



**Grand Avenue
Baptist Church**
in Fort Smith

PASTOR



PASTOR PROFILE

Biblically »

Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas, believes the Senior Pastor will be a man who has experienced God's sacred calling to the gospel ministry. The Baptist Faith and Message (2023) is our Statement of Faith and reflects our beliefs regarding the standards set forth in Scripture for such leaders.

The Pastor and Pastoral Ministry are not determined by the will of man as a possible vocation or career but are a sacred and divine calling, sovereignly established by God, for the faithful preaching of the Bible, the Word of God, and for the spiritual leadership and oversight of his people.

In Holy Scripture, there are two offices in the church: the office of pastor/elder/overseer and the office of deacon. We affirm, as stated in our Baptist Faith and Message (2023), these words: *"While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder/overseer is limited to men as qualified by Scripture."*

The Senior Pastor is biblically identified as:

- » **Shepherd.** (1 Peter 5:2–3)
- » **Elder.** (1 Timothy 5:17, Acts 6:4)
- » **Overseer.** (Acts 20:28)

The pastor-shepherd/elder/overseer is appointed by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to preach, teach, lead, guard, oversee, watch over, and care for the church according to the Scripture. Therefore, we believe the New Testament affirms that the three terms for the calling of a pastor, namely shepherd, elder, and overseer, are used interchangeably, all pointing to the same calling.

Pastorally »

Standing upon this biblical foundation described, we aspire that our Senior Pastor carry out his function by:

- » Prioritizing Biblical Preaching and Prayer as stated in Acts 6:4, *"But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."*
- » Providing Spiritual Leadership and Direction as our "Pastor-Teacher" (Ephesians 4:11–12), our "shepherd" (1 Peter 5:2–3), and our "overseer" (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17).
- » Fulfilling the missional vision of the Church, which is Jesus' final words to us before his ascension into heaven: *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and the ends of the earth"* (Acts 1:8).

PASTOR PROFILE

» Representing Christ and our Church, living a sacred life privately and publicly. He must be a man of God, known for his daily walk with God through prayer and the Word, and for practicing spiritual disciplines such as daily study and periodic seasons of fasting. As he lives this sacred life, he is to order his home well, love his wife, and lead his family in a spiritually faithful manner. His private devotions sustain his public ministry. It is the foundation of all public ministry. His preaching should be an overflow of his daily personal walk as well as his discipline of study (Mark 1:35; Psalm 1:1–3; John 15:4–5; Acts 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:1–7).

Our Grand Avenue Baptist Church aspires to uphold the arms of our Senior Pastor through intercessory prayer, personal encouragement, and spiritual support. Our church is biblically based, mission-driven, pastor-led, and deacon-served.

Practically »

We believe there are several practical realities that our church needs for our next Senior Pastor to be successful here:

- » We believe our next Senior Pastor should have prior experience as a Senior Pastor.
- » We believe our next Senior Pastor should be prepared spiritually, practically, and academically to lead our church forward.
- » We believe our next Senior Pastor needs to be a strong spiritual leader who is humble and has a servant's heart.
- » We believe our next Senior Pastor must have the vision to lead our church in fulfilling Acts 1:8 by reaching metro Fort Smith, Arkansas, America, and the world for Jesus Christ.
- » We believe our next Senior pastor should have the capacity to lead a staff team and be able to call a team of people here to serve with him as opportunities arise.
- » We believe our next Senior Pastor should be a faithful witness for Jesus Christ, able to lead people to faith in the Lord and call them to follow Jesus, be baptized, and live like Jesus through his preaching of God's Word.
- » We believe our next Senior Pastor should be on fire for Jesus Christ and model a life and faith that others can confidently follow.
- » We believe our next Senior Pastor should work with our lay leadership teams and the deacon body to advance the church's mission and glorify God.
- » We believe our next Senior Pastor should participate in our Great Commission Baptist Association, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention, as well as in ongoing educational and equipping opportunities that will support his personal growth as the spiritual leader of our church.

Our Pastor Search Committee is praying that God will lead us to the man the Lord is already preparing and calling here to serve as our next Senior Pastor.

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CHURCH



CHURCH PROFILE

Meet Grand Avenue Baptist Church »

Founded on December 16, 1934, with just 20 charter members, Grand Avenue Baptist Church has served Fort Smith and the surrounding River Valley for more than 90 years. What began as a small congregation has grown into a thriving Southern Baptist church with a deep love for its city, a strong commitment to the gospel, and a vision for the future.

Located in Fort Smith, Arkansas, Grand Avenue sits in one of the most strategically positioned areas of western Arkansas. The region continues to experience growth and demographic change, including a rapidly expanding medical school, a growing military presence, and a growing Hispanic community. The city of Fort Smith has over 90,000 residents, and our immediate metro area has over 180,000 people. Grand Avenue sees this as a unique opportunity to reach people from every background with the hope of Christ.





Vision »

Grand Avenue aspires to have a vision that Jesus articulated in Acts 1:8:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” — Acts 1:8 (CSB)

It is our desire that all our ministries are thriving and dedicated to reaching people around the world. Our goal is to help people move from simply attending church to following Jesus as His disciples and becoming active witnesses of the good news of Jesus Christ.

