

12.27.2024 Eric McPherson thoughts on McKnight moving forward -- mBret

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From: M Bret Blackford (bret\_blackford@yahoo.com)

To: mxelders@mcknightcrossings.org

Date: Friday, December 27, 2024 at 03:15 PM CST

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Guys,

*Note: I have added numbers and letters to the original bulleted items to allow for easier reference to specific topics.*

I appreciate that Eric McPherson has given such consideration to the McKnight body. Additionally, I am in favor of most of what he proposes. I'll address my thoughts on each section individually ...

**§1. Preaching Committee:** I agree consistency at the pulpit is important, and the proposed list is a good starting point. While the size of the committee seems large, some individuals may decline, which could naturally address this. As previously discussed, any decisions made by the committee would be recommendations to the Elders for review and approval.

**§1.a. Standard Rotation of Sunday Preachers:** Again, I like consistency at the pulpit and like that we have a 5th Sunday to rotate other individuals. We can discuss who might be on the standard rotation but I like the list, but not sure if Travis or Mathew have time to commit to this once a month.

**§1.b. Preaching Stipend:** I am open to this suggestion.

**§1.c. Sermon Topics:** My preference is sticking with blocking and tackling, the basics of faith. I favor focusing on foundational topics—faith basics and practical lessons. Occasional sermons on deeper or more esoteric topics can be enriching, but the priority should be on clarity and accessibility.

**§2 Number and Age of Elders:** I do not feel the need for more elders. A group of 4-5 seems manageable and effective.

**§2.a. Who are the Elders?:** I agree that Jeff McGlawn and Ross Brown should be treated differently, especially given the fact that neither will soon be an elder. I also agree that the process should be explained in some fashion.

Q: Should Jeff McGlawn and Ross Brown attend all meetings?

**§2.b. Qualification of an Elder - "*The husband of but one wife*":** I am not opposed to revisiting our position on this but do not see it as a front burner issue. Not an immediate concern.

**§2.d. Leadership Advisory Board:** This does not seem necessary to me.

**§3. Elder Women on Pastoral Team:** Agree with this suggestion. Not an immediate concern.

**§4. Admin Minister:** Agree that this position has been a great help and that Steve Walker is doing a great job. This position seems to have value beyond the hire of a Senior Minister.

**§5. Hire a Children's Minister:** The elders agreed to this in our last meeting. To me this is not a front burner issue but Steve Walker and Jeff McGlawn are closer to the need.

I believe Steve Walker will chair the January 2025 elder meetings so he can consider what of the above we might need to discuss over the next couple of months.

I hope everyone had a blessed Christmas and were able to spend quality time with family. Emmanuel - what a blessing!

--- Bret

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

**From:** Eric McPherson <emcpherson@cfserve.org>

**To:** Steve Awtrey <sawtrey@cfserve.org>; Steve Walker <srainey6@yahoo.com>; Don Fitzgerald <dona Fitzgerald@att.net>; Weiler Dave & Amy <dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com>; mBret Blackford <bret\_blackford@yahoo.com>; Brad Stevens <bstevens@shandselbert.com>

**Sent:** Friday, December 27, 2024 at 12:05:57 PM CST

**Subject:** my thoughts on McKnight moving forward

To the Elders:

I had a vision from the Lord (Old Testament language) or probably just I had an idea. I was disappointed that Jason did not accept the offer and relieved that John did not. I appreciate all the Elders have done in this search. It can be exhausting and discouraging. I want to share my thoughts about moving forward and what might get our church excited until we find a minister or even if we find one. Maybe, just maybe, God is telling us we don't need one for now.

My friend and old roommate, Todd Austin from Harding, goes to a church whose minister retired and they decided to not replace him. They have 3 men who preach on a rotating basis from the Liturgy. They have done well with this format and give the salary of a minister to missions.

Here are my thoughts. These are just suggestions or a framework. Feel free to reject, edit, change, deny, or ignore.

1. **Form a preaching committee** to handle the selection of themes, topics, and speakers. My first thought is the committee could be Steve Awtrey, Jeff Kryder, Kaylynn Meyers, Matt Bardowell, Travis Meyers, and myself.
  - a. I would suggest we have a 4 man rotation of myself, Jeff, Travis, and Matthew (if they agree) to preach with spot subs every 5th time, i.e. Kaylynn, Nathan.
  - b. You should pay Jeff, Travis, and Matthew (if they agree) a nominal fee as you would a visiting preacher for the day. Or not.
  - c. For example, we could preach the parables from the book, "Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes". Very informative book with a non-traditional perspective.

2. **We need more Elders** (and younger, no offense).

- a. We need to revamp the selection process. I am not comfortable with some auditing the Elders meetings without the congregation knowing. It seems undefined, vague, and secretive. Whatever process we come to, it should be published and transparent.
- b. We need to get over the divorce obstacle. Chris Fuller is the husband of one wife and he would be a good candidate as Jason Vincent will later on. Paul never meant to exclude someone from past mistakes some of which were out of their control. Would we let Paul, a murderer, be an Elder today? Probably not. My thinking is that Murder is probably worse than Divorce in the ranking of sins. I know we don't rank sins, but we kinda do.

I don't want to be an Elder, but should someone like me be excluded because my wife chose to leave me for another man after an affair?

- c. Rooftop church has an interesting process for becoming an Elder. We should investigate that.
- d. If you will not budge on the divorce issue, then consider a *Leadership Advisory Board* for men that could not be an Elder or don't want to serve in that intense and deeply involved role. The *Leadership Advisory Board* could assist or advise the Elders on congregational issues from time to time.

3. One of our strengths at McKnight is our **older women**. **Could they form a pastoral team** to assist Steve Walker in the execution of caring for our members?

4. **Steve Walker [as Admin Minister] is doing a fantastic job** and I hope that he would stay on for the foreseeable future.

5. **Proceed with the hire of a Family and Children's minister**. With this hire, Steve Walker as the Admin Minister and a preaching committee, could we not function well without a traditional lead minister? At least until, we can hire one?

Thanks for listening as always to my long rants and thoughts! I appreciate your leadership and all you do for the church.

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