




**firstevan**





*To glorify Jesus Christ and  
magnify His gospel in  
all of life until He comes*

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A photograph of a white church steeple with arched windows, partially obscured by green trees on the right side.

# Our Story

## Our Heritage

First Evangelical Church (we call it First Evan) was established in 1935 by a group of about 100 believers. Their hearts were united by a desire to provide opportunities for everyone in the community to be taught and disciplined through sound biblical teaching and conferences. Through the ministries of eight senior pastors and generations of faithful believers, God has enabled His people to effectively spread the Gospel and make disciples in our Jerusalem, Judea, and the uttermost parts of the world.

First Evan faithfully gathered for worship at 2693 Union Avenue Extended for almost 40 years. In the early 1970's, members of First Evan played an active role in what became a community wide revival. The congregation outgrew its facilities despite hosting two services. Property was purchased at 735 Ridge Lake Boulevard. The first phase of the current facility was built and this congregation has thrived and expanded from this site for the last 45 years.

All glory goes to God who has faithfully worked in and through us for more than four generations. Although the Covid crisis recently challenged how and when we minister, we have emerged from this season no less committed to loving and serving Jesus well. We are seeing God work among us in encouraging ways and are increasingly confident that our best is yet to come. We are earnestly praying and preparing for God's choice of our next senior pastor, eager to see whom God brings to partner with us in this next exciting season.







# Our Vacancy

## Explanation of the Vacancy

Pastor Cole Huffman served as our Senior Pastor from 2007 to 2021. He provided a rich teaching ministry during his tenure at First Evan. He resigned as Senior Pastor in March of 2021. Pastor Cole was prayerfully released to seek what God had next for him. He currently serves a Nashville church as their Senior Pastor.

## Interim Plan During Vacancy

The Session chose to invest time and energy in performing a church health assessment prior to fully engaging the search for our next pastor. The Session engaged the services of Interim Pastor Ministries (IPM) and, In August of 2021, installed Pastor Jim Fleming as our Interim Senior Pastor. He facilitated an intentional interim process that helped us identify and address six key issues from the health assessment prior to beginning the search for our next pastor.

In May of 2022, our Pastor Search Committee, having participated extensively in the health assessment, completed the background work needed to start our search in May of 2022. The men and women are earnest and committed to finding the man of God's choosing.

Our contract with IPM was concluded in August of 2023. Our Executive Pastor is currently overseeing the staff and operations of the church. He is also leading the committee of elders and staff who ensure our pulpit is filled weekly with sound, biblical preaching.

Our goal is to become a people even more focused on our mission as we prepare ourselves for the man God is calling to become our new Senior Pastor.







# Our Position

## Senior Pastor Position Description

The next Senior Pastor of First Evangelical Church will be one who has embraced the biblical priorities of a local church shepherd as his calling from God. As an elder, he is a man of seasoned character and maturity who serves the church in a Christ-like manner. As an overseer, he understands his people and is watching out for them. As a shepherd, he feeds, cares for, and protects the flock. As a leader, he governs by assessing and discerning what is best in God's eyes. As an equipper, he trains and outfits others for growth and effective ministry. As a manager, he is attentive to others in order to actively promote what is in their best interests. In short, he is alert to the condition of his flock, brings the Word to bear on what the congregation is facing, provides a positive example of what God desires, prays for the flock, and practically helps as needed.

## Expectation of Pastor as a Shepherd

As we look back on the ministries of our previous Senior Pastors, their teaching ministry in the pulpit and shepherding engagement with people have been profoundly important. The pastor who flourishes at First Evan will teach in ways that reflect sound exegetical study, doctrinal rigor, clear exposition, and robust, relevant application. He makes the Word of God come alive to the entire congregation as he facilitates growth and equips the saints for the work of ministry. The ministry of shepherding does not require the Senior Pastor to maintain a close personal relationship with the entire congregation, but it does mean that he will be accessible, relatable, and engaged with every generation represented at First Evan.

