

11.15.2021

Monday, November 15, 2021
6:12 PM – 9:15 PM

Attendees: All shepherds with exception of Steve Awtrey. Jeff Kryder was also absent. Joyce West and Jeremy Picker also attended first part of meeting.

Below are my notes from our last meeting. Again, these are mostly a transcription of the discussion.

Here are some key items:

During Jeff Kryder’s sabbatical (12/13/2021-2/14/2022):

- Jeremy Picker will be point person for staff
- Steve Awtrey will be the point person for the shepherds
- Make sure shepherds attend the Tuesday staff meetings [[sign up here](#)]
 - Jeremy will set agenda with input from shepherd attending that week and cc agenda to all shepherds.
- Review Jeff Kryder’s sabbatical plan (attached at end of these notes). It is currently vague in goals, is this ok or do we want more structure in the plan up front?

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People

Ben Mehringer - Leukemia
 Maria Holmes - overwhelmed with work and family
 Stephanie Hauper funeral this Wed. - Steve Awtrey will perform the service
 Markita Franklin - baby boy about 6-weeks ago. Jeremy Picker talking with her.
 Dan Creech - worshipping someplace else - not sure how this impacts Valerie. Some have encouraged her to worship with her husband.

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Louis West - **wanting to get plugged back in to the elder meetings**. Meeting at the building works well with Louis.

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Diversity

Louis West concerned about the current political and social environment. Racism is still problematic, like with voter suppression. Louis feels this is important to the leadership of MX and we should not put our head in the sand. Louis does not want the racial issues that exist in society to impact the church.

Joyce West - We as a church are peddling in quicksand. It is discouraging and heavy. Unity in Diversity Events - gets a lot of positive movement but soon everything is forgotten and momentum is lost. We need to be making moves to becoming a multicultural church. Joyce does not feel like things are moving. It has to start at the top, with the elders. MX should be a place where people who are different can come and feel welcome and not treated like a stereotype.

- **Steve Walker** - important to have training so you can see how you are involved in racism. You don’t know what you don’t know. Training is important to allow people to expand their understanding.

Joyce West & Next Steps - Talking with Steve Awtrey.

- **Dave Weiler** shared some of what he is learning (Color of Compromise session). Dave is struggling with what we at MX should discuss in church or from the pulpit. Squeamish about inappropriate Critical Race Theory and similar but there are things we CAN do.
- **Jeremy Picker** - from a staff point of view - how do we get back into North Webster and get involved w/families there. Looking at some type of Juneteenth celebration with these neighborhoods. Also looking at other steps/options (VBS, etc.). Trying to break through the awkwardness.
- **Louis West** - how did Jesus deal with racism? Christ challenged racism.
- **Lane Hamm** - we fully support this effort. We are making this a conscious effort but perhaps we are not doing enough. [Question to Joyce West:] What do you want to see?
 - **Joyce** - have the elders do the Color of Compromise training. .

- **Keaton Jones** - Get several men together to help the families that come to the Food Pantry. We want to connect with them and help them with their homes, etc.
- **Steve Walker** - we have *Diversity* as one of our core values.

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Dave Weiler - **budget update**

Working on 2022 budget. Almost put together. Will be presented to the elders soon.

Auditorium Project:

Jeremy Picker - *make things easier and more reproducible*. Both for audio and video. There are a lot of options for being on-line. Prefers streaming at this point (may change later). Streaming is clunky. We are working with one (1) camera. We should try and erase some of the distractions with live-stream.

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Jeff Kryder - sabbatical

- Jeremy Picker - he wants to help and take on the right things. Jeremy getting mentoring from Dusty Rush. Jeremy wants this opportunity to see what might be areas where he can expand his role. Jeremy will be leading the *staff* and *NextGen* meetings. Jeremy wants clarity in his roles. This will allow him to plan upcoming projects and understand what his commitments are in all areas.
 - Jon Earnhardt - is there a process for everything that needs to get done? If there are issues and balls dropped then fingers will point to Jeremy. We want to set Jeremy up for a win, so we need to get clarity on areas that need attention.

