



SAXE GOTHAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHURCH INFORMATION FORM

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY SESSION: DEC 2023

Saxe Gotha
is a church that is
rooted in Scripture
welcoming to all
& committed
to outreach, service
and fellowship



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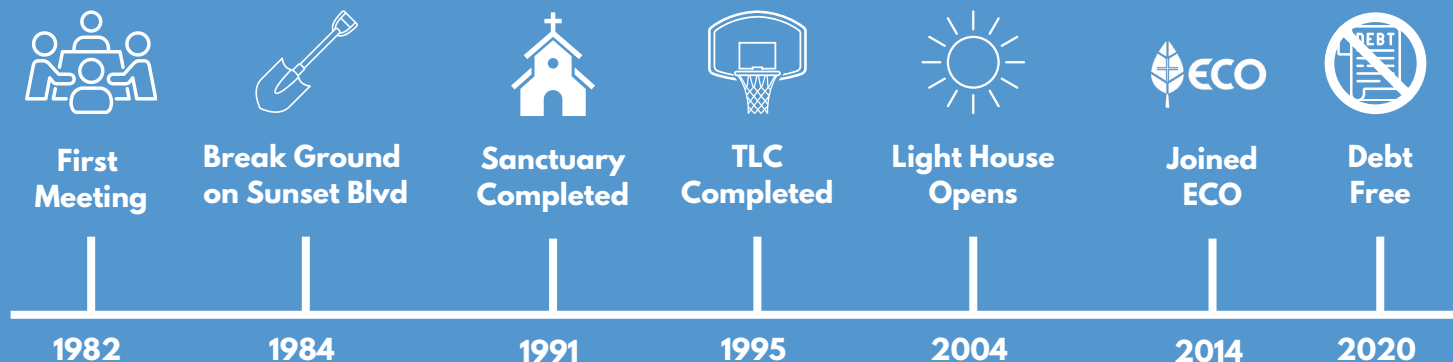
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A history of faithful service



OUR HISTORY

Saxe Gotha Presbyterian's first worship service was held on February 14, 1982, with 14 people present. Reverend Robbie McBride was called on August 15, 1982. The church went from being a New Church Development to an organized church on October 17, 1982, having been initially sponsored by Congaree Presbytery (PCUS) and later made part of Trinity Presbytery (PCUSA). When membership reached 175 members, we moved to our present location on Sunset Boulevard in December of 1984. The first building is now known as the Fellowship Hall. This building served as the primary worship location until construction of the sanctuary was completed in 1991, with the first service being held on Palm Sunday. The church membership had grown to 550 by that time.



Expansion of the SGPC campus over the next 13 years would include The Total Life Center (TLC) in 1995, containing a gym, kitchen, and classrooms, and the Light House in 2004. This is the location for our contemporary worship service - AWE, or Alternative Worship Experience – as well as several Sunday school classes, Bible studies, youth activities, a canteen, and a few staff offices.

Reverend McBride left Saxe Gotha in 2003, and was replaced by interim pastor Dr. Leslie Holmes. He served Saxe Gotha for 2 years until Reverend Dr. James Glatz was called in 2005. Pastor Jim, as he was affectionately known, served the congregation until his retirement in July 2022.

On Sunday, September 22, 2013, our congregation elected to be dismissed from the Trinity Presbytery (with our campus property), and from the PCUSA. On October 8, 2013, the Trinity Presbytery voted to release our church and its pastors; and on January 1, 2014, Saxe Gotha officially joined ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians. This bold action taken by our Session and faithful congregation has placed us in fellowship with Presbyterians who are committed to living in obedience to Scripture and making disciples of all nations. Immediately prior to the pandemic in 2020, we successfully completed a 3-year debt retirement campaign, and we are now proud to be debt free!

Worship Study Fellowship Serve



SAXE GOTHA TODAY

Saxe Gotha Presbyterian Church is home to more than 1100 covenant partners who love to worship God, study His Word, fellowship with each other, and serve the community through our various [ministries](#). We are currently led by Rev. Dr. Morgan Murray, who has served as our Transitional Pastor since January 2023.

During this transition, we have worked with A.E. Sloan Leadership (AESL) to better define who we are, where we need to faithfully change and grow, and how God intends for us to care for Greater Lexington. We are passionate about seeing our neighbors come to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and becoming His disciples.