### Minimum Qualifications

- A man who demonstrates the character and qualities of a pastor as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9
- M. Div. or equivalent from an evangelical seminary
- Previous experience as a lead staff member and teacher of an effective church team
- Committed to making disciples of Jesus from all people groups
- Committed to equipping disciple makers for Jesus until He returns
- Committed to biblical doctrine and can wholeheartedly affirm the First Evangelical Church Statement of Faith.

### Minimum Responsibilities

- Regularly preaches and ministers God's Word from the pulpit
- Shepherds the staff of First Evan
- Is attentive to all ministry areas of the church
- Assists the elders in affirming the overall vision and mission of the church

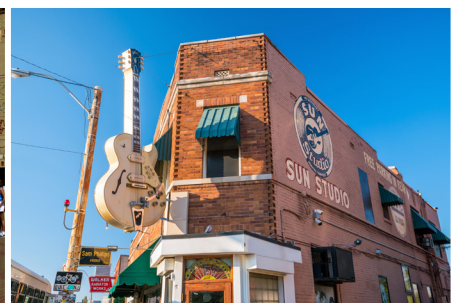


# Our Community

First Evangelical Church is located in a quiet business park on the outskirts of East Memphis in Tennessee. Our congregation gathers from numerous nearby communities such as Cordova, Germantown, Collierville, Bartlett, East Memphis, as well as north Mississippi. The city of Memphis has been growing over the last decade with the addition of hotels, restaurants, and small businesses, all of which give residents exciting, new reasons to call Memphis their home. Memphis celebrates a wide range of businesses and major corporations such as FedEx, International Paper and AutoZone, with FedEx being the area's largest employer. The city of Memphis is a strategic intersection of interstate highways, river barge traffic, and a massive intermodal rail center making it a thriving heartbeat of industry. In addition, the Memphis airport is the busiest cargo airport in the world. Memphis is also known for its resources in medical treatment and research through organizations such as LeBonheur Children's Hospital, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Smith & Nephew, and The University of Tennessee Medical School.

The Memphis area offers rich historical roots in music and culture with attractions such as Graceland, Rock 'n' Soul Museum, the Memphis Zoo, Stax Museum, Sun Studios, and others. Cultural exhibits and venues including the Pink Palace Museum, Mud Island Park, AutoZone Park, Levitt Shell, and the FedEx Forum attract more than 11.5 million visitors each year. Memphis is recognized as a significant contributor to the birth of the Civil Rights movement and is home to the National Civil Rights Museum.

