

Elders Meeting

July 1, 2024

6pm – 8pm

Attendees: Steve Walker, Don Fitzgerald, Brad Stevens, Bret Blackford, Dave Weiler, Steve Awtry (Chair), Jeff Kryder, Jeff McGlawn (visit), Ross Brown (visit), ~~Nathan Strickland~~

Next mtg.: Monday July 15 – Steve Awtry chair (hopefully discuss next steps with Ethan Laster)

1. 1 Peter 5:1-3

Steve Awtry also discussed the importance of Shepherds being good listeners. Provided some guidance as noted in **Attachment A**.

2. People

{{ various }}

3. July 7 sermon – Kaylynn Meyers

No negative comments heard by any of the elders. Again, having a woman preach is in-line with prior decisions made by elders¹.

4. Children’s Minister Search

The search committee plans to contact [Siburt](#) for additional guidance. Steve Walker updated on search committee progress and recommended consulting with Siburt (see **Attachment B**). A majority of the elders felt it would be worth the \$800-\$1,000 fee, so Steve Walker and the committee approved to proceed.

- Main question – how do we get more candidates?

Jeff McGlawn indicated he is willing to continue as the interim Nextgen minister as long as needed. We should check back with Jeff at the end of summer to revisit his availability.

5. Jeremiah Haywood Exit Interview

Steve Walker shared feedback received from Jeremiah. Overall positive, except for **“duties as assigned”**. This seems to be an issue for others in the ministry and not just for Jeremiah.

6. Ethan Laster Discussion

Don Fitzgerald and Jeff Kryder met with Ethan on Tuesday, June 25, to extend our offer and call Ethan to serve as minister here at McKnight Crossings church. Don and Jeff indicated there was healthy discussion and reasonable questions, and the overall feeling was positive. Ethan was given two weeks to pray and discuss with wife Sarah before responding. As of this writing no answer received from Ethan and expect some response by July 9, 2024. Don’s email summary of meeting [here](#). Memo of Understanding (MoU) [here](#).

Keep praying!

7. Jeff Kryder Retirement Reception

At the last elder meeting a budget of \$3,500 was approved for the reception (food, decorations, mailings). Steve Awtry communicated the budget to Kari Ferguson, who seemed fine with that budget.

Here are the notes from last meeting –

Jeff Kryder has requested his last Sunday to be somewhat of a reunion and he will invite several friends to attend, possibly: Jeremy Picker, Phil Gold, Bob Grigg, Dale Robinson, and others. There will be a luncheon after class that Sunday and the Elders have approved \$3,500 for food (main course) and decorations. Kari Ferguson will take the lead on the luncheon.

¹ reference 2014 MX Gender Study Summary document here -

<https://www.shepherd.mx.mxcoc.xyz/positions/docs/McKnight%20Crossings%20E2%80%93%20Gender%20Summary%20Fall%202014.pdf>.

8. Preaching Schedule

Elders agreed that non-MX preachers could receive up to a \$300.00 stipend. Steve Awtrey will start drafting a calendar, using the schedule noted at **Attachment C**. (also here - <https://tinyurl.com/5n9yvc37>). Steve Awtrey will start by getting Mike Root and Jerry Jones on the calendar.

Speakers will be instructed to not address politics, abortion, LGBTQ+. or other hot-button social issues.

Q: Are there any series we would like to cover during this time? Jeff Kryder might be able to offer some suggestions.

- Tithing would be good to address on multiple Sundays

9. LGBTQ+ Conversation

Steve Walker shared the [Rooftop Community Church Statement on Gender and Sexuality](#).

Although “marriage” is mentioned in the McKnight Crossings Church of Christ Core Beliefs ([Facility Rental Agreement \(mxcoc.xyz\)](#)). However, this is not on our website but has in the past been distributed to ministry leaders to affirm during budget submission.

It was discussed if Dave Weiler could present his thoughts on the Church and LGBTQ+, based on his recent study in this area. The Elders can then decide what, if anything, might be needed as far as a formal position on the matter. This should be done prior to a new minister as to avoid any suspicion that it was done on his request or prompting.

10. Miscellaneous

- **Office HVAC Replacement** – the main air conditioning unit for the office, RTU-9, failed during the heat at the end of June 2024. When checked it was determined the compressor died. After receiving multiple bids for replacement and repair it was decided to replace the unit at a cost of \$13,746. Trane YSC060G3HB, SN 333101288L
 - Detailed bid [here](#)
 - Warranty info [here](#)
- **New Color Copier/Printer** – the old color copier started to produce questionable color prints. A used color copier/printer was purchased to produce quality color prints. A Canon IR ADV C5550i II machine was purchased for \$3,908.57. Invoice [here](#).
- **Parking Lot** – last fall the parking lot had to be repaired and was sealed. However, the new areas of asphalt needed a season to cure before they could be sealed. They are now ready, and we have a bid to reseal and reapply parking marks. Price estimate: sealing \$835., striping \$550. Total Estimate: \$1,385 (info [here](#))
- **Don Fitzgerald stepping down** – Don mentioned he would like to retire from the eldership in about a year. This has been mentioned before so we need to find a way to honor Don’s request.
- **Winter Wonderland** – St. Louis Parks are considering WWL for winter 2024-25 and have requested the use of our lot for the following days: Mondays, November 25, and December 2, 9, 16 and 30. I requested the below, which they agreed to except they want MX to purchase event insurance and they will reimburse. Email [here](#)
 - St. Louis County Parks Department will purchase event insurance for the dates requested.
 - Payment of \$250.00 per date the parking lot is used. Fee to cover any possible snow removal, trash pickup, etc.

