



First Baptist Church
of MURFREESBORO

200 E. Main Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
fbcmboro.org

After a long season of discernment during which our congregation prayerfully considered our longstanding history and affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention as well as our church's and the Convention's current values, identity, and actions, First Baptist Church of Murfreesboro has made a decision to formally disaffiliate from the Southern Baptist Convention. This decision was not made lightly or easily. Precipitating factors include the following:

- First Baptist Church affirms and values women in pastoral ministry and in congregational leadership roles. God speaks to individuals and congregations personally, and calls women into His service as well as men. We stand with sister congregations who share this conviction and practice.
- First Baptist Church is grieved, saddened, and outraged by the actions of the Southern Baptist Convention in the abuse of power by leadership in the sexual abuse cases recently brought to light. The on-going cover-up is shameful, hurtful, and antithetical to the love of Christ.
- Finally, as faithful historical Baptists, we are not a creedal people. The Southern Baptist Convention has, and continues to use the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message as a tool of conformity and test of fellowship and employment. This ignores the cherished Baptist principle of church autonomy.

The culmination of our church-wide discernment process was a motion from our deacon body asserting that based on the above listed factors, we no longer consider ourselves “in friendly cooperation with” the Southern Baptist Convention. (This terminology is how the Convention classifies affiliated churches.) This motion was voted on and approved by an overwhelming majority of church members. This should not be interpreted as a blanket condemnation of all Southern Baptists, Southern Baptist ministries, or Southern Baptist churches, but rather as a clarification of how our unique congregational identity and values no longer align with the Southern Baptist Convention in the ways they once did.

Moving forward, we will continue to actively discern God's will for our church and do our best individually and collectively to live, love, and serve like Jesus. We welcome all who may come to join us in the effort.