

Our History

1959-2017



Church Covenant

Identifying the Church as a community of individuals bound by faith in Jesus Christ,

Believing the Church to be a called-out body whose existence is in the world,

Acknowledging the Church as an instrument of God's work in the world and

Affirming the Church as the guardian and proclaimer of the new covenant between God and His people,

We the members of the Fernwood Baptist Church,

Claiming.....the power of the Father,
Seeking.....the personality of the Son,
Trusting.....the presence of the Holy Spirit,

Commit Ourselves ...

TO WORSHIP & CELEBRATION, allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us as a gathered community into a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, celebrating His presence and influence in our lives;

TO DISCIPLESHIP & GROWTH, letting our lifestyle declare a growing commitment to Christlikeness;

TO EDUCATION & TRAINING, engaging in a program of religious instruction that will increase and deepen our faith through the knowledge of the Bible, enable us to grow in Christian maturity and develop the leadership necessary to be the people of God;

TO WITNESS & MISSION, exemplifying the abundant life of peace and grace that we enjoy through Jesus Christ by sharing the Gospel based on the principles of love and need;

TO MINISTRY & SERVICE, seeking through personal involvement an awareness of the spiritual and physical needs of the people in our areas of concern and responding to them in the name of Christ; and

TO LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP, nurturing vital, growing personal relationships within our faith community through the bonds of common commitment to Christ.

Adopted December 10, 1978

In the Beginning

A slender, needle-like spire, its simple cross thrusting into the sky from a high ridge in Eastern Spartanburg, is a silent and effective testimony to the Christian faith and courage of the 107 charter members of the Fernwood Baptist Church.

The words, “You’re on your own,” were a spur to an enlarged vision that had crystallized into a conviction that somewhere between century-old First Baptist Church and equally historic Zion Hill Baptist Church, there was an urgent need for another Baptist witness in rapidly expanding Spartanburg. This was not a sudden, impulsive undertaking, but a long cherished dream in the hearts of many people. Eleven lots in the Fernwood Farms residential area had already been purchased by the Southside Baptist Church looking toward the eventual establishing of a church. Through the help of First Baptist Church and the Associational Mission Program, additional land was acquired bringing the total area to a little over six acres. These lots were deeded to the Fernwood Baptist Church soon after its constitution, free of financial obligation.

The first public meeting of all persons interested in nurturing a new church was called at Houston Elementary School, November 4, 1958, with a number of area pastors in attendance. A second public meeting was held at First Baptist Church on the 23 of November. Immediately following this meeting, steps were taken to set up committees and organizations, to secure literature, to select a regular meeting place, and to attend to the many details of a church’s organization and early beginning. On January 11, 1959, an organizational meeting was held at First Baptist Church; and Fernwood Baptist Church was organized with 107 charter members. School authorities were gracious in providing the facility of Houston Elementary School, at first rent-free and later at a very reasonable figure, for the holding of services of the new church. The Reverend J. N. Watson, County Superintendent of Missions, advised, counseled and guided the young church in its beginning. He also conducted its services, visited its sick, and led the membership in its first series of revival services.

A New Church

In Business Conference May 24, 1959, Fernwood Baptist Church called as interim pastor, the Reverend Edwin Young, a student at Southeastern Theological Seminary. He served the church until his resignation on the 31 of August. The Reverend Dr. James L. Turner, Professor of Bible at Converse College, then supplied the pulpit for all services until the calling of a regular pastor. Fund raising began in earnest November 22, 1959, under the successful leadership of the Dr. W. C. Ezell, looking toward the erection of a suitable building as soon as possible. The small membership gave generously and on September 24, 1961, voted to enter into a building contract, which, with furnishings, was not to exceed \$275,000. Total cost of the initial facility, including the property and other designated gifts, amounted to slightly more than \$300,000.

On January 24, 1960, Fernwood Baptist Church welcomed its first pastor, the Reverend Dr. William L. Ball, Jr., from Oakland Baptist Church of Rock Hill. The church on this date numbered 149 resident members.

