



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
ROME
Seeking His Heart Being His Hands

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Table of Contents

- 3 Welcome
- 5 Position Profile
- 7 Our Beliefs
- 8 Our History
- 10 Our Ministries
- 14 Our Congregation
- 15 Our Stewardship
- 16 Our Missions
- 18 Our Staff
- 21 Our Community





LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Minister to Students and Young Adults position at First Baptist Church of Rome, Georgia. This document is designed to provide an overview of our congregation and our community.

Over the past 55 years, FBC Rome has been blessed to have only four senior pastors, with David Brooks being called in August 2022. Our church has also had excellent continuity of our ministerial staff as a whole. For example, two recent ministers had long and successful tenures: John Uldrick served as Minister of Students and Missions for 15 years before moving to another church out of state in 2022, and Tamara Tillman Smathers served as Minister of Education and Administration for 18 years before retiring in 2024. The current staff is characterized by a spirit of collaboration and mutual support, and they are excited to welcome a new colleague into this reimagined role.

After Nick Georgian, who served as Minister of Students and Missions from 2022 to 2024, was called by another church, FBC Rome created a Future Staffing Task Force, which enlisted the Center for Healthy Churches to facilitate a series of congregational conversations. Based on those conversations, the task force recommended to the deacons that the church employ a full-time Church Administrator, call a full-time Minister of Discipleship and Missions, and call a full-time Minister to Students and Young Adults.

Per the church bylaws, Deacon Chairperson Janice Davis worked with Personnel Committee Chairperson Bobby Keith to identify representative members of the church body to form a search committee for this position. Leigh Weldon was appointed Chairperson of the committee, and the eight members were elected by the church in April 2025.

The search committee has been meeting regularly and has held separate listening sessions with our students, their families, and young adults of the church. Members of the committee have also interviewed all active ministers, as well as Rev. Uldrick and Rev. Georgian, to gather their valued insight. We are confident that the areas of ministering to both students and young adults can be integrated well, and we are eager to discern the leader FBC Rome needs to accomplish this goal.

Our committee and congregation are committed to prayer and discernment for this process, and we seek to follow God's guidance along the path that ultimately leads to the minister God has called for us. The profile that follows was initially developed as part of the search process that brought Rev. Brooks to Rome in 2022. It outlines our church history, values, and aspirations for the future, as well as the desired characteristics of our new Minister to Students and Young Adults. As such, it provides insight into our past, present, and future.

If you feel God leading you to serve in ministry with us, please send an email to StudentMinisterFBC@gmail.com.

MINISTER TO STUDENTS & YOUNG ADULTS SEARCH COMMITTEE

Leigh Weldon, *Chair*

Jennifer Collins
Kate Escobar
Cora Fannin

Will Kenworthy
Stephanie Lewis
Robert Mathews

Jason Sanker
Jimmy Gentry
(*Consultant*)



Minister to Students & Young Adults

The Minister to Students and Young Adults will provide leadership in building relationships with students grades 8 through college and their families, encouraging Christian faith development and connections. This individual will focus on building relationships with young adults, providing direction and support for their spiritual growth.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Minister to Students and Young Adults is responsible to the Pastor, who will serve as the minister's supervisor and will work cooperatively with the ministerial staff, the support staff, lay leaders, and other servants.

STUDENT MINISTRY

- ◆ Oversee and coordinate all student ministries, including Sunday School, small groups, Biblical and theological studies, camps and retreats, social functions, worship opportunities, missional tasks and journeys, creative fundraising, etc.
- ◆ Help students grow in their relationship with Christ and integrate their faith into daily life.
- ◆ Partner with the Minister to Children and Young Families in facilitating Collide, which is a ministry to students in grades five through seven as they begin the process of transitioning to the Student Ministry.
- ◆ Recruit, equip, and support leaders of Student Ministry – e.g., Small Group Leaders, Sunday School teachers, interns, etc.
- ◆ Maintain an awareness of sound principles of student ministry, including student discipleship, and recommend developmentally appropriate curriculum and resource materials to all Student Ministry discipleship programs in consultation with the Minister of Discipleship and Missions.
- ◆ Facilitate opportunities for intergenerational connections.
- ◆ Give attention to serving and reaching college students by providing space for students to develop in their faith, connect in relationships with other college students and the church at large, participate in wholesome Christian Formation experiences, and engage in missional activities.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

- ◆ Offer support and encouragement to young adults.
- ◆ Encourage building relationships and fostering community.
- ◆ Be aware of current trends, issues, and resources related to young adults.
- ◆ Assist the Young Adult Team in scheduling discipleship and fellowship opportunities.