CHURCH PROFILE



Gathering in worship has always been a meaningful and unifying part of the life of Grand Avenue. The church prioritizes Biblical preaching, gospel-driven worship, and a calling of people to respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Weekly worship gatherings include strong congregational participation alongside a vibrant worship ministry featuring choir, orchestra, instrumentalists, and modern worship elements. Grand Avenue embraces both its rich worship heritage and a continued desire to reach future generations with authenticity, excellence, and passion for the glory of God.

The church also carries a strong heart for missions and church multiplication through our partnership with the Southern Baptist Convention. For decades, Grand has partnered with missionaries, church planters, and ministry organizations across the United States and around the world. The church desires to continue serving as a sending base for missions, outreach, leadership development, and gospel advancement throughout the region and beyond.

Who We Are »

Grand Avenue Baptist Church is a multigenerational, mission-minded Southern Baptist church in Fort Smith, Arkansas, committed to helping people meet Jesus, grow in authentic biblical community, and live on mission for the glory of God. Our mission is simple and central: to be a church living out Acts 1:8.



At a Glance »

Location

3900 Grand Ave.
Fort Smith, AR

Membership

2,222

Staff

19 — 8 ministers/
pastors and
11 support staff

Annual Budget

\$3,121,000

Sunday Schedule

One worship service
+ one hour of
community groups

Worship Center

1,258 seats

Community Group Space

125,238 SQ ft
including 30,000 for
children, 8,300 for
students, 2 mission
homes, and 12.5
acres on Massard
Road in Fort Smith

CHURCH PROFILE



At Grand, people from every stage of life can find a place to belong. We are passionate about strong families, meaningful relationships, biblical teaching, and life-changing discipleship. Through vibrant ministries for preschoolers, children, students, college students, adults, and senior adults, we seek to intentionally connect every generation to the gospel and the local church. Our desire is not simply to fill seats, but to help people become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who love God, love people, and aspire to be great witnesses for Jesus Christ locally, across America, and throughout the world.



We desire to be a church that values the authority of scripture and the leadership of the Holy Spirit of God. We are a church that believes scripture is the final authority for faith and practice, and we strive to create a culture marked by authenticity, humility, unity, generosity, and servant leadership. Our people believe in community, prayer, hospitality, and caring well for one another. At Grand, members are encouraged to discover their gifts, be equipped for ministry, and actively participate in the church's mission.



As a church family, we are warm, welcoming, and deeply relational. We love seeing new people connected and helping them feel at home quickly. While we value excellence and intentionality in ministry, we never want to lose the heart of being real people walking together through real life with a real Savior. Grand Avenue Baptist Church is a place where people are known, cared for, challenged by God's Word, and encouraged to take meaningful next steps in their walk with Christ.



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COMMUNITY



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Life in Fort Smith, Arkansas »

Welcome to Fort Smith—where the New South collides with the Old West. This isn't a sleepy border town; it's an ever-changing crossroads on the Arkansas-Oklahoma border. Once ruled by tough-as-nails lawmen and desperate outlaws, today it is a hub for industry where serious businesses produce many of the world's finest products. From the shadow of the historic fort to the rush of modern industry along the river, Fort Smith crackles with a gritty, relentless energy. And Grand Avenue Baptist Church is right in the middle of that action.

Pictured Counterclockwise: U.S. Marshals Museum, National Historic site downtown, Bass Reeves Monument, Fort Smith citizens, The Park at Westend downtown

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Today, Fort Smith balances its historic roots with a forward-looking spirit. The downtown area has experienced revitalization, featuring local restaurants, boutique shops, and a vibrant arts scene anchored by the historic Fort Smith Riverfront and the ArcBest Performing Arts Center. The city's location along the Arkansas River provides residents with access to outdoor recreation, including riverfront and park trails for running and biking (spanning more than 70 miles), multiple golf courses and updated city parks, and nearby lakes such as Beaver Lake and Lake Fort Smith for boating, fishing, and hiking.



Pictured left to right: Southside High School, Northside High School. (Both 7A Schools)

Fort Smith is home to a robust and deeply-rooted evangelical Christian community that shapes much of the city's spiritual and cultural identity. Scattered throughout the river valley is a dense network of evangelical churches that draw thousands of worshipers each Sunday, creating a faith landscape marked by passion, discipleship, and outreach. Unlike many urban centers, Fort Smith continues to be shaped by strong evangelical values that influence not only church attendance but also local politics, education, and community life. From thriving youth ministries to community food pantries run by congregations, the evangelical presence is both visible and active. Many of these churches have deep generational roots, but they're also seeing fresh energy from younger families and transplant professionals drawn to the area's affordability and close-knit religious culture.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Fort Smith is also defined by its unique cultural diversity. The region is home to a nationally significant Native American community, with deep ties to the Cherokee, Choctaw, and other tribes. Additionally, the presence of a growing Hispanic population and a notable Southeast Asian community contributes to a multicultural environment that is both welcoming and distinct.

Residents enjoy a lower cost of living than the national average, a family-friendly atmosphere, and a strong sense of community pride. With a robust network of public and private schools, a growing university presence through the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith, the Arkansas College of Health Education Medical School, and a variety of churches representing the region's strong evangelical heritage, Fort Smith offers a quality of life that balances small-town warmth with the opportunities of a growing city.



Pictured top to bottom: Mercy Hospital, University of Arkansas Fort Smith, Fort Smith Public Library, Bakery District, Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine



Grand Avenue Baptist Church

3900 Grand Ave.

Fort Smith, AR

» **479.783.5161**

» **gabc.church**

Grand Avenue Baptist Church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and the Great Commission Baptist Association.