Sunday, July 29, 1962, was a happy day when the congregation assembled for its first service in the newly constructed sanctuary (now known as The William L. Ball, Jr. Chapel) and educational facility on Fernwood Drive. The first service there was an early morning observance of the Lord's Supper at 9:00 a.m. This type of service was chosen as an act of thanksgiving and as a symbol of our faith and declaration of our bonds of Christian and church fellowship. The Sunday School attendance that Sunday soared to the unprecedented figure of 227. Formal dedication services were scheduled for Sunday, September 23 with Dr. James L. Sullivan of Nashville, Tennessee as the guest preacher. A week of daily revival services led by Dr. Harold Cole of Columbia followed.

Just one year after entering the new building, it became apparent that the church was crowded almost to capacity. The building was designed to accommodate 400 people and 440 were now enrolled for Sunday School. In a business conference on July 18, 1965, Mr. Dan Willis brought to the congregation a complete report of the work of the Building Committee with sketches and preliminary drawings of a proposed education building. Two years later on July 23, 1967, the church voted to award the building contract to Britain Construction Company in the amount of \$232,000. On November 3, 1968, the new building was occupied with dedication services set to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the church, January 12, 1969.

In 1974, the church purchased additional land adjacent to its property for future parking use and paid this indebtedness in three years.

Dedicated Staff

During Fernwood's history there have been several dedicated young people who have served on a part-time basis in differing areas of ministry. Jo Anna Duke Robinson served during the summer of 1963. Helen Lee Turner, then an undergraduate student at Wake Forest University, worked with children and youth in the summer of 1970. Julie Jay also gave Fernwood summer assistance in 1973 while she was a graduate student at Southern Seminary. Another Southern Seminary student and member of Fernwood, Bruce League, served as a summer worker in 1978. Mr. League became the first Fernwood young person to enter full-time Christian service, going in 1979 to serve as minister of Education and Youth at Edenton Baptist Church in Edenton, North Carolina. Clary Gardner, a 2007 graduate of Furman University with a BA in religion, served as Summer Children's Worker during the summer of 2007. Judith Myers, a graduate of Winthrop University and Fernwood member, served as Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Intern during the summer of 2013. A member of the congregation, E. A. Cox, served as Summer Children's Worker during the summer of 2015.

Also serving as youth interns or summer assistants were Dennis Haimbaugh, David Holder, Lisa Dunson, Lori Hartman, Dean Akers, and Tina Woody.

In August 1967, Fernwood called its first full-time Associate Minister, the Reverend Russell Lewis, who came to serve in the areas of education and youth. The Reverend William C. Treadwell, Jr. followed him in the same position coming in February 1971 and remaining until November 1974. The Reverend W. Gordon Knight, Jr. became the third Minister of Education and Youth, coming in January 1975 and remaining until August 1975.

Fernwood has sought to maintain a significant church music program since its beginning. Those who have served us well in leadership have been Mr. Herman Davis, Mrs. Sue Teele, Miss Carol Bizell, Mr. William Partridge, Mrs. W. H. Luther, Mrs. Dean Jenkins, Mrs. W. G. Metz and, in 1970, Mr. and Mrs. Roland Smith, as Choir Director and Organist respectively. In January 1972, Mr. David Penninger succeeded Mr. Smith as Choir Director; and, later that same year, Mrs.

Norma Jean Reid came to add a further dimension to the music program as Church Organist. Under Mr. Penninger's leadership, a full church music program evolved including a graded choir program for preschoolers through adults, youth and adult handbell choirs and voice, guitar and music composition classes. Mr. Penninger was also a nationally known composer in his own right. Following Mr. Penninger as Choir Director were Dr. Marielon Tatum Ratliff and Mrs. Mary Ruth Burwell. Mrs. Joanne Metz, and later Mrs. Reita King, directed the handbell choir. After Mrs. Reid left as organist, Lera Borden, Margaret Hopper, Kathy Hebert, Marcia Harris and Rusty Keesler served in that position.

On June 30, 1976, Fernwood witnessed the ending of a significant chapter in her life with the retirement of Dr. Ball. His contributions to Fernwood during our formative years were too numerous to count. He will always be held close to our hearts because of his love for us. During the interim search for a new pastor, the Dr. James Turner once again returned to serve Fernwood. On May 8, 1977, the Reverend Dr. David DeBord was called as Fernwood's second full-time pastor, leaving his position as Assistant Pastor at First Baptist Church, Florence, S. C.

