

## Blackford, Bret B.

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**From:** M Bret Blackford <bret\_blackford@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 1, 2024 6:25 AM  
**To:** Bret Blackford; Blackford, Bret B.  
**Subject:** MX Sr Minister Search - as of 02.29.2024

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### MEMO to FILE

Below Steve Awtrey and Steve Walker share their thoughts after initial interviews with **Michael Santiago** on February 28, 2024 and **Josh Nix** on February 29, 2024.

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----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Steve Awtrey <steve.awtrey@gmail.com>  
**To:** Stephen Walker <srainey6@yahoo.com>  
**Cc:** Jeff Kryder <jkryder@mcknightcrossings.org>; M Bret Blackford <bret\_blackford@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 29, 2024 at 09:48:47 PM CST  
**Subject:** Re: MX Sr Minister Search - as of 02.29.2024

Both candidates were impressive. They both felt a strong calling to preach. Both have very interesting backgrounds that I believe will help them to relate with people. **Michael has more ministry experience in a full time church setting.** **Josh is older and has more life experience. He was an entrepreneur with his personal training business.** They both seem to have a strength in their people skills.

Both have no experience in full time preaching. If we hired either of them, our expectations should be to help them grow into the position.

**Both are really good guys.**

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On Thu, Feb 29, 2024 at 8:35 PM Stephen Walker <srainey6@yahoo.com> wrote:

Jeff Kryder was also on the calls.

Awtrey and Kryder will likely have additional observations. Here are a few of my thoughts.

Both candidates were impressive for different reasons. **Michael is the younger of the two but seems to have a good upside. He has a sharp mind. He's overcome a number of non-self-induced obstacles. Demonstrated a level of maturity beyond his years.**

**Josh seems like he would be bettered prepared to hit the ground running in terms of the preaching. He may have some challenges in other areas, but probably are things he can overcome. He expressed a passion for evangelism and discipleship.**

The plan is to interview two additional candidates and rank them before making a recommendation for next steps. As of now **both candidates are worthy of additional consideration.**

Those are my thoughts.

I believe we recorded Josh Nix interview for the Elders to watch.

Sent from my iPad

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On Feb 29, 2024, at 7:44 PM, M Bret Blackford <bret\_blackford@yahoo.com> wrote:

Steve^2 (Steve A. & Steve W.)

Brothers, appreciate the work you two are doing with initial vetting of candidates. Here is my understanding of interviews to date:

1. **Michael Santiago** - initial convo 2/28/2024 (done)
2. **Josh Nix** - initial convo 2/29/2024 (done)
3. **Ethan Laster** - initial convo planned 3/1/2024

Can you give me your initial impressions of Michael and Josh and if the two of you feel they are worth a second interview. I'd like to get your thoughts while they are still fresh. Did anyone else sit in on the initial interviews?

I'm trying to find a good way to summarize efforts. Initial document is [here](#), but this is still a work in process.

--- Bret