



nextsteps

The Sweetwater First Assembly Story

Sweetwater First Assembly of God was birthed in January of 1971 when a group of 35 people deeply desired a Pentecostal fellowship in Sweetwater. Pastor J.L. Shaffer and his wife Alice were the founding ministers.

The church first met in the home of Marvin and Doshia Wilson and in various other locations as they continued to grow. Finally, on January 9, 1983, the congregation moved to its current location on Highway 11 South.

Dr. Andrew Templeton and his wife Rachel felt God leading them to the Sweetwater area in May 2009 and have been shepherding the congregation since then. God has continued to bless the ministry here at Sweetwater First Assembly, and many pastors and missionaries have felt the call to full-time service while attending here.

Today, we are a healthy church with a powerful kids and student ministries, a strong emphasis on missions, and many Small Groups meeting throughout our region. God is doing great things!



Mission, Vision, and Values of SFA

Our Mission is to develop fully devoted followers of Christ.

Our Vision is for everyone to:

1. Know God.

"[I pray]... that you may know Him better [personally]." - **EPHESIANS 1:17–18 NIV**

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" - **MATTHEW 7:21–23**

2. Find Freedom.

"[I pray]... that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened [focused and clear]."
- **EPHESIANS 1:17–18 NIV**

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." - **JAMES 5:16**

3. Discover Purpose.

"[I pray]... that you may know the hope to which He has called you." - **EPHESIANS 1:17–18 NIV**

"Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith." - **ROMANS 12:6**

"All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it." - **1 CORINTHIANS 12:27 NLT**

4. Make a Difference.

"[I pray]... that you may grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life He has for His followers [in his holy people]." - **EPHESIANS 1:17–18 NIV**

"By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."
- **JOHN 15:8, 11**

"God has given gifts to each of you from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another." - **1 PETER 4:10 NLT**

Our Seven Core Values

1. Love God
2. Love People
3. Grow Intentionally
4. Give Generously
5. Develop Others
6. Choose Joy
7. Pursue Excellence

Statement of Faith

Holy Bible

The Holy Bible, and only the Bible, is the authoritative Word of God. It alone is the final authority in determining all doctrinal truths. In its original writing, it is inspired, infallible, and inerrant. **2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Proverbs 30:5; Romans 16:25-26**

Trinity

There is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and co-eternal. **1 John 5:7; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19; Luke 1:35; Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 3:7-11**

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity. On earth, Jesus was 100% God and 100% man. He is the only man ever to have lived a sinless life. He was born of a virgin, performed miracles, died on the cross for mankind, and thus atoned for our sins through the shedding of His blood. He rose from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and will return again in power and glory. **John 1:1, 14, 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:16; Isaiah 9:6; Philippians 2:5-6; 1 Timothy 2:5**

Virgin Birth

Jesus Christ was conceived by God the Father, through the Holy Spirit (the third person of the Trinity) in the virgin Mary's womb; therefore, He is the Son of God. **Matthew 1:18, 25; Luke 1:35; Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:27-35**

Regeneration

For anyone to know God, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. **John 6:44, 65; Matthew 19:28; Titus 3:5**

Redemption

Man was created good and upright, but by voluntary transgression he fell; his only hope of redemption is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. **Genesis 1:26-31, 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-21**

Jesus' Blood

The Blood that Jesus Christ shed on the Cross of Calvary was sinless and is 100% sufficient to cleanse mankind of all sin. Jesus allowed Himself to be punished for both our sinfulness and our sins, enabling all those who believe to be free from the penalty of sin, which is death. **1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5, 5:9; Colossians 1:20; Romans 3:10-12, 23, 5:9; John 1:29**

Salvation

We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ: His death, burial, and resurrection. Salvation is a gift from God, not a result of our good works or of any human efforts.

Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16, 3:8; Titus 3:5; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 16:31; Hebrews 9:22

Repentance

Repentance is the commitment to turn away from sin in every area of our lives and to follow Christ, which allows us to receive His redemption and to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Thus, through repentance we receive forgiveness of sins and appropriate salvation. **Acts 2:21, 3:19; 1 John 1:9**

Sanctification

Sanctification is the ongoing process of yielding to God's Word and His Spirit in order to complete the development of Christ's character in us. It is through the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that the Christian is enabled to live a Godly life. **1 Thessalonians 4:3, 5:23; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 6:14-18, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3, Romans 8:29, 12:1-2, Hebrews 2:11**

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Given at Pentecost, it is the promise of the Father, sent by Jesus after His Ascension, to empower the Church to preach the Gospel throughout the whole earth.

