CONGREGATION PROFILE
When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. 13 “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”

New International Version (NIV)
Congregational Profile

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932 Starling Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112
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Starling Avenue Baptist Church * Martinsville * Virginia
Introduction to Starling Avenue Baptist Church

Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Henry County and the city of Martinsville are located on the Virginia/North Carolina border and conveniently positioned within a day's drive of 60% of the U.S. population. Starling Avenue Baptist Church is located on the south side in the city.

Starling Avenue is a church, deeply rooted in the practice of the priesthood of believers and servant leadership. As part of the family of God, with Christ as our head, we seek unity and harmony as we serve and minister together to each other, the greater community, and the world beyond our doors. We are affiliated with the Baptist General Association of Virginia and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

As stated in Isaiah 54:2, we believe in enlarging the place of our tent and stretching wide our tent curtains. We warmly welcome those who choose to worship with us. We believe that an informed congregation is a wise and discerning congregation. By being open to diversity, we gain knowledge and perspective. All voices are sought, heard, and respected as we work for the greater good of the Kingdom, the community, and Starling Avenue.
What We Believe and Value

Mission

We desire that all things may be done decently and in order, consistent with the New Testament model of the church of Jesus Christ.

Purpose

This church, acknowledging the Lordship of Jesus Christ and accepting the Bible as the authority for faith and practice, declares its purpose is to glorify God through the following practices:

1. To maintain regular services of public worship, devotion and prayer.
2. To proclaim earnestly the Gospel message and urge its personal acceptance.
3. To promote systematic Bible study and training for Christian service, and to encourage the fullest stewardship of life and possessions.
4. To cooperate through prayer, gifts, and service with the churches of the Henry County Baptist Association, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, and/or other Baptist associations as the church may choose in an effort to carry the Gospel of Christ throughout the world.
5. To promote fellowship and cooperation among all Christians.

This is a sovereign and democratic church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the rights of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.
Starling Avenue Baptist Church Covenant

*Rejoicing in the grace of God and surrendering our lives to Jesus Christ, we are led by the Holy Spirit to joyfully and reverently covenant with God and one another. As a member of this body of believers...*

- I will glorify God through worship, prayer, and the study of scripture.
- I will live in Christian love and forgiveness in my family and in this Congregation. I will encourage and support others and lift them to God in prayer.
- I will be a faithful steward of all God’s gifts, joyfully using all that I am and all that I have in sacrificial service to the glory of God. I will affirm and celebrate the Christian growth and service of others.
- I will demonstrate God’s love and mercy through words and actions to everyone whose life I touch. Working with others, I will provide the resources to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

*Adopted October 29, 2000*
Baptist Identity

We affirm four historic Baptist freedoms:

1. **BIBLE FREEDOM:** the historic Baptist affirmation that the Bible, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, must be central in the lives of individuals and the church. The Bible changes our lives, replaces any form of creed, and frees the individual to interpret scripture as the Holy Spirit leads. We are both obligated and free, with the best and most scholarly tools of inquiry, to study and obey the Scripture.

2. **SOUL FREEDOM:** the historic Baptist affirmation that an individual's faith is personal, experiential, and voluntary. Baptists affirm that each individual is created in the image of God. Each individual, therefore, is competent and responsible under God to make moral, spiritual, and religious decisions without the imposition of creed, the interference of clergy, or the intervention of civil government.

3. **CHURCH FREEDOM:** the historic Baptist affirmation that local churches are free under the Lordship of Christ to determine their membership and leadership, to order their worship and work, and to ordain whom they perceive as gifted for ministry, male or female, and to participate in the larger body of Christ, of whose unity and mission Baptists are proudly a part. No one (no pastor, no civil magistrates, no convention of churches) can dictate to the local church. A local Baptist congregation is free to design its own servant ministry; moreover it is responsible for the members to do so.

4. **RELIGIOUS FREEDOM:** the historic Baptist affirmation of freedom **OF** religion, freedom **FOR** religion, and freedom **FROM** religion (the separation of church and state). Baptist anchored their passion for religious liberty in (1) the nature of God, (2) the nature of humanity and (3) the nature of faith.
We hold the following values to express the character of Starling Avenue Baptist Church.

**Worship**  We believe worship is essential to the life of individuals, our community of faith, and God’s Kingdom on earth. To glorify and praise God, we worship in two Sunday morning services. The early service has an informal atmosphere and is a blend of traditional and contemplative styles. The later, more formal, service is traditional in style and provides translation for the deaf on first Sundays. Services are combined for special occasions throughout the year.

**Discipleship**  We believe Bible study, prayer, the study of Baptist doctrine and theology, and life application result in a servant heart and service for the greater good of The Kingdom. We offer Sunday School, a Wednesday morning Bible study and prayer group, a Wednesday evening Bible study and prayer group, an evening Youth Bible study, and other small group opportunities for discipleship training.

**Outreach**  We believe we have an obligation to reach the community around us. We provide entry points by providing a community meal each month, through participation in Hope Community Garden, and partnering ecumenically in the community. Community-wide outreach events are held throughout the year.

**Missions**  We believe in expressing a servant heart as we minister to those beyond our doors. In partnership with other congregations and benevolent non-profit organizations of the community, members of all ages are encouraged to be involved in local mission opportunities. We financially support and encourage participation in mission endeavors at the state, national, and international levels.

**Fellowship and Caring**  We believe fellowship opportunities build unity and harmony as we gather in casual settings. We also provide opportunities for the intentional caring for members and their extended family through our deacon ministry, the homebound team, and bereavement team. We extend fellowship to the community by sharing a meal each month and other events during the year.

