- Support pastoral care initiatives, in collaboration with Lead Pastor and ministry staff
- Prepare and deliver sermons, as needed or scheduled
- Coordinate GROW group curriculum and small group ministries in cooperation with Discipleship Coordinator
- Develop and implement discipleship program for church membership, including training and activities in cooperation with the Discipleship Coordinator
- Assist with observance of church ordinances and services, including baptisms, Lord's Supper, weddings, and funerals

Operations/Administration

- Drive continuous improvement and efficiencies in business/office processes
- Oversee finance and operations of the church in cooperation with the Lead Pastor
- Oversee ministerial staff in cooperation with Lead Pastor
- Oversight of physical property
- Oversee annual performance reviews of ministry and program staff and subsequent review with Lead Pastor
- Oversee Money County Committee and all bank deposits
- Work with outside auditors to complete annual audit of church records
- Support church supervisory positions with performance and scheduling issues, informing Personnel Committee as appropriate
- Ensure site disaster and evaluation plans are created, appropriate signs posted, and that staff receive training
- Prepare business meeting materials for distribution
- Attend/schedule regular staff meetings, as needed, or as directed by Lead Pastor
- Be proficiently aware of operations and ministries that would allow serving in the absence of staff of ministry leader
- Coordinate meeting room and site use requests, including invoices, with facility manager

- Ensure new hire orientation is conducted within 3 days of date of hire, including execution and filing of employee documents and securing IT devices prior to start date
- Oversee and/or collaborate on any ongoing training and development requests/needs for ministry and program staff (organizational change, team building, spiritual development, etc.)
- Review and update employee handbook in collaboration with Personnel Committee and make available (or distribute) to church staff
- Review and oversee filing of annual corporation registration with state of Kentucky
- Review KBF statement and journal entries annually
- Review and evaluate church insurance plans (property and medical)
- Oversee any workers' compensation claims
- Other duties, as assigned

TIM C. GUTHRIE

TALLAHASSEE, FL

EXECUTIVE PASTOR

Pastoral Leadership • Church Administration • Staff Leadership • Discipleship

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Southern Baptist pastor with more than 35 years of ministry experience, including Executive Pastor and Senior Pastor roles. Experienced in leading staff, overseeing church operations and finances, developing leaders, strengthening discipleship, and helping churches navigate seasons of growth and transition. I enjoy bringing people, systems, and resources together so the church can stay focused on its mission.

LEADERSHIP FIT

CHURCH OPERATIONS	FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP	PASTORAL & MINISTRY
Staff leadership	Budgets • Oversight	Discipleship • Small groups
Facilities • HR • Policies	Stewardship • Capital projects	Leadership • Pastoral care

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

Immanuel Baptist Church, Tallahassee, FL — Pastor of Discipleship & Education | 2025–Present

Lead discipleship and education ministries with emphasis on connecting people to biblical community, spiritual growth, and meaningful service.

- Led church to 85% small-group participation among worship attendees, created a stronger culture of connection, discipleship, and member involvement.
- Lead Life Groups and discipleship ministries while developing leaders, volunteers, and member-assimilation pathways.
- Assist with financial office and building projects while continuing teaching, communication, and pastoral care.

Bradfordville First Baptist Church, Tallahassee, FL — Executive Pastor | 2021–2025

Served as pastor's primary partner in day-to-day leadership and administration.

- Oversaw staff, church operations, budgeting, financial planning, facilities, personnel, and organizational processes.
- Worked with staff, committees, and lay leaders to strengthen teamwork, clarify responsibilities, improve accountability, and build a healthy ministry culture.
- Helped lead the church through pastoral transition while maintaining ministry stability and continued growth in baptisms and membership.
- Routinely preached, taught, and provided pastoral care and counseling.

Ekklesia Essentials Ministries, National — Founder & President | 2004–Present

Founded and lead a ministry helping churches and ministry leaders strengthen discipleship, leadership development, church health, stewardship, and ministry effectiveness.

- Consult with pastors and church leaders on Capital Fund Ministry and budgeting, organizational health, leadership, discipleship, and ministry strategy.
- Develop resources and training and provide coaching and encouragement to pastors and ministry leaders.