> **425**
AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

> **40+**
SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

> **75+**
MINISTRIES

> **\$0**
DEBT



WORSHIP

At Saxe Gotha, our weekend services are an opportunity to worship our Lord and to fellowship with other believers. Each Sunday, we have 3 services. The 8:30 am and 11:00 am services are traditional in style and are held in the Sanctuary. The 10:45 am “AWE” Contemporary Service is held in the Light House Auditorium. All three services include a sermon, reading of God’s word, and worship through music and prayer. Communion is served by the pastoral staff with assistance from Elders and Deacons once a month in all three services. Childcare is provided during our Sunday morning services. Sunday school for all ages is held each Sunday during the 9:45 to 10:30 am period and is an integral

part of the spiritual growth of the congregation. Saxe Gotha’s current weekly worship service attendance average is above 425 across the three services, and although weekly worship participation has been on the rise, we are still well below the pre-COVID average in person attendance of over 500.

During the pandemic, like most churches, we turned to live-streaming to serve our congregation. We continue to live-stream the Traditional Services, and the 10:45 am AWE Contemporary Service as resources allow. Those services minister to an average of 25 viewers weekly.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

NEXT GENERATION



Through the NextGeneration ministry, we aim to build biblical foundations and Christ-centered relationships that span birth-high school. We focus on Christian education in children and youth Sunday school classes. Outreach and growth are encouraged through programs like Vacation Bible School, Mother's Morning Out, and mid-week Bible studies that are offered in the mornings and evenings for middle and high school. The opportunity to connect with families in both the congregation and community has been successful through Bible study programs (Seekers, Club45, Oasis, and Refuge) and choirs (Pre-K, Elementary and Youth Praise Band) on Sunday nights for Preschool-12th grade.

ADULT MINISTRIES



Adult ministries at Saxe Gotha continue to be active, with various activities being offered for men and women to grow in their obedience to Christ through Biblical education, service, and fellowship. Men's ministry has included yearly wild game dinners, a weekly Caring Connections luncheon group, and weekly Bible studies. Women's ministry includes Circle Groups, weekly Bible Studies, an Annual Spring Luncheon, and several other social gatherings throughout the year.

COVENANT PARTNERS

Guests are invited to become covenant partners by participating in a short series of classes that help them understand the role of Protestantism in the whole of the Christian faith, how Reformed Presbyterian theology fits into this role, and distinctives of the ECO denomination, including covenant partnership and the Essential Tenets. At the end of this program, they are interviewed by Session regarding their faith, and are voted into membership.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Saxe Gotha also has on campus a vibrant child development center that is used to grow children of God who may or may not be members of the congregation. The Saxe Gotha CDC provides developmentally appropriate care and education for children through its preschool program (children 2-4 years), extended care program (3 and 4-year-olds) and afterschool program (5K-5th grade children).



**the body is not
made up of one
part, but of
many**

SAXE GOTHA'S LEADERSHIP

Our Senior Pastor will serve as head of staff, directly overseeing two Associate Pastors, whose roles are to lead our Adult Ministries and Next Generation Ministries. Both Associates are active in the pulpit and life of the church. The Senior Pastor also directly supervises the Director of Music and Worship Arts and the Business Administrator.

In total, Saxe Gotha employs 11 full-time staff members and 23 part-time staff members, who average 7 years tenure.

Saxe Gotha has not been immune to the recent trend in workforce changes, and has several staff positions in transition.

We are currently searching for well-qualified people to fill full-time positions for Director of Music and Worship Arts, Director of Children's Ministry, Director of Public Relations and Digital Operations, Assistant Director of Student Ministries, and a part-time Audio Engineer position.

Session is comprised of the 3 pastors and 12 elders. Leadership is further extended by 30 deacons serving the ministries of the church. Session and each ministry meet once a month to continue the work of the church through discussions about matters relevant to our operations and individual ministries.

MISSIONS

Saxe Gotha Presbyterian was founded and built to be a church that would attract people from the community, and provide a wide variety of activities that would enable them to spend much of their time on campus with their families. We have realized in recent years that this model may not be as effective anymore, and have made a concerted effort to become more missional in our approach. Saxe Gotha loves the people of Lexington, and we are committed to serving them and other people around the world, with the hope that our efforts to share the Gospel will point them to Christ as their ultimate hope.

LOCAL MISSIONS

We have several local partnerships within the greater Columbia area that seek to address societal issues that include addiction, human trafficking, abortion, and hunger.

MIGRANT MINISTRY

Saxe Gotha has a Migrant Ministry that works in partnership with a local Spanish-speaking congregation to support migrant farmers by providing monthly meals, fellowship, and a Gospel message.

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

Our missional efforts are not only within the local community. There are a number of global missionaries and groups that we support in areas such as South Sudan, Jamaica, Belize, Cameroon, and Central Asia.

SEASONAL MISSIONS

Saxe Gotha also has yearly service projects to support Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child, Lexington District One's Backpack Program, and our own Operation Turkey at Thanksgiving.

NAILBENDERS

The Nailbenders is a group of men at the church that perform repair projects for people in need around the community, working one Saturday a month to complete the needed repairs.