**Equality**  We affirm the giftedness and leadership abilities of all persons who feel the call of ministry, in all areas of service, for the up-building of God’s Kingdom. We welcome all who wish to worship our Lord and Savior.
History and Heritage

The roots of our identity lie in our heritage. Starling Avenue Baptist Church had its beginnings in a 1929 revival held on the property where the church now stands. On November 24, 1935, the mission became a church and the congregation moved quickly to call its first pastor. Times were hard for many in Martinsville. When the congregation attempted to secure a loan for the construction of the present sanctuary, the attempt met with rejection. But the members believed God was leading them in this venture. Many put up their homes and insurance policies as collateral for the loan. Others contributed the labor to erect the sanctuary. The shared faith and personal sacrifice of these first members became a pattern as well as a symbol of faith for the coming decades.

The Beginning: A Heritage of Faith and Stewardship

Early twentieth century Martinsville, Virginia, was a growing but still small, close-knit community of people. A large portion of the people in the new developed “Southside” of town depended on their feet for transportation. Most of their destinations were within a few blocks of factories, stores, entertainment, and banking. Some saw the desirability of a neighborhood church. In the summer of 1925, a tent revival was held on Askin Street with Reverend J. S. Riddle of Danbury, North Carolina, an independent evangelist with the Methodist Protestant Church. It was an interdenominational effort with the hope of a neighborhood church being the result, but no plans for a future church came of it.

Nevertheless, this planted the seeds for a second revival to be held in a tent in June of 1927. It was held near the intersection of Starling Avenue and Memorial Boulevard. At the conclusion of the revival, First Baptist Church, led by its pastor Dr. J.P. McCabe, purchased the property on Starling Avenue where the revival had been held. One lot was bought for $1200 from S. D. and Lucy English, and later two more lots were bought from F. E. Sites for $1000. Part was paid in cash and part was financed. It was stipulated that a “Missionary Baptist Church” would be built on the property.

In 1929, a one-room tabernacle was built and called “The Starling Street Baptist Tabernacle.” On September 15th a union revival was begun in the tabernacle. Protestant ministers from churches in Martinsville conducted the services. At the conclusion of the revival, a mission Sunday School was organized. Sunday School was conducted on Sunday afternoons with teachers from different churches coming to teach, and it continued for four years.
In 1934, Sunday School was moved to Sunday mornings with worship services following. November 24, 1935, was the date set to organize a Baptist Church. In 1936 after the charter roll was adopted by the church membership the church name was changed to Starling Avenue Baptist Church.

In 1936, the Deacons served as the first pulpit committee. They recommended the church call Reverend Thomas Waitt Fryer. The pulpit committee offered him the position of pastor of the church, and on February 15, 1936, Reverend Fryer preached his first sermon to a congregation that packed the tabernacle. The young and energetic pastor took the helm of the new congregation, and the church grew rapidly. The Sunday School was modernized, a graded Baptist Training Union was organized, and the Woman’s Missionary Union was started.

Martinsville had not felt the immediate effect of the economic depression that was raging through the nation. The Tobacco Market was doing well with record sales as well as the furniture factories and textiles. The City and County may have had a dark cloud hanging over them, but not the pastor of Starling Avenue Baptist Church.

Reverend Fryer wanted more for the church members than just shaking hands with the pastor and having their names written in the church records to become members. A church covenant was written. As people came for membership in the church, they were given a covenant card to pray about and see if they wanted to covenant with the church. The charter members were also asked to sign a card. Upon signing the covenant card, the person was accepting fellowship into the church to work and carry out the teachings of Christ and act in accordance with the church doctrine. Early members were not daunted by Rev. Fryer’s forceful preaching; instead the Tabernacle was continually full for all services. The Tabernacle was overflowing, and people were standing at the doors and at the windows and in the yard to hear his sermons.

June 21, 1937, a new building was started, and the church hired a local architect to draw up the plans for a new structure. The plans called for a spacious building with an auditorium over a full-size basement. The cost was estimated at $40,000. A committee was organized to get bids for materials and construction. It was agreed that after the foundation was poured, construction would go as far as the cash would allow. The finance committee presented a paper to each church member to sign, committing their all to backing the building fund. Seventy members signed and the
church decided to borrow the remaining money. Many members followed scriptural teachings by bringing their tithes, offerings and dedicated gifts. The church borrowed $15,000 from Jefferson Standard to complete the building.

In the fall of 1932 Dr. J. P. McCabe had extended an invitation to a small group to establish a Sunday School for the deaf at First Baptist Church, in Martinsville. Mr. Gerner Bondurant was the first teacher for more than a year before relinquishing the post due to his health. Mr. Obie Nunn took over teaching the class in 1935. In 1937 the Silent Bible Class decided to move to Starling Avenue Baptist Church since most of the members lived in the Southside area. In 1972, Mrs. Catherine Stone became the first interpreter for the deaf during worship services. Becky Woody Camden and Joan Joyce learned to sign in 1974 and became interpreters. They shared the ministry until 1979. Joan continues to lead the ministry today.

The church building was completed March 20, 1938, and Starling Avenue Baptist Church held its formal opening with an all-day service. Praises and thanksgivings were given to God and to Jesus Christ for making a way for the church to become a reality. It was noted as one of the most beautiful brick structures in this area of the state. In the Southern Colonial architectural style of some of the older Virginia churches, the new structure was a great asset to the community, seating around 450 people. On opening day of the new building, there were 226 church members. The Sunday School had grown to between 325 and 350, and Training Union had an attendance of 120. The church led the Blue Ridge Association in giving to missions and was regarded as one of the most progressive churches in the entire state.

In eleven years, in the midst of the Great Depression, Starling Avenue Baptist had grown from a large one-room frame tabernacle into a brick church building. The church had built a parsonage in Chatham Heights, sold it, and was in the process of building a brick home beside the church. The church was growing by leaps and bounds. People of faith and hope were walking with the Lord and putting God in the center of their lives. People who called each other brother and sister pulled together to make a close-knit church family of believers. That foundation of faith and stewardship has been passed to each generation in our church.

