

PASTOR SEARCH & SELECTION TEAM

VOTE OF AFFIRMATION ON JUNE 11

The Leadership Team unanimously recommends
the following team:

LEADERSHIP TEAM



GRANT JESSEN

Grant Jessen is a devoted believer who has been walking in his faith for over 40 years. His journey with Christ began at a young age, and since then, he has been actively involved in his church. Grant is blessed with a loving and supportive family. He is happily married to his wife, Diane, and together, they have raised four wonderful children: Sam (23), Abigail (20), Emma (17), and Jacob (14). They have a strong family bond that is strengthened by their shared faith in Christ. In 1994, Grant became a member of FBCW and Minister of Music & Youth, and it quickly became his church home. In 2000, Grant transitioned to the role of Pastor of Worship and Administration, where he continues to serve the church community with dedication and enthusiasm. Grant's hope for the future of the church is that it continues to be a light in the community, reaching out to those in need, and sharing the message of the Gospel. Grant is committed to playing his part in fulfilling this vision and believes that, together, the church family can make a lasting difference for the glory of God.



JEREMY SHIRLEY

Jeremy grew up attending church and has been following Christ since 1998 when he came to know Jesus while on a mission trip to Jacksonville, FL. He is blessed to be married to Julie, whom he married on May 28, 2005. Together, they are the proud parents of four children: Chloe (13), Noah (11), Lily (11), and Mya (10). In 2007, Jeremy joined FBCW as the Youth Pastor. Over the years, beyond being involved with the youth, he had a short season where he was responsible for cultivating mission partnerships and also he and his wife led the College & Career ministry. Currently, he serves as the Discipleship and Communications Pastor, responsible for Adult Sunday School, Online Worship, and overseeing all print, web, and digital communications of the church. Jeremy leads Sunday School groups at both 8:15 and 10:45. Reflecting on his time at FBCW, Jeremy deeply appreciates the love the church has had for his family and the things God has done through the church in the past. As Jeremy looks to the future, he holds great hope for the church. He believes God will work powerfully, in greater ways than ever before, through the willingness of the congregation, the Leadership Team, and our future Lead Pastor to follow the Spirit's lead.



JON WIES

Jon has been a believer for 27 years and has been married to his wonderful wife, Kaitlin, for four years. He became a member of FBC Wentzville in 1998 and has grown up in our church family through student ministry, collegiate ministry, and Sunday School. Jon currently serves as a lay member on the Leadership Team, teaches high school guys Sunday School, and serves on the Church Safety Team. Our church family is incredible because the people of God know the Word of God and put it into action for the Gospel. Our church has the opportunity to be used by God, even now, in ways that can change the lives of children, students, adults, and seniors for eternity!



DENNIS JOHNSON

Dennis accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior in 1975 at the age of 12. Dennis and Lori have been married for 37 years and have two children. Their daughter, Ashley (32), is married and lives in Lafayette, Indiana, and their son Austin (29), lives at their home. Dennis became a member of FBCW in 1997 and is currently a member of the Leadership and Safety Teams. In the past, Dennis has taught Sunday school and was a leader of the marriage ministry. Dennis has also been a part of the Wednesday Night meals team, Men's Ministry, and Monday Night Football Ministry. He also led Sunday night hymn singing and was a long-time member of the church choir. Dennis and Lori are active members of Kurt Schultz's Sunday school class. Dennis would like to see the church continue to grow and reach our community for Christ, disciple new and current members, and be a major outreach for the Kingdom.



LUKE PERSTROPE

Being raised in a pastor's family, Luke heard the gospel weekly, saw it lived out by his parents, and began following Jesus over twenty years ago. He and his wife, Melly, met at a Missouri Baptist Convention summer missions training and attended Missouri Baptist University together. They have been married for three and a half years. They joyfully welcomed Katherine into their home in April. In their free time, they enjoy drinking coffee, walking outside, and spending time with family and friends. Luke became our Student Pastor in June 2021 and recently graduated from Southern Seminary. Before joining FBCW, Luke served in the worship, tech, and student ministries at FBC St. Charles. Melly co-leads the middle school girls' Sunday group and enjoys serving in student ministry alongside Luke. They have been blessed by being part of this church family and are excited about how God will work at FBCW in this next season.