OUR VISION FOR CHANGE & GROWTH

Under the advisement of AESL, the work that our leadership and transition teams recently completed helped us to identify who we are, what our community needs, and how we may uniquely minister to it. In order to do this effectively, there are four areas in which we need to faithfully change and grow:

1

We need to grow in our capacity to **embrace change**, experiment, and let go of ideas and practices that are no longer effective.

2

Our vision requires us to become more deeply **unified** as a community that is centered in discipleship, with a deep culture of corporate prayer.

3

We need to re-inspire a passion to **proclaim and demonstrate the Gospel** with generous love and deep care to a community that is lost and hurting.

4

We need to develop a new creativity for **reaching the next generation**.

OUR TOWN

Lexington is a beautiful town located in the heart of South Carolina, within 15 miles of the capital city of Columbia. It is a direct descendent of the 18th century township of Saxe Gotha, from which our church was named. Our town is the seat of Lexington County, which is home to over 300,000 people. With around 25,000 residents, it is one of the fastest growing cities in our area. Total population has increased by over 133% since 2000, with an average year on year increase of nearly 4%. This trend is expected to continue, as more people from out of state are attracted to Lexington for so many reasons.

Residents find Lexington desirable for its small-town feel with the convenience of larger city amenities, such as shopping centers, restaurants, and health care facilities. We are in close proximity to many natural landscapes, such as Lake Murray and the Saluda, Broad, and Congaree Rivers. Our town is centrally located 2 hours from the Blue Ridge Mountains, and 2 hours from Charleston, SC and the Carolina coastline. The local airport is just 15 minutes away, and the major cities of Atlanta and Charlotte are within a 3 hour drive. Locally, there are endless sports, outdoor activities, entertainment, and community events to explore. There is always something to do for any age group.

Our town's rankings for job growth, outlook, and safety are among the best nationwide:

- Our 3-year employment growth was 3.7% in 2019, which outpaced the regional average of 2.5%.
- The Lexington One School District is consistently ranked one of the top in the state, as well as having many schools that are nationally recognized leaders.
- The University of South Carolina is located in nearby Columbia, and several other colleges, universities, and tech schools are within driving distance.
- Lexington County is also served by two excellent hospital systems.



Saxe Gotha's campus is centrally located on a highly visible property along Sunset Boulevard, which is the main thoroughfare for the Town of Lexington. Through our recent work with AESL, our leadership has determined that there are significant opportunities for ministry right outside of our doors. Residents are concerned with the difficulty of maintaining community character in the midst of rapid growth. Other concerns expressed about Lexington by our community members include lack of diversity, social cliques, lack of empathy, and how to best respond to issues of poverty, addiction, mental health, and divorce.

Roles of our desired Senior Pastor

Saxe Gotha Presbyterian Church is seeking a full-time, ordained Senior Pastor to lead our congregation and staff to faithfully live as disciples of Jesus Christ, and to steward the resources of His church. The following roles will be expected of our ideal candidate.

- Lead our pastoral staff in faithfully preaching the truth of sacred Scripture from the pulpit. Our members are theologically conservative and come from numerous denominational backgrounds. We hold to a reformed theological belief that scripture is the authoritative Word of God. Our Senior Pastor must be able to communicate these truths clearly and effectively to people of all ages, with various levels of knowledge - believers and the lost - so that all who hear may be “made wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim 3:15)
- Serve as the head of staff and moderator of Session. This person will work with Session and lay leaders to determine the best evangelical opportunities for growth within the congregation and community. They will have a clear commitment to the Church’s mission in the community and abroad to spread the Word of God.
- Evaluate staff structure and roles, as well as that of church leadership.
- Provide adaptive leadership in guiding a congregation united in God’s truth.
- Biblically and gracefully deal with conflicts that may arise among believers by navigating difficult conversations with emotional intelligence.
- Celebrate the sacraments along with the Associate Pastors
- Oversee pastoral care of the congregation
- Perform weddings and funerals for members when requested

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

- Master of Divinity Degree or higher
- Ordained by ECO or eligible for ECO ordination, by virtue of theological convictions consistent with Reformed traditions and adherence to ECO's Essential Tenets
- Demonstrated passion and ability for Biblical preaching and teaching
- Strong strategic, leadership, and management skills that builds trust among staff, leadership, and the congregation
- Clear commitment to the church's mission in the community and abroad, including desire and ability to develop a strategy for reaching the next generation
- Training and experience in creating a culture of discipleship for the entire congregation
- Deeply committed to personal study and prayer and emotional/spiritual health
- Biblical character and integrity

TO APPLY

Please submit a cover letter that includes your resume/CV, personal testimony, and links to 3 sermons (video preferred) to the Pastor Nominating Committee via email to saxegothapnc@gmail.com. We will confirm receipt of your materials within 2 business days.

