



First Baptist Church of Kennett Square

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of Kennett Square

In the heart of town ... with the town at heart

Letter of greeting to FBC

From Interim Pastor Tony Tilford

Greetings to the First Baptist family. I am truly honored and excited about being given the opportunity to journey with you for a period of time, as we together serve our great and mighty God.

A little bit of my ministry history: In the summer of 2017, my wife of 36 years, who was also my best friend and copartner in ministry, passed away after a long battle with cancer and an auto-immune disease. This led to my prayerful decision to retire from full time ministry at age 64 in November of 2019.

Before my retirement I had pastored for 35 years in a wide range of church situations — from church planting, where we celebrated a one-year anniversary, to serving Pennepack Baptist, where we celebrated its 320 anniversary in 2008 (No, there were no founding members present).

In addition to pastoral ministry, I have served as a chaplain in four different capacities: at a psychiatric/state hospital; on an Alzheimer's unit; in hospice for nearly 15 years; and presently serving as chaplain with The Hope and Help Network, a non-profit organization that I co-founded.

I am sure that I will share more about this as the weeks go by, since there are so many stories to be told about how God moved in these situations.

Most of all, I am looking forward to us creating *new* stories to tell of God's gracious working in and through His people.

In joyful expectation,

Pastor Tony Tilford

About Pastor Tony Tilford

Pastor Tony is a native of Pennsylvania born and raised in southeast Delaware County (DELCO) along with all that that *possibly means to those familiar with this geographical area!...such as having a troubled family and spending much time running the streets making his own trouble.*

After a major life change in ninth and 10th grades due to joining the track team and becoming a student, he graduated from Interboro High School and then attended Temple University, earning a bachelor's of science degree in marketing in 1977. That same spring he gave his heart to Jesus and became a committed follower.

He started attending the Glenolden Congregational Church where he met his future wife and partner-in-ministry, Jean Marie, marrying her in May 1981. He went on to attend Eastern Baptist Seminary in 1982.

While there, their children Keith and Danna Marie were born. Initially, his desire was to focus on marriage and family counseling in a Christian context, hoping to go on for a PhD in that field. Instead, God directed him to pastoral ministry.

Tony pastored a number of churches over a 35-year period, retiring from full-time pastoral ministry in November of 2019. In addition, he served as a hospice chaplain for 14-and-a-half years. He also served as chaplain at both a state hospital as well as an Alzheimer's facility.

Since his retirement, he has been working with The Hope and Help Network, a non-profit organization he cofounded in order to help people dealing with issues of poverty, addiction, and grief/despair.

Tony has been involved with many community organizations and has written extensively, creating manuals and models that serve as tools for ministry in the areas of evangelism, discipleship and grief.