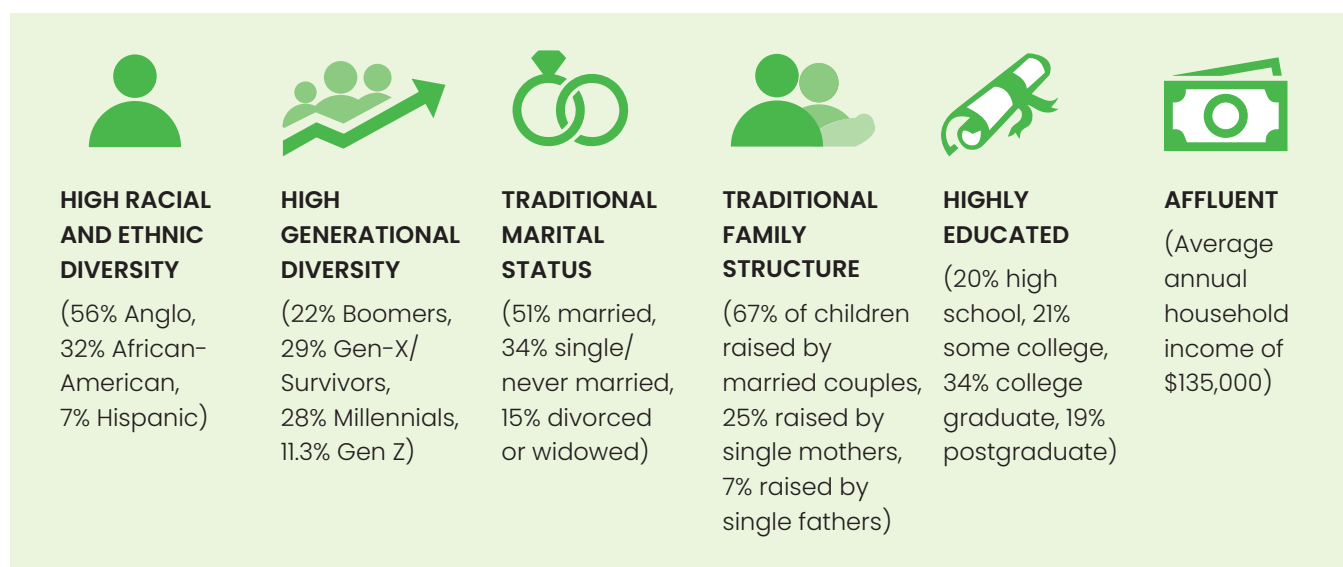
First Evan is delighted to be located within the Memphis-city limits. Our general proximity to the urban ministries that we partner with is crucial: We have embraced our mission to make Christ known in our Jerusalem and to love across ethnic, racial, and generational boundaries. Recent surveys of our congregation have helped reveal that, while we have been missional in some pockets of the greater Memphis area, we have room for improvement in strengthening our ministry opportunities and engagement within the surrounding urban area.



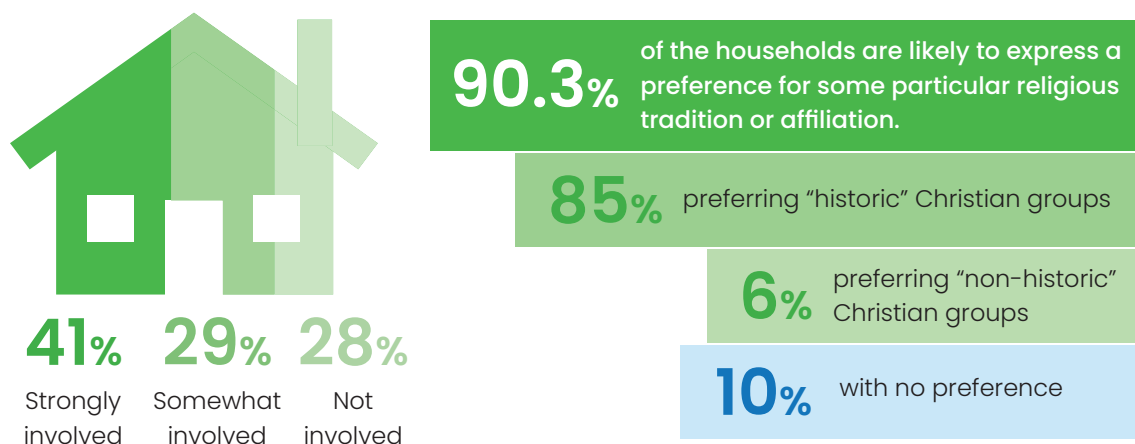




The First Evan footprint (eleven zip codes within which almost 90% of the congregation resides) represents approximately 322,000 people and is projected to increase by 2.3 percent over the next 5 years. Other significant factors of our immediate area include:



Households in the First Evan footprint (we call this our Jerusalem) have a higher level of faith involvement than the national average:

