

Vineville Baptist Church, Macon, Georgia
Profile



Vineville Baptist Church
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Welcome to Vineville Baptist Church

As the Pastor Search Committee, we are proud to have the opportunity of introducing you to Vineville Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia. You will learn from the following pages why we love Vineville Baptist and cherish our rich history which began in 1891. We are very fortunate to have been relocated from our earlier locations 100 years ago to the corner of Vineville Avenue and Pierce Avenue which are an entrance and an exit to downtown Macon.

On this corner approximately 18,000 to 20,000 cars per day pass by our sanctuary. However, the strength and beauty of Vineville Baptist does not come from our location or facility, but from our people. People who take much pride in being a loving, caring and praying Church that extends itself throughout our community providing anyone an opportunity for spiritual growth.

Following the resignation/retirement of our past senior pastor, our Church family went through the process of electing a Pastor Search Committee. Members of this committee have prepared this profile information so you may better understand who we are.

Vineville has experienced significant changes since the late 1990's when we outgrew our current location and built a second location West of Macon in a new, vibrant sector with both commercial and residential areas. You will read details of that transition in the following history of Vineville. Also, like other Churches, Covid was experienced by our Church family. Fortunately, throughout those challenges, we were blessed to retain the same sweet Christian spirit with many treasured friendships among us. The warmth of our fellowship and the concerns we have in reaching others for Christ are the hallmarks that help us to remain an exceptional Church.

Enclosed in this profile, you will find the results of diligent preparation. During the past few months, we have solicited information not only from our membership but also from chosen leaders in our community as to the best way we can continue to serve our community, proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to the world of believers as well as unbelievers.

Yes, it is evident that God is with us today, just as He was with Vineville in 1891. In addition to His presence, God has blessed us with one another, to sustain each other even as we remain united, awaiting God's chosen person for Vineville Baptist Church.

Thanks be to God for the love and blessings He continues to bestow upon us.

Pastor Search Committee,

Charles Jay, Barbara Jones, John Kelly, Scrap Ladson, Kent Russell, Alisa Rehberg, Mary Kay Smith, Sandra Higgison, and Stacy Whitehead

Church History

On May 10, 1891, fifty members of the First Baptist Church of Christ in Macon assembled in the home of Judge J.L. Hardeman to organize a new congregation. Vineville Village, so named because of the vineyards in the area, was then a suburb of Macon, Georgia. A survey had determined that there were already about 100 Baptists living in the area.

After meeting for a time in a private residence, the Church constructed a frame building for its first home. Then, just a few years later, this building was outgrown by the expanding congregation in this rapidly developing area.

Just prior to the onset of World War I in 1914, Vineville's leadership began discussing plans to accommodate its flourishing membership. These plans were delayed by the war, but a new structure was ultimately constructed on the corner of Vineville and Pierce Avenues and occupied in October 1924. That building houses the present sanctuary (the Loyd Landrum Building), the Media Center, the Reception Room and rooms for Sunday School departments and classes. Over the next fifty years, additional buildings were added and neighboring properties were acquired to create parking space and new construction.



From its beginnings, Vineville has emphasized outreach and Missions. Over the years, mission projects have been conducted on the local, state, national and international levels.

In the late 1990's, Vineville built a second location on Zebulon Road, under the banner, "One Church- Two Locations", which was named Vineville North Baptist Church. Vineville made major contributions to the founding of this Church both in financial support and in the number of families who transferred their membership to this new location. Vineville North was eventually granted its independence and is now known as Northway Church. The original loss of members by the establishment of Vineville North was somewhat offset by the merger of Cross Keys Baptist Church with Vineville in 1998. The members of this congregation who transferred to Vineville have made significant contributions to the Church.

Multiple ministries throughout the years characterize the heartbeat of Vineville, with capable staff ministers in the areas of education, music, and youth. Fellowship and programmatic activities have provided fine growth opportunities and training, reflecting appropriate spiritual development from the church's earliest beginnings.

In addition, in 2008, one of Vineville's finest assets was established with the creation of a sound Endowment Fund. It represents a resource of funds outside the operating budget in which the principle is to remain untouched, with few exceptions. The dividends from this account are available for maintaining, repairing and improving our facilities and operating system.

The Vineville area has a historic district, with many old homes being restored and young families choosing to live in this area. This, the growth of the city, and Vineville's strategic location offers continued growth and outreach potential.

Our Beliefs

God is Triune

We affirm the oneness of God manifest in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of creation. God the Father is revealed in the Son, Jesus Christ; and God the Holy Spirit makes the revelation complete and effective.