GENERAL PASTORAL MINISTRY

- ◆ As a member of the ministerial staff, the Minister to Students and Young Adults will also share in pastoral responsibilities including, but not limited to, pastoral care, leading in worship, and teaching.
- ◆ Facilitate the work of assigned church committees, especially the Student Ministry Committee and Young Adult Team, as a ministerial liaison.

I
PRAY FOR
OUR CHURCH
AND WORLD



OUR MISSION

“Seeking His Heart . . . Being His Hands.”

The mission of First Baptist Church Rome is to be a community of believers where we seek to mold our lives after the heart of Jesus Christ, and where we seek to be His hands in missions and ministry.

OUR CORE VALUES

In character - *Christlikeness*

In service - *Leadership*

In relationships - *Family*

In heritage - *Baptist*

In all things - *Prayer*

COVENANT OF CHURCH MEMBERS

Led by the Spirit of God to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and having entered into the fellowship of the Spirit through His Church, we, the members of the Church, prayerfully make this covenant with one another and with our Heavenly Father.

We respect all faith traditions, but we shall cherish our heritage as Baptist Christians. We shall hold dear the principles of soul competency, the priesthood of all believers, the autonomy of the local Church, and the Bible as our trusted and authoritative guide in matters of faith and practice.

As a group of gathered believers, we understand ourselves to be a part of a family of faith. Therefore, we shall love, forgive, admonish, encourage, serve, and pray for one another—always in the spirit of being sisters and brothers in Christ.

Jesus Christ shall be our model for living. We recognize that none of us shall ever attain his perfection; yet, we shall always strive to grow in likeness of Him. His heart shall be our guide for the way we minister, organize ourselves, conduct our business, and treat others.

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ on earth; therefore, we are the hands of Christ. Knowing this about ourselves, we shall be satisfied with nothing less than being leaders in Christian service. We can only accomplish this goal by serving more. Our Master is our example. We know that we serve Christ himself when we minister to the least, the last, the lost, and the overlooked.

We believe that, on our own, we are not strong enough, wise enough, nor good enough to accomplish our mission as a Church. Therefore, we trust in God's strength, God's wisdom, and God's righteousness to empower us. Only through prayer do we accomplish our mission as a Church.

Our History

FBC Rome was formed in 1835 and moved to its current location in 1855.

The church's current motto is, "Seeking His Heart ... Being His Hands." In the late 1800's, a similar motto was used, "Saved to Serve." This emphasis on service has been a common theme throughout the history of the church.

For many years, FBC Rome was a leader in the Southern Baptist Convention. In the early 1990s, the church became aligned with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

MAJOR CHURCH MILESTONES

1835	Six people met for worship in May and established the Baptist Church of Christ at Rome (<i>now First Baptist Church</i>).
1848	The Sunday School was organized
1868-1876	Pastorate of Luther Rice Gwaltney, founder of the Cherokee Baptist Female College which later, after gaining the support of church members Col. and Mrs. Alfred Shorter, became Shorter College.
1884	Constructed the third sanctuary
1930	Sunday morning services of worship first aired on the radio
1958	Constructed the fourth (current) sanctuary
1975	Sunday morning services of worship regularly televised
1977	First female deacons elected
1999	The church undertook a \$5.5 million renovation of its facilities
2000	Church website launched
2003	William S. Davies Homeless Shelter founded
2005	Joined Baptist General Association of Virginia
2006	Church Carillon installed Church Foundation established
2008	First female Chair of Deacons elected
2010	FBC celebrates its 175th Anniversary
2023	25th Presentation of "Christmas at First Baptist"
2024	Deacon-Led Ministry Teams launched



Our Ministries

WORSHIP

The love and grace of God compel us to worship. Each week the congregation is led to seek God's presence through biblical preaching and traditional hymns accompanied by piano, the largest pipe organ in Northwest Georgia, and a talented and dedicated choir. Each Sunday morning's worship service is carefully planned around a specific theme. Our Sanctuary Choir, Youth Choir and Children's Choirs, soloists, handbells, and other instrumentalists join with the ministers to guide the congregation.

