

Sarasota Community Church
Annual Meeting Agenda
December 2, 2018, 5PM
Auditorium

"Befriending all with the love of Christ through community, worship, and service."

1. **Call to order:** Mike Christner, Chair Pro Tem, called the meeting to order at 5:04pm, with 59 in attendance. Mike opened the meeting in prayer and with the following summary words of encouragement. "This church is great at making people feel like 'part of the family.' We do not 'go to church,' we *are* the church."
2. **Minutes:** Miriam Nauman, Secretary, read the minutes of the December 3, 2017 Annual Business Meeting.
3. **Financial Report:** James Read, Executive Minister gave a brief update on the financial status. We currently have reports through October 31, and are in the black.
4. **Pastor's Annual Report:** Pastor Roger Shenk read his annual report (attached).
5. **New/Unfinished Business:** none
6. **Presentation and Vote of New Overseers:** Mike Gervasio, Overseer, reviewed the ballot of Dave Kniss for an additional three year term, Nic King for an additional three year term, Mike Christner for an additional one year term, and Joe Smerdel for a new three year term. Joe was invited to introduce himself. He was baptized as infant, raised in Christian school, and later baptized as an adult. He moved here in 2014 and is a discussion group leader with Bible Study fellowship. He is ready to "serve my church" and feels God's calling to be an Overseer. He has 40 years management experience in the auto industry. With 56 ballots received, each nominee was unanimously affirmed with the exception of one person who received two "do not affirm" votes.
7. **Presentation of 2019 Budget for Approval.** James Read presented the budget and opened the floor to questions. Following brief discussions to clarify why office supplies are expected to decrease, and to confirm that staffing costs are in consistent with industry norms, a vote was taken by raised hand: 48 affirmed and 0 not affirmed.
8. **Other Business.** None
9. **Closing Prayer.** Pastor Roger closed the meeting with prayer and an invitation to the lighting party.
10. **Adjourn:** Mike Christner declared the meeting adjourned at 5:55pm.

Upcoming Events: Overseers, Monday, December 17, 2018, 5pm

Secretary: Miriam Nauman

Recording Secretary, Kathy Cydrus

PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Sarasota Community Church

“Befriend all with the love of Christ...”

Nine years ago we undertook a revitalization effort. It's hard to call it that because the church never died. In fact, it never even almost died. But it was in decline and had lost almost all of its young people, so it decided to work at becoming multigenerational again. So while we don't have the emotions of a revitalization effort, it is technically what we undertook in 2009.

In most church revitalization efforts, those who remain in the church feel threatened by the changes required by the process. And in many churches, those people are in fact alienated by the changes. It was always my conviction and promise that we would do what we could to welcome younger people without dismissing the needs of older people. The same can be said about our desire to minister to unchurched and dechurched people without neglecting the church people.

We have made changes at a pace and scope that fostered peace, and have likely sacrificed dramatic gains. In the past nine years we have welcomed 158 new members, but later lost 27 of them due to factors other than death or relocation. Of those, only 6 were due to grievances. Nineteen left amicably—meaning we didn't do anything “wrong” but apparently not enough “right.” During that same time we also lost 14 longtime members, mostly to grievance. If we factor for the loss of members due to death and relocation, our net gain is 79 members in nine years — just under 9 a year.

Our goal is not to “grow the church.” But our goal is to befriend as many as possible with the love of Christ. In 2019 we need to do that better. With intention, and a willingness to embrace strategic change, we should be able to bring many times that number into fellowship with Jesus and his Church this year. How many of our neighbors are dying to know that God loves them?

Looking Back

Every December we look back on the year to tell the story of SCC, to learn from our successes and mistakes in pursuit of wisdom and righteousness, and to remind ourselves that God always takes care of his Church.

Metrics. We baptized 10 people. We received 38 into membership, a quarter of all members received since 2009. We lost 10 members: 5 by death, 4 by transfer, and 1 by non-participation. Average attendance was down 2% while our median was up 1%. Maximum attendance exceeded last year's by 3% (991). Our June to August average attendance was up 5%. We held 8 funerals, significantly less than our average. Weekly Per Capita Giving (WPCG) averaged \$32 (year-to-date), up from \$29 last year and \$28 the year before, and compared to the average of \$26 for North American churchgoers.

