



PASTOR PROFILE

During the third and last Congregational Conversation, almost 200 members of South Main Baptist Church met to share their thoughts about the type of pastor the church needs to lead it into the coming decade. The congregation looked at ministry priorities, sermon characteristics and personal traits they desired in the next pastor. The people also identified those characteristics they deemed non-negotiable or “must have” traits in their new ministry leader.

The final analysis identified some of the opportunities and challenges the new pastor will face and those attitudes and actions the congregation must be willing to set aside for the next pastor to be successful. The information below reflects the thoughtful considerations of the South Main family.

Ministry Priorities

When considering ministry priorities, the congregation most desires a pastor who prepares and preaches effective, Bible-based sermons. Approximately eight out of 10 members identified that concept as their number one priority.

1. Preparing and preaching effective sermons.
2. Nurturing spiritual growth of church members.
3. Working with deacons/lay leadership to establish a vision for the church.
4. Empowering and enabling ministerial staff.
5. Direct evangelism and outreach efforts.

Sermon Characteristics

When asked to rate the importance of 23 varied sermon characteristics, the South Main congregation was almost unanimous in giving biblically based sermons its highest rating. The following characteristics averaged a rating of less than “2” on a five-point scale where “1” was the highest possible score.

1. Biblically based.
2. Makes Christ real.
3. Challenges me to live faithfully.
4. Provides a clear faith position.
5. Touches me spiritually.
6. Speaks to all ages.
7. Challenges me to think.
8. Focused.

Personal Traits

The congregation worked through a pastoral leadership polarity exercise of 10 personal traits in which each end of the spectrum reflected two sides of the same spectrum. The average placement on the scale reveals the congregation’s preference.

	Emphasizes Biblical		Emphasizes Social
Teaching	1.....2.....3.....4.....5		Issues
Group Facilitator	1.....2...3.....4.....5		Works Independently
Challenging	1.....2...3.....4.....5		Comforting
Teacher	1.....2..... ...3.....4.....5		Evangelist
Traditionalist	1.....2..... ...3.....4.....5		Modern
Strong Force in			Emphasizes Lay Leader
Decision Making	1.....2.....3 4.....5		Decision Making
Manager	1.....2.....3...4.....5		Creative
Follows Precedent	1.....2.....3.....4.....5		Seeks Innovation
Formal	1.....2.....3.....4.....5		Relaxed and Casual
Independent	1.....2.....3.....4.....5		Collaborative

Pastor Opportunities	Pastor Challenges
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The congregation considered the opportunities the new pastor will have in the first year of ministry at South Main. Their responses were similar to the opportunities and challenges identified as opportunities and challenges for the church in an earlier Congregational Conversation. For the pastor, the congregation said the following would be the most significant challenges for our new pastor.

1. Outreach to young adults and young families and outreach to an increasingly diverse community.
2. Growth in membership, especially among our children, youth and young adults.
3. Building relationships within the congregation.

The congregation believes the pastor will face the following challenges early in his tenure at South Main:

1. Outreach to young adults and families and outreach to an increasingly diverse community.
2. Developing ministries and programs to draw in children, youth and young adults and making inroads into our minority community.
3. Comparison to Dr. Lyles.
4. Cultural forces against the faith.
5. Navigating successfully the changes that need to be made.

What We Must Set Aside

1. Resistance to change.
2. Traditional Sunday evening programming.
3. The Lyles legacy.
4. Clinging to tradition.

Non-Negotiables

1. Bible-based and grounded in sound doctrine.
2. Loving, personable.
3. Ability to build relations in church & community.