Renovations and Additions

While the original part of the church facility is almost eighty years old, members have been faithful in planning for and carrying out aggressive maintenance and building projects. Further, over the years, we have sought to renovate the property with more efficient use as the main goal. Each renovation or addition at Starling Avenue Baptist Church has either been
paid for with funds on hand or loans that were paid before the due date. We have always been a financially healthy church, and today we are debt free.

In 1950, the church borrowed money to build a three-story addition to be used for expanding educational classroom space. The lower level provided a fellowship hall and kitchen. A library and church offices were housed in this addition.

During early 1976 the building and grounds committee added a handicap ramp to the sanctuary level of the church. For many years, it had been the desire of Mrs. J. A. Miles to see a steeple on the church. At her passing in 1976 she left money for that purpose. The bequest became seed money toward that project. On August 14, 1981, the new steeple was constructed and installed on the church.

In 1982 the church agreed to replace the roofing, gutters, downspouts and install ventilation on the roof.

In 1983, the Renovation committee asked that the Vestibule on the second level and the sanctuary balcony be renovated before the November Homecoming. The church also proceeded with renovation of the Fellowship Hall.

In 1984, extensive renovation was done on the floor beneath the sanctuary and to the second floor of the education building.

In 1985, we purchased property on the corner of Starling Avenue and Route 220. The property cost $60,000. The membership took the challenge, and over $28,000 was raised before the end of the year.

In 1986, it was recommended that we have a pipe organ built and installed to replace the existing electric organ. There was an enthusiastic response and by the end of the year the new pipe organ had been ordered, commitments amounting to 99% of the project had been returned, and $95,115 of the $155,000 required had been received.
In 1990, the church voted to have an elevator installed and members were asked to make pledges towards its purchase and installation. The elevator provided handicap accessibility to all levels of the church.

In 1994, the renovation committee asked that the church proceed with renovation of the third floor and new carpet for the sanctuary. By the end of the year our indebtedness for the project (including a new roof on the office building) was $52,500. Gifts and pledges to the renovation fund were used to retire the resulting debt.

In 1997, the church voted to purchase the Sara Lee property, located across Starling Avenue from the church at a cost of $150,000. The church envisioned this property as being used as a parking lot or new educational building.

Until 1973, Starling Avenue provided a parsonage, by first renting an apartment, and then by 1939 building a home in the Chatham Heights area. That parsonage was sold, and a new brick home was built next door to the church in 1941. In 1957, needing space for more classrooms, the church bought a larger home on Starling Avenue to serve as the parsonage. The old parsonage became an educational annex. In 1973 the parsonage was sold, and a housing allowance was added to the pastor’s salary package in accordance with IRS guidelines.

Between 2010 and 2011 the church office building was completely renovated. Volunteers from the church did the labor themselves keeping the cost at approximately $20,000. Money was drawn from a special improvement gift earmarked for the project.

In 2012 the church parking lot was revamped. We added landscaping, rescaled parking space, and installed new lighting to provide more safety at night. This project is a current example of the value we place on stewardship. Funds for the project were collected in advance, and where possible we have used funds on hand rather than incur debt.

**Our Heritage of Equality**

Despite early examples to the contrary, Southern Baptists as a whole were slow to recognize the gifts of women. One Baptist man cautioned in 1885 against hampering women’s efforts to lead. “The good sisters have too much sense and are too much in earnest to be satisfied with flattering platitudes and empty compliments.” When women did organize three years later it was as an “auxiliary” to the convention. (Southern Baptist Sister: in Search of Status, 1845-2000, by Daniel Morgan, Mercer, p. 117)

During the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s Starling Avenue Baptist had many gifted women who served as Ministers of Music and Education, Youth Directors, choir directors, and various other leadership roles in the church.
In the 1950s our WMU boasted strong leaders in the church, the association and the state. After serving Virginia Baptists on staff in the Training Union department, Marcella Winn Minter, a member of Starling Avenue Baptist Church, trained at the Carver School of Christian Social Work at a time when its partner Southern Baptist Theological Seminary was not accepting women as students for the ministry.

In the 1970s as more women felt called into ministry, factions in the SBC sought to reverse the tide. There were efforts to bring the WMU under its control, and the revision of the Baptist Faith and Message in 2000 explicitly restricted the role of pastor to men. Starling Avenue Baptist Church, however, has long recognized the gifts of women, and affirmed their ministry.

In keeping with this tradition, in 1980 Starling Avenue became one of the first churches locally to ordain women as deacons. The first women deacons were Emma Washburn and Rhoda Lancaster.

On May 31, 1980, Vicki Brodie became the first woman ordained to the ministry by Starling Avenue Baptist Church. She accepted the call to serve as Minister of Education at Wake Forest University Baptist Church.

On October 22, 1995, Bonny Lee Witt was ordained and went on to use her pastoral care training as director of Citizens Against Family Violence, the Mental Health Association, as Director of Church and Communities Ministries for the Henry County Baptist Association. She now serves as chaplain at Memorial Hospital of Martinsville and Henry County.

On June 18, 2005, Kristin Adkins Whitesides was ordained to the gospel ministry. She presently serves as associate pastor at First Baptist Church, in Winchester, Virginia.

We desire to make all individuals, regardless of gender, ethnic, culture, or socio-economics background feel comfortable in all phases of church activities. Through the years of strong lay and staff leadership, Starling Avenue Baptist Church has become a church with warm liturgical worship and missionary vision, one which is in touch with contemporary trends, devoted to lifelong Christian nurture, and the celebration of fellowship. Though as a church we recognize and defend the uniqueness of each person’s journey in faith, there is unity in our diversity. We are drawn together by our common belief in the Lordship of Christ. Cherishing the freedom of our Baptist roots and yet open to ecumenical opportunities, we have become a home to Christians from many tradition. We see ourselves as a family. We care about each other and show our love throughout each
part of the church’s program, as well as in our individual acts of caring. We encourage each other to use the gifts God has given us. The tenacity and perseverance of our founders and charter members inspire us to continue to attempt that which in the world’s eyes seems impossible. With worship of God and our love of each other as our foundation, we will continue to reach out beyond the walls of this church to the larger community, to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord.

