

## Ethan Laster

Ph.D. Candidate | Saint Louis University  
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Jeff Kryder  
Senior Minister  
McKnight Crossings Church of Christ  
2515 S. McKnight Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63124

February 29, 2024

To Jeff Kryder and Senior Minister Search Committee,

I am writing to express my interest in the opening for Senior Minister at McKnight Crossings. Although I am currently working as a Ph.D. candidate and instructor in the Department of Theological Studies at Saint Louis University, my academic studies are simply one expression of a lifelong call to ministry that God has placed on my life. I love the Church, and my deepest desire is to serve and equip Christ's Body for proclaiming the Gospel, forming disciples, and loving neighbor as self. My ministry has taken many forms over the years; I have served as a youth and associate minister for a rural congregation, as a student resource coordinator for a university, as a volunteer teacher and preacher in various communities, and as a teacher and student of academic theology. While these experiences are diverse, each has shared a common theme of caring for and forming souls in Christian discipleship. I am excited at the possibility of returning to congregational ministry and believe that the broad skill set I have acquired would serve me well in leading, caring for, and preaching the Word of God to your congregation.

One of the major appeals of the position at McKnight Crossings for me is location. I love St. Louis—the community, the culture, the environment—and I love the Church here. St. Louis has become a second home to my family, and I want to see the Gospel proclaimed and lived out faithfully and creatively in this city. While I am still learning, I am aware of some of the unique opportunities and challenges that come with ministering in St. Louis, including its long history of racism and poverty, as well as its rich Catholic culture. I would love to be a small part of God's work in this city and region, coming alongside McKnight Crossings in imagining how the Kingdom of Heaven might be more fully realized in St. Louis, and working to “equip the saints” for ministry to this community.

Should the need arise, I would also be happy to discuss preaching on an interim basis for McKnight Crossings. I understand that searches for such an important role require a great deal of time and discernment, and do not always adhere to neat timelines. Given my residence in the St. Louis area, and my experience in the pulpit, I would be willing and able to serve your community in a temporary capacity as you determine the best person for the position in the long term.

Thank you for your consideration! I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Best,  
Ethan Laster

# Ethan Laster

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Theological Studies, Saint Louis University

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## FORMAL MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

**North Main Church of Christ, Winters, TX** — *Youth and Associate Minister*

January 2015 – January 2018

- Served congregation of 100+ members
- Coordinated Wednesday night outreach program to neighborhood youth and children
- Managed and equipped youth ministry volunteers
- Taught Sunday morning and Wednesday night classes (adults and teens)
- Preached and provided congregational pastoral care
- Served as interim preaching/senior minister (Aug. 2015–Jan. 2016)

**Various Summer Ministry Internships, United States**

Summer 2011, Summer 2012, Summer 2013, Summer 2014

- Summer ministry intern for the following congregations: Heritage Church of Christ (2011; Ft. Worth, TX), Homewood Church of Christ (2012; Birmingham, AL), Bammel Road Church of Christ (2013; Houston, TX), Little Rock Church (2014; Little Rock, AR)
- Received mentoring in the practice of ministering to children, teens, adults, and families

## TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Saint Louis University, Saint Louis, Missouri** — *Instructor, Department of Theological Studies*

August 2022 – Present

- Teacher of Record for THEO 1600, "God-Talk: Ultimate Questions in Theology"
- Plan and deliver lessons on various topics in Biblical studies, theology, Church history, and philosophy
- Research and produce dissertation on prayer in Ancient Christianity

**Saint Louis University, Saint Louis, Missouri** — *Graduate Assistant, Department of Theological Studies*

July 2019 – May 2022

- Assisted professors with research, grading, prepping course material, and other administrative needs
- Completed coursework in early Christianity, Biblical studies, theology, and spirituality

**Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas** — *Resource Coordinator, Office for Student Opportunity, Advocacy, and Resources (SOAR)*

August 2018 – May 2019

- Provided outreach and support to students in crisis at ACU
- Worked with students to direct them to appropriate on-campus and off-campus resources
- Established and maintained relationships between campus departments involved in student life

**Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas** — *Teaching and Graduate Assistant, College of Arts and Sciences*

January 2015–December 2018

- Managed Canvas (LMS) course setup, assignments, gradebooks
- Assisted with teaching, tutoring, grading as needed

## EDUCATION

**Saint Louis University**

St. Louis, Missouri

*Ph.D., Theological Studies*

In Progress

**Abilene Christian University**

Abilene, Texas

*M.A., Ancient Christianity*

August 2019

**Abilene Christian University**

Abilene, Texas

*Master of Divinity*

December 2018

**Abilene Christian University**

Abilene, Texas

*B.A., Biblical Texts and Ministry*

December 2014

## REFERENCES

**Randy Harris**

Instructor (Ret.)