Every aspect of the service is worshipful, engaging and hope-filled. Throughout the church year our congregation treasures traditional services that include "Christmas at First Baptist," a concert featuring all choirs and orchestra, our Candlelight Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and a joy-filled Easter Sunday service.





CHILDREN

From the time a baby arrives, they are welcomed into the church family. A minister helps parents plan for their parent-child dedication service. Resources are provided to help equip parents to nurture their child's faith at every age and play an active role in their spiritual development.

Sunday mornings include Bible Study, where teachers lovingly welcome children and teach age-appropriate lessons to begin building their faith. Infants and preschool children are cared for during the worship hour, while younger elementary children have the option to attend Children's Church, which helps prepare them for worship with their larger church family.

The focus of our family ministry is on educating and empowering children at every age to know that they are an important part of their church family, and that their expressions of faith are valuable and important. On Wednesday nights children gather for music, missions & Bible basics to prepare them to lead in worship & service. Curriculum is chosen carefully based on each age group's specific needs, ensuring that a comprehensive selection of Bible stories & faith concepts are covered by the time they are ready to move to the youth group. Special events occurring throughout the year include baptism classes, 6th grade retreat, Fall Festival, Easter Eggstravaganza, Cool Yule Christmas camp, and more. Passport Kid's Camp, Vacation Bible School & weekly fellowship activities keep us connected through the summer.

First Baptist's Weekday Preschool is a faith-based program for Pre-K aged children that helps them to develop physically, emotionally, socially & spiritually while building educational readiness through the WEE learn curriculum.





STUDENTS

Students in 8th through twelfth grades will find that faithful learning is linked to service, service is fueled by discipleship, and discipleship produces a whole new way of relating to the world.

Youth retreats, summer camps, Bible studies, local and international mission experiences, and hanging out with people who care are some of the avenues that allow our students to create deep and meaningful relationships with other Christian teens. Students have the opportunity to attend Sunday morning bible study, weekly small groups, and weekly Wednesday night activities during the school year.

A summer packed with special events awaits teenagers each year. Lake days, campouts, mission projects, mystery lunches, bible studies by member's pools and so much more keep teenagers engaged and growing in relationship to each other and with Jesus.

Chapel Choir is open to any youth and normally rehearses weekly. The choir leads in worship periodically and sings for special seasonal services.

Bible study and fellowship opportunities are provided for the college students who come to Rome to attend the local colleges and those studying elsewhere who come home to FBC on weekends and breaks.





ADULTS

Adults of all ages find enjoyable avenues for the development of their walk with the Lord. A variety of Bible Study options exist on Sunday mornings to allow adults to develop their faith with others at a similar stage in life. Bible Study groups do not just meet on Sundays, but they also enjoy having socials with their families and gatherings with childcare provided by the church.

The church offers seminars open to adults of all ages on Wednesday nights and occasionally on Sunday nights. These five-week sessions take participants in-depth into topics that nurture life-long faith development.

Women of the Church congregate for Bible Study together with a group on Sunday evening and another on Monday morning. These small groups offer intimate connections to members and are also open to the community.

Each year the Men's Ministry sponsors two-three steak dinners with an inspirational male speaker. Other social activities are planned throughout the year to allow the men of the church to connect and grow in their faith together in a variety of informal settings.

SENIOR ADULTS

The Senior Adult Ministry hosts luncheons with special guests and entertainment. Day trips are planned multiple times each year. The senior adults enjoy traveling together to domestic and international sites.

The time may come when a member is less able to attend worship or church activities. The Extended Family Ministry stays in touch through visits, calls, and cards. Deacons and ministers lead worship and serve communion regularly in local retirement communities and homes.



Our Congregation

FBC Rome has a resident membership of about 1,200, with an overall membership of about 2,000. The membership encompasses a wide range of ages and longevity at the church. While 30 percent have been members for 30 years or more, about half the current members have joined since 1996. The growth continues. More than 120 members have joined by baptism and 370 by transfer of membership or statement of faith since 2011.