**Our Heritage of Missions**

In 1937, Rev. Fryer had challenged the church to tithe the first three months of the new year with one-third to be designated for missions. In 1940, 20% of tithes and 20% of all loose offerings were designated for the Cooperative Program.

Woman’s Missionary Union had been organized in 1936 for the mission education of children and women. In 1938, the church led the Blue Ridge Association in giving to missions. In 1939 the growth of the church was in the organizations of the Woman’s Missionary Union and the Sunday School. Woman’s Missionary Union leaders inspired children, women, and the entire congregation to be involved in mission education and endeavors. They organized the first Royal Ambassador group for mission education for boys. In 1945 they began collecting three annual offerings for missions.

In May 1942 a mission Sunday School was started in the Chatham Heights area. The attendance grew quickly to 60 and in September a request to build a tabernacle on property owned by SABC was presented to the congregation. The request was approved and the tabernacle was completed in 1943. SABC “mothered” the new mission by paying half of the cost for a piano, providing literature, and providing teachers and other support. Chatham Height’s Baptist Church was chartered in 1944 and grew to become the strong church it is today.

In 1947, the men of the church organized a Men’s Fellowship club, later known as the Brotherhood. In addition to mission study and support, the men participated in local mission projects. The ladies of the church prepared and served a supper for their meetings because these were the days when the men did not do kitchen duty. The men assumed leadership for Royal Ambassadors soon after.

In 1960 the church organized a food and clothes closet. The church always has been compassionate of the needs of the less fortunate. In order to best leverage resources Starling Avenue became a participating partner in 2006 with the newly organized Grace Network, MHC, INC. Contributions previously designated to a benevolent fund were voted to be given to Grace, and that organization is included in our budget. The food and clothes closet closed, and food is now collected for the client self-serve pantry operated by Grace.
1938 Church Bulletin

First Sanctuary

Modern Sanctuary

Handbells

Holy Week Labyrinth

Unpacking New Hymnals 11/2014
Where We Are Today

*Today, worship of God is central to the Christian life of Starling Avenue Baptist. Whether we gather in the sanctuary, in a park, or at a retreat, at that moment our congregation unites with all the people of our Maker and Redeemer. In 1999, with the closing of furniture factories and textile mills which provided the economic base for the area, many families in the community relocated to other areas. That began a decline felt in our congregation as well as in the community. During the last 15 years, Martinsville/Henry County area has been in transition and working to re-invent itself. Starling Avenue, while experiencing an exodus of many younger families, has remained committed to our heritage of faith and stewardship and has remained hopeful for the “not yet.”*

**Worship**

Starling Avenue currently has two Sunday morning traditional worship services which include ecumenical liturgy and litanies and follows the Liturgical year. The earlier service is informal and blends the traditional with a contemplative style that includes a broader lay participation. It appeals to those more comfortable in small settings and those whose work schedule prohibits attendance in the later service. We celebrate and worship together for services of Covenant Sunday (first Sunday of the year), Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Tenebrae, Easter, Pentecost, All Saints Day, Hanging of the Greens (an evening service observing the beginning of Advent), special services during Advent, and Christmas Eve candlelight communion. We also have an annual informal outdoor service for the Blessing of the Animals. We observe open communion and welcome all believers in our Lord to the table.

**Ministries:** Starling Avenue is a relational church and firmly believes in the caring for and ministry to our members, their extended families, and those who regularly worship with us. We provide a variety of ministries for the purpose of spiritual development. We believe that the participation in these ministries grows the unity, harmony, and respect that are characteristic of SABC.

**Sunday School:** One of the most important tools in the church for outreach, discipleship, evangelism and ministry is a lifelong process. Sunday School workers have one of the most important jobs in our church. By the 1990s there were classes offered for all ages from the cradle to Senior Adult. With the loss of job opportunities and ensuing exodus of younger families, our Sunday School and church membership have experienced a decline in attendance. However, during the transition period since our past pastor’s resignation, we have maintained stability in attendance and financial health.

**Deacon Family Ministry:** Annually each active deacon chooses a number of families to whom they serve as a point of contact. Deacons are to contact their families by card, phone, email, or personal visit throughout the year. In times of illness, death, or
other crisis the deacon serves and supports the member and their extended family and keeps the congregation apprised as deemed appropriate and/or requested by the member or their family. If someone is unable to attend worship, the deacon serves communion in the home or care facility at least once a year.

**Homebound Ministry:** In 1994 a Homebound Ministry was established. Volunteers of the Homebound Team serve as friends and visitors and ensure that those who are not able to be active in the life of the church are kept in touch. They also lend support to caregivers as appropriate. They use the avenues of electronic, phone, and written communications as well as regular visitation.

**Bereavement Ministry:** In 2001 a group met to explore the possibility of preparing a meal for bereaved families following the funeral service of a church member. The group decided to go forward, and the Bereavement Team was formed. The first family served by this ministry was Emma Washburn’s, one of the first women ordained as deacon. Today it remains as one of the greatest acts of caring provided to grieving families.

**Youth and Children Ministry:** Rev. Susan Spangenberg coordinates a full program for youth and for children with the help of volunteers. Members of SABC’s youth participate in Sunday School, choir, the weekly “Detour” program, and mission trips. They have ministered to the community by raking yards for homebound, collecting food for Grace Network, and teaching Sunday School.

Children participate in Sunday School and a Wednesday afternoon program that includes music, mission study, and spiritual development. They have spearheaded the church’s participation in mission projects such as “More Than Nets.” Annually, they work with the youth to provide an Easter egg hunt at Blue Ridge Nursing facility and a Halloween Trunk or Treat party for the community.