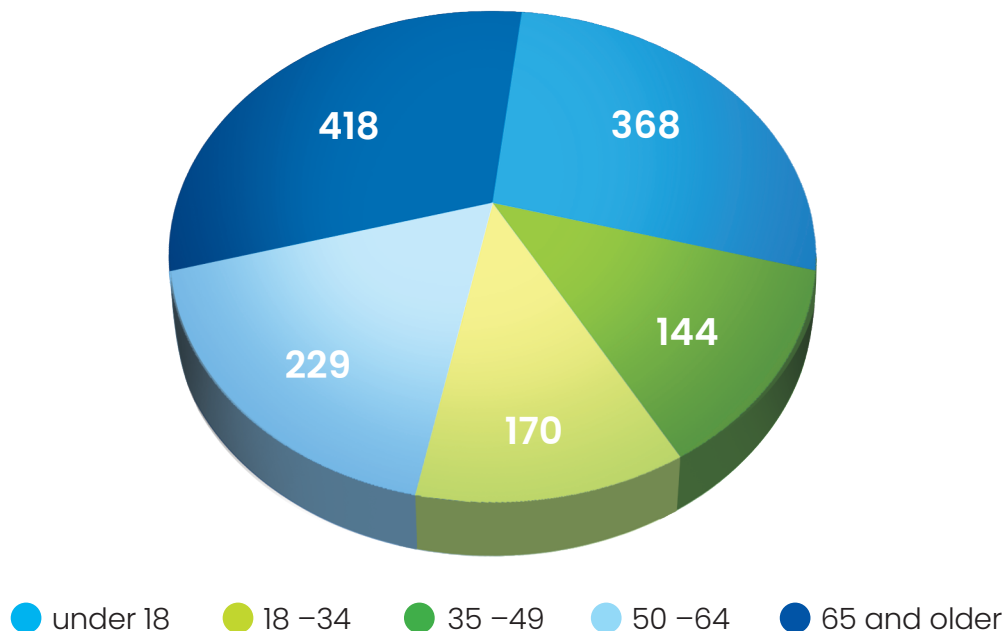






First Evangelical Church is a non-denominational congregation where about 700 people worship every weekend both in person and online. The culture at First Evan is shaped by an 87-year heritage of doctrinally sound, expositional preaching, and a deep commitment to both local and global missions. The congregation at First Evan is blessed to span multiple generations worshipping together on Sunday mornings and working alongside one another to fulfill our earthly mission. First Evan offers a blend of styles in our worship services as a complement to our efforts to invest in cross-generational relationships.

**First Evan by Age Group**







# Our Mission and Vision

*To glorify Jesus Christ and magnify His gospel  
in all of life until He comes*

We exalt Jesus Christ as The Way, The Truth, and The Life; therefore, our mission is to make Christ the very center of our lives in word and deed. Because we believe that God has made power for change available through Jesus Christ, we preach His Gospel which unlocks the means for getting right with God and living righteously before Him. Even as we eagerly await Christ's return, we want to maximize existing opportunities and create new ones to spread His Gospel and His reign in hearts through our personal outreach and support of missions.







## Our Vision

As a result of our recent church health assessment, leadership has identified six challenges that we will meet. We aim to be a church who will:



**GIVE GRACE** – Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, **so that it will give grace to those who hear.** (Ephesians 4:29)

**We will apply grace to our past, present, and future using the language of grace to build up one another in Christ.**



**IMPART A GODLY LEGACY** – The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, **entrust these to faithful men** who will be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

**We will make a robust and biblically-driven investment in those who will lead Jesus' church in the next generation.**



**PRESERVE UNITY** – Make my joy complete by **being of the same mind**, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, **intent on one purpose.** (Philippians 4:1-3)

**We will, with God's help, expend every effort to nurture, guard, and celebrate our essential oneness in Christ.**



**STAND STRONG** – Submit therefore to God. **Resist the devil** and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

**We will, in reliance on the strength and wisdom that Jesus supplies, identify Satan's attempts to work our harm and will actively employ prayer, God's Word, and mutual encouragement to resist him.**



**SEEK THE LOST** – I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. **I do all things for the sake of the Gospel**, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

**We will use every viable and Bible-honoring means to make intentional contact with people God has placed around us in order to win them to Christ and then grow them in Christ.**



**WORK SMART** – And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, **for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.** (Ephesians 4:11-12)

**We will organize church leadership to make the most of our time and efforts toward the mobilization of our people as fruitful disciple-makers.**

Our next Senior Pastor will share our commitment to address these challenges. Particularly, we need someone with a passion for making a Christ-honoring investment in the next generation and someone who is fully committed to our earthly mission of making disciples and equipping disciple-makers.