The Deacon Board of First Baptist Rome is composed of 42 active deacons who are divided into six different ministry teams. The term of service for deacons is three years. After serving a three-year term, a deacon is eligible for re-election after the lapse of one year. Deacons' meetings are held once a month unless otherwise needed.

The deacons function with their own set of officers and deacon body committees. Each active deacon is assigned to serve on a deacon body committee which is linked to a member of the ministerial staff. The purpose of the deacon committees is to provide support to the assigned minister as he/she carries out the responsibilities of his/her area of ministry.

Much of the work of the church is done through standing committees or ministry teams. Standing committees are comprised of church members and chaired by lay leaders. Committee members are nominated by the Committee on Committees and voted on by the church. Ministry Teams carry out ongoing ministry-related tasks on behalf of the church and meet as needed. Ministry Teams are open to any member of the congregation at any time. A member of the ministerial staff is assigned to each committee and Ministry Team to act as a liaison between the group and the church staff.

A few of FBC's standing committees are the Adult Education Committee, Broadcast Ministry Team, Budget Preparation Committee, Children's Ministry Committee, Health Ministry Team, Properties Committee, and Missions Committee. There are many avenues in which our members choose to serve, all in the name of Christ.

Our Stewardship

FBC Rome has a cherished tradition of faithful and generous stewardship. Thanks to the faithful generosity of our members, FBC Rome is accomplishing its mission without the burden of any outstanding debt. Our love for Christ is demonstrated daily by our generous support of our church budget.

2020–2021 EXPENDITURES

Missions & Ministry	\$385,725
Growing in Christlikeness	\$109,078
Worshiping & Support	\$221,337
Leadership	\$746,476
Office and Clerical	\$421,013
Facility and Administration	\$392,989
Total	\$2,104,921



Faithful giving provides over 90 percent of our budget in the form of regular receipts, special offerings, and designated funds. The balance of our budget is funded primarily through the generous donations of the FBC Foundation. FBC church leaders and ministerial staff work together to ensure a balanced budget every year. We ended the 2023 fiscal year on September 30th with a surplus of funds.

In keeping with the tradition of stewardship, we have increased our budget for the fiscal year 2025 by 5 percent to help support the many ministries and missions of the church.

BUDGET ITEMS OF NOTE

Missions & Ministry consistently accounts for 15–18% of the annual budget.

The current value of First Baptist Church Foundation is \$6.1 million.

Our Offering for Global Missions goal of \$45,000 has been met for the past several years.

Our Missions

FBC Rome has a deep tradition of supporting and leading missions locally and around the world. Our commitment to being the “Hands of Christ” is reflected in our annual budget that allots over 17 percent to missions support. Additionally, Sunday School classes and individual members donate untold personal resources, both financially and physically, to missions.

The current FBC Foundation was established in April 2006 using funds that existed before that organizing date. The Foundation now serves as a vessel for managing perpetual gifts to the church. The proceeds from the Foundation are used to supplement the church’s budgetary contribution to missions. Those Foundation funds double what we can do for missions around the world, and the current value of the Foundation is \$6 million.

It is our philosophy that missions be done with a holistic approach. This focus allows individual members to develop into who God has created them to be. As such, we partner with like-minded organizations that work to establish long-term relationships, believe in asset-based planning, and allow those experiencing our partnership to be self-sufficient.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Included among our many local partnerships are:

- ♦ Habitat for Humanity Coosa Valley, a partner that provides homes and other construction projects for qualifying home buyers. FBC funds and leads a build every 3-5 years.
- ♦ William S. Davies Homeless Shelter, a partner started by FBC members that provides men’s shelter and women’s shelter for those in our community experiencing homelessness.
- ♦ Rome Floyd Community Kitchen, a partner started by FBC and other local churches that provides daily meals, showers, and laundry to Romans in need.
- ♦ Living Proof Recovery, a partner that provides multiple substance misuse recovery options and transitional housing.
- ♦ Restoration Rome, a partner that provides resources and coordination for those on the front lines of the foster care crisis in our state.
- ♦ Bridges Out of Poverty, a project of FBC that provides a 20-week Getting Ahead program and coaching for those experiencing poverty.