NOMINATED BY CHURCH



GARY MILLS

Gary has been a believer since he was eleven years old in Oklahoma City at Brookline Baptist Church. He has been a member of 17 Baptist churches because he has moved that many times. The last move brought him to First Baptist Wentzville in 2007. In 2009, Gary became the Director of Facilities for FBCW, and he held that position until September 2019 when he retired for the third time. He met his wife, Sandra Pierce Mills, at church during high school, and they have been married for 58 years this coming August. They had two boys, Paul and Benjamin. Paul is a surgeon and is married to Mary, a physician at Mercy Hospital. They have three children: Emma, Sarah, and Charlie. Gary and Sandra's other son, Benjamin, passed away at age 26 from cancer. Gary attends the 10:45 AM Sunday School group taught by Jeremy Shirley. He is currently Chairman of the Board for LINC, which includes FBCW's Hope Ministry, providing services to poor and fragile families in need. He also is active in the Missions Ministry, having gone on trips to Panama, Italy, and Montana, and plans to continue as long as possible. From 2019 to 2020, Gary led the Stewardship Ministry, Financial Peace University, which teaches and counsels on personal finance. He's also involved in the Bonsai Society of Greater St. Louis and, his grandson's Boy Scout Troop, to a lesser extent. He enjoys woodworking as well as bonsai trees. His work experience includes draftsman, engineer, Aviation Electronics Technician while in the US Navy during Vietnam, District Manager positions with AT&T/Southern Bell Corp., competitive analysis, strategic planning, market analysis, and Church Administrator at Churchill Baptist Church in San Antonio before working as the Facilities Director at FBCW. Since joining FBCW in 2007, the church has been a major part of my life. Having served the Lord in several positions, both paid and voluntary, gives me the purpose and stability all Christians need in these times of turmoil in our country and world. I look forward to what FBCW will accomplish in the future, both in evangelism and discipleship with God's leader as our new pastor. I would like to see FBCW grow again in all age groups and be a light to our community.

QUOTES FROM THOSE WHO NOMINATED GARY MILLS

"Sound in his faith"

"Christ follower and teacher"

"Mature Christian experienced in church leadership"

"Overall knowledge of scripture and years of living the Christian life would bring foundational perspective"



GREG ATCHISON

Greg came to know Jesus as his Savior in 1982, but it wasn't until 1993 and the early Promise Keepers' movement that He really became Lord of Greg's life. Greg and Nancy have been married for nearly 48 years. He enjoyed a military career spanning 22 years, followed by another 18 years with Boeing. Since late 2016, Greg has been stewarding his C12 practice, which works with Christian business leaders to advance the Gospel in the marketplace. Greg and Nancy joined FBCW soon after relocating to Wentzville in 2003. Over the years, Greg has served in the Men's Ministry and taught a Senior's Sunday School class. He now fills in whenever necessary and serves as a deacon to the 8:15 am Senior's Sunday School class. As our influence expands in a growing city, he hopes that FBCW will become the launch pad for many churches in the area, as the need is great!

QUOTES FROM THOSE WHO NOMINATED GREG ATCHISON

"He is a biblical scholar"

"Strong Christian who can handle leadership duties"

"Would follow scriptural guidelines in conducting the pastor search"

"Respected by all who know him"



GWEN DOYLE

Gwen became a believer at a young age, around 7 or 8 years old, and her faith has been a significant part of her life ever since. She is a proud mother to three children: Audrianna (23), Jason (22), and Austin (14). In 2006, Gwen started attending FBCW and became actively involved in ministry. She currently serves in the Student Ministry, co-teaching high school girls in Sunday School, helping in MDWK, and during special events like camp. She also helps with Kids Worship and Vacation Bible School along with the church's outreach events. In the past, she has been involved in ministries such as WAM for Kids and served as a Children's Sunday School teacher. Outside of church, Gwen works as the Director of Child Nutrition in the Wentzville School District, playing a vital role in ensuring children receive nutritious meals. Gwen deeply values her church family at FBCW. She is grateful for the genuine love and support they offer, both to one another and the community. The friendships Gwen and her children have made within the church are a constant source of blessing. She looks forward to the future of the church, eagerly anticipating the new leadership that God has planned. Gwen holds hope for the opportunities that will arise to reach their community and contribute to building God's kingdom alongside her church family.