When Jeff Kryder returns how do we put up some guard rails to keep Jeff healthy?

Last Saturday it was decided that ...

- We like Jeremy Picker being the point person
- Make sure elders are at Tues staff mtgs. [[see calendar here](#)]
 - Jeremy to align agenda with elder for that week. Also cc agenda to all elders.
 - Bret to get a Google form set up so elders [[Note: form available here](#)]
- Steve Awtrey will be the point person for all things during sabbatical
- Bret to follow-up with Jeff Fogarty about preaching. Perhaps talk about Missions. [[Note: Jeff Fogarty is willing to preach on Missional Feb. 13, 2022](#)]

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Next meeting 11/29 at 6PM - Steve Awtrey

- Focus on Sabbatical plan and document (from Steve)
- Sermon series in Jeff's absence
- Classes
- Elders on Tuesdays

Dec 2021 - Lane Hamm

Jan 2022 - Brad Stevens

[[Note: Future shepherd meeting schedules and chair is available here](#)]

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Leadership model when Jeff Kryder returns

Jeff Kryder criticism: Do we, as elders, need to communicate to the congregation that we need to get feedback from the congregation, send to elders not Jeff Kryder. Jeff needs thick skin but the elders need to buffer Jeff from these negative comments. Directional issues should go to the elders.

Matthew Bardewell has comments on NextGen and his vision. Perhaps get a few people like Matthew and others in that stage of life to discuss NextGen and their priorities. Make sure our plans are relevant to our body and other young families that will hopefully be part of MX in the future.

Jeff's Sabbatical (November 11, 2021)

1. Beginning and Ending Dates.

- a. Sabbatical to begin on December 13, 2021 and run through Feb 14.

2. Plans for the Sabbatical include:

- a. Rest for my own mental health issues. I frequently feel discouraged and depressed, and would describe myself as simply – depleted.
- b. Plan several “alone times” for a day or two, focused on prayer, Bible reading, and journaling. Possibly, in the first few weeks, not try to “figure anything out.” Use Perry’s cabin. Go to a monastery.
- c. In addition to simply resting, I will establish some kind of relationship with a therapist or spiritual director for mental health and to offer insight and feedback on what’s going on. Consider Philip Matheny’s neighbor as a possibility, and Terry Smith, in Nashville.
- d. Establish connections with resources on managing ministry in 2021, like Jim Martin at Harding Graduate School and Kent Blake in Memphis, Dale Robinson in Indy, Arthur Sutherland in Baltimore, Phil Gold, and Bob Grigg, and others who might be attune to the current challenges. Some of these connections would be by phone, others in-person.
- e. Travel to meet face to face with other leaders to get a fresh perspective on ministry.
- f. Visit other churches to worship, feed my spirit, and to observe models, and ministries.
- g. Develop some key points of focus for remaining years of full and part-time ministry after Sabbatical.

3. Possible effect on other ministers and staff members workload.

- a. A couple of concerns is the morale of Jeremy who is willing to take on some of the Senior Minister responsibilities, and possibly Elizabeth as she seems as though she is often in need of a break.
- b. I believe my Sabbatical will be an opportunity for Jeremy to step up to do some of the preaching, and leadership. I have outlined this below. I understand that giving Jeremy a block of the preaching may be met with mixed views, however, he has invested in preacher training over the past year.
- c. The challenge will be the unexpected – a death, or a funeral, for instance.
- d. Elders continue to meet with staff on Tuesdays. I will send out a new schedule.

