

What Others Have to Say

John Unger, South Main member and former chair of the diaconate

When I first heard that Greg felt a call to service to God through the Ministry I was struck with awe and anticipation. The awe was that Greg heard God's call with such clarity that he would step away from a long and successful career as a trial lawyer with all the rewards and security that brings, to a life of service as an instrument of God among us. And the anticipation is of seeing Greg's gifts of intellect, communication, compassion, insight, empathy, creativity and love unfold as he joins the rest of the similarly gifted staff to lead us to worship, discover and share. Can you doubt that God is the source of this call to Greg? I can't. In this call to Greg can you hear God calling us, too? I can. May we all rejoice in God's call.

Erin Conaway, Pastor at Seventh and James Baptist Church, Waco

I was beyond thrilled to hear that God has been working in Greg's life and in the discernment process of the Personnel Committee and staff to call him as your newest minister. He is a brilliant teacher whose mind is surpassed only by his passion for exploring together the deep places of our faith and our lives. He is a powerful listener with a heart wide open and I know you will treasure his serving South Main as a minister of the Gospel in your midst. The only comfort I had in leaving was trusting that God would call someone new to care for you and walk with you. I couldn't be more delighted for the church and for Greg as you all embark on this new adventure together.

Shirley Wright, former CEO, Boys and Girls Country

Greg was an active board member of Boys and Girls Country during my 14-year tenure as Executive Director. He volunteered for thorny leadership roles and always met commitments. His unique way of listening and summarizing helped board members create a new and ongoing vision for the organization – and meet goals year after year. Greg “got us” – the needs, the ideal solutions, and the realities we faced. He patiently cut through rhetoric, and kindly, gently, led us to the heart of every challenge. What a shepherd he is and how he will bless your ministry!

Bobbie Lott, South Main member

When Greg was a younger man, in his 20's, his heart was already set on a path toward pastoral care. He was one among a small group of South Mainers who weekly visited cancer patients at MD Anderson Hospital, in partnership with the hospital chaplaincy. Greg ministered faithfully, after leaving his workday, to the 5 or 6 patients who had been assigned to him each week. It was unusual for a person so young to volunteer in the Friends 'n Deeds ministry of South Main. Who could have known that God was preparing him for the ministry that lies ahead for him? Amazing!

Tracey Brown, CEO, The Amazing Place

During his six years of service at Amazing Place it became clear that Greg's faith is always at the heart of his priorities and decisions. In dealing with others he is fair, kind, wise and positive. He is truly authentic and is devoted to his Lord and his family. Greg is guided by priorities... he goes to what is most important.

Linda Funderburk, South Main member

Greg has the heart of a minister, and always has since I've known him for over thirty years. His mother, Patricia, was a minister at heart to everyone she met. She taught Greg, and his sisters and brother, by example. We are so happy that Greg has been led to this decision.

Martha Dethrow, South Main member

When I heard surprising and good news that Greg Funderburk would be joining the SMBC staff, my first thought was “this feels so right.” I had the opportunity to walk with him through his Discovery Weekend experience back in June 2007. When I recently looked at the records from that group, I saw he had discovered his spiritual gifts of creative communication, leadership and administration and had identified his passion as equipping others growth/education. Now I know why “this feels so right.”

Welcome Greg Funderburk

January, 2012



Minister to Adults/ Pastoral Care



South Main
BAPTIST CHURCH

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Dr. Steve Wells, Pastor
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smbc.org

From Your Search Committee

The Personnel Committee takes great pleasure in announcing that one of our very own, Greg Funderburk, has accepted the call to join South Main's pastoral team as Minister to Adults.

Greg and his wife, Kelly, have been members of South Main since 1994. Their sons, Hank and Charlie, started life at South Main on the Cradle Roll, and we have watched with pleasure as Greg and Kelly raised their sons here. We also have seen Greg and Kelly's Christian faith grow and mature, as they gracefully and effectively served Christ's people at 4100 Main Street. Over the years, as some of the comments in this brochure suggest, Greg in particular has developed a reputation as an excellent teacher, servant leader, counselor, deacon, and visionary. At the same time, Greg developed and prospered in a successful career as a civil trial lawyer here in Houston.

While the Personnel Committee did not foresee at the start of the search process that someone like Greg, with his successful career in the secular world of the law, would be willing to turn aside from that career and take up the mantle of Christian ministry, that is precisely what Greg felt God's call to do. After a lengthy search process that commenced after Erin Conaway's departure and continued through November 2011, including interviews with several excellent candidates (any one of whom would have served us well), the Personnel Committee concluded that Greg's call to the ministry was fully in line with what the Committee believed God's will to be for South Main's future. Therefore, we are delighted that Greg has accepted our call as a Minister to Adults.