Lordship of Jesus Christ

We profess, "Jesus is Lord," and we make a commitment to Christ's Church. Salvation is by grace through faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the life of Jesus is the model for our faith and practice.

Authority of the Bible

We affirm the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and as our guide in matters of faith and practice. God is revealed through the reading of scripture, revealing the hope of the kingdom of God. We, led by the Spirit, respond to its teachings, reading them in the light of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Church as a Body of Christ

We are called as disciples of Jesus Christ to embody the love of God, as the people are the church. We are called to the mission of God, extending the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. We affirm a spirit of cooperation among Baptist churches as well as other denominations, embracing the diversity of the Church.

Worship

We gather for worship on the Lord's day, celebrating the gift of grace, building community within the church, and renewing our commitment to the ministry of the church. We affirm the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism symbolizes the confession of believers in Christ as Lord and Savior. The Lord's Supper symbolizes the death of Christ as forgiveness for our sins.

Soul Freedom

We affirm the competency of each believer to approach God for himself or herself, honoring people's access to God through Christ. We hold that all believers, led by God's Spirit, have the duty and responsibility to study, to interpret, and to respond to the teachings of scripture.

Priesthood of all Believers

We affirm that through the redemption of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, each believer is called to engage in ministry. Each believer comes before God through Christ, so the clergy and the laity of the church minister together as the body of Christ.

Religious Freedom

The history of the Baptist tradition affirms the separation of church and state, upholding the freedom of believers to worship and practice their faith based solely on the dictates of conscience.

Autonomy of the Local Church

We affirm the responsibility of each local congregation to govern its own affairs, shaping its mission, policy, and actions.

Church Organization and Administration

Vineville Baptist Church is a mid-sized intergenerational church family in the Middle Georgia area. Our membership encompasses a wide range of ages and longevity at the church. Our current membership is approximately 366, with average Sunday School attendance of 100 and average worship attendance of 160, plus additional on-line viewers.

The laity leadership of the church consists of Committees, Ministry Teams, a Church Council, Church Officers, and Deacons. Much of the work of the church is done through standing committees or ministry teams.

COMMITTEES

Committees have broad responsibilities that continue year-round within a particular area of the work of the church. Committees handle the administrative requirements of the church and make policy and/or decisions crucial to the overall organizational structure of the church. Committee members are nominated by the Nominating Committee and voted on by the church. The current standing committees are: By-Laws, Fellowship/Outreach, Finance, Missions, Music, Nominating, Personnel, Preschool and Children, Properties, and Youth.

MINISTRY TEAMS

Ministry Teams carry out ongoing ministry-related tasks on behalf of the church and meet as needed. Teams have responsibilities in areas that are very specific. They organize and perform duties which may vary from year to year based on need. The current teams include: Baptism, Consignment Sale, Endowment, Fall Bazaar, Flowers/Decorating, Grief Ministry, History, Homebound Ministry, Media, Men's Fellowship, Sound/Lights/Video, Sunday Deposit Counters, Technology, Ushers/Greeters, Wedding, Wednesday Night Hospitality, and Women's Ministry.



CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council of VBC serves as the communications, reporting, and planning hub for the church body. The Council is composed of all ministers, chairpersons of committees, the Deacon Chair, the Sunday School Director, and the Church Clerk.

CHURCH OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

The Church Clerk is selected by the Nominating Committee and is responsible for recording minutes from church business meetings and Church Council meetings. The Chair of the Finance Committee serves as the Church Treasurer. The Trustees are the legal representatives of the church and have authority to execute legal documents as approved by the church in conference. There are three trustees who each serve a three-year term, the respective terms being staggered so that one term expires each year.

DEACON FAMILY MINISTRY

The Deacons are an integral part of the pastoral care given by the church. These men and women work closely with the ministers to insure that all members have someone in leadership who is familiar with their needs and

who provides direct pastoral support. VBC maintains one active deacon for every 15 individuals. These active deacons serve a three-year term with one-third being elected by the members each year. When an active deacon completes the three-year term, they are eligible for re-election after the lapse of one year.

Ministries

Sunday School (Adult)

We offer a variety of Bible Study options for adults, college – 100s! One of the things we celebrate at Vineville is the opportunity to study and grow together across the generations.

In addition to weekly Bible studies, we have unique opportunities for fellowship on the second and fifth Sundays. The second Sunday hosts a time of coffee and confections where we can engage in intergenerational fellowship around pastries and coffee or juice. The fifth Sunday allows for all adults to join in a corporate Bible study, typically led by the Sunday School director. This fifth Sunday gathering not only allows the Sunday School teachers a break from their teaching but allows for yet another intergenerational event where we can discuss the importance of scripture using a centralized theme.

