

Elders Meeting Agenda & Notes

December 23, 2024
6pm – 8pm

Attendees: Steve Walker, Don Fitzgerald, Brad Stevens, Bret Blackford (chair), Dave Weiler, Steve Awtry, Jeff McGlawn (visit), Ross Brown (visit)

Zoom meeting recording on-line [here](#).

Here is the agenda ...

1. ~~John Gunter~~ Sr Minister discussion (Steve 30-min)
 1. ~~next steps if accepts offer~~
 2. next steps if declines offer
 3. Communication to Congregation
2. Children’s Minister (CM) Next steps -
 1. Jeff McGlawn good to continue part-time but will need some weeks off in summer
 2. Do we start looking for a CM concurrent with Sr Minister search?
 3. Do we look for a PT or FT position?
3. 2024 Preaching Schedule - suggest we work on stability at podium (Steve A. 10-min)
4. Communion Guidelines - on-line [here](#). (Steve W. 5-min)
5. What do we Believe? Various discussions from prior meetings and documents. draft on-line [here](#). (Bret 10-min)
6. Collection – do we still need to pass the trays each week?
7. 2025 Budget (Dave 10-min) – **time did not allow discussion**
8. Rental Property (Bret/Steve W) - discuss issues with 1346 N Rock Hill
9. Trucks on MX parking lot (Brad 5-min) – **did not discuss**
10. People

Below are salary data points from the 3 candidates:

Candidate	Salary Offer/Total Package	Note
Ethan Laster	\$67,000 / \$87,810	Salary not an issue
Jason Mundie	\$80,000	Salary not an issue
John Gunter	\$80,000 / \$102,000	Looking for total package of \$126,800 (\$105,600 salary)

Note (per Dave Weiler): Jeff Kryder's total package was \$135,000

1. Senior Minister Discussion and Next Steps:

Previous candidates Jason Mundie and John Gunter would not be moving forward, and the group considered reaching out to Philip Matheny again to gauge his interest, as well as discussing potential candidates and the importance of establishing a salary range (\$65,000 - \$80,000) to avoid surprises during negotiations.

During the meeting, Jeff highlighted the importance of knowing salary expectations early in the hiring process to avoid mismatched expectations, referencing a candidate's high salary demand. Steve and Don discussed the need to establish appropriate salary ranges and consider the local market. Steve Awtry was hesitant about publicizing salaries, while Don Fitzgerald recommended discussing candidates' financial expectations early on. Jeff supported the idea of transparency, noting that many job postings include salary ranges to ensure candidates are aligned with the budget.

Group decided that salary expectations would be part of a second interview with candidates.

We are back to step 1. Interview Candidates in our [search flow](#).
Reminder, our Sr Minister Job Search summary document is on-line [here](#).

Action Items:

- Steve Awtry will follow up with Philip Matheny to gauge his interest in the minister position.
- Steve Awtry will talk with [Michael Santiago](#) next month regarding potential interest in the minister position.

2. Children’s Minister (CM) Next Steps:

Bret Blackford highlighted the need for a discussion on recruiting a children's minister during the first meeting in January. Jeff McGlawn emphasized the urgency of starting the search for a full-time minister to avoid delays, as he is currently managing the role part-time. Steve Awtrey mentioned the potential for outreach at the National Conference on Youth and Children's Ministries to gather resources. Will want an updated flyer ([like this](#)) he can hand out while at the conference (flyer needed by January 5th). The group decided to proceed with the search for a children's minister, with Jeff, Stephen, and Nathan ready to guide the new hire. Dave Weiler recommended considering Michael Womble ([resume](#) & [Zoom](#)) for the position, noting his local ties and interest in family ministry.

Action Items:

- Jeff McGlawn will provide input on the timeline and burden of the children's minister role.
- Ross Brown & Steve Walker will coordinate with Nathan Strickland and Hannah Grimshaw on the design of the [children's minister flyer](#), including a QR code to direct candidates to more information on the job.

3. Preaching Schedule:

Steve Awtrey shared feedback from the eldership regarding the inclusion of outside speakers for preaching, with some advocating for consistency and others supporting the idea of paying skilled preachers like Jerry Jones. Don Fitzgerald agreed on the value of compensating talented speakers, while Bret Blackford stressed the importance of curating a list of high-quality preachers. The conversation underscored the need for a balance between variety and consistency in preaching.

Jeff McGlawn asked Steve Awtrey about the development of preaching themes for the next year, highlighting the value of consistency in messaging. Steve shared that the initial theme is "standing firm," referencing scriptures from Ephesians and 1st Corinthians. He remains open to additional ideas for themes beyond early February.