On August 4, 1977, Charles M. Walls became Fernwood's fourth Minister of Education and Youth. Mr. Walls continued to serve until September 30, 1980. On April 1, 1981, the Reverend Jean S. Pruett was called as Fernwood's fifth Minister of Education and Youth. Her coming was of historical significance in that Rev. Pruett was the first woman to serve in this position and the first ordained woman to serve on the staff. Fernwood had already affirmed the place of women in ministry by being one of the first churches in this area to ordain a woman, Mrs. Iva Mae Hendley, a charter member of the church, as a deacon.

Dr. DeBord resigned from the pastorate on August 15, 1983, to accept a call to First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Virginia. The Reverend Ted Dougherty served the church as interim pastor from August 28, 1983, to August 5, 1984.

The Reverend Dr. P. Randall Wright, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Seneca, S. C., was called to become Fernwood's third pastor. He came to Fernwood on August 12, 1984, and served Fernwood during a time of great upheaval in the Southern Baptist Convention. It was also a time when Fernwood added the sanctuary and the Easley Family Life Center to the physical plant.

As the church ministries grew and expanded, the Reverend Jean S. Pruett, now the Reverend Dr. Pruett, became the Minister of Education and Discipleship. The

Reverend C. Eric Bjork was called as a full-time Minister for Children and Youth. He came to Fernwood on September 15, 1987, and held that position until 2000 when he was called to be the pastor of Bedon Baptist Church, Walterboro, South Carolina.

In December 1993, Dr. Pruett left Fernwood to become pastor of First Baptist Church of Moore. The Reverend Marc Burcham was called to fill the new position of Minister of Music and Adult Ministries January 1, 1995, and served until May 10, 2005. Our beloved Dr. William L. Ball, Jr. was named Pastor Emeritus on November 24, 1985. He was again honored on February 25, 1996, when the chapel was dedicated as The William L. Ball, Jr. Chapel.

The Fernwood family mourned Dr. Ball's death on June 25, 1997. In the memorial service on June 27, Dr. Wright described Dr. Ball's legacy as "his kind gentle spirit, his quiet, powerful spirituality and his quick and winsome ways." Dr. Ball was also remembered for his untiring devotion and commitment to the vision of Fernwood as a vital and growing ministry to the Spartanburg community.

With the opening of the Easley Family Life Center (EFLC), there was an opportunity to enhance the ministry to families. Toward this end, the Reverend Kelly L. Belcher from our own congregation was called to be Minister for Children and Family Life. She began her tenure on September 16, 2001. After guiding the development of activities in the EFLC and reorganizing the children's programs, she resigned effective September 15, 2006, to return to the congregation.

The Reverend Stuart L. Jones came to Fernwood on November 4, 2001, as Minister to Students. Jones was previously the Minister to Students at First Baptist Church of Sanford, NC. On April 13, 2008, Jones' position title was changed by the congregation to Associate Pastor / Minister to Youth. He served in this position until March 13, 2016.

Dr. Wright retired December 31, 2006, leaving to become the Director of The Snail's Pace, a religious retreat center in Saluda, N. C. Fernwood was then shepherded by The Reverend Dr. Jim Langford, Intentional Interim Minister, from March 1, 2007, until May 31, 2008. Fernwood was then led by the Reverend Stuart Jones, Associate Pastor / Minister to Youth, until a new pastor was called.

The Reverend Jones and a number of dedicated ordained Fernwood members filled the pulpit during the search for a new pastor. Those members were the Reverends

Kelly L. Belcher, Laura L. Jones, Dr. Gerald L. Keown, Jason Loscuito, Kevin B. Lynch, Dr. James N. Rentz, and Carson Rogerson. The insight, skill, and devotion of these eight ministers provided essential continuity and stability for the congregation during this time.

Upon the recommendation of the Pastor Search Committee, the Reverend Drs. Lisa Wimberly Allen and Larry Dean Allen II were called on April 19, 2009, to be jointly the Pastor of Fernwood Baptist Church. This pastorate is distinctive in that both the Allens share the one position of Pastor. The Allens began their tenure at Fernwood on June 15, 2009.