1824: for high school graduates through mid-20s and considered College and Career young adults. We seek to support these “new adults” through Bible studies and social gatherings, supporting the spiritual and communal needs of this life stage.

There are eight additional adult classes, age-graded and life staged.

Curriculums

Our Sunday School classes utilize a wide variety of literature ranging from Holy Scripture, Lifeway, Smith & Helwys, Faithlab, and Nurturing Faith among others. Choices really depend upon age and life-stage and group preferences.



Preschool and Children's Sunday School



At Vineville Baptist Church we recognize the importance of providing children with a strong foundation of faith. Our desire is to create experiences that will whet their appetites and begin in them a hunger for deeper faith. The children of the church are cherished for their exuberance and embraced as a gift. At VBC, children are welcomed as an important and integral part in all aspects of the Church. During our weekly Sunday School time, children are given the opportunity to grow in their understanding of God as they study the Bible in age-appropriate ways through hands-on activities and intentional life-application discussion. We currently utilize the Gospel Project, a Christ-

centered, chronological Bible study for our Preschool-5th graders. Our children are also afforded a "children's sermon" during corporate worship every Sunday.

Morning School

Our Mission is to embrace, encourage, engage, and educate every preschool child, helping them explore the world around them and learn about God's Word, His Grace, and His Love, every day.

There are three primary goals for this program: happy children who feel encouraged, happy parents who see their child learning, and happy teachers who love what they do here.

Our classrooms, toys, and curriculum are designed to engage and excite children about learning while helping them discover the gifts and talents that God has given them.

During summer weeks, VBMS provides an optional summer camp. This camp is 4 days/week for 9 weeks and the parent can choose which days/weeks they desire and will meet their summer needs. The focus is on PE, Art, Literacy and Science (PALS). Children have 8-15 books read to them each week as well as arts, crafts, science experiments/activities, and physical exercise.



Seniors (XYZ)

Our XYZ is one of the largest senior groups in Macon, representing membership from several local congregations.

Monthly groups typically host about 100 attendees. Groups meet every 3rd Thursday and enjoy a lunch and fellowship.

This fellowship body is, while not limited to, composed of members 55 years of age and older. Musical entertainment is scheduled each month and attendees enjoy great food, fun and fellowship.



Youth

Vineville Baptist Church has an active and vibrant youth ministry. It is currently lay led and relies heavily on volunteers. The VBC youth have participated in mission trips, faith building retreats, church lock-ins and local mission projects.

They participate in weekly Bible study, Sunday School and youth Choir. All of their studies and activities have provided opportunities where they are encouraged to ask hard questions and learn about the foundation of their Christian faith.



Media Center/Library

Christian-based content is available for all ages and all genres. Available for use and check-out are DVDs, Videos, Bible study materials, children's books, non-fiction and Christian fiction, and audio materials. AV equipment is also available for check-out.

The librarian orders materials from suggestions. For those who wish to put materials in the library in honor or in memory of someone, the librarian will handle those requests as well.

There is a volunteer library staff. These volunteers read to the morning school classes and help the Higher Life clients select books. They work with Sunday School and Wednesday night teachers, upon request.

Higher Life Center

The **Higher Life** Center is an enrichment Center for adults with cognitive challenges who are past school age. Clients are provided an opportunity to experience a higher life in a safe setting which provides physical, mental, and social stimulation. The Higher Life Center has served this adult population since September 1990. Friendships are developed and family members enjoy some respite.



This non-profit ministry center is funded by tuition and donations.

The Arc Macon (formerly known as Advocacy Resource Center, Inc – Macon) awarded the Religious Service Award to our Higher Life Center in 1994, 2000, and 2009.

Women's Ministry

The Women's Ministry at Vineville Baptist Church provides many opportunities for spiritual growth, fellowship and outreach. Special events include a spring brunch featuring a guest speaker, testimony and inspirational music. Also, quarterly dinners with a uniquely themed program and/or craft experience.

Monthly scheduled lunch or dinner gatherings at local restaurants are a favorite time of fellowship and fun. Spiritual growth development is a keen focus of the Women's ministry. Weekly book studies and/or Bible study groups are offered. Prayer partners and Thursday morning prayer time in the sanctuary are available for meditation and focused prayer.

The Vineville Women's ministry participates in programs that serve women and children in our community such as the battered women's shelters and other services in the Macon area.

Encouragement and emotional support is also a high priority. Prayer groups and media communication are utilized to keep members informed of needs and upcoming events.