*Department of Bible and Ministry*

Abilene Christian University

harrisra@acu.edu

325.370.2649

**Brock Paulk**

Senior Minister

Heritage Church of Christ

bpaulk@hccmail.org

817.454.0965

**Mike Brown**

Admin and Equipping Minister

Lafayette Church of Christ

mike.lafayettechurch@gmail.com

317.796.8720

**Colt McCook**

Former Preaching Minister

North Main Church of Christ

colt.mccook@gmail.com

501.827.1262

**Jeff Childers**

Carmichael-Walling Chair

*Graduate School of Theology*

Abilene Christian University

childersj@acu.edu

325.674.3797

## VOLUNTEER MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

### Lafayette Church of Christ, St. Louis, Missouri

Member 2019-Present

- Intermittent preaching (2-4 times a year)
- Teacher for Sunday morning and Wednesday night adult classes
- Teacher for Sunday morning and Wednesday night children's and teen classes
- Teacher for Ne-O-Tez summer camp (July 2023)
- A/V team for Sunday morning worship
- Young Working Professionals Small Group leader
- Young Working Professionals Fall Retreat leader

### Heritage Church of Christ, Fort Worth, Texas

Home Church; Member 1993-August 2011

- Intermittent preaching for home congregation, 2018-Present
- Preach 1-2 times per year

### North Central Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Indiana

October 2022

- Youth retreat guest speaker
- Led teens through study of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6

### Little Rock Church, Little Rock, Arkansas

February 2018

- Youth retreat guest speaker
- Led teens through introduction to spiritual disciplines

### Highland Church of Christ, Abilene, Texas

August 2011- December 2014; January 2018-July 2019

- Writer, Adult Bible Class Content Team (Spring 2019)
- Volunteer, Highland Cares Pastoral Ministry Team (January 2019-May 2019)
- Leader, College Ministry Small Group (August 2013-May 2015)

### Grace Church Intentional Community, Abilene, Texas

August 2015-December 2016

- Lived in intentional Christian community with three other men
- Built relationships with impoverished, transient, and homeless neighbors
- Hosted weekly community meal for neighbors

### Global Samaritan Resources, Abilene, Texas

2011-2015

- Weekly warehouse volunteer
- Assisted with gathering and shipping supplies for humanitarian aid and medical missions

## FAMILY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

### Family

- Born and raised in Fort Worth, TX
- Married to Sarah (Winkler) Laster for seven years
- Daughter—Miriam—due July 2024!

### Hobbies/Interests

- Hiking
- Reading
- Music
- Baseball

## SAMPLE SERMON LINKS\*

### “An Unexpected Savior” ([link](#))

Luke 2:22-40

*Heritage Church of Christ*

December 31, 2023

### “Inside Out” ([link](#))

Luke 11:37-34

*Lafayette Church of Christ*

October 29, 2023

### “Christ Abandoned, Christ Betrayed” ([link](#))

Matthew 26:47-56

*Lafayette Church of Christ*

October 16, 2022

\*Additional sermons and lessons available upon request.

## ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Available upon request.

## SELECT HONORS/AWARDS

### Abraham J. Malherbe Scholarship

Christian Scholarship Foundation

September 2023-May 2024

### Graduate Assistantship Award

Department of Theological Studies

Saint Louis University

2019-2024

### Logos Scholar

SCIO at Wycliffe Hall

Oxford, England

Summer 2018

### Promising Scholar Award

Stone-Campbell Journal

May 2018

### Academic Excellence Award

Graduate School of Theology

Abilene Christian University

May 2018

### Isaac Errett Award

Disciples of Christ Historical Society

March 2018

### Valedictorian Award

Abilene Christian University

December 2014