While Greg will be physically present on South Main's campus every Sunday between now and the end of January (just as he has been for nearly two decades), his first "official" day as Minister to Adults will be Sunday, January 29, 2012. Details of a welcome reception for Greg on that date will follow shortly.

As our newest Minister to Adults, Greg will shoulder two important responsibilities. First, Greg will support, encourage, and oversee discipleship for adults ranging from 35 to 60 years of age, and at the same time, he will provide pastoral care for that same age group, which faces many of the same issues that Greg himself has faced (including the responsibilities of raising a family and assisting parents entering their senior years). Second, Greg will have over-all responsibility for the provision of pastoral care on a congregation-wide basis. In this endeavor, Greg will coordinate a pastoral care team that includes all of our ministers, and in particular, our other Ministers to Adults, Amy Grizzle Kane (working chiefly with adults under age 35) and Tom Williams (adults over age 60). The Personnel Committee anticipates a further report to the congregation in the near future on the allocation of these and other ministerial responsibilities, along the lines outlined by the Pastor's State of the Church address on August 28, 2011.

Your Personnel Committee rejoices that Greg and his family have been a part of South Main for so many years, and that Greg will now bring his gifts of compassion and servant leadership to our adult and pastoral care ministries. Please join us in welcoming Greg to the pastoral team.



SMBC Personnel Committee

Janice Anderson (chair, 2011)
James H. Barkley (member 2012)
Jan Barkley (member 2011)
Larry Carroll (member 2011)
K. Wade Cline (member 2011-12)
David Wilks Corban (member 2011, & chair, 2012)
John O. McCoy, Jr. (member 2012)
Nancy O. McNiell (member 2011-12)
Curtis Mooney (member 2011-12)
Emily Nelson (member 2011-12)
Betty Sellers (member 2011-12)

Called to Ministry



Kelly and I joined South Main on Easter Sunday in 1994. I had attended the church for a few years, sitting in the back, enjoying the worship, mostly, I must admit, as a spectator. After joining though, a testimony from Roberta Torn prompted me to begin serving as a hospital visitor at MD Anderson through the church's Friends 'n Deeds ministry. I can't forget the first time I went on a visit. It was with Gordon Musgrove. As we arrived, Gordon passed up multiple terrific spots in the parking garage, explaining, "I like to leave the good places for the people coming to the hospital for treatment and their families." Perhaps this was a small gesture, but it was significant and memorable to me because I began to see, in real life situations, that South Mainers were doing the thousand little things on which true worship is based. Then, as Bobbie Lott, Dorothy Daniels or Mary Ann

Doggett gave me names of patients to visit at the hospital each week, I began to understand the power of this ministry. It seemed, for me at least, the power resided simply in being present and available and to listen.

Not long after that, rising from our pew after church one Sunday, Kenneth Chafin, turned to us, introduced himself, and invited us to a new Sunday morning class he was starting. We were there the following week and have been a part of a small community at South Main ever since. For both Kelly and me, and now, our children, Hank and Charlie, this has become a vital part of the rhythm of our lives, not only edifying, but connecting us to friends who are going through the same things we are and preparing us in unexpected ways to contend with life. My involvement Sunday mornings soon led to opportunities to teach, then to chair some committees, to serve as a deacon, to work with Erin Conaway and so many others in missions, and later to contribute to strategic and vision efforts of the church.

Meanwhile the practice of law here in Houston was bringing me into close professional contact with some incredible mentors, most significantly, my uncle, Larry Funderburk, who taught me the importance of preparation and the process and details of good work. My practice also provided contacts, which led to service on non-profit boards, where I began to suspect I should listen for a calling to serve further, perhaps in a different way in the future. In this effort to listen with intention, it turned out I heard and felt something I didn't initially expect.

In the fall of last year when I came to understand the church would focus its search for a new minister to adults who shared the very life-station issues we were going through, Kelly asked me if this new position was something I had thought about. It was. Even before she asked me, I felt like there was not only the germination of an idea borne from that listening, but a sort of pull somehow connected, not only to my love for this church, but to something else. In seeing my mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's, embody notions of the sweetness I associate with the Holy Spirit and in remembering the life of my father, who, before he passed away in 2010, had characterized the idea of duty and capability in such a way that modeled God as Father to me, I felt compelled to respond to the possibility of a new direction.

While I know, and confess humbly, that I have a lot to learn, I could not be more grateful for this chance. This honestly feels to me like the intersection between a place to which good-hearted people in my life have pointed, and a place where God has quietly, but incredibly, invited me to serve. I pray for God's continued grace and much appreciate yours, as together we work to find what more God has in store.


Greg Funderburk