



CHURCH PROFILE

OVERVIEW

We are an unaffiliated Baptist church with a strong scriptural and evangelical emphasis. Our congregation is diverse in its background and traditions. We tend to focus on those things which unite evangelical Christians rather than on those which narrowly divide.

Our church strives to be a friendly, caring community of believers that functions as a family. We have ministry for and by all ages with cross-generational interactions. We seek to strengthen and support the families within our congregation through our ministries and programs.

We seek to be a place of healing in Christ's love for those who are hurting and a place of growth and equipping for service in Christian living. While our faith and relationship with God is individual, we recognize the importance of learning, growing, and serving together within a local church body.

OUR BELIEFS AND PURPOSE

Our shared vision statement is: "To Discover Christ and Display His Transforming Power." We pray that, through this *Profile*, you will sense that God is leading and working among us for His glory. The following statements from our *Confession of Faith* document and *Constitution* outline the purpose and some of the beliefs of our church, but they only begin to describe who we are.

We believe that mankind is sinful both by nature and by choice and that God reconciles the sinner to himself by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ alone. We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, given by the Holy Spirit through inspired men, are the word of God, and therefore are the supreme authority for our faith and life. (*from Confession of Faith*)

The PURPOSE of this church shall be to declare and demonstrate the gospel of Jesus Christ to its constituency, its community, and to the world. It shall provide the vital experiences of worship, fellowship, growth, and ministry in order to make its calling effective. (*Constitution, Article II*)

CHURCH GOVERNANCE

We have a congregational form of church governance that allows both men and women to serve in all elected offices. The elected leaders serve on the Church Board, the Spiritual Leadership Council, and seven Core Committees. The Church Board is responsible for the administration and operation of the church and is comprised of a moderator, the church treasurer, seven Core Committee chairpersons, all members of the Spiritual Leadership Council, and the Senior Pastor (*ex officio*). The Spiritual Leadership Council is responsible for the overall spiritual direction, guidance, and pastoral care for the congregation. The primary function of each Core Committee is to serve as a task force to create strategy, determine policy, and to have oversight of relevant ministries. The seven Core Committees are Worship, Discipleship, Evangelism, Fellowship, Diaconate, Missions, Facility and Finance.

PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES

Worship

Our worship services seek to bring glory to God through praise, thanksgiving, prayer and preaching from His Word. Our purpose in worship is to glorify God by helping believers worship the one true living God in spirit and truth on a daily basis and when the church is assembled corporately. Such worship centers on scripture; displays joy and wonder in God; delights in God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; involves believers in performing for God alone; and uses a variety of worship forms of the highest quality possible to create worship that is never about us, but about God. We are purposefully diverse with a blended musical style. We seek to use a balance of the best of both contemporary and traditional styles so that our whole body may worship together.

We currently have one time of corporate worship on Sundays at 9:30AM. The average weekly attendance is approximately 280. We are actively moving to two worship services in the Fall of 2018.

The music for Sunday mornings is provided primarily by the worship band, choir, and organist. The choir has 30-50 members. The worship band consists of a rhythm section of piano, bass, drums, and synth along with vocalists and a sax player. Occasionally, other instrumentalists from the congregation including woodwinds, brass, strings, and percussion participate in the Sunday worship service. Music for special services such as Christmas and Easter is provided by both in-house instrumentalists and vocalists as well as hired musicians as needed. We have an active youth band, choral groups and choir who periodically perform in worship services and for special programs.

Discipleship

Sunday School –Adult Discovery Groups, Community Groups, and Sunday school classes are offered at 11AM for children, youth and adults from September through May. Adult Discovery Groups are Bible centered, Gospel focused and mid-sized elective classes which offer a blend of teaching, media, and discussion.

Small Groups –Small Groups are one way for individual believers to become accountable for the application of biblical truth into their lives and become a part of this local body of believers. Each group is encouraged to build community with a Kingdom perspective; to create an environment of authenticity where members are accepted and loved while being challenged to grow in biblical Christ-like maturity; to care for the other members of the group; and, as a group, to care for the greater body of Christ and to reach into our neighborhoods with the “Good News” of the Gospel. We have many kinds of small groups –couples groups, family groups, sports ministries, Grounded (young adults), men’s Bible studies, women’s Bible studies, and home groups. Over 50% of our congregation is connected to a small group.

