

01.01.2025 Lead Minister (LM) Communication-The Narrative to MX

From: M Bret Blackford (bret_blackford@yahoo.com)

To: bret_blackford@yahoo.com

Date: Wednesday, January 1, 2025 at 02:13 PM CST

On January 1, 2025 the attached was sent to the McKnight church giving background on where we are with the Lead Minister search. Also, link [here](#).

Stephen Walker

From: srainey6@yahoo.com

To: dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com

Cc: bret_blackford@yahoo.com, mxelders@mcknightcrossings.org

Tue, Dec 31, 2024 at 4:04 PM

Dave

Thank you for weighing-in.

Sounds like the consensus is less details. Will have Kaylynn set-up a link in the bulletin connect

Sent from my

Sent from my iPad

> On Dec 31, 2024, at 3:13 PM, dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com wrote:

>

>

> Hello Steve, Bret, and All:

> Thank you, Steve, for your effort to facilitate communication to those who missed the LM update. I was comfortable with what I have heard about the meeting.

>

> I do think it is good to put a link in the bulletin this week and probably repeated next week with

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> In light of our short timeframe to accomplish that, I will recommend we go with the less specific. It does encourage those wanting more information to speak to an elder. I guess I'm erring on the

>

> Thank you again for this effort.

> Keep praying,

> Dave

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

From: Stephen Walker <srainey6@yahoo.com>

To: M Bret Blackford <bret_blackford@yahoo.com>

Cc: MXElders MX <mxelders@mcknightcrossings.org>

Sent: Tuesday, December 31, 2024 at 01:52:31 PM CST

Subject: Re: : : LM Communication-The Narrative to MX

I appreciate your openness.

Thanks Bret

On Dec 31, 2024, at 1:44 PM, **M Bret Blackford** <bret_blackford@yahoo.com> wrote:

Yes, my preference would have been more brevity in what was disclosed verbally - my preference would have been to mention that we had two good candidates that the elders and the congregation both found acceptable, and offers were made to each in

turn, but circumstances did not lead to acceptance on either. As such, I would prefer to limit additional mention limited to something similar to what I presented below (with no details on Jason or John). Again, it mentions that if anyone has additional questions to seek out an elder. I would expect we would still need to show some discretion but we could handle more details on an individual basis if needed.

--- Bret

On Tuesday, December 31, 2024 at 01:32:06 PM CST, **Stephen Walker** <srainey6@yahoo.com> wrote:

I think we might have different goals. Which is fine. I also don't want to get distracted about the type of approach we should use to communicate an important piece of information to the congregation. I do however think it's important the body, specifically those who were not present on 12/22, hear the details about Jason and John from the Elders.

We communicated specific details and used pronouns when we gave the congregation updates of the two candidates. So I can better understand, would you have preferred we not have used specific details? Your letter is good. It is a compilation of good information we communicated in the past. How our objectives may differ is I focus specifically on the the events that happened after the interview weekends.

I do not want to prolong this discussion because we are nearing the deadline to make tomorrow's bulletin. We have until the end of business day today to decide. I would like to alert Kaylynn tonight so that she's not doing too much reformatting to the bulletin.

On Dec 31, 2024, at 9:52 AM, **M Bret Blackford** <bret_blackford@yahoo.com> wrote:

Like Brad, I prefer to not use proper nouns and specifics. Let me offer the following for your consideration ...

Subject: Update on the Lead Minister Search

Dear Church Family,

For over a year, the Elders have been preparing for Jeff Kryder's retirement. This has been a thoughtful and prayerful process as we strive to ensure the right person is called to lead and serve our congregation.

Our initial focus was understanding the full scope of Jeff's work and developing a realistic job description. We also consulted with the Siburt Institute, a respected organization that specializes in church staffing and structure, to guide us in this process. Since then, we have reviewed over 20 candidates and conducted more than 24 hours of interviews, both online and in person.

As you know, three candidates stood out as strong potential fits for our congregation, and offers were extended to them. However, due to factors such as timing and family considerations, those opportunities did not come to fruition.