# Our Ministries



## Global Missions

First Evan has a heritage of commitment to missions, that is the cross-cultural proclamation of the Gospel. We put an emphasis on our people personally knowing, praying for, and giving toward the work of our missionaries and national partners. This has historically resulted in approximately one third of our missionaries growing up at First Evan and approximately one third of all the funds given to First Evan being designated to Missions and Outreach.

We partner with 33 mission agencies, supporting 21 missionary units (49 missionaries) in 17 countries, though many of our missionaries work beyond the borders of their country of residence. We also support 30 national partners in 15 countries.



## Memphis Ministries

God has used First Evan and its members to support and minister alongside multiple local evangelical ministries to share the Gospel in our community. We have partnered with organizations such as Young Life, Memphis Union Mission, Bible Study Fellowship, Memphis Leadership Foundation, Neighborhood Christian Center, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Advance Memphis, STREETS, Eikon Ministries, A Way Out, Forgiveness House, World Relief, Life Choices, and many others.



## FEC Kids

FEC Kids is currently studying the Bible chronologically with the Gospel Project for Kids curriculum. We want our kids to learn who God is, develop a genuine love for Him, and help them live for God, showing their love for Him with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.





## Student Ministry

Student Ministries seeks to equip students with a firm foundation in scripture and train them to share their faith within their spheres of influence. Students are currently preparing to serve on-mission in Birmingham, AL where we will work alongside local organizations in children's programming, outreach to the homeless, and the elderly community.



## Worship

Together with the choir, band, and instrumentalists, our Worship Department seeks "to honor God by preparing and prompting His people in corporate and individual expressions of adoration to our Redeemer." In addition to leading the congregation in weekly worship, we prepare all year for special services such as Lessons and Carols and Palm Sunday.



## Young Adults

The Young Adults Ministry seeks to provide a space for college students and young professionals to find community while being challenged to grow in their faith. In addition to Sunday mornings, we meet weekly for fellowship and Bible studies or discussions.



## Women's Ministry

Women's Ministry is committed to helping women build community, to equip them in the Word and ministry, and to provide avenues of outreach to our neighbors. In addition to the weekly Heart to Heart Bible study and other outreach events, the Women's Ministry hosts an annual Christmas Dinner at the Hilton Hotel. First Evan ladies invite non-Christian friends, or those outside our church, to come enjoy conversation with dinner and a gospel presentation through live music.







## Midweek Fellowship Meals

During the school year, our congregation gathers for Wednesday night meals for a rich time of fellowship. This year we invited members from our Memphis Ministries partners and served an average of 220 meals weekly.

## Men's Ministry

Our Men's Ministry seeks to help the men at First Evan to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which they have been called" (Ephesians 4:1). Throughout the year, we gather for Bible studies, prayer meetings, the annual Men's Fish Fry, and the Men's Retreat.

## Senior Adults

The Senior Adults Ministry helps care for certain members of our church with groups and events such as Second Act (Widows' Fellowship), the He Cares Ministry, and LLL luncheons. Other ministries at First Evan, such as FEC Kids, support our senior adults by making and delivering holiday-themed sunshine baskets throughout the year.

## Adult Sunday School

The adult Sunday Schools at First Evan function like mini-churches. In the twenty plus classes currently offered, hundreds enjoy mutual prayer, encouragement, discussion and biblical instruction, even as they seek to sharpen one another as followers of Jesus.