On July 15, 2014, Drs. Lisa and Dean Allen resigned to be closer to their family in Florida. Again Assoc. Pastor Stuart Jones and a number of ordained Fernwood members filled the pulpit while a Search Committee worked to obtain a new pastor. Those members were the Reverends Dr. Randy Gardner, Laura Jones, Dr. Gerald Keown, Drs. Jean & Jim Pruett, Kevin Lynch, Jason Loscuito, Arthur Kirk, Brad Holmes, and Judith Myers. Also, a member Christopher Cox, MDiv., preached during this interim.

On Sunday, May 17, 2015, the church called the Reverend Bailey Edwards Nelson to be Fernwood's next pastor. She served as Pastor from June 8, 2015 to February 19, 2017.

The Reverend Dr. Dan R. Vincent began his intentional interim ministry on June 11, 2017.

No church can function without a dedicated administrative staff. Those serving up to the present were Frances Schall, Iris Bailey, Frances Leonard, Eileen Ronat, Joanne Gregory, Ruby Latherage, JoJo Bagwell, Sandy Edwards, Jo Ellen O'Shields, Judy Wilson, Kay Walden, Mary Ann Burton, Mary Helen Wessinger, and Angie Quinn.

Lee Rice was custodian for Fernwood even before the church building was begun. He retired in 1987. Troy Norris was custodian until 2002 and Jerry Hutchins from 2003 until 2015.

A New Focus

In January 1991, “Continuing the Vision” was chosen as the name for Fernwood’s Stewardship Ministry. It was the desire of the congregation to fulfill the expansion needs of the church to provide a sanctuary, just as the charter members of Fernwood planned. The current membership had expanded the vision to include not only the long-awaited sanctuary, but also a family life center. An updated master plan adopted by the church further expressed the “Continuing the Vision” theme. Believing that the worship of God is central in the life of a church, Fernwood determined to begin the master plan with the construction of a sanctuary and continue as soon as possible with a family life center.

After a two-year fund raising effort, a ground breaking ceremony was held on June 13, 1993. Architect Ken Pflieger of Interpretative Design/Architecture and general contractor Yeargin Enterprises worked along with the Sanctuary Committee to design and build a facility that reflected Fernwood’s outreach to the community. The completed sanctuary was dedicated on May 7, 1995.

One of the key design elements of the new sanctuary is the seven bays of faceted glass windows designed by Jane Collins of Willet Stained Glass Studios in Philadelphia. The windows depict themes and periods including the beginning of time, the prophecy of Isaiah, the life of Christ, the early church and the final consummation. Fittingly, the window depicting Pentecost and the Acts of the Apostles has been designated as the “Billy and Bessie Ball Window.”

Another part of the master plan was fulfilled with the building of a family life center that included a gymnasium, kitchen, dining room, and stage. The Fernwood Baptist Church Family Life Ministry Vision was “... To offer personal ministry and a credible witness to the Spartanburg community by ministering to the whole person with education, fellowship, and recreational activities to enhance mind, body, and spirit.” The role of this vision was aptly described in the April 21, 2002, dedication of the center by the following charge:

This building is dedicated to God and built in memory of Mary Barber and Genatus “Red” Easley in recognition of the positive role that family and sports activities play in molding the lives of young people. The benevolent spirit of Mary and Red helped make their longtime dream a reality for the youth of Fernwood Baptist Church.

Membership and Service

Fernwood Baptist Church celebrated her 50th Anniversary on January 11, 2009. During the first 50-year history, Fernwood received 2191 people into membership, a membership which at that time numbered 600.

In her history, Fernwood has ordained the following men and women to the Gospel Ministry:

Charles M. Walls on September 3, 1978
Bruce League on March 30, 1980
William Lockaby, Jr. on September 27, 1981
Elisabeth Smith on November 25, 1984
Terry Raines on August 10, 1986
Jane McKown on May 5, 1991
Walter (Rocky) Ratliff on August 11, 1991
Christine (Tina) B. Woody on October 29, 2000
Laura Jones on April 27, 2008
Stacy Sergent on May 31, 2008
Tonya D. Hill on November 20, 2011
Randall (Randy) Perrenoud on May 4, 2014
William Christopher (Chris) Cox on October 30, 2016

Praises to God

It poses an impossible problem to squeeze these years into a few neat paragraphs and say this is the history of Fernwood. Without the generous effort and cooperation on the part of so many loyal members and friends who have proved their interest through their gracious gifts of time and money, Fernwood could never have been. To God we are grateful for this experience of sharing with one another and with Him in this impossible dream. Affirming our past and the vision that has brought us to this point, we now seek the new “Word from the Lord” and with it a renewed awareness of His energizing presence in our midst.