Joel 2:28-29; Matthew 3:11; Mark 16:17; Acts 1:5, 2:1-4, 17, 38-39, 8:14-17, 10:38, 44-47, 11:15-17, 19:1-6

Heaven

Heaven is the eternal dwelling place for all believers in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:3, 12, 20, 6:20, 19:21, 25:34; John 17:24; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Hebrews 11:16; 1 Peter 1:4

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Matthew 5:3, 12, 20, 6:20, 19:21, 25:34; John 17:24; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Hebrews 11:16; 1 Peter 1:4

Resurrection

Jesus Christ was physically resurrected from the dead in a glorified body three days after His death on the cross. In addition, both the saved and the lost will be resurrected; those that are saved to the resurrection of life and those that are lost to the resurrection of eternal damnation. **Luke 24:16, 36, 39; John 2:19-21, 20:26-28, 21:4; Acts 24:15;**

1 Corinthians 15:42, 44; Philippians 1:21-23, 3:21

Jesus Christ Indwells All Believers

Christians are people who have invited the Lord Jesus Christ to come and live inside them by His Holy Spirit. They relinquish the authority of their lives over to Him thus making Jesus the Lord of their life as well as Savior. They put their trust in what Jesus accomplished for them when He died, was buried, and rose again from the dead.

John 1:12; John 14:17, 23; John 15:4; Romans 8:11; Revelation 3:20

Second Coming

Jesus Christ will physically and visibly return to earth for the second time to establish His Kingdom. This will occur at a date undisclosed by the Scriptures. **Matthew 24:30, 26:63-64; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8; Revelation 1:7**

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is manifested through a variety of spiritual gifts to build and sanctify the church, demonstrate the validity of the resurrection, and confirm the power of the Gospel. The Bible's lists of these gifts are not necessarily exhaustive, and the gifts may occur in various combinations. All believers are commanded to earnestly desire the manifestation of the gifts in their lives. These gifts always operate in harmony with the Scriptures and should never be used in violation of Biblical parameters. **Hebrews 2:4; Romans 1:11, 12: 4-8; Ephesians 4:16; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6-7; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 14:1-40; 1 Peter 4:10**

Hell

After living one life on earth, the unbelievers will be judged by God and sent to Hell where they will be eternally tormented with the Devil and the Fallen Angels.

Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:43-48; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 14:9-11, 20:12-15, 21:8

The Church

The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of Jesus' Great Commission. Every person who is born of the Spirit is an integral part of the Church as a member of the body of believers. There is a spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. **Ephesians**

1:22, 2:19-22; Hebrews 12:23; John 17:11, 20-23

Healing of the Sick

Healing of the sick is illustrated in the life and ministry of Jesus and included in the commission of Jesus to His disciples. It is given as a sign, which is to follow believers. It is also a part of Jesus' work on the cross and one of the gifts of the Spirit. **Psalm**

103:2-3; Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:17-18; Acts 8:6-7; James 5:14-16; 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28; Romans 11:29

Get Connected: Small Groups and Serving

Community is important here because we believe life change happens best in the context of relationships. Our relationships are formed through proximity with God and others through small groups and serving.

Small Groups

We base our Small Groups model on the early church as described in the Bible in the book of Acts. Since God designed us for relationships, we believe it is through the connections made in Small Groups that God will help us grow. Our Small Groups provide three things:

1. A place to connect with others.

"Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him." - **1 CORINTHIANS 9:22 TLB**

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and Small Groups provide a place for you to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

2. A place to protect each other.

"We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters." - **1 JOHN 3:16 NLT**

When we do life together, our problems become smaller as God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Small Groups become a place where others don't just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.

3. A place to grow together.

"Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another." - **PROVERBS 27:17**

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Small Groups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus, find freedom, and reach the potential God has put inside you.

Serving

Our Serve Teams consist of volunteers who invest their time and talents to impact lives. We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Our Serve Teams are a great place to make a difference within the lives of those attending each week. We invite you to find a team that fits your gifts and passions.

Prayer Team

This team of trained intercessors covers the weekend services in prayer, preparing the way for the Lord. In addition to praying for the prayer requests of our church throughout the week and in serve as needed.

Production Team

This team uses skill and creativity to provide the best possible experience for our guests through audio, video, and lighting technologies.

Worship Team

This dynamic team prepares the way for our guests to encounter the presence of God through vocals, instruments and audio engineering. An audition and interview process will take place upon expressed interest.

Small Group

This team hosts Small Groups, offering a place for people to find meaningful community. Small Group leaders host groups based on topics or activities they are passionate about.

Coffee Team

This team gets to serve our guests free coffee in our lobbies. They are responsible for brewing coffee, keeping stations stocked, and cleaning to prep for the following services.