Youth Ministry -The purpose of youth ministry is to develop a strong foundation in Christ in the lives of teens, to help them understand the Bible and effectively reach their friends for Christ, and to incorporate young people into the life of the church.

High school and middle school groups meet weekly to discover and grow in Christ through fellowship, music, prayer and the Word of God. Throughout the school year small groups provide a more intimate place for spiritual learning and meaningful fellowship. The youth ministry also offers special events, weekend retreats, service projects, and mission trips.

Children's and Family Ministries – We believe that, because children are important to Jesus, ministering to children is a high priority. We also believe that, because God has given parents the primary responsibility and privilege to be the spiritual teachers of their children, the church is called to partner with and encourage families in the spiritual guidance of their children. Therefore, the purpose of our children's ministry is to provide scripture-based, life-relevant, age-appropriate programs that offer opportunities for evangelism, worship, growth, fellowship, and service. Along with Sunday School and Children's Worship, we offer a mid-week program for boys and girls, called Live Wire, for more than 30 children. Activities include Bible lessons and memorization, games, and crafts. Many children are from families outside the church. A Vacation Bible School is held one week each summer for children through sixth grade. This past summer more than 275 children attended VBS. Eighty percent were from families outside our church. Family Ministries has offered special events such as Walk Thru The Bible, Christmas ADVENTure, Lenten resources, and seasonal devotionals.

Library - The library provides a wide range of material for reference, devotion, study, and spiritual growth, including Christian books, periodicals, DVDs and CDs for all ages.

Evangelism

Community Outreach - Our goal is to encourage and equip our church family to reach out to people who need the Savior in the communities where they live and work. We have offered various training classes and seminars to help people build bridges of friendship and develop strategies for reaching others for Christ. We have held regular outreach events which offer informal settings to introduce friends and neighbors to our church and its ministry. We look for ways to serve our community and have participated in community events sponsored by Western Springs businesses. Our Evangelism Committee also helps new attenders at WSBC to integrate into the life of the church with follow-up phone calls and "get-acquainted" luncheons.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes - We sponsor a weekly ESL program, where over a dozen WSBC members have built bridges of friendship with over forty internationals. During the past couple of years, these internationals represent China, the Czech Republic, India, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, Russia, and Sri Lanka. We have been privileged to give many of the ESL students Bibles, Bible-based literature, and the "Jesus" video in their own languages. The ESL students have been invited into our members' homes and have also participated in our church's outreach events. Several internationals have begun to regularly attend services as a result of this ministry.

Monday Night Basketball – Monday night basketball started out in 2002 as an informal gathering of men from our congregation for an evening of pick-up basketball. In 2008 several high school students from our congregation and their friends began participating. As attendance grew, three men from our congregation moved to create an organized outreach ministry. Since September of 2011 over 340 men and women have participated. Many participants come from some of the most depressed neighborhoods in Chicago and the suburbs. Devotions and prayer are part of each weekly gathering. Occasionally a meal is provided. Guest speakers from within WSBC, and from outside the church have been invited to speak to the players. Through the relationships that have developed, WSBC has been able to provide assistance to several participants in the form of financial aid, employment counseling, meals, and spiritual discipleship. Several have come to accept Christ since participating in this ministry.

Fellowship

Men's Ministry – Men's Ministry is designed to build relationships with other men for accountability, encouragement and prayer while seriously studying God's word in order to develop an authentic faith that will impact their home, work and community. This is accomplished through small groups, Bible studies, annual retreats, fellowship breakfasts, sports and outdoor ministries, service projects, and special events.

Women's Ministry – The goal of Women's Ministry is to encourage all women to know Christ through worship, discipleship, study, prayer, and loving fellowship as they grow in grace together. Activities include prayer times, special speakers, fellowship, and service events, Bible study and retreats. Bible studies are designed to help each woman grow in her faith through teaching, small groups, prayer and relationships. Groups are open to new members and welcome drop-in guests. Social events and service events are designed to welcome guests to the group and encourage cross-generational relationships.

Senior's Ministry – OWLS (Older Wiser Loving Saints) gather monthly for a program, a meal, or trip. Trips are designed for fellowship and social encouragement and usually include a meal together. ROMEOS – (Retired Old Men Eating Out) meets at a local restaurant for breakfast the first Tuesday of every month at 8:30AM.