STATE AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Among the state and national missions we participate in are:

- ♦ **Disaster Relief** – FBC responds when disaster strikes. We work through existing contacts in affected areas to assess and provide for real needs whether they be people, products, or financial resources.
- ♦ **Cultivate Abundance** – FBC has committed to being an Encourager Church to CBF field personnel working with farmworkers in Immokalee, FL for the next five years. FBC has sent two groups to learn and work at Cultivate Abundance.
- ♦ **Student Mission Trips** – FBC students are offered opportunities to work locally and in the southeastern U.S. where help is needed. We’ve partnered with Habitat, Appalachian Outreach, The Timothy Project, and others.
- ♦ **CBF & CBF-GA** – FBC participates in various state and regional missions opportunities through CBF Georgia and CBF National, including an ongoing partnership with Together for Hope.

GLOBAL MISSIONS

Globally, the presence of Christ is extended through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship field personnel whom we support through offerings and efforts from mission teams from our congregation. This has fostered relationships in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Kenya, Peru, Thailand, the Caribbean, and North America. Among our global partnerships are:

- ♦ **Operación San Andrés** – FBC financially supports OSA, and through partnerships with South Main Baptist Church in Houston, Texas regularly sends support teams to serve Colliqué citizens.
- ♦ **Refuge & Hope** – FBC provides financial support for Refuge & Hope and its field personnel.
- ♦ **Middle East** – FBC has hosted field personnel from the region several times and has given gifts to their efforts in Lebanon.
- ♦ **Ruble International Education Initiative** – This organization, founded by a church member, provides educational opportunities for students from developing countries.
- ♦ **CBF Offering for Global Missions** – FBC Rome participates in this offering to support the CBF field personnel around the world, with a 2025 goal of \$45,000.
- ♦ **World Hunger Offering** – Collected on the last Sunday of every month, this totals about \$25,000 annually.

Our Staff



DAVID BROOKS

Pastor

Rev. David Brooks began serving as our Pastor in August of 2022. His degrees include a B.A. in History and Religion from Samford University in 1994, and a Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School in 1997. Although originally from Miami, FL, David pastored churches in North Carolina before accepting the call at First Baptist of Rome. His role is to serve as the pastor by preaching, teaching, caring for the congregation, leading the staff, working as a team with our other ministers, and helping people to know Jesus and follow him faithfully. His interests lie in the formation of people's spiritual lives, based on Robert Mulholland's definition of spiritual formation which is, "The process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others."



KEITH REAVES

Senior Associate/Minister of Worship

Rev. Reaves began serving as Minister of Worship in 1999. The additional title of Senior Associate was added in 2012. A native of Arkansas, Rev. Reaves' degrees include a B.A. with a combined major in Political Science and Journalism from the University of Arkansas in 1984 and a Master of Music from the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1994. Keith is responsible for planning and leading meaningful corporate worship experiences and for developing resources among the congregation to provide vital worship. He conducts the Sanctuary Choir, the Youth Choir, the older Children's Choir, and the First Baptist Ringers. Senior Adult Ministry also is part of his work and he has enjoyed planning luncheons, day trips, and adventures all over the world for this group. As Senior Associate, he assumes responsibility for staff coordination, decision leadership, and pastoral care whenever the pastor is absent.



KRISTEN MATHIS

Minister to Children and Young Families

Rev. Mathis began serving as Minister of Faith Development in 2017. She received a B.A. with a double major in Psychology and Religion from the University of Transylvania in Lexington, Kentucky, followed by a Master of Divinity degree from McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia. Kristen approaches her role with a holistic approach, seeking to minister to the entire family. This includes emphasis on equipping parents to be an active and primary leader in their child's faith development. She also encourages children to see their importance as followers of Jesus at every age. Kristen coordinates Sunday morning Bible Study and Wednesday Night programming. She coordinates fellowship & discipleship events throughout the year, from Vacation Bible School to baptism classes and retreats.



GWEN STEPHENS

Minister to Extended Family

Rev. Stephens has served as the Minister to Extended Family since 2012. Her role is to foster relationships with senior church members who are living in assisted living centers or those who are homebound, helping them feel that they still are a vital part of the congregation, even when they can't attend in person. Prior to her retirement in 2015, Gwen was a music educator with experience in teaching all grade levels. She has served in interim ministry roles that include FBC Rome as Minister of Music (1996-1997), Minister of Youth (2000-2001), Minister of Music at Towne View Baptist (2000), and as Minister of Faith Development at FBC (2015-2017). Gwen has also held part-time positions as Minister of Music at FBC Rockmart (2007-2008) and North Broad Baptist (2008-2012).



