



Brewer ready to lead Parkway Baptist congregation

By [Jennifer Edwards \(Contact\)](#) | The Natchez Democrat

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NATCHEZ — Jeff Brewer will have a different view of Parkway Baptist Church on Sunday mornings.

Brewer will be looking out, from the pulpit, at pews on which he used to sit.

He has returned to the church that helped shape his faith to pastor its congregation.

Brewer will preach his first sermon at Parkway Baptist today.

The 1989 Trinity Episcopal Day School graduate never really planned to return to Natchez, but it was God's plan, he said, that he come home.

He was encouraged by some to look into the opening in Natchez, but initially said he didn't feel led to return to Natchez.

But now that he has followed God's path, Brewer is excited to get to work.

"I'm a personable person," he said "I like people. I like talking to people. A visit that might really take someone five minutes will take me 20 minutes because I want to get to know you."

Though, there are many people who already know him.

"I think there is going to be a time of transition for some people who have known me all my life to go from little kid Jeff who was running the halls of this church to pastor Jeff," he said.

Brewer comes to Natchez with his wife Dawn from Cherry Street Baptist Church in Clarksville, Ark. He has served at that church for just over four years.

He started work Wednesday by meeting with some of the most vocal members of the church — the children — during Popcorn with the Pastor during AWANA.

“There are a number of different ministry options at Parkway that were not at (Cherry Street),” Brewer said. “With the children, youth, young adults, this church is growing in many ways.”

Just as Brewer never intended to return to Natchez, he didn’t leave Natchez with the intentions of entering the ministry.

He attended college and played baseball and football at Delta State University. After graduation he took a job leading the graphic arts department at University Sporting Goods in Oxford and became an active member of North Oxford Baptist Church, teaching Bible study classes, serving Wednesday night supper and even working in the bed baby room in the church nursery.

“I realize now, by doing those things, I was really only trying to pacify God,” he said.

Through his activity at that church and his daily Bible study time, Brewer said it became evident that God was leading him to a life of ministry.

But still it wasn’t an easy decision.

“I had a good life in Oxford,” he said. “I was making good money, eating out five times a week and really enjoyed my job and the life I had there.

“When I was weighing the decision to become a minister, I was doing it on earthly scales.”

But God won out and Brewer entered seminary at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Upon returning to Natchez, Brewer was pleasantly surprised to see the changes God has made within the Parkway congregation.

“The congregation is vastly different,” he said. “When I grew up, we had an all white congregation, but now the mix of backgrounds and ethnicities worshiping together is exciting and it is biblical.

“The Lord said the greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all your heart and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself. The color of skin is not a part of that at all.”