

CHERRYVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH



Congregational Profile 2023

Brief History

Cherryville Baptist Church (CBC) was established in 1849 by congregants from Flemington, Baptistown, and Norton Baptist Churches. That first congregation was organized by the missionary Pastor, Reverend Edward R. Hera, and stated as their purpose to “raise the standard of the cross at Cherryville.” As the congregation held its first services and meetings, it was determined to erect a house of worship in Franklin Township, which was duly completed and dedicated to the service of Christ in 1850.

The original church building was quite small and included only a space in which the congregation could gather for worship. By the 1880s the church determined that an expansion of the existing structure was necessary, and so undertook the task, transforming the building into what is seen today. The narthex and steeple were added, the side galleries were removed, and stained-glass windows installed. The choir room/church office was originally added as a space to fellowship, and the smaller room on the other side of the church was intended for classes in Christian instruction. Around the same time, it was determined that housing should be provided for the Pastor, so a parsonage was constructed opposite the meeting house.



The congregation that had grown steadily in the late 19th century, began to experience some stagnation in the period after World War I. Throughout the period, there was a series of relatively short pastorates, a trend that continued until the later 20th century. During this same period, church membership and attendance ebbed and flowed in roughly 20-year cycles with peaks in the early 1970s and 1990s. Nevertheless, the congregation saw an opportunity to expand its ability to fellowship and host ministry events by purchasing a surplus U.S. Army barrack in 1946. The structure was transported from Fort Dix to the site and a kitchen and bathrooms were added to what is now called the Parish Hall. Since the start of the 21st century both membership and attendance have remained relatively stable.

Although the precise date at which Cherryville Baptist became associated with the American Baptist Churches USA is unknown, it is certain that the congregation was affiliated by the 1930s.

Geographic Area



Cherryville Baptist Church is located in Franklin Township, which is in the heart of Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Hunterdon County is a scenic, mostly rural area in the Northwestern part of the state 50 miles from both New York and Philadelphia. Flemington is the county seat.

The church sits on the top of the Hunterdon plateau at the intersection of Cherryville Road (County 617) and Quakertown Road and has great views of both the sunrise and sunset. In addition to the rural landscapes that appeal to nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts, Hunterdon County has quaint river towns and many cultural opportunities. The county has a high concentration of well-educated residents and is one of the healthiest counties in the state. Franklin Township is in the Franklin Township School District (K-8) and North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional School District (9-12).

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be the advancement of The Church of Jesus Christ. It shall seek to obtain this end through public worship of God; the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, missionary endeavor and Christian education.

Church Doctrinal Statement

- The Church receives the Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments as God's Word and the all sufficient basis of doctrine and practice. (2Timothy 3:16, 2Peter 1:20-21)
- We believe in one God (Mark 12:29), existing eternally in three persons...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)
- We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:30), and is true God and true man. (Philippians 2:5-8, John 1:1-2)



- We believe that man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27); that he sinned (Genesis 3: 6); and thereby incurred not only physical death (Genesis 3:19), but also spiritual death which is separation from God (Romans 3:23); and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature. (Romans 5:12, Psalm 51:5)
- We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures (Romans 5:6,8) as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice (Romans 3:25-26, Romans 5: 9-10), and that all who believe in Him are accepted by God, on the basis of Christ's shed blood. (Romans 8:1, John 3:16)
- We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord (John 20:27, 1Corinthians 15:4-6), in His ascension into Heaven (Luke 24:51), and in His present life there for us, as High Priest (Hebrews 4:14) and Advocate (Hebrews 7:25, Romans 8:24).
- We believe in the Blessed Hope, the imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His Church (Revelation 22: 20, 1Thessalonians 4:16-17) and the personal, visible, bodily return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the earth where he will rule and reign. (Revelation 11:15)
- We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3,5), and thereby become the children of God. (John 1:12-13, Romans 8:10)
- We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and the everlasting punishment of the lost. (Revelation 20:11-15)
- We believe that Christ left two ordinances for His church to practice, namely Baptism (Matthew 28:19, Matthew 3:16) and the Lord's Supper. (1Corinthians 11:26)
 - We believe that Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit (Acts 8:36,38, Matthew 28:19), symbolizing said believers union by faith with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6: 4-5).
 - We believe that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic, memorial feast by which we look back in faith to the cleansing blood of the cross (Luke 22:19-20); look up in love to our Heavenly Father as we feast upon the virtues of His Son, showing the Father what we have found in the Son (John 6:33,35,51,54); and we look forward in hope to our Lord's promised return. (Revelation 22:20)
- We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as either male or female, biologically recognizable at birth, and that these two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1: 26-27; Psalm 139: 13-16)
- We believe that God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one man and one woman for life, and that intimate sexual activity is to occur exclusively within that sacred

union. (Genesis 2: 18 – 25, 1 Corinthians 6:18, 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). Divorce and/or remarriage conforms to Biblical principles only in the circumstances of Death (Romans 7: 2; 1 Cor. 7:39), Marital Unfaithfulness (Matthew 5: 32, 19: 3 -9), or Desertion (1 Cor. 7: 15)