## Shepherds and Flocks

The entire congregation of First Evangelical Church is organized in flocks led by shepherding elders. Our goal is clear: *Everyone who names First Evan as home should be the recipient of proactive and informed prayer, growth assistance, and personal ministry guidance from a shepherd whom they know and trust as they do life together.* We are committed to robust shepherding and flourishing flocks, but we are not there yet. We are getting there.





# Our Structure

## Governance and Staff

As a non-denominational church, we are governed by a Church Council that is made up of the Session and the Board of Deacons combined. The Session is made up of the currently seated elders and the Senior Pastor. The Board of Deacons is made up of the currently seated deacons, usually twenty-one in number. Elders and Deacons serve three year terms.

### Elders

- Define and communicate the mission and vision of the church
- Support the development of robust shepherding throughout the congregation
- Discern Biblically-informed ways for the congregation to respond to current challenges

### Deacons

Deacons attend to various practical needs and do it in such a way that greatly empower specific areas of ministry.

### Staff

God has blessed First Evangelical Church with a dedicated team of servants that includes five pastors, eight directors, and twenty support staff. Under the direction of the Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor, staff seeks to develop and direct the organized ministries of the church in ways that are informed by our mission and vision. Despite the challenge of working from offices in various building locations, the staff enjoys camaraderie, times of fellowship, and a sense of partnering on mission.





# Our Beliefs

## Our Statement of Faith

**We believe** in the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired by God, and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21)

**We believe** in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4, 2 Corinthians 13:14; Luke 3:22)

**We believe** that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. (John 1:1–2, 14; Luke 1:35)

**We believe** man was created in the image of God, that he sinned, and thereby incurred, not only physical death, but also spiritual death which is separation from God, and that all human beings have a sin nature. Man is dead in sin and therefore helpless and incapable of advancing his spiritual position, pleasing God, or gaining salvation. Therefore, salvation must be initiated by God alone and consummated by grace alone. (Genesis 1:26–27; Colossians 3:10; Genesis 3:6; Romans 5:12; Romans 3:23; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Hebrews 9:27)

**We believe** that the Lord Jesus died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. (John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:1–4; 1 John 2:1–2; 1 John 4:10)

**We believe** in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into heaven and His present life there for us as High Priest and Advocate. (1 Corinthians 15:1–4; 1 John 2:1–2; Hebrews 4:14–16)

**We believe** that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will personally return and set up His Kingdom wherein He will rule and reign in righteousness. (Daniel 2:44; 1 Corinthians 15:24)

**We believe** that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby become children of God. (Ephesians 2:8–9; Acts 16:31; 1 John 1:7)

**We believe** that, since salvation is a gift of God and Jesus' blood atones for past, present and future sins, the believer once saved by grace is kept secure by grace forever. (Romans 3:24; Romans 5:20–21)

**We believe** in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the blessedness of the saved, and the retribution of the lost. (1 Corinthians 1:5; Matthew 25:46; John 5:28–29; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 20:1–15)

# Our Search Committee

**Kevin Weaver (63)**, *Session Chairman & Pastoral Search Committee Chairman, Attorney*  
**Katelynn Bernardini (34)**, *Member, Administrative Assistant to Worship Pastor of First Evan*  
**Debbie Frazier (67)**, *Member, Retired Head of Grammar School of Westminster Academy*  
**Mark Gosney (66)**, *Elder, Director of Operations and Programming at Advance Memphis*  
**Ralph Hughes (78)**, *Deacon, Owner of Hughes Heating and Cooling*  
**Bill Granger (69)**, *Deacon, Retired Owner of Granger Electric Co.*  
**Buddy Jones (69)**, *Secretary of the Session, Retired Business Analyst from AutoZone*

If you are interested in applying for this position, please send a cover letter and resume to [spsearch@firstevan.org](mailto:spsearch@firstevan.org).

**firstevan**

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