SFA Kids Team

This team creates an environment in our children's services and nursery where children are consistently exposed to the real love of Jesus. They intentionally invest in the lives of our children through worship, videos, skits, small groups, greeting, games, check-in, and more. Typical commitment is once monthly. *(We require applicants to pass a background check.)

Greeter Team

This team welcomes people to Sweetwater First Assembly at the front doors.

SFA Youth Leadership Team

This team partners with the youth pastor to provide spiritual support to the students of SFA Youth Ministry. Through games, food, worship, and outings they use their giftings to encourage the students of Sweetwater First Assembly. *(We require applicants to pass a background check.)

Facilities Team

This team works behind the scenes to maintain a spirit of excellence in our facilities. Serving opportunities include preparing facilities for baptism, conferences, special events, occasional maintenance and small repairs.

Outreach Team

This team works to make an impact on our community through services and events including food distribution and service projects.

Legacy Team

This team uses the gift of giving to support major projects and facilitate the overall vision of Sweetwater First Assembly through strategic financial offerings.

BECOME A MEMBER

Sweetwater First Assembly Membership Covenant

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and being in agreement with the mission, vision, and values of SFA, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Sweetwater First Assembly family. In doing so, I make the following commitment to God and my fellow church members:

1. I will protect the unity of my church by:

Acting in love toward other members. Refusing to gossip. Following the leaders.

"So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together." - **ROMANS 14:19 PH**

"Live in complete harmony with each other—each with the attitude of Christ toward each other." - **ROMANS 15:5 TLB**

"Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart." - **1 PETER 1:22 GNT**

"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as it's the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." - **EPHESIANS 4:29**

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you." - **HEBREWS 13:17**

2. I will share the responsibility of my church by:

Praying for its growth and health. Inviting the unchurched to attend. Warmly welcoming those who visit.

"To the church...we give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers." - **1 THESSALONIANS 1:1–2**

"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that the house will be full." - **LUKE 14:23 TLB**

"So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified." - **ROMANS 15:7 TLB**

3. I will serve the ministry of my church by:

Discovering my design. Using my God-given gifts to make a difference in the lives of others. Developing a servant's heart.

"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you."
- **1 PETER 4:10 PH**

"And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."
- **EPHESIANS 4:11–12**

"Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus... taking the form of a bondservant."
- **PHILIPPIANS 2:4–5, 7 NKJV**

4. I will support the testimony of my church by:

Attending church and Small Groups faithfully. Living a Godly life. Giving regularly.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." - **ACTS 2:42**

"Let us not neglect our meeting together...but encourage one another."
- **HEBREWS 10:25 NLT**

"But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the Gospel of Christ." - **PHILIPPIANS 1:27 PH**

WHY MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

"Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone – especially to those in the family of faith." - **GALATIANS 6:10**

Membership at SFA is all about community. It is a covenant relationship that expresses commitment to a family of believers. It is a partnership that helps provide for the community of believers, protect the vision and mission of the group, and participates in the work of the church. Paul often spoke of each part of the body fulfilling their gifts and playing a role in the greater purpose. Church membership is simple an agreement that say's I am ALL-IN! We need one another. We all serve a distinct role in fulfilling the mission entrusted to us. Membership is a method that shows we are together in this journey!

Additionally, at SFA the members are those entrusted with the ownership, care and stewarding of the buildings and grounds that God has given to us. We are autonomous in governance, overseen by a board of directors, and affiliated with the Assemblies of God.

SCRIPTURES:

Galatians 6:10; Ecclesiastes 4:9; 1 Corinthians 12:21; Hebrews 13:17 ; Ephesians 4:16

If you would like more information about Membership, Small Groups, or Serving, please contact Pastor Jill at the church office **423.337.6037** or **jill@sfa.church**. There will be an opportunity to get involved in these areas in the DNA class.

Discover Your Ministry Strengths Questionnaire

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father."

- JOHN 14:12

Rank each of the statements below as either: **1. Almost Never**, **2. Sometimes**, or **3. Almost Always** on the attached sheet. Once you've answered each statement, add up the scores from left to right and place that number under the Total. Look for your top numbers and then go to the Using Your Ministry Strengths to locate the letter that matches up your top numbers.