Church Covenant

Trusting that God's grace has brought us to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and by the influence of His Spirit to give ourselves up to Him, we do now solemnly covenant with one another, that with God's help, we will walk together in brotherly love; that we will show a Christian care and concern about each other, and faithfully warn and admonish each other as circumstance may require; that we will not neglect to gather for



worship, nor forget our responsibility to pray and to study the Scriptures; that we will share each other's joys and try, with tenderness and sympathy, to bear one another's burdens and sorrows; that we will seek God's help to enable us to behave in a Christian manner, avoiding the pitfalls the world puts in our paths; that we will cheerfully contribute, as God has given to us, to the support of a faithful, evangelical ministry among us, to the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations; and that through life, through bad times and good times, we will seek to live to the glory of Him, who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

OUR CHURCH LIFE

Worship

Worship at Cherryville is central to our identity as a body of believers. We hold one another accountable to enter into the Lord's service in "Spirit and Truth" each week, to praise God for his goodness, give thanks for His daily provision, repent of transgression, and partake in the gracious gift of eternal life He offers through His Son Jesus Christ. The handmaiden of our worship is the Word of God: the sacred page and the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. The Word is central to our pattern of worship and in the weekly sermon.

As a matter of form, our worship is blended. We feel that in all things we are to glorify our crucified and risen Lord. To that end we will sing traditional hymns and spiritual songs. We carefully assess contemporary worship music and employ it as is appropriate throughout the service. The Call to Worship each week typically consists of a responsive reading followed by a

time of praise and worship or a single hymn. We do employ some liturgical elements like the corporate recitation of the Lord's Prayer and singing of the Doxology.

A deacon is assigned to each Sunday service to assist the Pastor and lead certain elements of worship. The deacon will typically lead the Congregational Prayer (Prayers of the People) which follows the sermon. A short Children's Moment is given during services, excepting the first Sunday of the month, when we hold Communion. Deacons also assist in the preparation of the Lord's Table and serve the congregation during that portion of the service.

During the Covid-19 pandemic worship took to Facebook, with in person services returning to



regularity by the middle of 2020. The online presence is still considered important and so the Sunday service remains a feature of our Facebook page. Before the pandemic, the musical life of the church consisted of a small chancel choir, handbell choir, and a country/folk-style ensemble. These groups alternate weeks, providing musical offerings when they are the most appropriate. The pandemic era made gathering difficult, so these groups are currently not meeting. The church is furnished with a recently refurbished Mason and Hamlin grand piano, and a recently acquired (new-to-us) Allen organ. Both instruments can be utilized in worship each week.

While there is a template for weekly worship, the Pastor is free to change the order of the worship service to accommodate the needs of that week, whether it is commissioning Sunday School teachers, honoring graduates, or welcoming a missionary. While some elements of service are a must, there is a good deal of flexibility from week to week.

Special services include Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunrise Service, River Baptism Service, Thanksgiving Eve Service (alternating with Quakertown United Methodist), Christmas Cantata/Live Nativity, and Christmas Eve (multiple).

Discipleship and Fellowship

We have provided many programs over the years to teach and provide fellowship to our congregation. Currently, Nursery services are provided almost every Sunday during service. Sunday school for Pre-K through Adults meets prior to service on Sunday Mornings from Labor Day through Memorial Day. The second Sunday of the month Sunday School normally has a Fellowship/Sunday School breakfast. We have a Tuesday Morning Bible study for all interested in attending. During Lenten season we host a Soup Supper, Bible study/lessons and Prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings. During the rest of the year, we normally hold a Wednesday Evening



Prayer meeting. During the summer, we generally have a Men's Bible Study and Vacation Bible School. In the past, we have had summer Hispanic ministries. We have a Bible Youth Fellowship which works year-round based on the interest of our youth.

While many of our lessons and teachings also involve Fellowship of our congregation our Deacons host several fellowship events throughout the year. Potluck Dinner and Hymn Sings, Thankful Sunday Luncheon and fellowship, Valentines Breakfast, breakfast after Sunrise Easter Service, Shepherding meetings with luncheon, and occasional cake and coffee fellowship after service for special occasions of congregational members.

Stewardship

The congregants of CBC are faithful givers to the support of God's Kingdom and the Boards are careful stewards of those funds. Offerings have met or exceeded expenses for the last 3 years.