Other documents:

- July 3 Email Bulletin - [link](#)
- July 3, 2024 MXYG Newsletter - [link](#)
- July 3 Kidmin Newsletter – [link](#)
- [Rooftop Community Church Statement on Gender and Sexuality.](#) - [link](#)
- What Do Elders Do? – [link](#)
- McKnight Crossings Shepherding Model – [link](#)
- McKnight Crossings Shepherd’s Covenant – [link](#)
- McKnight Crossings Core Beliefs – [link](#)
 - Note: includes the following statement:
*We affirm that **marriage is ordained by God as a covenant made between a man and a woman**, which is the foundation of the family and representative of Christ and His church. Eph. 5:22-33; Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:23-24*
- McKnight Crossings – Gender Summary (Fall 2014) - [link](#)
 - Note: includes the following statements:
*We, the leadership, have asked ourselves whether we want to be among those contributing to the benefit of the next generation? If so, how? Our answer is that **we would like to do our part to strengthen the body of Christ and the mission of God, by allowing women every role our current understanding of the Scripture will enable***
*Therefore, as a leadership, at this time, **we do not believe that a woman should be the primary teaching minister** (which necessarily requires leadership) for the church **or serve in the role of an elder.***
*If our principles **allow women to use their gifts more fully ... We will encourage and build upon an inclusive use of gifts ... including leading worship and preaching a sermon.***

*Earth is crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.*
. --- Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Attachment A

Below presented at the 07.01.2024 elder mtg by Steve Awtrey

Shepherding Stuff

A Good Listener

Someone has said that this is especially true for the effective counselor (shepherd). Active listening is an essential skill for the one who wants to successfully work with people. The road to the heart is through the ears. A good listener should be able to restate back the content and feelings behind his statements without judging them, adding to them, correcting them, or leaving anything out. This does not mean that the counselor (shepherd) merely acts like a parrot and just repeats verbatim what a person says, but is able to capture the content, feeling, and meaning and restate them in his own words in such a way that it communicates a total grasp of what the person is thinking and experiencing.

“The single most important factor in effective counseling (shepherding) is the personhood of the counselor (shepherd). Regardless of one’s education, training, theoretical orientation, or counseling techniques, it is now widely accepted that if certain qualities are not brought to the helping relationship, little chance of successful intervention exists.”

Dr. Keith Olson sums it up well: *“You are the main ingredient in counseling (shepherding). The effectiveness of your counseling (shepherding) is determined primarily by the quality of your personality. The techniques that you use and the skills you possess, although important, are secondary to the quality of your being.”*^[4]

However, research has shown that there are certain characteristics that are found in the most successful counselors. You will want to try and incorporate those into your life if you wish to be the most effective counselor (shepherd).

The Discovery of the “Big Three”

What are the essential personality characteristics of effective counselors (shepherd)? Research has proven that clients of therapists improve if the therapist expresses high levels of 1) accurate empathy; 2) unconditional positive regard or warmth; and 3) genuineness or congruence. These findings have been supported by subsequent research and are found in practically every textbook on counseling and psychology. It will be helpful to define in more detail each particular characteristic.

1. Accurate Empathy

Empathy is the ability to communicate to another that you feel their pain. As far as it is humanly possible, you are sharing in their experience along with them whether it be grief, anger, depression, or hopelessness, etc. Empathy “implies both the capacity to enter into the feeling states and understandings of another person but also the capacity to communicate this to the person.”

Empathy is different from sympathy; it is deeper and stronger. With sympathy, you feel sorry for someone—but you are personally removed from the situation. With empathy, you feel sorry with someone—you enter into their situation and try to understand and experience it from the viewpoint of the client. “Sympathy is standing on the shore and throwing out a lifeline while empathy is jumping into the water and risking one’s safety to help another.”

2. Unconditional Positive Regard or Warmth

This is simply another way of saying “unconditional love” (Romans 5:8,10). It is nonjudgmental acceptance of people. Swiss counselor Paul Tournier said, “I have no methods. All I do is accept people.”

Caution: this does not mean that the counselor (shepherd) approves of all the current behaviors and choices of the teenager, but simply that he accepts the teenager as a worthwhile human being, made in the image of God and deserving of respect and care. “It is friendliness and consideration shown by facial expression, tone of voice, gestures, posture, eye-contact, and such non-verbal behavior as looking after the helper’s comfort.”