1. I like organizing services and events.
2. I am interested in starting new churches.
3. I enjoy working with my hands.
4. I can tell when someone is insincere.
5. I pray daily for people who don't know Jesus.
6. Encouraging others is a high priority in my life.
7. I trust God to provide for my daily needs.
8. I am passionate about financially investing in the Kingdom of God.
9. I look for opportunities to pray for the sick.
10. I enjoy doing little things that others typically do not enjoy.
11. I often have people over to my house.
12. I enjoy spending hours in prayer for other people.
13. Education is very important to me.
14. I tend to motivate others to get involved.
15. I hurt when I see others hurting.
16. I believe God will use me to enact His miracles.
17. I enjoy sharing the Gospel with other people groups and nationalities.
18. I've devoted considerable time to mastering my voice and/or musical instrument.
19. Caring for the hurting is one of my highest priorities.
20. I get frustrated when people knowingly sin.
21. I enjoy serving behind the scenes.
22. I like creating outlines of the Bible.
23. God has used me to interpret what someone speaking in tongues is saying.
24. I enjoy the book of Proverbs more than any other book in the Bible.

25. I am passionate about managing details.
26. I like to help start new ministry projects.
27. I consider myself a craftsman or craftswoman.
28. I sense when situations are spiritually unhealthy.
29. I am greatly motivated by seeing people who don't know God be saved.
30. I come across as loving and caring.
31. Asking God for a list of seemingly impossible things is exciting to me.
32. I find ways to give offerings above my tithe.
33. I believe miraculous healing is possible and still happens.
34. Helping others is one of my greatest motivations.
35. Creating a warm and welcoming environment is important to me.
36. I am burdened to pray for situations affecting the world.
37. People come to me to learn more about God and the Bible.
38. I prefer to take the lead whenever possible.
39. I'm very sensitive to sad stories.
40. Miracles often happen when I'm nearby.
41. The idea of living in another country to benefit the Gospel is exciting to me.
42. I desire to serve the church through worship.
43. I enjoy connecting, caring for, and coaching others.
44. Confronting someone about a sin in their life is important to me.
45. It bothers me when people sit around and do nothing.
46. I share Biblical truth with others to help them grow.
47. I pray in tongues daily.
48. When I study Scripture, I receive unique insights from God.
49. Creating a task list is easy and enjoyable for me.
50. I am attracted to ministries that start new churches.
51. Building something with my hands is very satisfying to me.
52. I can pinpoint issues or problems quickly.
53. Sharing the Gospel with someone I do not know is exciting and natural for me.
54. I look for ways to encourage other people.
55. I trust that God has my back in every situation.
56. I want to make more money so that I can give more.
57. God has used me to bring healing to those who are sick.
58. Being a part of the process is fulfilling to me.
59. I tend to make total strangers feel at home.

- 60. People often ask me to pray for them.
- 61. I enjoy knowing Biblical details and helping others understand them, too.
- 62. I delegate responsibilities to accomplish tasks.
- 63. I am motivated to help people in need.
- 64. I have a constant hunger to see God's miraculous power.
- 65. I focus a lot on reaching the world for Christ.
- 66. I gain my deepest satisfaction through leading others in vocal or instrumental worship.
- 67. I enjoy helping people who are going through a difficult time.
- 68. I enjoy hearing passionate and clear preaching of God's Word.
- 69. I like to do small things that others overlook.
- 70. I prefer to teach and study the Bible topically rather than verse by verse.
- 71. Praying in tongues is encouraging and important to me.
- 72. When faced with difficulty, I tend to make wise decisions.

Choose one of the following for each statement:
1. Almost Never, 2. Sometimes, or 3. Almost Always

ANSWERS			TOTAL	STRENGTH
1. _____	25. _____	49. _____	_____	A. _____
2. _____	26. _____	50. _____	_____	B. _____
3. _____	27. _____	51. _____	_____	C. _____
4. _____	28. _____	52. _____	_____	D. _____
5. _____	29. _____	53. _____	_____	E. _____
6. _____	30. _____	54. _____	_____	F. _____
7. _____	31. _____	55. _____	_____	G. _____
8. _____	32. _____	56. _____	_____	H. _____
9. _____	33. _____	57. _____	_____	I. _____
10. _____	34. _____	58. _____	_____	J. _____
11. _____	35. _____	59. _____	_____	K. _____
12. _____	36. _____	60. _____	_____	L. _____
13. _____	37. _____	61. _____	_____	M. _____
14. _____	38. _____	62. _____	_____	N. _____
15. _____	39. _____	63. _____	_____	O. _____
16. _____	40. _____	64. _____	_____	P. _____
17. _____	41. _____	65. _____	_____	Q. _____
18. _____	42. _____	66. _____	_____	R. _____
19. _____	43. _____	67. _____	_____	S. _____
20. _____	44. _____	68. _____	_____	T. _____
21. _____	45. _____	69. _____	_____	U. _____
22. _____	46. _____	70. _____	_____	V. _____
23. _____	47. _____	71. _____	_____	W. _____
24. _____	48. _____	72. _____	_____	X. _____





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