A proposed budget is presented to the congregation for approval at the Annual Business Meeting on the last Sunday of January. The proposed budget is developed by the Budget Committee with all ministries within the church having an opportunity to submit requests.

The grounds of CBC include the Church, a Parish Hall, and a Parsonage. The Trustee Board manages the upkeep of the grounds, buildings, and equipment through supervision of contracted services and volunteer maintenance and upkeep.

Missions

The congregation elects a Missions Commission Director who works with the Pastor and a group of volunteer members to establish missions goals, provide occasional "minutes for missions" during worship, arranges for presentations and messages from missionaries, and disburses funds raised for missions projects. Missions goals or "budget" is set late in the first quarter of each year after the approval of the regular budget. The missions budget is at least 10% of the regular budget, but has been higher in recent years.

The following principles guide the efforts of the committee:

- We will try to develop a missions budget that ministers in our local community, our state, our nation, and across the world.
- We are an American Baptist Church, and we will recognize and support the state, national, world missions, and special offerings of our denomination.
- We want to have a strong missions presence in our community, and will contribute especially to those ministries that minister in a way that we do not have the resources to fulfill ourselves.
- We recognize that the Holy Spirit has established missions opportunities for us through His movement in the individuals and Body at Cherryville.

- We want to participate in evangelical ministries that proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as they minister to the physical needs of those hurting in our midst.
- Everything and Only Principle: Everything given to missions goes to missions. Only what is specifically given to missions goes to missions.

In 2022, CBC supported over 30 missions locally, nationally, and internationally distributing nearly \$35,000.

THE FUTURE AT CHERRYVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Our Next Pastor

Members and those who regularly attend worship were invited to complete a church survey. Responses were gathered in December 2022 and January 2023. One section of the survey concentrated on the areas of ministry that respondents felt were most important for our next pastor.

Preaching:

The preaching and teaching of God's word is an absolute in the life of the believer and the Church. The Pastor, who is the undershepherd of Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, is accountable for the flock (1 Peter 5:2).



Much time in prayer is paramount as the shepherd seeks the understanding of God's word which He promises to provide by the Holy Spirit (1 John 5: 20, Matthew 7: 7-11).

It is through the ministry of God's word that the Church reaches the people as described in Romans 10:14-17. It is, however, not only the founding of one's faith, but is where the believer is strengthened for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The preaching and teaching of God's word brings the Holy Spirit's work to our hearts by God's grace. To comfort one another, exhort one another, admonish, lift up, pray for one another, bring conviction of sin, healing, and an eternal hope only found in the cross of Christ and the empty tomb for us to share with a world that has none.

Education:

We seek a Pastor who will develop, implement, revise and monitor a program of Christian Education in conjunction with our Board of Christian Education. In general, this means a plan that includes basic Bible literacy for younger students and adults whose knowledge of scripture is developing. Beyond basic biblical literacy, the Pastor will guide the entire Congregation in applying the totality of the scriptural witness to the issues that confront us personally, as a body of believers, and in society. The pastor may be asked to teach a Sunday School class if it is deemed appropriate. The pastor will work with the Vacation Bible School Director and will also coordinate special programs between the Board of Christian Education and Diaconate, as necessary.

**Interpreting the Faith:**

The pastor is expected to interpret that body of knowledge which is collectively known as the Faith. This knowledge is rooted in the Word of God as it is revealed in scripture, living and active in the person of Jesus Christ, and guiding us as it is proclaimed by the historic teaching of the Church. We expect that a pastor should be able to engage the biblical witness (preferably in the original languages) at a deep level of understanding. The pastor should further draw on the historical and theological propositions that are distinctive within the Protestant tradition, and among American Baptists in particular. We further expect that the pastor pose his remarks in a way that is:

- Prayerfully considered
- Well-reasoned
- Edifying to the faithful
- Christ-centered

The interpretation of the faith must make the connection between this living Word and lived-experience of the believer. In all, this interpretation should serve to strengthen faith by following Christ's summary commands: to love God, and to love one another.

Evangelism:

Cherryville Baptist Church is dedicated to Evangelism and sharing the Word of God to lead people to making a decision for Christ and then to find and participate within the Bride of Christ. We support many Evangelist (missionaries) through our Missions budget. Additionally, Cherryville Baptist Church has been working to grow our local outreach through Vacation Bible School and participation with other local Christian Ministries. What we need is someone that can help develop individual gift of evangelism in members of our congregation. (1 Peter 3:15)



But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Pastoral Care:

An important responsibility of any church is to care for its members. Although this job is usually thought of as a responsibility of the pastor and the deacon board, it is a responsibility of all members. During our monthly communion service, we stand and pledge to share each other's joys and support each other's sorrows and burdens. This can be lifting each other in prayer (always a good place to start) or reaching out with any other needs.

