

HOUSTON'S FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

KEEPING THE FAITH AND GROWING STRONG



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www.HoustonsFirst.org

On the muddy banks of Buffalo Bayou in 1841—five years after Texas won independence from Mexico—16 men and women united to organize Houston's First Baptist Church. Throughout its history, the church has survived wars, yellow fever epidemics, financial hardship and the 1900 Galveston hurricane that destroyed one of its early buildings.

Along the way, the church faithfully gave back to its hometown. Church leaders established Star of Hope Mission, and a clinic that today is Memorial Hermann Healthcare System. Sunday School classes created for the community later became churches themselves, including Chinese Baptist Church and Woodhaven Baptist Deaf Church.

In 1977, under the leadership of Dr. John Bisagno, a renewed emphasis on evangelism, strong religious education and a vision for missions sparked phenomenal growth in the old church, requiring Houston's First to relocate from its longtime downtown location to a larger home at I-10 (Katy Freeway) and West 610 Loop.

Pastor Gregg Matte became the Pastor of Houston's First in 2004. While studying at Texas A&M University, Pastor Gregg founded Breakaway Ministries, the nation's largest on-campus college Bible study.

Pastor Gregg is the author of *Finding God's Will* and *I AM Changes Who i am*, and in 2011, he received the Outstanding Alumni Award from the Texas A&M Mays Business School.

Houston's First continues to serve the community through programs and ministries far beyond Sunday mornings. A fitness and recreation center and counseling center offer services for church members and guests. First Baptist Academy provides college-preparatory education for early childhood through eighth grade. The church's Faith Center sponsors ministries such as a food pantry, clothes closet, ESL classes and afterschool programs.

In 2011, Houston's First returned to its roots, opening a downtown campus on the tunnel level of 1010 Lamar where the church gathered for decades. The church is opening a campus in Cypress in 2013 to serve the needs of the growing population on the northwest side of Houston.

Houston has changed tremendously since the church's 1841 founding, and Houston's First continues to provide a relevant biblical community. The church invites longtime Houstonians and first-time guests to visit on Sundays or anytime. ■