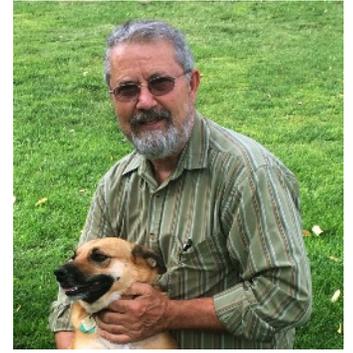


Just a Word...

Did you miss the church business meeting Sabbath evening, January 26? You might have thought, “A business meeting? Ho-hum. I’ve got better things to do.” And maybe you did have better things to do—like catching your Sabbath afternoon nap (but, hey, that should have been over with by 3 o’clock, and the meeting didn’t start until 5).



Me with my dog, Jindo

The fact is, I don’t know what your reason was, but if you weren’t there you missed some good stuff. First we sang a few songs together and had a prayer for an end-of-Sabbath vesper program. Then Pastor Eric presented his “State of the Church” address, complete with PowerPoint slides. He included areas where we might put some emphasis during the coming year—and asked for suggestions and further input.

The church board can’t approve the budget. Did you know that? Only the church in session (a church business meeting) can do it.

Carol Hargreaves had some slides, too: information and stories about the church’s recent India project. Dwight Bartlett followed with a financial report for last year and a proposed church budget for this year. He gave us some interesting things to think about, such as this: if the amount the church has been receiving for tithe represents ten percent of our income, then the amount we’ve been giving for the church budget represents two and a half percent. As most of us know, we haven’t been able to do some of the things we’d like to because our church budget giving hasn’t been sufficient. Dwight pointed out that just a small increase in our church budget giving (for example, three percent instead of two and a half) would make a big difference in the bottom line.

Then the good part: we voted on the budget. The church board can’t approve the budget. Did you know that? Only the church in session (a church business meeting) can do it. That gave the 35 or 40 people in attendance a lot of influence on the church’s immediate future. Voting on items such as the church budget is important enough that the whole church is invited to participate.

- A business meeting is an informal setting that allows for (and encourages) dialog between the pastor and the members. Ask a question—get an answer! Express your opinion! Share your great ideas for the future of our church!
- A church business meeting is also an opportunity to see in detail what the church’s finances look like. We’ve got a graph on the back of the weekly church bulletin that keeps us informed of the offering that’s been coming in, but the financial report at a church business meeting lets you see where the money goes—and how much remains of the budgeted amount. If something isn’t clear, you’ve got a chance to ask questions.
- A church business meeting gives you a preview of upcoming plans and allows you to have an impact on those plans. You may be asked to share your opinions and suggestions, or you may be asked to approve by a vote. In any case, you’re part of the process!

So that’s what you missed (if you weren’t there), and to top it off, there was a free meal (ice cream, too!) supplied by church board members. Maybe we’ll see you next time?

Steve Dickerson
Communications Secretary