Diaconate

The purpose of the Diaconate is to serve with the pastoral staff and other church members in caring for the pastoral and practical needs of the congregation. They provide resources and facilitate care to individuals in our congregation; manage the Good Samaritan Fund for those with financial needs; assist at communion, baptisms and funerals; organize the preparation and delivery of meals to those experiencing medical needs; and resource practical skills our congregation can provide for one another.

Missions

Our church is strongly committed to the support of missions. We provide partial support for twenty-two American families or individuals serving in fourteen countries, and five foreign nationals serving in their own countries. Approximately one fourth of our total church budget goes to the support of missionaries and mission agencies. Many of our currently supported missionaries grew up in or were members of our church. Our missionaries are involved in evangelism, church planting, church leadership training, youth ministry, medical services, Bible translation, services to the urban poor, and a wide variety of support activities. We sponsor mission emphasis weekends each year, providing opportunities for our congregation to meet our missionaries, learn about their ministries, and capture a vision for the global ministry of the church. We also provide support for individuals and groups to participate in special mission activities and short-term mission projects.

Facility and Finance

The Facility and Finance Committee is responsible for the regular financial affairs of the church and for the use and maintenance of all church property and equipment. The last major facilities renovation was completed in 2003. All existing facilities were upgraded. The addition included a new sanctuary and audio visual system, an expanded community room/recreation facility, meeting rooms, classrooms, an elevator, and full ADA compliance.

The ministries of the church have been supported by a growing level of giving. In the last ten years the General Fund Budget has grown from \$751,000 to \$871,600. In the same period, the Mission Budget has gone from \$252,250 to \$344,500. The church is currently debt free.

HISTORY

Our church was founded in 1912 by several resident families. Initially it was a store front meeting place for Sunday morning worship and Sunday School. When the church was two years old, the congregation voted not to join an association, but rather to remain an unaffiliated Baptist church, which it is to this day. In 1927 a basement sanctuary was built.

In 1943 Billy Graham, a recent graduate of Wheaton College, became pastor of the 100 member church. During his 21 months of ministry, "Songs In The Night," a well-known Sunday evening radio vesper service, began broadcasting from the church.

Lloyd Fesmire pastored the church from 1945 to 1965. He continued the radio ministry of "Songs In The Night." During this time, the church's commitment to missions grew. In 1947 an above-ground sanctuary was built. Space for Sunday School, library, offices, and nursery was added in 1954.

Art Brown pastored the church from 1967 until he retired in 1989. His pastorate brought an increased missions emphasis, particularly through outreach to inner city Chicago. Pastor Brown's ministry also strengthened a love and tolerance for other Christians resulting in the current diversity of denominational backgrounds within our congregation. In 1975 a community room/recreational facility was constructed.

Dick Norwood pastored the church from 1989 to 1993. Under his pastorate, an informal contemporary Sunday evening service evolved and a small-group intensive Bible study program began.

John Beukema pastored the church from 1996 to 2005. In 2001 the congregation moved from its current site to accommodate a major facility upgrade. The church returned to the new facility in January 2003 and experienced significant growth. Under Pastor Beukema's leadership, our governing structure was redesigned and our church constitution rewritten. This new structure was approved by the congregation in February, 2006.

Our present Pastor, Dean Monkemeier, has served the church since June 2007.

DEMOGRAPHICS -- THE CHURCH AND ITS COMMUNITY

Western Springs (incorporated in 1886, www.wsprings.com) is located approximately 15 miles west of downtown Chicago, with a population of 12,500. It is 2.32 square miles in size. Congregation members reside in many of the surrounding suburbs, reflecting the diversity of the wider suburban area. The church has a history of welcoming attenders and participants from multi-cultural backgrounds. There has been a consistent membership of 250-300. Approximately 65% of the congregation are active volunteers in church ministries, 80% are regular weekly attenders.

MINISTRY STAFF

Senior Pastor (full-time)

Rev. Dean Monkemeier

Worship Pastor (full-time)

Steve Wolf

Family Pastor (full-time)

Joel Sisson

Youth Minister (full-time)

SUPPORT STAFF

Office Administrator (full-time)

Karen Ulery

Financial Secretary (part-time)

Beverly Dougherty

Director of Multimedia (part-time)

Bruce Miller

Organist (part-time)

Sherilyn Monkemeier

Custodian (full-time)

Martin Viramontes