HEATHER SHORES

Interim Minister to Students

A native of Rome, Georgia, Heather has a Bachelor's and Master's degree in History from the University of West Georgia. After working in the museum field and teaching at the college level for two decades, she became a History Instructor at Darlington Upper School in 2022, where she discovered her calling working with high school students to help them find their own purpose in life.

Heather became the Interim Minister of Students at FBC in October of 2024.



Our Community

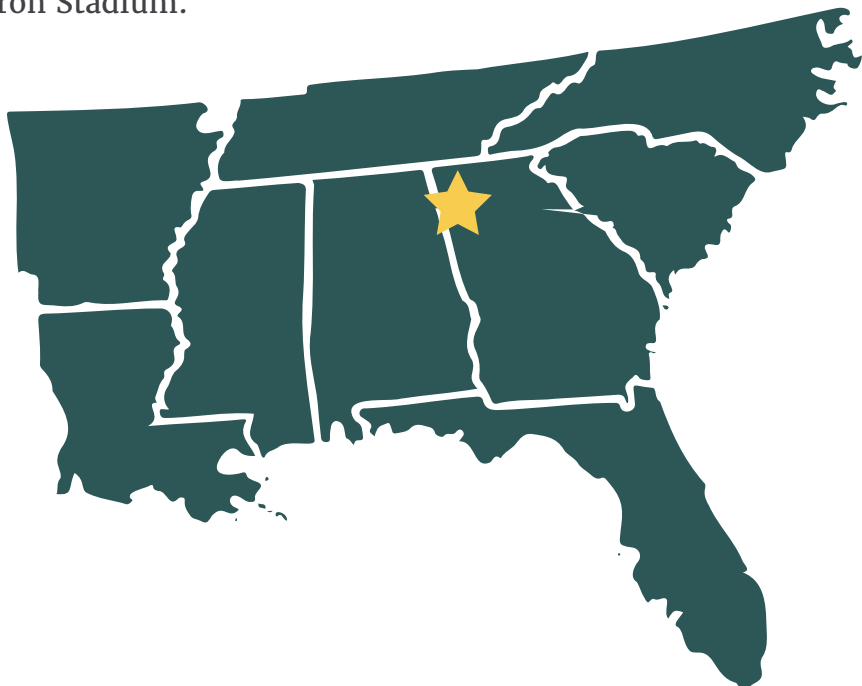
ROME AND FLOYD COUNTY

Rome is the largest city in Northwest Georgia, conveniently located nearly equidistant from Atlanta, Birmingham, and Chattanooga. With a population of just over 37,000 in the city and 99,000 in Floyd County, Rome maintains a small-town feel while still providing access to larger metropolitan amenities.

Rome is defined by its seven hills and three rivers which converge in the center of a thriving historic downtown that FBC Rome calls home. Nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Rome is full of natural beauty and is an oasis for outdoor adventure with over 50 miles of trails and waterways to explore, including the 26,000 acres of Berry College, the largest contiguous college campus in the world. Rome's charming downtown is filled with historic buildings, eclectic shops and restaurants, and frequent community events. Downtown Rome has received numerous accolades as one of the "best small-town main streets in America" over the past 20 years.

With two regional hospitals, a third-year residency program, and a large multi-specialty medical clinic, Rome boasts more physicians per capita than any other similar-size community in the U.S. With four colleges and universities, two public school systems and five private schools (including an international day/boarding school), Rome is also a major educational hub for the region.

In addition to healthcare and education, Greater Rome has a robust manufacturing base and recently ranked among the top 10 cities for manufacturing in the U.S. according to SmartAsset. Tourism generates over \$150 million in economic impact in Greater Rome, much of that through major regional and college sporting events held at the world-class Rome Tennis Center at Berry College and Barron Stadium.





FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

100 EAST FOURTH AVENUE | ROME, GA 30161

706-291-6850

www.fbcrome.org

MINISTER SEARCH COMMITTEE EMAIL:

fbcromejobs@gmail.com.