**Music Ministry:** Music is an integral part of SABC’s worship. Adult, youth, and children lead the congregation in worship through music. There is an adult handbell choir, and a music ensemble that perform at various services throughout the year.

**C.A.R.E. Group:** Caring Adults Reaching Everyone is a women’s group of the WMU that meets monthly. The group does projects within the church and community. They have sponsored a mission lunch for the congregation with donations being given to the Annual Mission Offering. Other projects have included stockings for nursing homes, baby showers for Pregnancy Center, and Christmas gifts to the ladies at the Horne Home. In November, they promote congregation participation in filling boxes for Samaritan Purse.
**Missions and Partnerships:** We encourage and support involvement in missions locally, state wide, nationally, and internationally. Our belief is in the Great Commission as stated in Acts 1:8. The church encourages members to volunteer in hands-on mission opportunities locally and beyond. For three decades our church as observed World Hunger Sunday and received an offering for the relief of people in hunger or poverty.

Members have participated in Disaster Relief in Tazewell, VA., Buchannon, VA, Poquoson, VA, Bishop, WV, New Orleans, LA, and Punta Gordo, FL. Members have volunteered for projects of Virginia Baptists Partnership Mission in Tanzania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Mexico, Hungary, Austria, Panama, and South Africa. Volunteers working with other entities have been to Cuba, Monserrat, Honduras, Chicago, and Pine Ridge, SD.

Youth on mission trips have worked with hurricane victims, done crafts with inner city children, conducted Backyard Bible Schools, worked on home repairs in low-income housing, worked in food pantries, and ministered to nursing home residents. Some places they have been are Louisiana, Maryland, Atlanta, GA. Florida, Pennsylvania, Williamsburg, VA., the Eastern Sore of VA, North Carolina, Tennessee, and New York City.

**Community Meals** began in January 2014. A Feed America report on the area indicated that a large portion of our community was “food insecure.” Realizing, also, there are many elderly and lonely residents in the area, a ministry team was formed to provide a community meal once each month. Volunteers provide and serve the free meal at fully dressed tables for anyone wishing to attend. They also eat with our visitors and engage them in conversation. Prayer boxes are placed on each table, and all are encouraged to place their requests in the boxes anonymously. The requests are shared with the Wednesday evening prayer and Bible study group.

**Hope Community Garden** is located on the property across Starling Avenue from the church. Raised planting beds are provided and prepared by volunteers. Residents in the area are encouraged to plant a garden for the use of their household. Gardening advice, water, some tools and materials are supplied by the church volunteers. Produce from beds planted and tended by volunteers is donated to Grace Network.

**Grace Network** is an ecumenical faith-based non-profit organization. It began offering services to the community in 2006. Supported by over 90 congregations, Grace Network pools money, food, volunteers, leadership, and expertise from churches, individuals, groups, and businesses to create a “one stop” location for people in crisis in the Martinsville and Henry County area to find help. Their mission statement: Short term help for long term solutions. Many SABC members serve as Grace volunteers and supply food donations for the quarterly assignments to keep the self-serve food pantry filled.
**Good News Jail and Prison Ministry** provides Bible studies to inmates and support to their families. Several of our members are involved visiting the local jails and prisons. They teach Bible studies and have conversations and prayer with the inmates. They often provide support to newly released inmates as they re-acclimate into society. Our church budget provides Bibles for this ministry.

**The Chevis and Helen Horne Home** is a joint ministry of the Virginia Baptist Children's Home and Family Services and the churches of the Henry County Baptist Association. It provides the staff and support for adult developmental disabled women. The Association maintains the property and offers opportunity for resident involvement in the churches. In addition to supporting the home through our budget, many members are involved annually in their fund raising activities.

**Habitat for Humanity** in Martinsville and Henry County began at Starling Avenue in 1988 and continues to maintain an office in our Office Building. SABC members volunteer in the construction of homes and work alongside the future homeowner as they invest “sweat equity” in their home.

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**Entities with Which We Have Connections**

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<td>Baptist General Association of Virginia</td>
<td>Cooperative Baptist Fellowship</td>
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<td>Horne Home</td>
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<td>Grace Network MHC, INC</td>
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<td>CONTACT</td>
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Organizational Structure

Our strong heritage of collaborative relationships creates an environment where all work together using their gifts, talents, and skills to create an effective, respected, and appreciated administration and ministry process. The pastor will join our current team of ministerial staff, clerical staff, support ministry team, and other leaders to continue our tradition of providing loving, cooperative, respectful, and proactive leadership.

Ministerial Staff

Rev. Edwin “Ed” Spencer serves as Minister of Music and Organist. Ed is a native of Mountain Home AFB, Idaho. Ed’s degrees are from Old Dominion University, Virginia (B. S.), and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) in Kentucky (M. C. M., 1978). Ed and his wife, Kay, joined the membership of SABC in November 1986. He joined the SABC staff in July 2013. Kay and Ed have a son, Nathan, living in Richmond, VA. They have a son, Joel, daughter-in-law Maria, and grandson Samuel living in suburban Chicago.

Rev. Susan Spangenberg serves as Minister of Youth and Children. Susan is a veteran in ministry, having served on the staff of six churches for nearly 31 years. She began her ministry at Starling Avenue Baptist Church in September of 2000. Susan received her BA in Secondary Education and Foreign Language from the University of Maryland, completed all course work for a Masters in Linguistics at San Diego State University, and received her Masters of Divinity from Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. Susan has been married for 37 years to Keith Spangenberg, pastor of our sister church Villa Heights Baptist Church.
**Clerical Staff**

Debbie Griggs joined the Starling Avenue staff as the church secretary in September 2004. She is a graduate of John Motley HS, in Eden, NC. Debbie has one son, Travis Shively, who attends Patrick Henry CC. She has been married to David Griggs for two and one-half years.

