

# **Reimagining Zion**

Andrew Gardner



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This history is composed of three parts: Leaving Zion, Reimagining Zion, and Living Zion. Part I - Leaving Zion - provides a chronological historical overview from Baptist beginnings in Chapter One to a history of the Southern Baptist controversies that led to the birth of the Alliance in Chapter Two. The final chapter in Part I provides a summative history of the Alliance from its formation in 1987 to its life and ministry in the second half of the 21st century. Part II - Reimagining Zion - provides a more detailed and topical history of the Alliance of Baptists. Chapter Four provides a brief history of the creation of the Alliance Covenant, which serves as the framework for the seven subsequent chapters. Each of those chapters addresses a particular tenet of the covenant and the ways in which the Alliance of Baptists "lived into" these covenant principles. These chapters are as follows: Chapter Five - The Freedom of the Individual; Chapter Six - The Freedom of the Local Church; Chapter Seven - The Larger Body of Christ; Chapter Eight - Servant Leadership; Chapter Nine - Theological Education; Chapter Ten - Proclamation of the Good News; and Chapter Eleven - The Free Church in a Free State. Part III - Living Zion - changes trajectory from a traditional source-based methodological perspective to a more ethnographic perspective. Within this section are brief congregational studies that examine the Sunday morning services and experiences of eight Alliance congregations from eight states. These studies attempt to provide a description of how Alliance congregations operate, rather than a birds-eye view of the organization's history. They also showcase some of the diversity and similarity within Alliance congregations. The congregations are First Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina; Glendale Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee; Ginter Park Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia; Woodbrook Baptist Church, Baltimore, Maryland; Oakhurst Baptist Church, Decatur, Georgia; Metro Baptist Church, New York, New York; Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, Raleigh, North Carolina; and Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, Oakland, California.



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