

Sparta Reformed Presbyterian Church
Session Report to Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery
February 16, 2022

Overview

The Lord has graciously provided for us in the midst of nationwide shutdowns and ministerial transitions and we stand ready to continue and grow as a congregation of Christ Jesus and to work toward the growth of Christ's kingdom in Sparta and the surrounding region.

Pastor

Ross Fearing completed his first full year as pastor this year and continues to serve in the United States Army Reserve as a Chaplain, assigned to the 77th Quartermaster Group in El Paso, TX, completing Army duty one weekend a month and a few five-to-seven-day stints throughout the year.

Public Ministry

The congregation continued to worship morning and evening each Lord's Day, with Ross providing most of the preaching. Because Ross serves in the Army approximately fourteen Lord's Days each year, we thank Pastor Terry Dowds (OPC, formerly RPCNA at Shawnee, KS) for providing regular pulpit supply as well as Pastors Bill Roberts and Bruce Martin for preaching for us as well. This year we have considered the books of Ruth, Ezra, Romans, in the preaching and are currently engaged in Nehemiah and Mark.

Regular Sabbath School continued this year with Jeanne Finley teaching the elementary and kindergarten class. Ross Fearing taught the middle and high school class, and Bill Wilson and Bob Finley led the adult class. In the last two months Ross began teaching a combined adult and youth class on the Shorter Catechism. We celebrated communion March 21, September 26, and January 16 (2022).

On September 25, 2021, we celebrated our 200th anniversary with a community cookout and thanksgiving service. We had over 100 people in attendance with representation from across the RPCNA as well as from Sparta.

Session

The session consists of Moderator Ross Fearing, Clerk James Odom, and Elder Bob Morrow. In December 2021, Elder Morrow's health has declined and he has had to be moved to a full-time skilled care facility (he is almost 90). Please pray for us as he is unable to attend church nor practically function as a local Session member.

In the last year we two communicant members, Jim and Betty Jones, and one baptized member, Lawrence Fearing, to the membership role.

There are currently 16 active resident communicant members, 7 resident baptized members, 2 non-resident baptized members, and 1 inactive baptized member on the roll. For morning worship average attendance was 23 and for evening worship 20.

Properties

Last year we converted one room in the ministry house at 516 N. Maple St. to a pastor's office. This change has greatly helped Ross by giving him a dedicated space for study and meetings. Thanks to this change and work completed last year, the ministry house is in good condition and perfect for smaller group meetings.

The church building continues to be in good condition, without need of major repairs in the last year.

Finances

We are thankful for the work of several members of the congregation who assist in bookkeeping and financial work.

Giving increased substantially from the year so that despite increased expenses, the church ended the year with an increase of funds. God has graciously provided for the church's current expenses and as well as to pursue new endeavors.

Conclusion

This year we focused on building up the foundations of a healthy church through a consistent preaching ministry, building shepherding and discipleship relationships, and cultivating a life of prayer. We have seen important progress in each of these areas and will continue to pursue these focuses in the coming year.

In addition, we hope to be building on this foundation to have a more organized, consistent outreach into our community. In all these things we must remember that God has chosen to dwell with us his people here in Sparta RPC. We must strive to enjoy the blessing of his presence, live as fitting those who dwell in his presence, and share the relationship we have with him with those around us.

In Christ Jesus,

Sparta Reformed Presbyterian Church Session

Ross Fearing, Moderator
James Odom, Clerk
Robert Morrow

Appendix 1: Financial Report

	2021 Budgeted	2021 Actual	2022 Budget
Receipts			
Offering	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 68,323.18	
Interest	\$ 75.00	\$ 41.84	
Other	\$ 66.00	\$ 66.00	
Total	\$ 32,141.00	\$ 68,431.02	\$ 58,000.00
Expenses			
<i>Congregation</i>			
Ministry and Education	\$ 660.00	\$ 424.00	
General Supplies	\$ 580.00	\$ 332.61	
Pastoral Supplies	\$ 1,020.00	\$ 687.07	
Misc	\$ 100.00	\$ 150.00	
Total	\$ 2,360.00	\$ 1,593.68	\$ 3,000.00
<i>Pastoral Support</i>			
Salary	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 38,341.00	
Pension	\$ 4,400.00	\$ 1,100.33	
Guest Ministry	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,775.00	
Guest Travel	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,849.00	
Total	\$ 49,200.00	\$ 44,065.33	\$ 46,000.00
<i>Outreach</i>			
Local (Anniversary)	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 861.10	
Mercy	\$ 240.00	\$ 400.00	
Total	\$ 1,240.00	\$ 1,261.10	\$ 2,000.00
<i>Denomination</i>			
Presbytery Assessment	\$ 355.00	\$ 353.18	
Synod Assessment	\$ 1,102.00	\$ 1,104.00	
Synod and Pres. Delegate	\$ 360.00	\$ 405.50	
RP Global Missions	\$ 2,125.00	\$ 1,130.00	
RP M&M	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	
Total	\$ 4,942.00	\$ 3,492.68	\$ 4,000.00
<i>Church Property</i>			
Water	\$ 1,130.00	\$ 594.75	
Gas/Electric	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 1,625.36	
Insurance	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,701.00	
Cleaning	\$ 1,040.00	\$ 960.00	
Grounds	\$ -	\$ 650.00	
Supplies	\$ 480.00	\$ 6.98	
Website	\$ -	\$ 289.00	
Total	\$ 6,900.00	\$ 6,827.09	\$ 6,800.00
<i>Ministry House</i>			
Insurance	\$ 240.00	\$ 261.62	
Supplies	\$ 240.00	\$ 90.77	
Trash	\$ -	\$ 234.00	
Water	\$ 700.00	\$ 502.99	
Gas/Electric	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,021.22	
Total	\$ 2,280.00	\$ 2,110.60	\$ 2,200.00
Total Expenses	\$ 66,922.00	\$ 59,350.48	\$ 64,000.00
Starting Account Balance		\$ 82,486.45	\$ 91,566.99
Total Receipts		\$ 68,431.02	\$ 58,000.00
Total Expenses		\$ (59,350.48)	\$ (64,000.00)
Net Change		\$ 9,080.54	\$ (6,000.00)
Ending Balance		\$ 91,566.99	\$ 85,566.99