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**Support Ministry Team**

Kay Spencer, Adult Choir Director

Dr. Pam Randall, Handbell Choir Director

Sarah Fain, Pianist

Joan Joyce, Interpreter for the deaf

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**Trustees**

Six trustees serve to hold all church property in trust for the congregation, to insure that all properties are properly insured, to anticipate future property and land needs, to execute legal documents as instructed by the church, and to bring appropriate recommendations to the congregation as needed.

Each year, one trustee is nominated for a six-year term by the Nominating Committee and elected by the congregation. If no active deacon is serving as a trustees, one may appointed by the chair ofdeacons to serve a one year term to expedite communication and coordination.
Deacons

Deacons serve in cooperation with the pastor and staff in overseeing the work of the church. They are especially charged with the spiritual advancement and interest of the church. A key component of their service is care and ministry to the members of the congregation and their families. They are also responsible for the distribution of the Lord’s Supper.

The diaconate consists of one person for each 25 resident church members. Deacons are nominated and elected by the congregation/membership in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws. Each deacon serves a three-year term with one-third of the ministry being elected each year.

Councils, Standing Committees, and Ministry Teams

Members of committees, at-large members of councils, and team leaders are nominated and elected to serve as established by the Constitution and By-Laws. Committee members serve a three-year term with one-third being nominated each year.

Ministry Teams are formed around temporary needs as seen by the ministers, deacons, or laity and cover a broad spectrum. Team Leaders are elected for a one-year term. Team members volunteer and are not elected.

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<tr>
<th>Councils</th>
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<td>Church</td>
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<td>Christian Education</td>
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<td>Mission Development</td>
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<th>Standing Committees</th>
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<td>History Committee</td>
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<td>Personnel Committee</td>
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<td>Stewardship Committee</td>
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<td>Worship Committee</td>
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How We Make Decisions

IDEAS

DEACONS
PASTOR
AND STAFF
TRUSTEES
COMMITTEES
INDIVIDUALS
TEAMS

CONGREGATION

EXECUTION
Membership

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have made a profession of their faith in Christ as Savior and Lord; who desire to be numbered among His disciples; who have been baptized and who are in sympathy with the faith and practices of this church.

*Constitution of Starling Avenue Baptist, revised 2010*

Members are received by profession of faith and baptism, transfer of membership by letter, or upon statement of profession of faith and church membership where no letter is obtainable.

Currently, as was true in the beginning of Starling Avenue Baptist Church, there is a mission field within the shadow of our church. While working with gifted and loving Christians eager to grow our community of believers, the next pastor will have the challenge of bringing younger people into the congregation changing the age balance to 50% under 50 years of age.

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**Membership Age**

- Under 19: 5%
- 20-29: 4%
- 30-39: 3%
- 40-49: 7%
- 50-59: 17%
- 60-69: 23%
- 70-79: 15%
- 80-89: 10%
- 90 plus: 4%
- Unknown: 12%

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Starling Avenue Baptist Church * Martinsville * Virginia
The breakdown of members’ age reveals that 7.08% are 20-39 years, 23.23% are 40-59 years, 37.68% are 60-79 years, 14.17% are 80 plus years, and 12.46% are of unknown age. This analysis reveals that slightly over one-half of the congregation is age 60 and over and 69% are above age 50. There is a small margin of error due to the 12% for whom age is not recorded. The median age of the Martinsville/Henry County area is 43.1 years.

There are approximately 325 resident members. Average attendance for worship during the past year of transition has been 120. Approximately 35 of our resident members are confined to home or nursing facilities because of health and mobility issues. Many of their caregivers are unable to attend regularly.
Looking Forward

Through three Listening Sessions and demographic studies, several specific needs have been identified for the near future of Starling Avenue Baptist. Recommendations are being made to establish goals and action plans in these areas.

**Worship** – Being respectful of our traditional style of worship, we are open to fresh approaches and innovative ways to present the Gospel. Realizing traditional worship times are not always attractive to everyone, we need to “look outside the box” and develop non-traditional times for worship opportunities and experiences. Small groups are exploring strategy for providing these worship experiences.

**Children and Youth** – We believe that a continued emphasis on spiritual education and emotional support of our children and youth is crucial to the growth and future of, not only our church, but the Kingdom. Many children come from single parent or broken home situations. We need an intentional ministry to their families to provide opportunities for parents to be involved.

**Education of Baptist Identity and Connections** – Since many of our congregation come from varied religious backgrounds, it is important that there be opportunities for education in historic Baptist beliefs and principles. We also need more clarity about those entities we support and with which we connect. A series of messages on Baptist Identity is being considered, as well as, periodically inviting a representative of the organizations and groups with which we connect to provide information of their values and beliefs and the mutual benefit of the relationship.

**Mission** – Entry points for participation in hands-on mission opportunities should be a regular part of our congregation’s awareness. Enthusiastic support and personal involvement by the pastor is vital to the continuance of our mission heritage.

**Organizational Structure** – The Constitution and By Laws are to be reviewed every five years. A committee will review and update this document during 2015. All handbooks will also be revised to bring them into congruence with the Constitution.

**Communication** – Information needs to be disseminated to the congregation and community in a more efficient and timely way. With better use of the available technology, and the use of additional methods, we can significantly expand our
communication base. By establishing a communication coordinator and web team, we could leverage all resources to their fullest potential. Print material needs to be developed and placed in hotels, the Martinsville Visitor Center, and other prominent public places to provide information about SABC’s worship opportunities and ministries.

**Visitor Center** – Currently, visitors who access the sanctuary from the vestibule are met by a member of the Greeters team and asked to sign a guest book. A Visitor Center needs to be established which would provide visitors with print materials that give a quick overview of SABC, our beliefs and values, available Sunday School classes, worship opportunities, directions, etc. and where their questions can be answered. Visitors should be met at all main entrances and encouraged to go to the Visitor Center during their visit.
Who Will Lead Us

Starling Avenue Baptist is seeking a pastor who will lead our congregation as we seek to continue the heritage of faith, stewardship, equality, and mission that is our foundation of service to God and our community.

