

Dear Jeff and Steve,

Greetings! My name is David Mahfood, and I'm writing to be considered for the Senior Minister position at McKnight Crossings. My cousin Matthew Bardowell referred me to the position and encouraged me to send you a resume and apply. My background is mostly in the academic world, but I have seen that work as a form of ministry, and it's also given me opportunities for ministry experience both in the college context and at our church. For the last several years, I've been serving as a professor of theology at Johnson University's campus in Kissimmee, Florida, where I have taught courses in theology and philosophy as well as leading a d-group and preaching in our chapel on a regular basis (usually once or twice a semester). Johnson is a small school associated with Independent Christian Churches (close cousins of Churches of Christ). At the same time, my family and I have been attending St. Nicholas Anglican Church here in Kissimmee, and I've also provided regular preaching and teaching there. I've also taught online for Abilene Christian University's Graduate School of Theology (where I did my master's degree), and will be teaching for Harding School of Theology this fall.

Unfortunately, at the end of the Spring 2024 semester, Johnson made the difficult decision to close our Florida campus, and so I am looking for other opportunities to use my gifts and my training to serve the Lord, whether in a congregational or academic context. Thankfully my wife's career is geographically flexible, and so we are able to consider moving for the right opportunity. McKnight Crossings is an attractive place for my family and I. For one thing, my own background is in Churches of Christ, and my wife and I have attended Churches of Christ for most of our marriage up until our move to Central Florida back in 2017. I am deeply drawn to serving in a theologically healthy, non-sectarian Church of Christ context. I've also had many connections with folks there, including the Bardowells but also Alden Bass, Stephen Lawson, and Travis and Kaylynn Myers (my wife and I also visited once back in 2009!) and I've heard a lot of good things.

For my part, though I'm a bit more familiar with the academic job search process, my orientation as a theologian is to serve the Church. I am committed to the work of preaching, teaching, and mentoring, whatever the context. I have found as a professor that learning happens best through sustained relationships--I have been blessed at Johnson to be on a very small campus where I teach the same students in multiple classes throughout their degrees; seeing their growth over time both in and out of the classroom has been deeply fulfilling, especially seeing them develop the skills and maturity to minister themselves. I've enjoyed doing this in an academic context, but I believe I would enjoy very similar things (and in some ways better) in a congregational setting (and, indeed, I've found the teaching I've been able to do at church very rewarding as well). I recognize that I would need to learn new skills and processes to enable those things to happen effectively in a new setting. It would be a new kind of role for me, but I am very open to exploring whether it could be a good fit if it seems to you that it might be one. In any case, I will be praying for your search, and look forward to hearing from you one way or the other.

Blessings,

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