

First Baptist Church  
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## OUR CHURCH INFORMATION

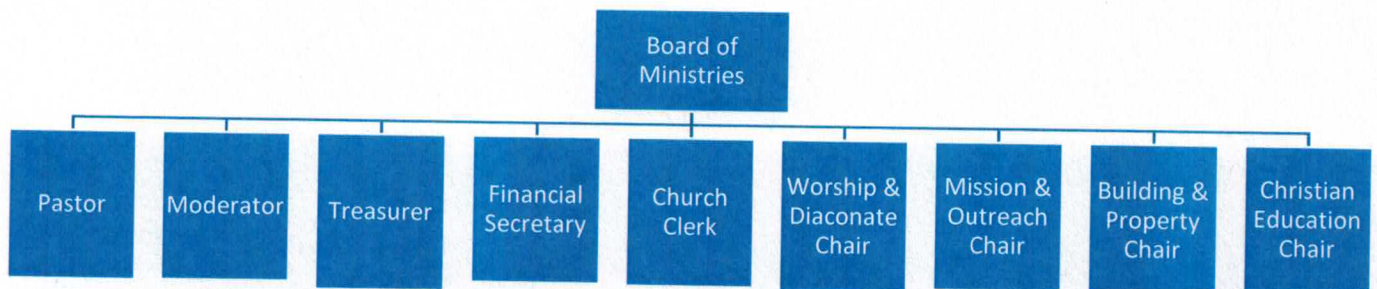
First Baptist Church is located in Winona County, in the state of Minnesota. Located in picturesque bluff country on the Mississippi River. The city of Winona is considered a small city within the Southeast region of Minnesota with approximately 27,000 people.

We have a total of 38 registered members and an average Sunday morning attendance of approximately 20 people. Our active church members are primarily located in Winona County or within 20 miles from the location of the church. Our congregation is primarily made up of European Americans. Our congregation is made of a combination of retired and employed members with employment backgrounds in farming, educational, manufacturing, technical and small business owners. Majority of our congregation households would fall within the middle-class range.

Our church is an older established, family-based, church with a long history within the community promoting Christian faith.

Historically members of our church have been involved in regionally sponsored training events and the Green Lake and Dayton Oaks camping/conference programs. The church body is open to and interested in participating in other events as they come available.

Our congregation's formal structure is as follows:



The current total budget of our church is approximately \$75,000 annually. The current annual expenses of the church are approximately \$64,500. Annually our mission giving is \$400. We have a current endowment of \$200,000 which is used for current expenses of the church.

Our total annual compensation package for our Pastor is \$36,500. We have a parsonage (3 bedroom, 1 bath) available adjacent to the church. Details of the package may be discussed further with the search committee upon consideration of an offer.

## OUR CHURCH LIFE

Currently we offer Sunday School for all ages before the worship service on Sunday mornings. We have a Men's mid-week prayer/Bible study on Tuesday mornings. ABW Ladies circle meets once monthly on Thursday afternoons. During Sunday morning church service, children are invited to attend Children's church. When the opportunity allows, we invite our missionaries to join us to share their work with the congregation.

In the past, we have held an octogenarian meal honoring the senior members of our congregation for their continued support and guidance. Annually our church hosts a display of more than 400 Nativity Scenes that is open to the community. The church was open to the public for the Winona Historical Society's 2018 Christmas House Tour, showcasing our beautiful stained-glass windows and Nativity scenes.



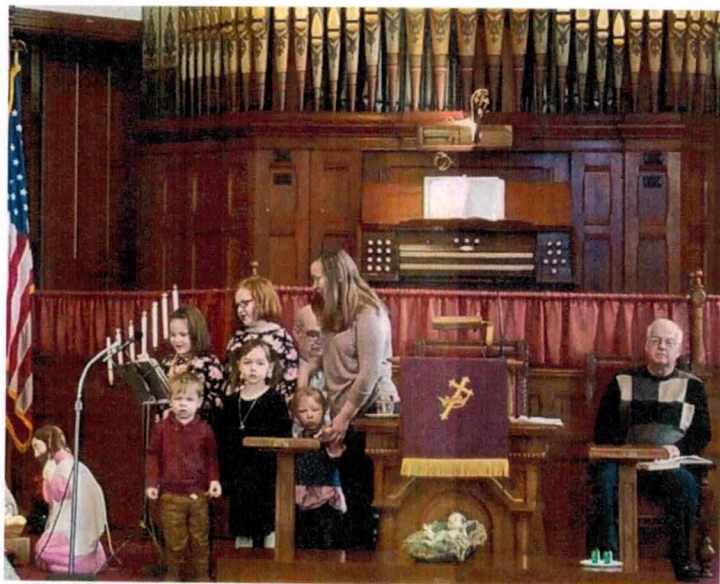
Corrine Zierfus, left, and Jean Gardner, right, look at a glass Nativity scene at First Baptist Church on Saturday morning. Four hundred Nativity scenes were donated and set up at First Baptist Church and are open to the public to come see for the holidays. Jean mentioned the glass Nativity scene was her favorite.  
Taylor Nyman photos, Daily News