The new pastor should be a gifted and Spirit-led speaker who will articulately convey the relevance of scripture to daily life and who has the skills and ability to develop personal relationship with people of all ages and backgrounds. Our congregation desires that our pastor give focus to his or her own spiritual formation through devotion, study, and prayer thus leading our congregation through example.

We would like for our pastor to have a servant heart. He or she should have the skills and abilities to counsel individuals with personal and spiritual concerns and needs. Our next pastor should be an encourager and assist members in discovering their gifts and places of service in the ministries and missions of the church. The pastor should be personally involved in mission and outreach, be willing to work ecumenically with a global view, and genuinely care about people.

Our heritage, traditional worship style, and Baptist identity are important to us; and our next pastor needs to understand, respect, and share our values. This person must share our optimistic vision for the future as God’s servants in our changing world. Our new pastor should possess the skills that promotes successful outreach to the diverse theological, ethnic, and cultural community we serve. It is our desire to maintain the unity and harmony within our church family as we move to cultivate the changes necessary to be the church God would have us be for the future.

The next pastor will have the privilege of working collaboratively with a gifted and talented leadership team in the planning and implementing of worship, ministries, and programs. He/she needs the administrative management skills to work cooperatively with our existing staff to continue the effective ministry we currently enjoy. We are looking for a pastor who will seek God’s will and discernment, to work with our staff and congregation, and lead us in fulfilling the mission God has placed before us.

We prayerfully and expectantly look to loving, serving, and supporting the person whom God is, even now, disturbing and calling to pastor Starling Avenue Baptist.
Martinsville Speedway

Philpott Lake

Virginia Museum of Natural History
The Community We Serve

Located on the southern border of Virginia, Martinsville - Henry County is positioned 50 miles south of Roanoke, Virginia and 50 miles north of Greensboro, North Carolina - home to the Piedmont Triad International Airport. With our roots in furniture and textile manufacturing, we have undergone a transformation of our economy over the past 10 years. We are now home to plastics and polymer processors, logistics and distribution companies, food processors and more.

Henry County was founded in 1777 and named for Patrick Henry who once resided in the area. Martinsville, named for General Joseph Martin, was incorporated in 1878 and became the county seat. It became a city in 1929. Martinsville-Henry County is saturated with history, and a visit to these sites will show a brief glance into the days of yesteryear.

The Martinsville Historic District is a 45-acre area encompassing 96 historically contributing buildings reflective of a number of architectural styles dating from 1791 to 1948. The district was listed in both the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places in 1998.

History buffs will be intrigued by visiting our museums and historic cemeteries. These locations are filled with interesting architecture and memories of days gone by. The Bassett Historical Center is sought by families seeking their roots and is renowned for its rare genealogical records.

Arts and Culture

Martinsville-Henry County offers an array of artistic and cultural entertainment. The area is home to the Virginia Museum of Natural History (a Smithsonian affiliated Natural History museum), FAHI African American Heritage Museum, MHC Heritage Center and Museum, TheatreWorks, Walker Fine Arts Theater at Patrick Henry Community College, Piedmont Arts Association, and the Southern Virginia Artisan Center. Public art is on display in many murals and fun sculptures around town.

Recreation and Sports

Recreation and sports abound. A 44.5-mile section of the Smith River bisects Henry County, Virginia, as it travels from Philpott Lake down to the North Carolina border. The Smith River Trail System is a network of easily accessible trails which includes a scenic blueway with 10 river access points and more than 20 miles of greenway. Two businesses offer equipment rentals, shuttles and guide services. The Bike Barn on the Dick and Willie trail section, within the city, provides bikes and equipment free of charge.
Fishing and boating take place on the lakes in the Martinsville and Henry County area. Philpott Lake is a 3,000 acre reservoir located in the northwest corner of Henry County and is home to the area's newest attraction, Philpott Marina. Fairy Stone State Park features a 168-acre lake that adjoins Philpott Lake. Beaver Creek Reservoir offers 165 acres of water for boating and on-site canoe rentals.

Numerous parks, golf clubs, and other recreational facilities are conveniently located throughout the city and county. Both the city and county offer recreation programs for children, youth, adults, and seniors.

Martinsville Speedway is NASCAR's most historic and shortest track on the Sprint Cup Circuit. Two NASCAR Sprint Cup and Truck Series races are held at Martinsville Speedway each year, along with an annual Late Model Stock Car Race in the fall.

The Smith River Sports Complex offers a 90-acre multi-use sports development facility with two picnic pavilions, a paved trail along the river, and an Evos Playground.

Hooker Field is home for the Martinsville Mustangs. They are members of the Coastal Plains League, and players are hosted by local families for the season.

**Music**

Music is an integral part of the area, and residents and visitors can enjoy many events throughout the year. There are weekly, monthly, and seasonal venues for music of all styles, from Bluegrass to Symphony and everything between.

**Education**

Martinsville and Henry County are served by two separate public school systems and one private school for preschool through 12th grades. There are three colleges in the city and county and easy access to an additional 30 schools within a 60 mile radius.

*The Martinsville City Public School System* is a small yet innovative system of five schools which has attracted state and national recognition. Serving 2300 students in preschool through 12th grade, the standard for educating students is excellence through a rigorous academic curriculum, as well as a full array of arts, music, and sports programming. Advanced learning is present throughout the system. The Middle School is home to the only NASA Science, Engineering, Math, and Aerospace Academy (SEMAA) lab in Virginia.
The Henry County Public School System is a high performing school division with 7,000 students enrolled in 14 schools for preschool through 12th grade. Critical thinking is expected, creativity is encouraged, technology and innovation are embraced, and learning is celebrated. The system has been awarded the Apple Distinguished Program Award for innovation, leadership, and education.

