

The First Baptist Church in Ithaca is a community centered in Christ, bound by grace, and called to model God's vision of inclusive love. Our ministry begins here as we move beyond all barriers of race, gender, sexual orientation, backgrounds, and creeds, to a place of faithful worship. God's ministry continues through the actions of all who illuminate their daily lives with their faith.



The First Baptist Church was founded in 1821 and moved to its present site adjoining DeWitt Park in downtown Ithaca in 1826. The current structure was completed in 1890, and is designated an historic landmark. In the 1970s the congregation voted to renovate the interior using an open, level, and inclusive model.

From its beginnings, First Baptist has been committed to social justice. The church has supported women's suffrage meetings, the civil rights movement, protested the Vietnam War, provided space for the first Planned Parenthood office and clinic in Ithaca, joined the Quakers in the "sanctuary" movement, and resettled refugees from six countries. Our journey of advocating LGBT rights began in the 1980s, with the congregation voting to join the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists in 1997. Our children, youth, and adults participate in many outreach programs in the greater community. We strive to be energy efficient, to reduce waste, and participate in the Interfaith Climate Action Network. First Baptist is a living wage employer.



As a congregation we enjoy a wide selection of musical styles in worship provided by our choir, children, and a contemporary worship band. Though modest in size, our congregation has ordained ministers, and is home to a half-dozen retired clergy. In the Baptist tradition we see all members of the church as ministers.