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE — CONTINUED

Arlington Baptist Church, Knoxville, TN — Senior Pastor | 2006–2018
Provided overall pastoral leadership.

- Led preaching, teaching, discipleship, pastoral care, evangelism, and congregational leadership.
- Worked with staff, deacons, committees, and volunteers in ministry development and organizational health.
- Managed church budgets and participated in financial, facility, and long-range planning.
- Led major ministry and building initiatives including church relocation and assisted living facility.

PREVIOUS PASTORAL MINISTRY

Open Door Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, AL — Senior Pastor | 2000–2004

First Baptist Church, Westlake, LA — Senior Pastor | 1994–2000

First Baptist Church, Westlake, LA — Associate Pastor | 1991–1994

SELECTED LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- **35+ Years in Ministry —** Served churches ranging from approximately 150 to more than 2,000 in attendance.
- **Financial Leadership —** Administered church budgets up to $3M, including development, implementation, financial reviews, and giving strategies.
- **Capital Projects —** Provided leadership for building campaigns and capital projects exceeding $16M.
- **Church Operations —** Staff leadership, HR, facilities, financial processes, policies, and day-to-day operations.
- **Leadership & Governance —** Worked with pastors, staff, trustees, deacons, committees, volunteers, and lay leadership.
- **Church Growth & Health —** Helped churches strengthen ministry systems, develop leaders, improve discipleship, and navigate seasons of transition.

EDUCATION

Trinity Law School — Master of Legal Studies (MLS), Church & Ministry Management — Summa Cum Laude

Trinity Theological Seminary — Graduate Studies in Pastoral Ministry

Liberty University — Bachelor of Science

ORDINATION & DOCTRINAL ALIGNMENT

Ordained: First Baptist Church, Westlake, Louisiana | Licensed: First Baptist Church, Joshua, Texas

Doctrinal Commitment: Baptist Faith & Message (2000); committed to authority of Scripture, mission of local church, and Southern Baptist cooperative ministry.

MINISTRY COMMITMENT

I believe the local church is God's primary instrument for making disciples and reaching people with the gospel. I desire to serve the pastor and church faithfully, develop people, equip leaders, and help create a healthy environment where the church can fulfill its God-given mission. I value leading from the second chair—supporting the pastor's vision, strengthening staff and organization, and helping ministry move forward with unity and excellence.

Dear Pastor and Search Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to be considered for the Executive Pastor position at First Baptist Church Richmond. There was something familiar to me as I read the description of the position. The combination of working with people, helping a pastor and staff, caring for the practical needs of the church, and keeping the larger mission in view is the kind of ministry I have found especially meaningful through the years.

After more than 35 years in pastoral ministry, one thing I have come to appreciate is that a healthy church is built on relationships. Good staff relationships, trust between pastors and leaders, clear communication, and a willingness to work through difficult things together often make a greater difference than any particular program or system. The administrative side of church life matters, but it matters because it serves people and helps the church do what God has called it to do.

That is one reason the Executive Pastor role has always been a natural fit for me. There is satisfaction in helping things come together—working through a problem, encouraging a staff member, helping leaders think through a decision, taking care of a financial or facility concern, or helping a pastor carry the weight of the many responsibilities that come with leading a church. Some of those things are very visible; many are not. Both are important.

More than anything, I see the Executive Pastor as the Lead Pastor's trusted number two—a person who knows the pastor well, shares his heart for the church, can be trusted with difficult matters, and is willing to step in wherever needed. That requires more than administrative ability. It requires loyalty, discretion, good judgment, humility, and the willingness to have the pastor's back while helping the staff and congregation move forward together. That kind of partnership is something I value deeply.

Over the years, I have also learned that church growth and church health are closely connected. Churches grow best when people are cared for, leaders are developed and, staff members work well together and are resourced, and the church has a clear sense of who it is and where it is going. That kind of culture does not happen by accident. It takes prayer, patience, good leadership, and people who are willing to serve one another as they serve the Lord first and foremost.

It would be an honor to be considered for this position. Celeste and I are praying for you, as we all seek God's will together.

In Christ,

Tim C. Guthrie
Tallahassee, Florida