Cherryville needs a pastor who will

- Share our joys
- Celebrate engagements, celebrate and officiate at weddings – including pre-marital counseling, celebrate the birth of new life, even celebrate things like a new job or a promotion
- Support our sorrows and burdens
- Reach out when there is a loss in the family – parent, spouse, child, other relatives, friends. This is always a time of real need physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- Be there to plan and officiate funerals – a real part of life.
- Be available for visitation of the elderly and sick- be it at home or in the hospital. There is nothing more helpful than your pastor being there to pray over your loved one in the hospital.

Another important aspect of caring would be yearly visitation of all members to offer encouragement when needed. Church members expect a lot of our pastor. We should also realize that a pastor needs our prayers and support, understanding that too many expectations can place burdens on our pastor.

Our first responsibility is to lift all things in prayer trusting that God has a plan for Cherryville.



Church Growth:

The desire for church growth is better called church health; seldom does a weak plant produce a record crop. Our desire is for the roots of every believer to be grounded firm and deep in the rich, moist, fertile soil of God's word. This undoubtedly will bring a record crop (Matthew 13:8).

Numerical growth occurs by environment. No young plant wants to be in a cold, dark greenhouse. A warm climate, sonlight, the plant food of God's word, and the encouragement and fellowship of God's people and the firm yet tender care of an undershepherd, called here specifically, by God for His purpose and our good, will bring glory unto Him and an atmosphere of growth.

Spiritual Life Development:

We seek a pastor who brings an understanding of how Christian beliefs are fostered through personal examination and engagement with others seeking wisdom and truth. We desire someone who can guide both new and seasoned believers in all aspects of our spiritual journey. A pastor will provide guidance to congregants in the importance of development of their prayer life. The pastor may lead a Sunday School class or a weekly bible study. The pastor may suggest resources for individual and group study. The pastor will encourage understanding of our covenant relationships.



Counseling:

Cherryville Baptist Church recognizes the importance of Godly wisdom in all areas of Christian life and the need to promote Christian values. The pastor will be available to people seeking guidance and/or encouragement. We believe we should show a Christian care and concern for people in conflict. The pastor will be available to assist with resolution of differences that impact the body of Christ at Cherryville using a Christ-centered approach.

CHERRYVILLE BAPTIST NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

After visiting our church, one might comment on the friendliness of our congregation. At Cherryville, we strive to foster a welcoming environment, where after visiting for a time, one might feel a sense of family and close knit community amongst church attendees. A visitor may also comment on the truth led, traditional, Bible based relatable teaching that is found here. Our congregation worships through traditional hymns, while singing enthusiastically. At Cherryville, we strive to love God and love others well.

Looking ahead, our congregation hopes to experience growth over the next few years. We hope to have greater opportunities and further development of youth, children's, and nursery programs, as well as an increase in membership to support them. We also hope to improve and increase our community outreach, focusing on evangelism, and family and relationship development. As we continue to stand against worldly influences, our congregation would like to see more opportunities for small group discussion, prayer, expository teaching, and variety with music.

At Cherryville, we have countless opportunities for impact. Our congregation believes there is a great opportunity to reach our community through further implementing youth and children's programs, and to better develop those programs in our church. However, we struggle with follow-up and getting members motivated to be involved. We would like to bring new people into membership and to develop leaders from a younger generation for the furtherance of our church. Overall, we have an opportunity to be a church, continually anchored in Bible-based truth, that supports and connects to the local community.

One of the greatest challenges that our church is currently facing is the lack of initiative for physical participation. Cherryville needs increased membership and congregational participation, especially in the areas of church ministry and leadership. We need church leaders



who are passionate about their God-given positions and responsibilities, giving their best effort, to help direct our church against societal influence, and to address conflict resolution in an appropriate Christian manner. The congregation of Cherryville is also challenged with the lack



of a younger population in our church. Without having a current permanent pastor, some congregants are feeling detached and disconnected. There is also great concern that, in the future, Cherryville will not continue to refute sinful behaviors and false teachings, and will instead give into societal/worldly beliefs compromising our strong faith in the inerrant Word of God.

When asking our congregation what one thing they would change in our church (with no limitations), the theme of involvement continued. Congregants would like to see more involvement by the whole congregation - in old and new ministries alike, an urgency to serve and lead with integrity, and opportunities for congregational counseling. Congregants would also like to learn from Bible based truth seminars, combating current controversial topics that are influencing society and our church. Our church would like to see a strong teen fellowship like we've had in the past, and a biblical program for children and families. While some congregants feel that our church is very welcoming, many would like to see it be more loving and more welcoming, especially for Sunday morning services.