Fernwood Past And Present Pastors

The Reverend Dr. William L. Ball, Jr., January 24, 1960 – June 30, 1976
The Reverend Dr. David M. DeBord, May 8, 1977 – August 15, 1983
The Reverend Dr. P. Randall Wright, August 12, 1984 – December 31, 2006

The Reverend Dr. Larry Dean Allen II, July 15, 2009 – June 15, 2014
The Reverend Dr. Lisa Wimberly Allen, July 15, 2009 – June 15, 2014
The Reverend Bailey Edwards Nelson, June 8, 2015 – February 19, 2017

Clergy Staff

The Reverend Russell Lewis, Associate Minister 1967 – 1970
The Reverend William C. Treadwell, Jr., Minister of Education & Youth, 1971 – 1974
The Reverend W. Gordon Knight, Jr., Minister of Education & Youth, 1975 – 1975
The Reverend Charles M. Wall, Minister of Education & Youth, 1977 – 1980
The Reverend Dr. Jean S. Pruett, Minister of Education & Discipleship, 1981 – 1993
The Reverend C. Eric Bjork, Minister for Children & Youth, 1987 – 2000
The Reverend Marc H. Burcham, Minister of Music & Adult Ministries, 1995 – 2005
The Reverend Kelly Belcher, Minister to Children, 2001 – 2006
The Reverend Stuart Jones, Minister to Students, 2001 – 2008
The Reverend Stuart L. Jones, Associate Pastor / Minister to Youth, 2008 – 2016

Interim Pastors

The Reverend J. N. Watson
The Reverend Dr. Edwin Young, Summer, 1959
The Reverend Dr. James Turner, 1959 – 1960, 1976 – 1977
The Reverend Ted Dougherty, 1983 – 1984
The Reverend Dr. Jim Langford, 2007 – 2008
The Reverend Dr. Dan R. Vincent, 2017– present

Music Directors

Mr. Herman Martin Davis, Jr.
Miss Carol Bizell
Mr. Rusty Keesler

Organists/Choirmasters

Mrs. Doris Luther
Mr. Roland Smith
Mr. David Penninger
Dr. Marielon Ratliff
Mrs. Mary Ruth Burwell

Handbell Directors

Mrs. Jo Anne Metz
Mrs. Reita King

Organists

Mrs. Sue Teele
Mrs. Etta Mae Jenkins
Mrs. Julie Smith

Mrs. Norma Jean Reid
Mrs. Lera Borden
Mrs. Margaret Hopper
Mrs. Kathy Hebert
Mr. Rusty Keesler
Mrs. Marcia Harris

Pianists

Mrs. Bessie Ball
Mrs. Daisy Evans
Mrs. Nancy Ruth Smith
Mrs. Ruthellen Ronat West
Mrs. Peggy Elliott
Mrs. Judy Wright
Mrs. Vera Smith
Mrs. Luan Woods
Mrs. Marcia Harris

Office Staff

Mrs. Frances Schall
Ms. Iris Bailey
Mrs. Frances Leonard
Mrs. Eileen Ronat
Mrs. Joanne Gregory
Ms. Ruby Laughridge
Ms. JoJo Bagwell
Mrs. Sandy Edwards
Mrs. Jo Ellen O'Shields
Mrs. Judy Wilson
Ms. Kay Walden
Mrs. Mary Ann Burton
Mrs. Angie Quinn, November 1, 1999 – present
Mrs. Mary Helen Wessinger, July 9, 2014 – present (Financial Administrator)

Custodians

Mr. Lee Rice
Mr. Troy Norris
Ms. Tabatha Robinson
Mr. Jerry Hutchins

Reflecting On Our Past, Celebrating The Present And Committing To The Future Our Vision

(As given in *Our History* in 1999)

Our Vision

The earliest record of the beginning of Fernwood Baptist Church reflects a meeting in 1958, attended by Mrs. W. H. Hendley, Sr., Mr. Jim Caldwell and Mr. and Mrs. Monie S. Hudson with Mr. J. N. Watson, the Baptist Association missionary. The meeting was for the purpose of learning methods and procedures in forming and establishing a Baptist church in the Fernwood area. At that time the area was Fernwood Farms, which later became Fernwood subdivision.

