

Adding an Important Piece!



Dear Members of First Baptist Church,

Our current theme for 2010 preparation and planning is “add the last piece”.

It has been expressed that we as church members provide these many pieces of the church: prayer, time, talents, special gifts, regular participation and budget.

With that in mind, the Pulpit Committee through earnest prayer, guidance of the Holy Spirit and a lengthy process of seeking and deliberation are pleased to present our “last piece”, Dr. Cheryl Henson as our candidate to serve as Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church.

The search committee has kept in the forefront of our deliberations the attributes you indicated were important from our congregational survey. These included preaching, church growth, leadership, nurturing the fellowship, and pastoral care to name a few.

The committee has had several opportunities to speak with Dr. Henson about all aspects of the Senior Pastor position and find her to be an outstanding candidate who excels in the attributes you expressed as important. We have witnessed her preaching ability on video and in person and can attest that she delivers a powerful scripturally-based message that resonates with the congregation. We strongly believe she has the talent and calling from God to lead us at this time in our church’s life and into the future. Her additional passions in ministry include evangelism, mission, and church revitalization.

Dr. Henson is a “born and raised” American Baptist. She completed her Doctor of Ministry degree at Northern Seminary. She has just completed her tenth year as the Area Minister (Northern Illinois) in the Great Rivers Region of American Baptist Churches. Prior to becoming an Area Minister, Dr. Henson served as an American Baptist pastor for 25 years, serving at various churches including most recently the First Baptist Church of Marengo, Illinois. She is a certified coach for Natural Church Development. She is a skilled administrator with experience in budgeting, finance, fund raising, church growth, communication, conflict management and pastoral care. She highly values her relationship with Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior. These skill sets and personal traits make her the right person to lead us at this time. She and her husband Mike live in Oregon, IL. They have 3 adult children: Noah, Greg and Jessica. Dr. Henson and Mike have visited Topeka, toured the church and met our staff.



She equally feels God's calling to return to congregational ministry and to our church as we feel she is being led to us. She is very excited about the prospect of serving at First Baptist Church.

Arrangements have been made for Cheryl and Mike to visit First Baptist the weekend of October 23rd thru 25th. There will be several opportunities for you to meet and greet Cheryl and Mike throughout the weekend. The following is the detailed schedule of Cheryl's visit:

Friday – October 23rd

2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Meet with the church staff
4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Open House for the entire congregation - Parlor

Saturday – October 24th

9:00 to 10:00 a.m. Meet with Board of Ministries
10:30 a.m. to Noon Visit Boo at the Zoo Ministry Event – Gage Park
1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Open House for the entire congregation - Parlor
5:00 to 6:30 p.m. Pizza with Youth and College age and Parents – Fellowship Hall

Sunday – October 25th

9:45 a.m. Preach in Connexion Gathering - chapel
11:00 a.m. Preach in combined Traditional Worship Service (no 8:30 service) - sanctuary
(A business meeting will immediately follow each service).

Dr. Henson will be presented to the church and preach at the 2 services mentioned above on Sunday, Oct. 25th. According to the church's constitution and bylaws, a business meeting will be conducted immediately following each service for the purpose of voting on whether to extend a call to Dr. Henson. Members must be present to vote.

The search committee feels that God has led us to Dr. Henson and we are excited about her candidacy and the future of our church. We ask for your prayerful support and consideration as we approach this time of decision.

In Christ's Service,

Walter Schoemaker
Chair, Pulpit Committee

Other Members:

Betty Joe Morris	Kelly Crowl	Amy McLaren	Doug Jacobs
Dennis Slimmer	Jeff Chanay	Travis Stryker	Bill John
Ed Fenton			