### Historical Holiday House Tour 16



A nativity display at the First Baptist Church.  
Craig Johnson, Winona Daily News





Annually, during the Christmas season our church children help us celebrate Jesus' birth through either a Christmas program or by singing Christmas songs during the worship service. Previous years we have hosted a week-long Vacation Bible School program for the children (with an open invite to children in the community) during the summer.

Future opportunities we would like to explore would be youth/college ministry, single-adult ministry, special needs group(s), disciple classes, "English as a Second Language" ministry, and community basic needs ministry.

### **OUR CONGREGATIONAL STYLE**

Our church expects to share in leadership with our pastor. Our church is influenced by our church history and traditions. Our church's approach to social issues tends to be educational, leaving any action to individual conscience. Our church ethical decisions should be based on absolute standards but also with the ability to make decisions in light of circumstances. Our church emphasizes ABC relationships locally, nationally, and internationally. Our church is periodically involved in community affairs with interest to be have more future involvement. Our church idea and plans are made by responsible boards, committees, or task force. In making decisions, our church is governed by boards with larger decisions voted on by the congregation. Decisions are communicated formally through worship, bulletins, newsletters, and an annual meeting/report. Our church places some emphasis on giving to ABC national and world mission through mission outreach.



## OUR WORSHIP LIFE

Our worship service begins with the Lay leader leading the congregation participation in singing an opening song and announcements. The Lay leader then opens up for prayer requests from the congregation (requested joys and concerns), leads the prayer, congregation participation in additional songs, and offering. The Pastor or guest speaker will lead a responsive scripture reading followed by the sermon/message, and closing prayer.



The lay leader will close with the final

song and benediction. The Lord's Supper, led by the Pastor, is served the first Sunday of each month after the message. Music is provided by a pianist or organist. Currently we do not have a choir, however a choir was part of the worship service historically. We would be interested in the opportunity for choir participation in the service again in the future.



We are very excited about our next Pastor's new and fresh ideas for leading our worship service. We hope the Pastor will use a variety of worship styles in his or her sermon, preach sermons with a biblical focus, to share leadership worship with laity, and to use some input from the Worship Committee.





## **WHAT WE BELIEVE**

The purpose of our church is to establish a vital community of faith, in keeping with our Church Covenant. We will seek to promote spiritual growth and inspiration; to provide opportunities of Christian fellowship; to participate in the aiding of community needs; to bring the impact of the Christian gospel to bear upon the personal and social needs of our day; to serve the spiritual needs of all, regardless of religious background to participate in the world-wide mission of the church. We shall be affiliated with American Baptist Churches of the U.S.A. and the Mid-American Baptist Churches.

## **OUR MINISTRY PRIORITIES**

Areas of ministry we would like for our Pastor to focus on are as follows:

1. Communicate a comprehensive understanding of the Bible and Christian theology in terms that are relevant to our lives (interpreting the faith)
2. Preaching – Support the preaching ministry with time for preparation/reflection on the Word, and commitment to listen for the Word's power and its implications for individuals, the church, the community, and the world.
3. Seek to lead persons to make decisions for Christ encouraging their identification with and participation in our church/community.
4. Visitation - Make formal and informal connections with church members or others in their homes, at work or in other settings.
5. Counseling – Provide opportunities for individual, couples, families and/or groups to enter a healing relationship.
6. Pastoral care – Provide (by word and presence) an empathetic understanding of and concern for persons in the routine and joys as well as the crises and transitions of life, giving assistance where appropriate and feasible.
7. Interchurch cooperation – Cooperate and coordinate with other churches and leaders from Baptist and other denominations in the community.
8. Educational ministry – provide a teaching ministry that is based on theological, educational and historical foundations.

## **OUR VISION FOR MINISTRY**

Areas of ministry we do well are teaching the word of the Bible, Adult Sunday School, Fellowship with one another ("Potluck Sunday's").

Potential areas of growth for our church would include growing church membership to include more children. We would like to expand our ministry for children and youth. This may include community outreach programs or events targeting the local schools and colleges.

## OUR HISTORY

The Winona First Baptist Church was founded on September 9<sup>th</sup> of 1855, celebrating 163 years in 2018.

