

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

DELAVAN, WI



“Our mission is to worship God, and to teach, encourage and practice discipleship”

The roots of First Baptist Delavan go very deep – to faithful Baptists that settled in southern Wisconsin, entering into a covenant in 1839 to form the first Christian congregation in Delavan. The turn of the 20th century was a high point with several hundred enrolled in Sunday School. By the turn of the 21st century, the congregation was struggling. A crucial decision was made to participate in the New Church New Century program, proving to be **transformational**. Out of this work came a fresh vision and a new mission statement: *Our mission is to worship God, and to teach, encourage and practice discipleship*. Spurred to new missional engagement, the congregation **collaborated** with other churches in the community to address homelessness, hunger, and other needs. Since 2002 the church has hosted an annual concert, “Helpers in Harmony”, inviting choirs and musicians from area churches to come together in support of the local food pantries and Delavan Human Concerns. Members participate in local and national mission trips, expanding to international missions in 2019, sending Lisa Reshkus on a mission team to Honduras. The church’s **growth** and renewed strength was celebrated in a magnificent 175th Anniversary Celebration in 2014, which included organ recitals and a historic reenactment service complete with 1800s clothing. We celebrate God’s goodness and guidance which allows this small and aging congregation to sustain a comparably large footprint of impact in our community.

In 2004, Rev. Mike Ida brought the church **renewal** process to life with enthusiasm for mission and a love for the congregation. We celebrate faithful Sunday School teachers, reflecting the church’s **roots** in Christian education – Roxann Kelton teaching at FBC Delavan for 48 years and Darlene Henning for 26 years! Significant restorations of the 1880 Church building include the stained glass restored in 2013, the organ re-leathered in 2017, and the steeple cross relit in 2019.

Our mission statement remains relevant, guiding our primary purpose to bring glory to God through engaging worship drawing hearts to the Lord. Teaching discipleship guides our Christian Education program. Practicing discipleship keeps us engaged in mission, hosting homeless, feeding children, and supporting a wide variety of mission work. We encourage discipleship through loving care of one another, urging one another to shine hope and faith into the community, sustained by continual attention to our relationship with God through Christ.