On Tuesday and Thursday mornings ladies of all ages from Vineville as well as members in the community gather to exercise in the ladies Stretching Class.



Worship

At VBC, we engage in a “traditional” worship service at 10:45a.m. on Sunday mornings in our sanctuary. The word “traditional” means different things to different people. For us, it simply means hymn-based (Celebrating Grace Hymnal) music with participation by the congregation, choir, and a variety of musical instruments. New hymns and contemporary worship songs are integrated in a fluid manner that encourages gratitude towards God’s varied musical pallet.

We believe that our service presents a fresh approach to traditional worship. We believe that our worship experience is friendly, open, deep, meaningful, and Bible-based, all at the same time. All participants strive to bring their very best talents and gifts in praise to God.

We have a Bible-based message provided by our pastor. This message is a tool to reach the spiritually lost and grow our congregants in understanding of God’s written word and living a life that reflects Jesus, our savior. We entreat the power of the presence of God into our worship services through prayer, praise, and music.

We are blessed to have a wonderful technology team that is able to provide an on-line, streaming option for attending worship. We have been able to offer this to congregants who have been unable to worship in person for many years.



Music

Worship is the primary goal of the music ministry of Vineville Baptist Church. The music ministry offers opportunities for all ages to use their gifts in worship. Our worship is traditional, and incorporates a variety of choral, instrumental and congregational song.

The primary worship leadership groups are the 30 voice Sanctuary Choir and the Vineville Instrumental Ensemble. Accompanying them are two excellent accompanists at the piano and organ. The Sanctuary Choir consists of volunteers who offer their voices in praise. The choir sings a broad variety of music including classics, contemporary anthems, hymn arrangements, spirituals and seasonal music. We have a variety of smaller ensembles to help lead worship.

The Vineville Instrumental Ensemble supports the congregational songs, accompanies the sanctuary choir and provides additional instrumental music in our services.

Handbells are also part of the musical/worship life of VBC. This ensemble periodically rings in worship and enjoys traveling to bell festivals and other ringing opportunities.

We are blessed to have a bluegrass group that is comprised of a variety of instruments and voices. They will lead in worship often and perform at functions at the church.

A women's trio and a men's quintet help to round out the ensemble offerings.

We are so blessed to have a graded choir program. Our preschool choir includes children from 3K through Kindergarten and our Children's Choir which is named, "Treble Makers", includes children from 1st through 5th grade. Preschoolers and Treble Makers have the opportunity to sing during an annual Christmas program in December and during an end-of-year program in May. Treble Makers also have the opportunity to lead in worship throughout the year. Our preschool and children's choirs are not only for the member families, but also children whose families do not have a church home or whose church home is not able to provide a graded choir program.



Missions and Trips

VBC has a longstanding tradition of supporting missions, both locally and around the world. God has blessed us abundantly and we want to use what He has given us to bless others. We believe we are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus and we strive to do that in financial and physical ways.

Church members, as individuals and in groups, respond to community needs and serve in ways that are too numerous to list; however, some of our local partnerships include:

Daybreak, a Project of Depaul USA: a partner that provides support services and a warm, welcome refuge to those affected by homelessness in our community.

Life Spring Women's Shelter: a partner that assists women experiencing domestic abuse.

Mentor's Project of Bibb County: a partner that provides role models for encouragement and motivation to eligible Bibb County Public middle and high school students.



Salvation Army: a partner that utilizes the Angel Tree each Christmas to provide gifts for those in our community .

VBC has a long history of serving on mission trips outside of Georgia. Some of the places we've been able to share Jesus include Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Guatemala. We have also served on several trips closer to home, including one to the Florida Panhandle to help with hurricane relief. We have not taken a trip since the pandemic and are primed and ready to hit the mission field again! We have packed over 300 meals for our local community fridges by preparing extra food during church events. Each Thanksgiving we collect the necessary items and pack food boxes so that local families may enjoy a delicious holiday meal. Our Children's Consignment Team donates unsold items to local groups twice each year. Our youth group attends Mission Madness with CBF each spring and helps

with various community projects during the year. Our members respond quickly and generously when needs are made known both within and outside of our church family.

We believe you are never too young to serve so we have opportunities for our children to experience missions in ways that are age appropriate and engaging. Mission Friends is for children ages 3 years through kindergarten. In Mission Friends, we strive to plant seeds of God's love for each child and for others. Our curriculum, Form, is designed to teach preschoolers about missions and missional life by engaging all 5 senses through experiential learning. Kingdom Kids is for children in grades 1-5. The curriculum, Spark, is a missional formation resource that uses creative hands-on activities to teach children about missions throughout the world. Both groups assist with various local mission projects to help those in need, teaching and embodying the truth that it is more meaningful to give than to receive. It is our prayer that these activities will encourage a life-long commitment to learning scripture, praying, giving, and serving others.