Steve Awtrey and Dave Weiler explored the idea of a hospitality series and the potential involvement of Katie and Trevor Holloway in worship services. Jeff mentioned that they had previously inquired about Katie's availability, and Bret Blackford highlighted the difficulties in bringing the entire ACTS group together. The group agreed on the importance of having Katie and Trevor Holloway share their ministry passion with the congregation (with or without the ACTS students).

2025 Q1 Preaching Schedule (so far):

December 29	Nathan Strickland
January 5 th	Steve Awtrey
January 12 th	Logan Whalen
January 19 th	Matthew Bardowell
January 26 th	
February 3 rd	
February 10 th	possibly Jim Martin

Action Items:

- Jeff McGlawn will explore themes for preaching in the upcoming year and gather ideas from the team.
- Steve Awtrey will work on scheduling and planning activities through February, as he will be out of town in January.

4. Communion Guidelines:

Bret Blackford reviewed the newly established [communion guidelines](#), which are sent to individuals leading communion, and suggested reintroducing a time limit for communion thoughts (5-minutes).

Action Items:

- Stephen Walker will update the [communion guidelines](#) document noting a 5-minute timeline and distribute it to those leading communion.

5. What Do We Believe?

This draft document – [What Do We Believe](#) (for elders only and not to be published) - is Bret’s attempt to document key decisions made over the years in various elder meetings as well as from several key documents, such as the [MX Welcome Packet](#), [MX Core Beliefs](#), [MX 2014 Gender Study](#), and other items on the MX website (<https://www.mxchurch.org/>).

This draft document categorizes beliefs into essential and non-essential practices, and highlighted the need for clarity on these beliefs as the congregation considers hiring a new minister. The discussion included various topics such as women's roles in ministry and the interpretation of scriptural qualifications for elders.

* Note: the document on “[What do we believe](#)” is draft and only for the elders and is not intended to be shared publicly.

Action Items:

- Elders to review the draft document “[What do we believe](#)” and provide comments or changes as needed.

6. Passing Collection Trays:

Bret Blackford questioned the necessity of passing community trays for collection, proposing a collection box instead due to logistical challenges. Jeff McGlawn highlighted the difficulties with the communion process, while Stephen Walker pointed out the optics of modeling giving for younger attendees. The conversation included suggestions for improving collection methods and the acknowledgment that a significant portion of contributions are made online or via mail.

Action Item:

- Bret Blackford will draft a proposal for the collection process and present it at the next meeting.

7. 2025 Budget

We did not have time for this agenda item. Dave Weiler will present budget proposal to the elders in our January 2025 meeting.

8. Rental Property:

The church owns two properties adjacent to the building. These properties were originally purchased with the idea they could be used for expansion of parking. However, after engineering review it was determined parking expansion was not an option. As such, the elders agree that the properties are considered investment assets and should be looked at purely as a revenue stream. We discussed if rental income and possible asset appreciation of properties are worth the administrative headaches and potential downside risk (lawsuits, tenant issues, repair and maintenance headaches, etc.).

Recent flooding of the rental property at 1346 N Rock Hill. As noted in [this video](#), the heavy rains in St. Louis on November 5, 2024 flooded the property. Steve Walker has been working with the tenant to address water damage at the property as well as taking reasonable steps to evaluate the living space to ensure no moisture in walls or noticeable mold growth. Recent summary email [here](#).

Steve Walker will continue to work with the tenants at 1346 N. Rock Hill to address any water damage as well as complete address some repair and maintenance items like replacing oven, installing new laminate floor in area next to new exterior French doors, etc.

Action Items:

1. Steve Awtrey will follow up with Philip Matheny to gauge his interest in the minister position.
2. Steve Awtrey will talk with [Michael Santiago](#) next month regarding potential interest in the minister position.
3. Jeff McGowan will provide input on the timeline and burden of the children's minister role.
4. Ross Brown & Steve Walker will coordinate with Nathan Strickland and Hannah Grimshaw on the design of the [children's minister flyer](#), including a QR code to direct candidates to more information on the job.
5. Jeff McGlawn will explore themes for preaching in the upcoming year and gather ideas from the team.
6. Steve Awtrey will work on preaching scheduling and planning activities through February, as he will be out of town in January.
7. Bret Blackford will prepare a [summary of church policies and practices](#) for review by the elders.
8. Stephen Walker will update the [communion guidelines](#) document noting a 5-minute timeline and distribute it to those leading communion.
9. Steve Awtrey will create a mock-up for a new communion collection method (wood with holes for communion cups).
10. Bret Blackford will draft a proposal for the collection process and present it at the next meeting.