

Church and Pastor Profiles

Thetford Baptist Church

www.thetfordbaptistchurch.org

Compiled by the Pastoral Search Committee
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Thetford Baptist Church
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CHURCH PROFILE

Thetford Baptist Church (TBC) is an evangelical Christian fellowship in Thetford, Vermont, that believes in the inerrancy of the Bible, salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, His virgin birth, substitutionary death and bodily resurrection and second coming. We graciously affirm the doctrines of God's sovereign grace in salvation and of believer's baptism and we believe the church is comprised of all those who have genuinely placed their faith in Christ to forgive their sins and to give them new life in Him. We believe the Christian life involves living under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, engaging in worship and fellowship, telling lost people about Jesus Christ, and seeking to obey the Word of God.

We are led by a plurality of Elders (of whom the Pastor is one). We are currently associated with the Conservative Baptist Association (CBA) and practice fellowship with other like-minded churches. Our worship is directed to glorifying our great God. To this end, the preaching of the Word of God is emphasized, as is our attention to that preaching. In worship we use both traditional and contemporary music, and administer holy communion every week.

THETFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

Worship

We see worship as an integral part of Christian life. The major focus of our Sunday Morning Worship Service is faithful teaching of the Bible. The Service includes a blend of the great hymns of the faith along with worship and praise choruses. We also spend time in corporate prayer.

Christian Education

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

—Colossians 3:16 (ESV)

At TBC we strive to do our part in growing life-long Christians and view Christian Education as essential to this goal.

The Sunday School provides teaching for all ages prior to the worship service. We have been using a curriculum from Children Desiring God Ministry for Pre-K through 8th grade and a variety of books and curriculum geared toward gospel living for the adults. During the Sunday service the younger children leave to attend a class geared for their age group.

Other education activities have included Pioneers Club, Girls of Grace and our yearly Vacation Bible School.

Weekly Ministries

Our small group meetings throughout the week are designed to provide a more intimate setting for fellowship and spiritual growth. Small groups of 7 to 10 adults plus children meet weekly in homes for study, prayer and fellowship. Groups begin in the fall and run concurrently with the school year. All church attendees are encouraged to join a small group.

Men of the church meet Wednesday mornings at 6:30 a.m. for Bible study and prayer. They also meet quarterly for men's breakfast which includes a study and outreach activity.

Women of the church meet Thursday evenings at 6 p.m. with a potluck dinner, then Bible study. There is also a yearly retreat that features an overnight stay at a nearby retreat center, and includes Bible study and fellowship time.

Missions

The Missions Team has recently updated the mission policy manual to provide solid direction for current and future ministries. TBC currently supports the following through budgeted expenditures: two missionary families with Wycliffe Bible Translators, our own missionary in Cambodia, SEMBEQ seminary in Quebec, a church planter and health center in Tajikistan through Operation Mercy, and two day-care centers in Moldova through Operation Mobilization. Locally we support The Fold, a residential program for troubled teens, and the Pregnancy Center of the Upper Valley. We have an annual offering for The Persecuted Church.

Constitutional Officers

The spiritual leadership and oversight of TBC is provided by the Elders. The Pastor, who is an Elder, has particular responsibility for teaching, preaching, and overseeing the administration of the ordinances of the church. The Deacons serve and care for the congregation and community. In addition to these officers, the church has a Clerk, Social Director, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer.

Church Body

Church attendance is 55-65 on Sunday mornings. About 40% of the body resides in the towns of Lyme, NH and Thetford, VT and most of the rest reside in the surrounding towns within a 15-mile radius, with a few coming from much greater distances. Slightly more than half of the body are from families with deep roots in the area, while the majority of the remainder are transplants from outside New England. The body has people with a wide variety of occupational, educational and denominational backgrounds. The body consists of a wide range of ages from young families to retirees.

Facilities

The main level of the church building has an entry foyer, an office for secretary or pastor, a sanctuary which seats 120, and a fellowship hall with kitchen and restroom. There is an open balcony overlooking the sanctuary which houses the church library and an open office. The lower level of the building has classrooms, a nursery, a kitchen, and restrooms. The building is handicapped accessible with the exception of balcony.

The church property is 2 acres set well back from the main highway in residential/light commerce area. There is a play area for children with a swing set and climbing fort and a paved area for basketball and activities. There is ample parking and space for future growth.

History

Thetford Baptist Church was begun as a church plant by the Conservative Baptist Association in 1982, and has faithfully declared the message of new life in Jesus Christ since then. The building is a colonial-style church, circa 1835, which was no longer in use in southern Vermont. We purchased it, disassembled it, trucked it to our present location, and re-assembled it with the help of people from churches in our local area as well as churches from New Hampshire and Pennsylvania.

Finances

For fiscal year 2014/15 the total Budget is \$124,490 of which \$27,300 is designated for Missions. The church has no indebtedness.