QUOTES FROM THOSE WHO NOMINATED GWEN DOYLE

- "Experienced in serving in multiple areas of our church"
- "Loves our church and is committed to the Lord"
- "Perspective having grown up as a pastor's kid"
- "Would add balance and insight"



JANICE WALDREN

Janice Waldren, her husband, Brian, and children, Mya (20) and Cohen (17), have been attending FBCW for 18 years and have been members for 15 years. Janice has been active in ministry over her tenure at FBCW. She is currently hosting Conquerors, our college and career ministry, and has previously devoted time to Children's Choir, Children's Sunday School & Nursery, Kids Worship, Student Ministry, and mission trips. Janice and Brian attend James Hantack's Sunday School group and encourage anyone who isn't plugged into a small group to find one; it's been their biggest blessing at FBCW! Outside of church, Janice is employed as a mortgage underwriting manager and spends her free time working out, watching her kids' sports, taking walks, and the occasional heated pickleball or tennis match with her family. Janice is grateful to the believers who have been faithful to teach the Word over the past 40 years, pouring into her and others. She started attending church in grade school and was saved at Forest Lake Baptist Camp at age 8 but rededicated her life to Christ in her twenties and has been seeking a deeper, more personal, relationship with Christ ever since. Janice wants to encourage believers to live with a thankful heart, to enjoy the peace that only Jesus gives, and to share that with others along the way. Jesus changes everything!

QUOTES FROM THOSE WHO NOMINATED JANICE WALDREN

- "Mature believer with a heart for young people"
- "Biblically sound"
- "Loves the Lord and missions"
- "Heart for people and understands the importance of outreach and discipleship"



JOANNE LOCKARD

Joanne has been a believer in Christ since childhood. She has been married to her husband, Wayne, for 40 years. Wayne serves as a Deacon within the church. While they have no children, Joanne and Wayne have impacted the lives of children by loving families and children from the church and community. One of the many ways they've done that is by organizing workshops for young boys to teach important life skills. In 1999, Joanne and Wayne joined FBCW and have been active members ever since. Joanne serves as the Bridal Coordinator and ministry leader for bereavement meals, church furnishings, and Christmas decorating. She also assists with money counting, fills in at the church office, and serves as a hostess on Sunday mornings. Joanne has been involved in the Hope Ministry as a desk counselor and was a member of the church choir. She and Wayne prepare the table and elements for the Lord's Supper. They attend the 8:15 a.m. Sunday School group taught by Jeremy Shirley. In the community, they have volunteered at the food pantry of St. Patrick's Church for over 30 years. The church family holds great significance for Joanne. She finds encouragement in praying for and supporting others. Joanne hopes the church will grow and spread the word of God to believers and non-believers alike.

QUOTES FROM THOSE WHO NOMINATED JOANNE LOCKARD

- "Faithful servant who desires the best for FBCW"
- "Objective, wise, kind, and strong character"
- "Perspective on life and biblical truth is an asset"
- "Seen and experienced many transitions at FBCW"



KURT SCHULTZ

Kurt came to know the Lord in 1981 at Fort Leonard Wood during his US Army Basic Training. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit and the gift of a New Testament Bible given to all soldiers at departure for training by the Gideons, he surrendered control of his life over to the Lord. Kurt has been married to Tammy (Byington) Schultz for 40 years. They have two grown children: Brett Schultz (Wentzville) and Kaitlyn (Schultz) Blair (Saskatoon, SK, Canada). They have four grandchildren ages 3-13 (three girls and one boy). Kurt and Tammy have been members of FBCW since 2013. Kurt teaches an adult Bible Study group and has been teaching Bible Study classes for more than 30 years. He is also on the Church Safety Team. Kurt works for Purina Animal Nutrition (25 years) as a Marketing Director. Kurt and Tammy have been and are active, involved members of the church and believe that service is what the Lord calls us to do. He equips us all and calls us all to serve others, and we grow and are blessed when we do. Serving the Lord through the local church has been the foundation of their marriage. The fellowship of the body of believers has sustained them during times of joy and times of sorrow. Sharing in ministry, in study, in worship, and in fellowship have been, and still are, anchors in their life.

QUOTES FROM THOSE WHO NOMINATED KURT SCHULTZ

- "He is vested and cares about the welfare of our church"
- "Intelligent and faithful servant"
- "Knows the Word of God and the people of the church well"
- "Life experience and scriptural grounding are a perfect combo"