Baptist influence began early in Winona and has ties to the Mississippi River. One of its founders, Pastor Edward Ely arrived aboard the steamer "Nominee" on May 4<sup>th</sup> of 1852.

His arrival was a direct result of a meeting held in New York City in July of 1851. Mr. William Haddock, a New York printer, convinced a group of people to form the Western Farm and Village Association to establish a new frontier on the Mississippi River. The first two scouts that were sent ahead chose Minnesota City, as they believed it was on the main channel of the river. This was a mistake as the river was at flood stage during the summer of 1851 and had frozen over at that stage. They had skated up "Straight Slough", which was not the main channel of the river, however, the association on July 11<sup>th</sup> of 1852 established a Baptist church in Minnesota City. This was the first church organized in what is now Winona County and was the first Protestant organization in Southern Minnesota. This church is still active today.

When the members of the association left New York to come to Minnesota, they met Pastor Edward Ely on the docks in St. Louis. He was a shepherd without a flock, a pastor awaiting a providential call to ministerial charge. Horace Ranney, an acquaintance of Pastor Ely, persuaded him to put his family and possessions on board the steamboat and accompany them to the promised land. Pastor Ely agreed and arrived on May 4<sup>th</sup> of 1852. Captain Smith and Ervin Johnson, co-owners of the town site, offered Mr. Ely an acre of land for himself plus another acre for a church if he would settle in Winona. Mr. Ely accepted and became one of the early civic leaders of Winona as well as the leader of the Baptists.

The First Baptist Church got its start on September 9<sup>th</sup> of 1855 when sixteen Baptists met at the home of Reverend and Mrs. Ely. Elder Ely was chosen moderator and Dr. G.T. Child was chosen Clerk.

During the pastorate of Reverend Samuel Cornelius, that a small, white frame, 45x60 church, was built by the Baptists at the corner of Center and Fourth Streets where the Exchange building is located now. It was built in the popular style for churches in the new west, a rectangular hall, topped by a belfry, wooden spire, and a weather vane. The church seated 250 and was also used for Civic Affairs.

In April 1865, the Sunday school was organized. It flourished, making it necessary to build a lecture room on the side of the church capable of seating 125.

The First Baptist Church survived the great Winona fire in 1862 and because of this the church was able to help other Winonans after the disaster. However, a tragic event occurred on the evening of November 20<sup>th</sup> of 1887. While the churchgoers gathered outside the church to chat, the building caught fire and burned to the ground as the members watched helplessly. Records do not indicate the cause of fire, although there

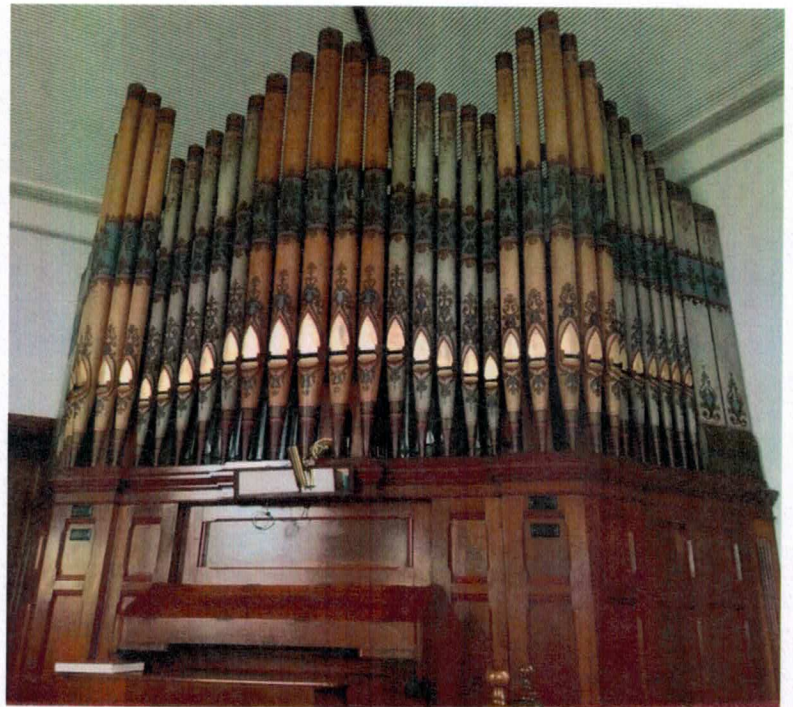


was speculation that it may have started in the blacksmith shop next door. One of the church members, W.F. Kingsbury, died as a result of injuries received in the fire.