Missions. This year we sponsored a Global Disciples program for church planters in Nepal. We hosted a Multiplying Disciples conference for 25 North American pastors to teach the Global Disciples approach in the US context. We took four mission trips, helping with hurricane clean up in Puerto Rico, in Florida's panhandle, and assisting in a medical missions trip to the Dominican Republic. We formed a missions committee to give future oversight to missions.

Word. We taught through 11 sermon series: How to Rewrite Your Reputation, The Good News About Suffering, The Gospel Explained, Untapped, What the Lord Has Done, Set Apart, Devoted, Hope, The Sins of the Parents, The Gift of Gratitude, and Dreams of Christmas.

Staff. Executive Minister Mike Christner resigned his four year part-time position and we hired James Read who to a full time position in July. Families Minister Kevin Bowder resigned his full-time position after one year, and we staffed the children and youth ministries with volunteers. Marketing Director Bonnie Telingar took a full-time position at Ashton Elementary, and member Belinda Jobe was hired in September.

Overseers. Dave Polen resigned his position in August, so the board appointed Mike Christner through the end of the year. Chair Danny Remchuk moved to Georgia in October but agreed to fulfill his responsibilities remotely through the end of the year, with vice chair Karissa Miller assuming local responsibilities.

Affiliation. Our Southeast Mennonite Conference voted in October to leave Mennonite Church USA. They plan to bring options for other affiliation in 2019. We continue to be a supporting church of the conference.

Facilities. We removed old trees and refurbished the front parking lot medians. We added a surveillance system throughout the campus. We painted the church exterior using mostly volunteers. We determined that there is considerable interest in moving forward with the master plan.

Looking Ahead

When the people of Israel were in the desert, they followed the cloud. When it stopped they stopped, and when it moved they moved. But they also organized their responsiveness to it. They had certain trumpet calls to tell the whole community they were moving. And they had preassigned responsibilities, and decided in advance which tribe went first, second, etc. It was organized. Certain people were in charge of discerning God's moving, and declaring the decision, but make no mistake: they were following God.

It's the same in the Church. We follow God's Spirit, but that doesn't mean we all just do whatever we sense. We have the structure of assigned responsibilities, and a prescribed order in which we do things. We see this in our budget process, and in efforts by the staff to predict needs and prepare to respond to opportunities.

Families Minister. Last year we recreated the Children's Minister and Youth Minister positions into one Families Minister position that would focus on programs and discipleship for families. But we were never able to get away from it being treated as a Children's Minister and Youth Minister style position. As a result we were not effective in supporting and connecting the families. In 2019 we want to provide a full-time minister to focus on growing and connecting people in the family-raising stage of life.

Worship Assistant. Several months ago we advertised a full-time worship minister, and had some interviews but did not feel released to hire. Coming into 2019, recognizing the perception that we are overstaffed, we decided to hire a worship assistant to help with administration and musical arrangements.

MultiGen Community Groups. It is common in most churches to have community groups designed around age or affinity. But I think there is great value in having Christian relationships across the generations, so we plan to experiment with "MultiGen Community Groups" in 2019, where the stated goal is to create supportive friendships with friends ranging in age from 20-100.

Master Plan. The church would like 2019 to be the year we kick off phase one of the Master Plan. We will conduct a feasibility study to see what resources are available. This will determine what "phase one" is.

Sabbatical. Policy gives a three month sabbatical every fifth year of full-time pastoral employment, and requires one year of service following the sabbatical. I delayed my 2014 sabbatical, taking it in 2016, and then my 2018 sabbatical until 2019. This will allow one year of service prior to my contract renewal in 2020.

Summary

For all our plans, what it all comes down to is loving God with all we are, and loving our neighbors with all we have. We give our obedience in faith, and he provides the increase. I pray for an incredible revival in Sarasota where many come to know Jesus, and every congregation of the Lord's Church is filled with new believers. May that be undeniably true of SCC even this coming year.



Roger Shenk, Pastor
December 2, 2018