

BETTER TOGETHER

Proposed Merger-Partnership FAQ's

1. How did the idea of a merger-partnership come about?

The idea was first presented to Pastor John Mark by Josh Carter, the SBC Church Planting Director for Nevada. Josh had previously witnessed the fruitfulness of a church merger-partnership and recognized the potential for both congregations to be stronger together. His encouragement sparked the beginning of this conversation.

2. Why are we considering a merger-partnership?

At the heart of this consideration is a desire to be more effective in fulfilling God's mission—specifically, making disciples and advancing His Kingdom.

3. What are the benefits of this proposed merger-partnership?

- We believe we will be better together than we are individually.
- Reach more people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Make a greater difference for Christ in our community.
- Multiply our church's ministry and impact.
- Become stronger as a local church body.
- Begin a new, revitalized church life cycle.
- Expand God's Kingdom by living the Great Commission.

4. Who will be our pastor?

Pastor Joseph Gibbons will serve as the Lead Pastor (see attached bio) . Pastor John Mark will be retiring.

5. Will our church have a new name? What will it be?

Yes. The merged church will be called Favor City Church.

6. What is the idea behind the name Favor City Church?

The name "Favor City" is inspired by Acts 2:47, where the early church is described as having "favor with God and all the people." Just as the Lord added to their number daily, our prayer is that Favor City would be known by the same spirit of grace, growth, and Gospel movement as the early church.

7. Why not keep the name Highland Hills Baptist Church?

Favor City Church would represent a fresh start and unified identity for the church meeting at 615 College Drive. It allows a new vision and revitalization for what God is doing now and in the future. Plus, new churches reach new people.

8. What will happen to church employees?

Highland Hills currently has five employees. Two—our custodian and financial ministry assistant—will continue in their roles. Two other staff members will not be retained but will receive a severance package. Pastor John Mark will be retiring.

9. What will happen to ministry teams and committees?

The plan or goal is integration of HHBC members into the vision and mission of the new church. Those serving now will have opportunities to serve in the future.

10. What will happen to the church facilities?

The facilities will be updated including new signage, children's ministry spaces, and enhancements to the worship center.

11. What will worship services be like?

Worship will continue to be Christ-centered and Bible-based. Expect a fresh, energetic atmosphere that is prayerful and powerful. Favor City's worship style is heartfelt, engaging, and designed to connect across generations.

12. Who will preach and how will sermons be delivered?

Pastor Joseph Gibbons will be the primary preacher. He brings energy, clarity, and a deep passion for God's Word. Messages will be rooted in Scripture and relevant for daily life.

13. How will the budget and finances be managed?

The finances will continue to be managed with integrity and transparency. A stewardship team works with the pastors to provide oversight and accountability.

14. How will current church membership be transferred?

Details will be shared soon, but the process will be simple, intentional, and respectful of everyone's current membership.

15. Will our denomination or affiliations change?

No. Both Highland Hills and Favor City are Southern Baptist Churches and affirm the Baptist Faith and Message (2000).

16. What will happen to our supported missionaries and mission organizations?

There will be continued support of the International Mission Board and North American Mission, including the Foodo people and the local Crisis Pregnancy Center.

17. What will the merger cost? Can we afford it?

There are costs involved—mostly related to updates to the facility and ministry materials—but we believe they are manageable. Both churches have no debt and strong cash reserves. The investment is worthwhile for the mission and future of the church.

18. Who decides if this merger happens?

Highland Hills Baptist Church members will vote on the proposed merger-partnership during a scheduled church conference.

19. If the merger happens, what will change?

- New name and unified identity
- New lead pastor
- Updated facilities and worship experience
- Expanded ministry vision and outreach
- But the heart of the church—loving God and loving people—remains the same.

20. What is the timeline for the proposed merger?

- August 13 (Wednesday) – Vision Night & Q&A
- September 3 (Wednesday) – Joint Prayer Gathering
- September 14 (Sunday)– Congregational Vote

21. What happens if the merger does not go through?

Highland Hills will need to begin the process of hiring new staff and pursuing a church revitalization strategy for the future.

22. What are my next steps?

- Pray. Ask the Lord to reveal His will.
- Seek His direction for our church family.
- Ask honestly: “God, is this what You want us to do?”