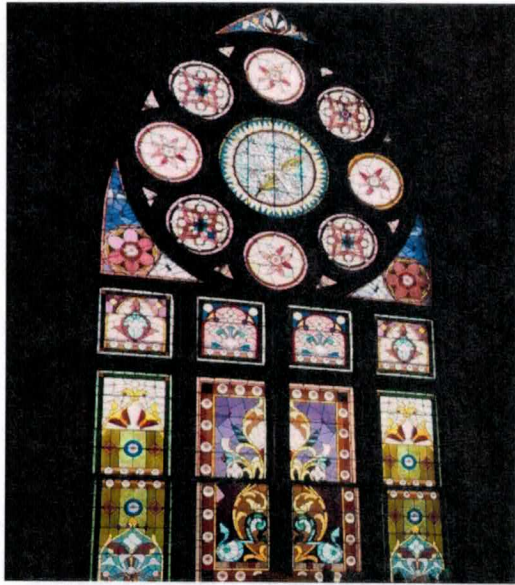
Plans were made at once for the construction of a new building. Many in the congregation felt a new location in the residential area was desirable. The old site was sold and a new site, on the corner of Wilson and Broadway streets, was purchased for six-thousand dollars.

The present church, built with native magnesium limestone and trimmed with Fond du Lac sandstone, was completed and dedicated on January 30<sup>th</sup> of 1893. The cornerstone had been laid on August 14<sup>th</sup> of 1888 and the chapel was used as soon as it was finished, while waiting for the completion of the entire structure to be finished. The firm of Bullard and Bullard from Springfield, Illinois was the architect for the church. Frederick Kratz and John Panzer, masons, and Mr. Wendler, a carpenter, built the church.

A Moline tracker organ, now a historical significance, was installed by the Moline Organ Company of Moline, Illinois when the church was built in 1888. The organ has not been modified in any significant way from its original installation. The painted pipes in the façade are original and wooden pipes of the organ were seldom included after the 1890's. The organ was cited in 1991 by the National Organ Historical Society in Richmond, Virginia, as an organ of historical significance. It is one of two organs in the state to receive this honor. It is now listed on the national list of Extant Organs.







First Baptist is often referred to as “the church with beautiful windows”. The Wells Glass Company of Chicago, Illinois installed the windows when the church was built for total cost of seven hundred dollars. The windows have some unusual features. Many of the pieces are beveled, giving depth and three-dimensional affect adding additional sparkle to the windows. Some pieces are faceted like gems in a ring. Contrary to many church windows, they are not made up of religious scenes however, some of the flowers represented have symbolic religious meanings.

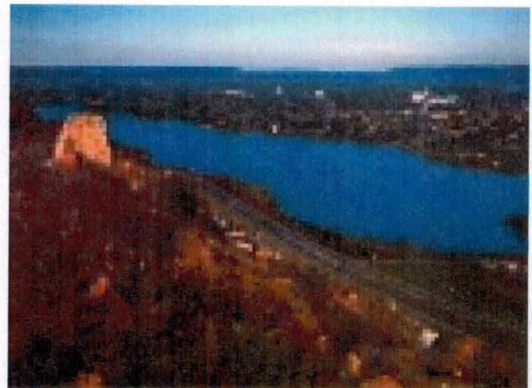
Winona First Baptist Church celebrated it's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of 2005. A large quilt, made up of an embroidered

square from each family was made to honor the church for this celebration.

## MORE ABOUT OUR REGION - WINONA, MINNESOTA

### General Demographics

Winona, Minnesota is part of Winona County, located in the southeast corner of Minnesota. It is bordered by Wabasha, Olmsted, Fillmore, and Houston counties on the Minnesota side and by Buffalo, Trempealeau, and La Crosse counties on the Wisconsin side. Winona County was created on April 4, 1854. The County was named for a Dakota woman, cousin of the last chief Wabasha; from the Dakota word meaning "first born daughter". The name of the County is said to derive from a Dakota legend regarding a woman, who was betrothed to marry a warrior whom she did not love. Rather than marry him, she is said to have leapt to her death from a rock now called "Maiden's Rock" on Lake Pepin. This legend is colloquially referred to as the Winona legend. (Ferguson, 2004-2018). Winona is bordered on one side by the river bluffs and is separated from Wisconsin by the Mississippi river.





## Things to do in Winona

There are several reasons to make Winona, Minnesota your home. There are several things to do in the Winona area, from sightseeing, attending Steamboat Days or one of Winona's many festivals, visiting the Minnesota Marine Art Museum or other arts & theatre museums/events, touring historical sites and museums, and outdoor recreation including canoeing and kayaking, hiking and biking trails, climbing, cross-country skiing, golfing, camping, and many other activities. Visit <https://visitwinona.com> for more information.