COMMUNITY

Geography

Thetford Baptist Church is located in the village of East Thetford, one of the six villages comprising the Town of Thetford. The Town of Thetford is laid out along the Connecticut River. Interstate 91 runs through Thetford providing easy access to Massachusetts and Quebec. Thetford is a rural New England community with a population of 2,700.

Thetford is situated in the "Upper Valley" of Vermont/New Hampshire, which includes the larger towns of White River Jct., VT, and Lebanon & Hanover, NH. We are within easy driving distance to major cities: 2-1/2 hours to Boston, 4-1/2 hours to New York City, 4 hours to Montreal, and 1-1/2 hours to Burlington, Vermont.

Climate

Ours is a four-season climate. Generally the summer is warm and pleasant and the fall is crisp, colorful and beautiful. There is plenty of snow and cold in the winter and, following “mud season” (the spring thaw), spring is always welcome!

Recreation

The Upper Valley is rich in the arts and recreational opportunities. The outdoor activities in the local area are downhill and cross-country skiing, hiking, biking, camping, with swimming, boating and fishing on the lakes and rivers of the area. Many cultural opportunities and events are offered throughout the Upper Valley.

Medical

Thetford is served by major hospitals: Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital, both located in Lebanon, NH; and the Veteran’s Administration Hospital in White River Junction, VT.

Education

The education system in Thetford consists of an elementary school (200 students in K-6; www.thetfordschool.org) and the designated high school, Thetford Academy (approximately 300 students in grades 7-12; www.thetfordacademy.org). Thetford Academy is one of New England’s oldest private institutions. Mid Vermont Christian School (K-12; www.mvcs.info) is located in Quechee, VT just 21 miles away. We also have higher education opportunities: Dartmouth College is ten miles away in Hanover, NH; Lebanon College is 17 miles away in Lebanon, NH; and Community College of Vermont has a campus located in White River Jct., VT, 17 miles away.

Churches

There are six churches in the Town of Thetford of which TBC is the only evangelical church. The area is relatively low in church attendance, however, in the upper valley area there is an active association of evangelical churches whose Pastors meet monthly for fellowship.

Summary

God has a mission for TBC in this community. There is great potential for growth and outreach here. It is our earnest prayer that God will bring to us a teaching shepherd who shares our vision to grow and reach the local area with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

PASTOR PROFILE

After prayerful consideration, we believe that Thetford Baptist Church's next pastor will display the characteristics described below.

Preacher/Teacher: The candidate for this position should be an individual who loves to study and teach the Word of God and present it boldly in a clear and understandable manner. He should help God's people apply His Word to their relationships and daily lives.

Devotional life: The candidate should be an individual who puts a high priority on his personal devotion to the Lord. He should be an individual who sees this as critical to the success of his preaching and other pastoral functions.

Professional growth: The candidate should promote his calling through professional growth, including meeting with like-minded Pastors and Elders for discipling, study, and mutual encouragement. He should continue his education through seminars, conferences, and the like.

Pastoring/Shepherding skills: The candidate should be a person who: loves and enjoys people; can relate well to a variety of different people in a sincere and humble way; be a servant-leader who leads by his own example; able to discern the particular needs of individuals in the flock and provide them with the requisite pastoral care; delegate pastoral care responsibilities among his fellow Elders and other gifted individuals within the congregation; and be willing to warn, admonish, rebuke and correct as this becomes necessary for the church as a whole or for individual members who need these ministries.

Family and Children: The candidate should support children and youth ministries with a vision to developing Godly families by encouraging and equipping those in the church with a gift and heart for these ministries.

Discipling: The candidate should be gifted at teaching believers to be learners from and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ in their relationships and daily lives. This includes teaching them how to love and study God's word, to love one another, to pursue God's will, and to bear fruit for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Missions: The candidate should possess a heart for missions and desire to work with the missions committee to encourage the growth of support for missions at TBC.

Evangelism: The candidate should have a heart and gifting for personal and broader-scoped evangelism and outreach. He should encourage, exhort, motivate, and lead TBC in reaching out with the gospel of Jesus Christ to the local community and to the world.

Worship: The candidate should be able to conduct and coordinate the worship service in conjunction with the worship team. He should encourage the congregation to worship God not only on Sunday but in all their relationships and life activities.

Administration: The candidate should possess organizational skills adequate to coordinate the day-to-day operation of the church.

Visitation: The candidate should be willing to visit individuals and families within the church and community and to encourage the congregation to demonstrate hospitality to one another and to those in the community.

Leadership: The candidate should be able to lead this church in its mission to its members and to the community. He should recognize leadership potential in others, helping them to develop their gifts, all to the greater glory of God.

Counseling: The candidate for this position should possess pastoral counseling skills for both formal and informal counseling opportunities as they arise. He should be committed to counseling people biblically. He should be able to dedicate a portion of his time each week to counseling people in the church. He should be able to wisely delegate counseling responsibilities among his fellow Elders, other gifted individuals within the congregation, and to professional biblical counselors in the area when the situation goes beyond his abilities or time limitations.