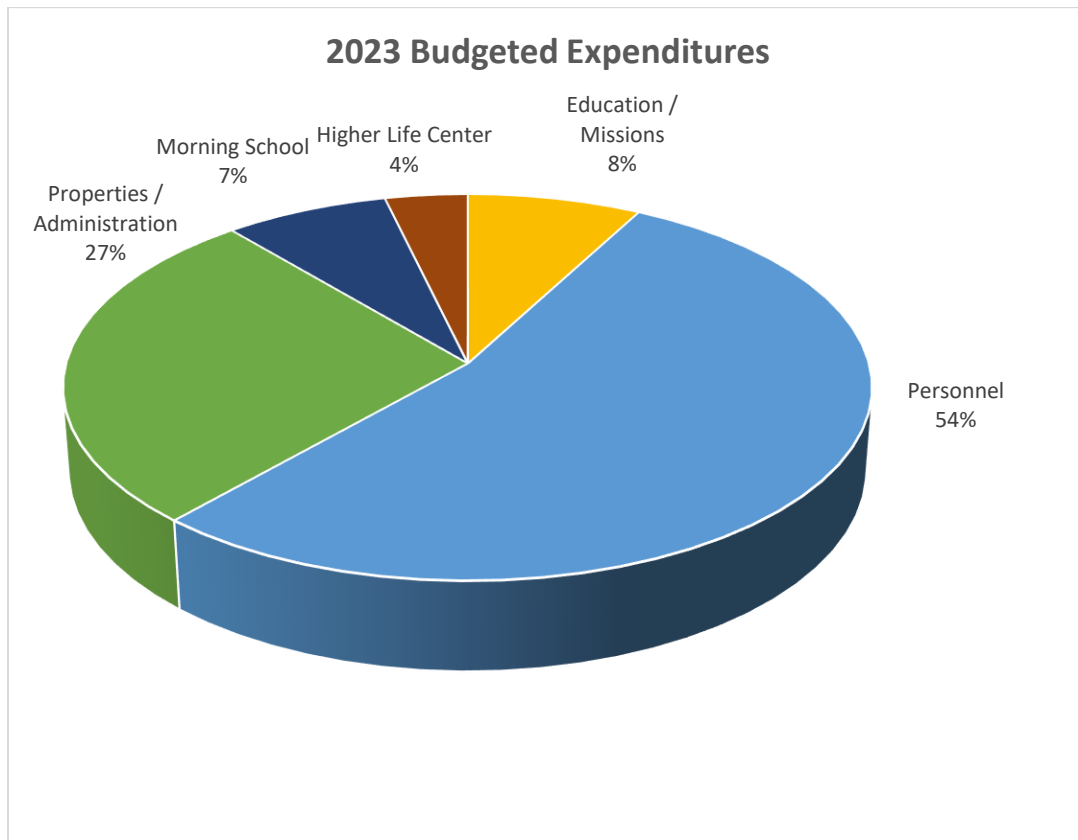
Financial Overview

Vineville Baptist Church has a tradition of faithful stewardship. Despite recent events such as Covid along with economic and social challenges, the generosity of our members has allowed us to continue to accomplish our ministerial goals without the burden of any debt.

The church budget in 2023 totals \$898,000. Faithful giving funds approximately 92% of our budget in the form of tithes, special offerings and designated funds. Additional income is derived from our Morning School, Higher Life Center and two fundraisers: the Fall Bazaar and our semi-annual Children's Consignment Sale.

Endowment Fund

In addition to the church budget, VBC's future benefits from the establishment of an endowment fund currently valued at \$1.2 million.





Looking To Our Future

In our current search for a new pastor, we, the Vineville Baptist Church faith family, have worked diligently to hear each other and the voice of our community. What did we hear? That we are being transformed into a new body of believers, called by God to love Him, love each other and serve in the name of Jesus. We are striving to find pathways of new and creative ways to be responsible to the remarkable legacy of VBC that has been given to us by those who have been responsible servants of our good Lord in days gone by. We offer some of our challenges as we are being transformed.

- To find creative ways of ministering in our Vineville community
- To strategically plan on how to best utilize and maintain our historic complex
- To seek ways of invigorated discipling though Bible study and fellowship
- To expand a purposeful prayer ministry
- To be responsible stewards of all that God has provided