We want to assure you that we are committed to finding the right person for this vital role. Rather than rushing to fill the position, we are prayerfully seeking God's will and trusting in His timing.

Transparency is important to us, and we welcome your questions or feedback. Please don't hesitate to reach out to any of the Elders if you'd like to learn more about the process.

Thank you for your patience and prayers as we continue this search. We trust that God is preparing the right person to serve alongside us in His work.

In Christ,
Steve Walker
On behalf of the Elders

On Tuesday, December 31, 2024 at 09:45:49 AM CST, **Steve Awtrey** <steve.awtrey@gmail.com> wrote:

I had a couple of people also come to me. One, who didn't hear the announcement, went up to Mark Minton thinking he was our new minister. I think being as transparent as possible with wisdom, is our best option. Over communicating is not bad. Don't forget the recent email saying we were being secretive about our "elder interns".

On Tue, Dec 31, 2024 at 8:49 AM **Stephen Walker** <srainey6@yahoo.com> wrote:

I have a couple of thoughts about written communication related to the LM search.

From my perspective, there's nothing in the communication I would feel uncomfortable sharing with either Jason or John. If there is something there, I'm open to making an adjustment. As a matter of fact, John and I have communicated a couple of times after we concluded our negotiations. I do want to be careful about what we communicate while providing an actual account of the pertinent facts.

I'm not sure how many people were out on the day we made the announcement. I'm also not sure how those who were out are getting information on what was communicated. The LM search is an important milestone for MX. As much as possible, we will want to stay in front of the communication. I would prefer to control the narrative rather than to have someone else give an account of the events.

Those are my thoughts. Whatever is perceived as the best course of action, I'm

onboard.

On Dec 30, 2024, at 5:18 PM, **Brad Stevens** <brad1125@swbell.net> wrote:

If there are only a couple of people who've asked for this information, I have no problem sharing the information with them orally. However, the idea of publishing this in writing where it could go to who knows where troubles me. If a couple of phone calls would take care of the situation I would recommend that first.

On Dec 30, 2024, at 12:41 PM, **Steve Walker** <swalker@mcknightcrossings.org> wrote:

Good Afternoon

A couple of people have mentioned they were out on 12/22 when we gave the congregation an update on the LM search. Since the LM search update was not recorded, someone suggested providing some written communication to the congregation. Here is the suggested message. The plan is to connect our communication to a link in the bulletin.

The Elders first choice for the lead minister position was Jason. Also, the feedback from the congregation was in favor of Jason.

Jason and Megan Mundie

Jason and Megan had some thoughtful reasons for deciding not to accept the lead minister position. Megan's desire to finish her PhD is a big commitment, and balancing that with a potential move could make it harder for her to focus on her academic goals. Her concerns about being far from her mother are also understandable; family connections can be an important support system, especially during big life changes. Additionally, considering the potential complications in adopting their foster child makes sense, as it's important to ensure stability and continuity for a child in that situation.

After weighing their priorities carefully, they decided to pass on our offer for the Lead Minister position.

After much discussion and time in prayer, we concluded John was a strong second candidate. We made him an offer.

John and Katie Gunter

Given the challenges with finding adequate housing when relocating to a new state, the Weilers made a thoughtful and generous offer to the Gunters. They offered their rental property below market rate in the Lindbergh School District for 12 months as part of the transition. However, it's understandable that other factors came into play during the negotiations, and despite good intentions, sometimes things don't align.

After negotiations were completed, a text message from John Gunter showed a lot of grace and respect. He expressed appreciation for the

opportunity and the relationships he and Katie developed during the process, even though the outcome wasn't what everyone had hoped for.

It's always tough when negotiations don't lead to the desired outcomes, but the positive tones in the follow-up messages indicated the Mundies and Gunters appreciated the connections that were made even if ultimately we could not come to an agreement.

As we take next steps in the search process, we are confident God is guiding this process and we will ultimately land where He's leading.



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