3. Genuineness or Congruence

This trait refers to the necessity of the counselor’s behavioral and affective display to match what he is communicating. It must also be in harmony with the content currently being communicated by the other person. In other words, if the counselor is verbally communicating words of care and concern, but his tone of voice and body language are sending a message of boredom and indifference, then he is not being congruent or genuine. Another example of failing to exhibit congruence would be if the individual is sharing about a very painful experience and the counselor has a smile on his face and a very self-satisfied demeanor.

“Genuineness cannot be faked. Either you sincerely want to help or you are simply playing the sterile role of a “helper”—hiding behind masks, defenses, or facades. In other words, authenticity is something you are, not something you do.”

Attachment B

Below from an email between Steve Walker and Carson Reed.

Proposed Scope of Collaboration Between MX and Siburt

- A. Have a Q&A with Jennifer to better familiarize Siburt with MX. This will help her to be better prepared to make recommendations to candidates who has openly expressed an interest in finding a new opportunity, as well as candidates that are on her pocket list.
- B. Discussion to better understand the role of Children’s Minister vs Family Minister and the qualifications of the candidates for each of the roles.
- C. If we establish a different direction for the role, we will have a discussion on the Job Description (JD).
- D. Miscellaneous Topics
 - a. Value of posting sites such as churchstaffing.com and churchjobs.net in addition how to best utilize Facebook.
 - b. Discussion of factors that contribute to long-term tenure.
 - c. Discussion of best practices for interim period with and without the position having an interim staff person.
 - d. Process for reviewing resume.
- E. Post-Hire
 - Factors that would promote healthy collaboration between ministers, staff and leadership.

Siburt Response:

Good afternoon. I hope you all are doing well, and I am so glad that you have people reaching out about the job.

I printed out your email and made some notes regarding estimations of time. In my experience, the most involved (and thus lengthiest conversations) of the items that you have listed in A through D would come out of items B, C, D2, and D3. I would also say that other essential pre-hiring conversations would be:

With that being said, I would estimate about 2-3 hours for all of the items that you listed in A through D, and maybe an additional 30-60 for the bullet points that I listed. If it is more about me needing to convey information so that you had the information at hand, then I could move significantly more quickly (and in even less time than I indicated above). If the desire is to give you space to really ask some questions, then it would be the upper time limit.

On the post-hire list that you made, I would estimate 1-2 hours. Again, the number is contingent upon conveyance of information versus conversation with space for questions.

And all of this would be done at the Siburt consulting hourly rate (\$200/hr, charged in 15 minute increments).

Yes, I could do multi-hour meetings. I am somewhat of a high energy person, and so I could make that work easily.

Estimate charge for services will be \$800-\$1,000.

Contact: Jennifer Schroeder, D.Min., DMA
Summit Director, Siburt Institute for Church Ministry
Jennifer worked 17 years as a Children Minister

Attachment C

Steve Awtrey presented at the 05.06.2024 Elder mtg.
 (on-line here - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1l-1KxQVyoWcJRrJCT9GiTauoSoafmDky/edit>)

Sunday schedule for August 25th through end of the year

Here are the dates for the Sundays from Jeff’s last sermon through the end of the year until Ethan starts, if we decide to hire him of course. This is “the liminal period”. ☺

August 25th – Jeff’s last Sunday/reception after worship

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| September 1 - | October 6 – |
| September 8 - | October 13 - |
| September 15 - | October 20 - |
| September 22 - | October 27 - |
| September 29 – | |
| November 3 – | December 1 - |
| November 10 - | December 8 - |
| November 17 - | December 15 - |
| November 24 - | December 22 – |
| | December 29 – |

January 5th – Ethan’s first Sunday

Here are some possible names that have been mentioned from my memory. In our discussions nothing was concrete, and neither is this list. This is just a list to get us started thinking about the future. Regardless of our plans with Ethan, this is a plan that we need to put together anyway. Are there any other ideas? Other names? Suggested series or every person for themselves? **If we decide on a series, I suggest Jeff help brainstorm about the series.** I would also suggest that if preaching is done internally, that we not pay them. If it is outside of our church we give an honorarium and expenses when applicable.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Names within our congregation: | Names outside our congregation: |
| Matthew Bardowell | Mike Root (do a series) |
| Jeff Fogarty | Jerry Jones (do a series) |
| Travis Myers | Dale Robinson |
| Kaylynn Myers * | Siebert people <- decided no |
| Brad Stevens | |
| Phillip Matheny | |
| Melanie Sewkarran * | |
| Eric McPherson (3) | |
| Nathan Strickland | |
| Other elders/ministry leaders? | |

* reference 2014 MX Gender Study Summary document here - <https://www.shepherd.mx.mxcoc.xyz/positions/docs/McKnight%20Crossings%20E2%80%93%20Gender%20Summary%20Fall%202014.pdf>.