

## Membership in the Southside Baptist Network

### What is the Southside Baptist Network?

- The newest association recognized by the Georgia Baptist Mission Board
- Founded March 1, 2013, when the South Metro and Henry Baptist Associations voted to disband and join forces to form a new, bigger, better association
- 80+ Southern Baptist congregations in Clayton, Fayette, Henry, Spalding, and surrounding counties who believe we can do more for the Kingdom working together than we can do by ourselves
- Churches on mission together based on a common confessional statement:  
*The Baptist Faith & Message 2000*

**Our Motto:** *Assisting Churches. Advancing the Gospel.*

**Our Mission:** *To assist churches in advancing the Gospel through community impact, church planting, church revitalization, and leadership development*

**Our Vision:** *To see increasing numbers of healthy churches – existing and new – making disciples and transforming communities through Christ*

### Our Core Values:

1. *We value the Lordship of Jesus Christ and follow His example for our conduct and service (Mt. 22:36-40; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 3:23).*
2. *We value the Bible as the Word of God and as the authority for our mission efforts and work (2 Timothy 3:15-17).*
3. *We value our churches and respect their autonomy (Matthew 16:18).*
4. *We value cooperation among churches and denominational ministry partners. We are intentional in our efforts to build trust. (Acts 11:22-30; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).*
5. *We value a partnership of churches of all sizes reaching all people, tribes, and languages (Acts 1:8; 10:34-35; 1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-13; 1 Tim. 5:1-3; Rev. 5:9).*

### Churches are The Network

We assist and equip pastors and churches to fulfill the Great Commission and do the works of service God has called us to do. Membership in The Network indicates a commitment to walk with, pray for, and be willing to help sister churches in our local mission field.

## Steps in the Process

1. Mail or email the following documents to the Associational Mission Strategist (AMS) requesting membership. Be sure to include the date that the church or its leaders voted to request membership. Mail or deliver these to our SBN Ministry Center, 2170 Jonesboro Road, McDonough, GA 30253, Attention: Dr. Ray Gentry. You may email these to him at [rgentry@southsidenetwork.org](mailto:rgentry@southsidenetwork.org):
  - A. The resume or a bio of the Pastor
  - B. The church's bylaws
  - C. The church's doctrinal statement (if it is not the Baptist Faith & Message 2000)
  - D. The current budget.
2. Upon receipt of the letter, the Associational Mission Strategist and Credentials Team will conduct an initial review of the information provided. The Team will request a meeting with the Pastor and church leaders. It is important that the Pastor, staff, and key lay leaders be present for this meeting.
3. The Credentials Team will be looking for signs that the church wants to be an active, participating member of the Southside Baptist Network, that it shares a common commitment to evangelism and missions, that it holds to common beliefs (see Baptist Faith & Message 2000), and that it will be consistent in giving to associational missions through the Southside Baptist Network. It is recommended that each church gives 3% of undesignated gifts that it receives to Associational Missions through the Southside Baptist Network.
4. Once the church meets the qualifications, the Credentials Team will recommend one of two things to the Executive Council:
  - A. The church be accepted under watch care for one year.

It is normal for church plants and existing churches that are not already members of a Southern Baptist association to be in watch care for one year. During the year, the church gets to participate in all SBN activities, to give to the Southside Baptist Network, and to benefit from all SBN ministries. The Director of Ministries and Church Planting Catalyst are able to get to know the pastor and other church leaders, attend worship services, and assist the pastor and church when requested. After one year, if the church still wants to be a permanent member and the Credentials Team feels that the church meets SBN's requirements, the Team will recommend membership to the Executive Council. The Executive Council meets three times a year. It is composed of the Pastor (or someone he designates to take his place) and another member from each church.
  - B. The church be accepted into membership immediately. This is normal if the church has been a mission of an existing church in SBN or in another association, or a member church of another Southern Baptist association.