The fact of the vision was probably unconscious in 1958, but it became a conscious program in later years as the church pursued three distinct building programs: the original chapel and educational building, a major addition to the educational building, and the sanctuary. In 1990 the program for building the sanctuary was entitled "Continuing The Vision."

to be caring Christians

For forty years Fernwood has provided a full program of traditional ministries while looking for opportunities to provide unique, caring witnesses throughout the Spartanburg community. Some examples of community witness are: use of Fernwood's facilities by the Hispanic and German churches, involvement with the Baptist Mission Center, Downtown Rescue Mission, TOTAL Ministries, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Piedmont Community Action, AIDS Support Network, Hospice, St. Luke's Free Medical Clinic, Greater Spartanburg Ministries, Habitat for Humanity and other helping organizations offering personal ministry.

offering personal ministry

The Daisy Chain is a group of members organized to visit specific homebound church members each week. Volunteers take each one a tape of the previous Sunday's sermon and a Sunday School lesson tape, if desired. Our clergy and church staff also seek to fulfill their ministries personally and sensitively. Numerous members serve on various boards in helping agencies throughout our community, carrying the influence of Fernwood Baptist Church beyond her walls.

and a credible witness

The Sunday School lesson is taught every Sunday by several Fernwood members at Skylyn and White Oak, local senior citizens' facilities. Church youth play bingo with the residents of White Oak one afternoon each month. The handbell choir provides concerts for the local nursing homes. Various discipleship experiences and the ongoing educational ministry of Fernwood provide members with opportunities to enhance the credibility of their witness. For many years a kindergarten was provided for the community and a scouting program has been continuous. The Fernwood facilities are used throughout the week for community meetings that support a variety of interests and needs including the arts, Weight Watchers, Whitten Village residents and Narcotics Anonymous. The Charles Lea Center operated at the church for several years, even housing their washer and dryer in the building for part of that time.

to the Spartanburg community.

Volunteers, called Caregivers, give of their time to help people in the community who have needs. They also check on and send cards to our own members with special requirements. The Caregiver ministry is scheduled six days per week.

For 20 years or more, a WMU member has organized a group of ladies to play bingo with the residents at Mountain View Nursing Home once each month. These women take small gifts to award as prizes. The organizer has been known to frequent garage sales to search for items.

We are a family of faith

The church is a family of faith. It is also composed of physical families of people. In the original 107 members, 45 surnames were represented. 18 of these surnames are still represented on the present church roll, reflecting stability in the midst of growth. The individual families merge into the family of faith by shared interests in God and community.

seeking spiritual maturity,

Between 1958 and the present, Fernwood has retained a number of gifted spiritual leaders to minister to the members and to help shape our vision through leadership and inspiration.

Both clergy and lay leaders have served the members of the spiritual family in various roles through the years, leading the members toward spiritual maturity. Fernwood has also been blessed with a senior citizenry whose spiritual maturity and wisdom flow into the life of the church and provide continuity with the purpose and activity of the original founders.

celebrating human diversity and creativity,

We are a diverse congregation, celebrating the freedom and growth which such diversity stimulates. The creativity of Fernwood exists as the creativity of the individual members providing labor and leadership in business, finance, education and medicine. Ministers who are members of the congregation push the number of ministers per capita beyond that of most congregations, giving Fernwood a broader base of theological expertise. Technical and scientific contributions of members serve not only local industries, but also some international causes. The members work with the ministers of Fernwood to present the Gospel in a creative, fresh manner, using their gifts in the music, drama and education ministries of Fernwood.

and proclaiming God's unconditional love.

Seven faceted-glass windows in the sanctuary cover themes and periods from the beginning of time through the prophecy of Isaiah and the life of Christ, up through the early church and pointing to the mystery and glory of final consummation. The biblical witness of these windows is a lasting proclamation of God's unconditional love and inspires us to love in a like manner.

Changes and Solidification

The statement of *Our Vision*, as explained in the preceding *Reflecting On Our Past ...* and as first recorded in *Footsteps* in April of 1992, was modified as follows to include "the greater Spartanburg community" in order to recognize that many of our members come from outside Spartanburg. This Vision was renamed The Mission of Fernwood Baptist Church when the new Vision was adopted in 2008.

