

# Church stands on Scripture to further the message of Christ

By Kandace Lankford  
NJM Correspondent

**EASTPORT ROAD** — Amidst the industrial buildings that populate Eastport Road stands a beacon of hope, where the cross of Christ is prominent. For the past 79 years, parishioners have gathered there, at Eastport Baptist Church, to learn about God and to worship Him.

Since the church was started in 1939, the landscape has drastically changed, but the church has stood the test of time. Two years ago, Steve Hereford became the pastor of the church. He attended Eastport Baptist Church in the 70s when he was a child, and now he is back to start a new work and is excited to see how God is going to move. His goal is to further the mission and message of Christ through expository preaching, meaningful worship and loving fellowship.

Expository preaching involves the thorough explanation of the Scripture; that is, expository preaching presents the meaning and intent of a biblical text, providing commentary and examples to make the passage clear and understandable. The word exposition is related to the word expose — the expository preacher's goal is simply to expose the meaning of the Bible, verse by verse, rather than preaching topical or textual sermons.

In topical sermons, a preacher starts with a topic and then finds passages in the Bible to support that topic. In a textual sermon, a preacher uses a specific text to make a point without exploring the original intent of that text. In expository sermons, the Bible passage is the topic, and support materials are used to explain and clarify it.

"A lot of churches major on different things — we major on teaching the Word," said Pastor Hereford. "When choosing a church home, first look at the Word and see how it is taught, don't just look at the programs. It's important to teach people to read the Word



Pastor Hereford has 34 years of ministry experience and has been the pastor at Eastport Baptist Church for two years. He is also the president of H.E.R.I. (Home Education Resources & Information), which ministers to home schooling families throughout Florida.

with context — context is everything."

Eastport Baptist Church is a Reformed Southern Baptist Church. Reformed Baptists hold to the "Five Solas of the Reformation." These are: Faith alone — meaning we are



Fellowship is very important at Eastport Baptist Church. Once a month, the congregation shares a potluck meal, where everyone brings their favorite dish.

justified by faith. It flows from God's grace and it comes to the individual not by anything he or she might do: Scripture alone — meaning the Bible is our ultimate authority: Christ alone — meaning our salvation is based entirely on Christ and His atonement, and not on any of our human achievements: Grace alone — meaning human tactics in themselves could

never bring anyone to faith. It is grace alone expressed through the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that brings us to Christ, releasing us from our bondage to sin and raising us from death to spiritual life: and finally, the glory of God alone — meaning that all things are from God.

Along with expository preaching, meaningful worship



Youth and adults alike make up the family integrated congregation. Families stay together during the entire service and worship together, hear the Word together and fellowship together.

is another vital component of the services at Eastport Baptist Church. Pastor Hereford has a background in music, and in addition to being the pastor, he is also the worship leader at the church. He plays guitar and sings, accompanied by pianist, Joyce Trescot. Singing worship and praise songs full of Biblical truths and theology can be very helpful for learning more about God and more about the Bible.

"We sing a lot of traditional hymns and part of our service is singing the Scripture put to music," he said. "We want a God-centered service — we want to see how He truly is as revealed in Scripture. The songs we sing play a big part in this."

The church is not defined by the building where believers congregate, but by the believers themselves. Each church member is a part of the body of Christ, and loving fellowship at Eastport Baptist Church is manifested through Christ and poured out on one another as well as those who visit the church.

"If you haven't been hugged at least three times before you leave here, you were hiding somewhere," said Pastor Hereford. "At this church, 'How are you doing?' is not just a greeting, people really want to know how you are doing — it's part of caring."

One thing that means a lot to Pastor

Hereford is the way the congregation not only accepted, but also embraced his 9-year-old special needs son. Due to an injury at birth, Samuel is non-verbal, but he makes a lot of noise. In some churches, Samuel has been rudely stared at, but the folks at

Eastport Baptist Church are different.

"They love on him, they want to know how he is doing, they pray for him — they really care," said Pastor Hereford.

Eastport Baptist Church is family integrated, meaning that families stay together throughout the entire service, worshipping together, hearing the Word together and fellowshiping together. Although there is a quiet space where moms with babies can go, by design, there is

no nursery. Once a month, the congregation has a potluck meal, and they also have special activities, such as a live nativity scene at Christmas.



At Christmas time, the church has a live nativity scene. Pastor Hereford's children participate, and they bring animals from their family farm.



Although it's surrounded by industry, the church was there long before the surrounding buildings. Eastport Baptist Church opened its doors in 1939.

Pastor Hereford has 34 years of ministry experience, including many years spent planting and establishing new churches. He is the featured speaker on "Changed By Grace" which can be heard locally on WAYR AM 550 and FM 103.3 and internationally on SermonAudio.com. Pastor Hereford received his training at Logos Graduate School (D.Min), Jacksonville Baptist Theological Seminary (Th.M. Th.B) and North Florida Baptist Theological Seminary (A.Min). He has been married since 1988 to the love of his life, Theresa, and has seven children and two grandchildren. Pastor Hereford is also the president of H.E.R.I. (Home Education Resources & Information), which ministers to home schooling families throughout Florida. For more information about Eastport Baptist Church, visit their website at [www.Eastportbaptist.org](http://www.Eastportbaptist.org), see their Facebook page or call them at (904) 757-7858.



**Eastport Baptist Church**  
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[www.eastportbaptist.org](http://www.eastportbaptist.org)  
Sundays 11 AM • Wednesdays 6 PM

*A Family Integrated,  
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Meaningful Worship, and  
Loving Fellowship*



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