In the school year for 2012-2013, 61% of all Juniors and Seniors were enrolled in Advanced Placement and/or Dual Enrollment classes.

Carlisle School is an independent college preparatory school that provides an environment for academic excellence and character development, while embracing diversity and preparing students to become leaders as citizens in a global society.

Carlisle is the only school in the Commonwealth of Virginia to have an IB-accredited program running in elementary, middle school, and high school grades.

It is accredited by: Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS) and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Members of Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) and Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE)

Patrick Henry Community College is a 2-year college located in Henry County. Tuition and fees for in-state students attending this school in the 2012-2013 school year were $3,805.

Patrick Henry Community College offers 29 associate degree programs, 12 certificate programs, and 38 career studies certificate programs. It also offers over 100 satellite and online programs of study through Old Dominion Learning. It is a member of the Virginia Community College System and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

American National University has helped working adults in the Martinsville area achieve their education goals since 1978 and continues to build its reputation among local employers for its skilled graduates.

Located in Martinsville, the campus is easily accessible and serves students throughout Henry and Patrick counties. American National University (ANU) is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) and offers degrees and diplomas in medical, business, and technology fields. There is a full range of services available to assist students in developing interview and workplace skills, creating goals, and exploring career options.
*New College Institute* is a state funded educational entity that provides access to bachelor’s degree completion programs, master’s degrees, teacher endorsement programs, teacher recertification courses, and more through academic partnerships with ten colleges and universities.

In addition to college-level degree and certification programs, NCI offers experiential learning opportunities, summer camps, non-credit lectures, financial aid resource events, and community programs to promote educational access.

NCI’s newly opened state-of-the-art facility is a hub for education, technology, and public-private partnerships.
By The Numbers

2012 - Cost of Living Index for Martinsville-Henry Co.
(National Average = 100.0)

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<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Index</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>ALL</td>
<td>89.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groceries</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods/Services</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Real Estate Tax Rates
Martinsville $1.062 per $100.00
Henry County $0.488 per $100.00

Median Income $37,086
Combined Population 69,551
Median Home Value $118,404

Martinsville 14,560
Henry County 54,991

Starling Avenue Baptist Church * Martinsville * Virginia
Climate

The climate in Martinsville-Henry County is perfect for those who enjoy the full scope of four seasons. Listed below are the monthly averages for Martinsville and Henry County, Virginia:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>JAN</th>
<th>FEB</th>
<th>MAR</th>
<th>APR</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUN</th>
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<th>OCT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avg. High (°F)</td>
<td>46°</td>
<td>50°</td>
<td>59°</td>
<td>69°</td>
<td>76°</td>
<td>84°</td>
<td>87°</td>
<td>86°</td>
<td>79°</td>
<td>70°</td>
<td>60°</td>
<td>50°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Low (°F)</td>
<td>21°</td>
<td>22°</td>
<td>29°</td>
<td>38°</td>
<td>48°</td>
<td>57°</td>
<td>63°</td>
<td>61°</td>
<td>54°</td>
<td>41°</td>
<td>31°</td>
<td>24°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Precip.</td>
<td>3.8&quot;</td>
<td>3.4&quot;</td>
<td>4.5&quot;</td>
<td>3.2&quot;</td>
<td>4.3&quot;</td>
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<td>3.5&quot;</td>
<td>4.3&quot;</td>
<td>3.5&quot;</td>
<td>3.1&quot;</td>
<td>3.1&quot;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Average of 100 clear days: 45"

Average Rainfall: 10" Average Snowfall: 10"

Average Temperature:
- July: 87°
- January: 46°

*Starling Avenue Baptist Church * Martinsville * Virginia
Acknowledgements

Dr. Dennis Knight serves as part-time Interim during our transition. Dr. Knight works with the ministerial staff in the planning and leading of worship services three weeks each month. He retired in 2010 as pastor of our sister church, First Baptist Martinsville. Prior to serving First Baptist, Dr. Knight held pastorates of churches in Virginia and North Carolina. Dr. Knight and the ministerial staff continue to provide support and encouragement during the transition.

A deep debt of gratitude is due to our consultant, Dr. Bill Wilson of the Center for Healthy Churches. His guidance and leadership throughout our transition process has been an invaluable resource. The information he provided concerning national trends and demographics was both eye-opening and encouraging. His help and coaching during the three Congregational Listening Sessions, the evaluation, and the organization of the data collected during them into this Congregational Profile is greatly appreciated. Bill continues to work with the Search Committee as Starling Avenue Baptist prepares to meet our new pastor.

Appreciation is extended to the C.A.R.E. group for serving the three meals provided at each of the Congregation Listening Sessions. A special “Thank You” goes to Judy Ward for the delicious cookies.

“Thank you” to Martha Lee and her Posted Notes as she read and proofed the numerous drafts of this document.

Last, but certainly not least, appreciation goes to the congregation for their faithfulness to SABC and the Kingdom, and their patience, support, encouragement, and prayers during the transition. Their attendance and input at each of the Listening Sessions provided extensive information contained in this document.

Transition Team Members:

Amanda Estep  Barry Dorsey  David Bell  Joan Joyce
Marilyn Spencer  Patsy Hobson  Tommy Wells  Travis Clemons
Jeff Stegall – co-chair  Merle Prince – co-chair

Starling Avenue Baptist Church * Martinsville * Virginia
APPENDIX

Former Pastors Of

Starling Avenue Baptist Church

Reverend Thomas Waitt Fryer 1936-1939
Reverend George E. Simmons 1940-1941 Called into active duty 1946-1953
Reverend Charles L. Harmon 1941-1946
Reverend Shields Webb 1954-1959
Dr. Thomas O. Hall 1958-1962
Dr. Charles R. Sanks, Jr. 1963-1969
Reverend John E. Woody 1970-1979
Dr. David W. Adkins 1979-2014 Pastor Emeritus