Our Mission

To be caring Christians
offering personal ministry
and a credible witness to
the greater Spartanburg community.

We are a family of faith
seeking spiritual maturity,
celebrating human diversity
and creativity, and proclaiming
God's unconditional love.

Acting on recommendations from the Transition Team formed after the retirement of Dr. Randy Wright, Fernwood voted on February 10, 2008, to be identified as a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship church and to continue the practice of accepting the baptisms of persons who transfer their memberships from other denominations. On December 7, 2008, the congregation adopted a more compact vision statement crafted by the Transition Team:

Our Vision

We aspire to be Christ to each other
and our community – doing justice,
loving mercy and walking humbly with our God.

Charter Members

Mrs. Helen Berry	Miss Lunelia Henderson	Mrs. E. S. McSwain
Mr. Melvin L. Berry	Rev. W. Y. Henderson	Lewis J. Moesley
Mrs. B. L. Blackwell	Mrs. W. Y. Henderson	Mrs. Lewis J. Moesley
Mrs. L. J. Bomar	Mrs. W. H. Hendley, Sr.	Jerry Moesley
Claude L. Brockett, Jr.	W. H. Hendley, Jr.	Dixon L. Poole
Mrs. Claude L. Brockett, Jr.	Mrs. W. H. Hendley, Jr.	Mrs. Dixon L. Poole
Mrs. J. B. Caldwell	Harvey Hendley	Andrew J. Rosco
Miss Elizabeth Caldwell	Mrs. Z. E. Holland	Mrs. Andrew J. Rosco
James B. Caldwell, Jr.	Joe B. Herlong	Mrs. G. M. Sanders
Mrs. James B. Caldwell, Jr.	Mrs. Joe B. Herlong	Miss Mary Mae Sanders
Ralph M. Caldwell	Monie S. Hudson	Mrs. Carrie B. Smith
Mr. Ralph M. Caldwell	Mrs. Monie S. Hudson	Miss Elizabeth Smith
Joe Hill Cantrell, Jr.	Belva McCall Hudson	Horace C. Smith
Mrs. Joe Hill Cantrell, Jr.	Sharon Hudson	Mrs. Horace C. Smith
Miss Mary Covington	Monie Haynsworth	David Smith
Wallace G. Dean	Hudson	Stephen Smith
Mrs. Wallace G. Dean	Roy D. Hughston	Mrs. Lillian M. Smith
Donnie Dean	Mrs. Roy D. Hughston	Mrs. Hubert Surratt
Glen Dean	Miss Louise Hunt	Mrs. Esten C. Taylor
Mrs. Bertha W. Dobson	James W. Ivey	Joseph N. Todd, Jr.
Theron K. Evans	Mrs. James W. Ivey	Mrs. Joseph N. Todd, Jr.
Mrs. Theron K. Evans	Rev. A. P. Jones	Mrs. Rosa Lee Turner
Elaine Evans	Mrs. A. P. Jones	W. R. Turner
Claudia Evans	Charles Jones	Mrs. W. R. Turner
Mrs. Nannie L. Ezell	Constantine "Gus"	Charles D. Veal
Dr. W. C. Ezell	Karegeannes	Mrs. Charles D. Veal
Bill J. Farrow	Robert A. Kay	H. Smith White
Mrs. Bill J. Farrow	Mrs. Robert A. Kay	Mrs. H. Smith White
John Ralph Farrow	Mrs. Clara Moore Knutz	Mrs. Alice L. Williams
Mrs. John Ralph Farrow	Miss Nan Ethelyn Little	Joe L. Williams
Mrs. Fannie M. Foster	Judson Mac Little	Mrs. Joe L. Williams
Miss Elaine Foster	William C. Lyles	Mrs. L. W. Williams
Fred A. Gandy	Mrs. William C. Lyles	T. R. Willis
Harold A. Gault	Curtis O. McDowell	Mrs. T. R. Willis
Mrs. Harold A. Gault	Mrs. Curtis O. McDowell	Tandy Willis
Moody G. Henderson	Harry N. Miller	
Mrs. Moody G. Henderson	Mrs. Harry N. Miller	

Fernwood Baptist Church

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