4. How job responsibilities will be handled in my absence.

- a. The good thing is I have been doing less in the past few months than I ever have in my ministry! This is telling in itself! I have already scaled back, mostly due to COVID, breakfast and lunches with members.
- b. This fall I stopped the Unity in Diversity meetings, I turned over my Connect Group Leadership to Dave Weiler, I gave up leading the Area Wide Minister’s Meetings, and I have asked Don to lead the Road to Reopening meetings, so a good workload transition has already taken place. The new member conversations and engagement in the past has currently dried up, as well.
- c. Vision Casting. Priorities and Plans 2022. An important part of my energies has gone into thinking about the future – plans, priorities, etc. I recommend that the Core Leadership Elders continue to meet to think about and take action on these things. Have Jeremy attend these meetings. The first 4 below of highest priority.
 - i. Hiring for Heather’s position.
 - ii. Auditorium renovation and upgrade.
 - iii. Roll-out signs and banners for 2022 them – The Story of Our Lives. (These signs can and should incorporate many of the good intentions of the Unity in Diversity team)
 - iv. Next Steps – QR Code project. (Almost there – Jeremy has details)
 - v. Hiring for Jeff’s replacement, including development of job description. (in my opinion, we can probably wait until the start of summer for this one).
 - vi. Video projects / testimonies. (Currently budgeted for one video per month for 2022)
 - vii. Identifying and securing a “Body-life” Champion and team. (This is very important, however, currently hampered by COVID)

- viii. Hiring a Next Gen Outreach Minister. (This is not a priority, until we determine that we have the funding and are ready to move forward.)
 - ix. Plan and kick off Food Pantry meals and outreach.
- d. Sunday Preaching. Obviously, the biggest responsibility is the Sunday planning – what series, what theme, what passages, preparation and delivery. I will lay out a simple approach to this and determine series, theme, title, and speaker by Dec 1. Jeff to preach on Dec 5 to complete Gentle and Lowly series. Jeff to preach 1st Advent sermon on Dec 12. Proposal:
- i. Christmas Series – Heaven to Earth
 - 1. Dec 5 – Start Christmas Series – Jeff preach.
 - 2. Dec 12 – Advent Series Jeff preach 2nd sermon.
 - 3. Dec. 19 – Steve Haupt to preach.
 - 4. Dec 24 – Christmas Eve - Jeremy to plan.
 - 5. Dec 26 – Christmas service – The Greatest Gifts of Christmas - Keaton Jones do 10-12 minute talk and Michalie do 10 minute talk. I have the idea prepared.
 - ii. The Story of Our Lives (7 Values to Shape Our Future)
 - 1. Jan 2 – Spirit-led (Jeremy preach)
 - 2. Jan 9 – Family (Jeremy preach)
 - 3. Jan 16 – Diversity (Jeremy preach)
 - 4. Jan 23 – Next-Gen (Jeremy preach)
 - 5. Jan 30 – Adaptable (Lane Hamm preach)
 - 6. Feb 6 – Generous (Don Fitzgerald preach)
 - 7. Feb 13 – Missional (Steve Walker preach)
- e. Adult Bible Class. (December) The Psalms will continue through December. I will lay out each class and find a teacher for each week.
- f. Adult Bible Class. I believe I have a good idea. Michalie and Steve Awtrey co-lead a class in the Gym that is intergenerational, uses our current model of sitting at tables, and invites teens, parents, and older members to share the Scripture together, using the Book of James. Beginning January for 8 weeks.
- g. New Worship team to work with Jeremy on Worship Planning, beginning with Advent and Christmas season.
- h. Have staff do self-reviews this year, and meet with an elder to discuss their self-review.
- i. Elder Meetings. Turn Elder Meeting planning and communication over to Elders. Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 15. Jeff is out. Steve Haupt to lead.
- j. Staff Meeting. (Tuesday at 11:00) Jeremy to lead. Elder invited to attend Jeff to send out new rotation.
- k. Next Gen meetings can continue without me, Jeremy leads. Provide update one time per month at Elders' meeting.
- l. Have Jeannie meet with select Ministry Leaders. I will prioritize those ministries.
- m. New member ministry. Have Jeannie work with a Shepherd to follow-up with families, as needed. As I indicated above, this is slow at this time.
- n. Prior to December 13, finish 2022 Calendar and key dates with staff. Have calendar to handout to congregation on January 2.
- o. Pastoral – Have one elder and one staff be designated as point person for congregation as needs arise. Communicate this to the church. I have asked Jeremy to be staff contact and Steve Awtrey to be Shepherd contact.
- p. Dolores to prepare Shepherd's Prayer each week. Elder for that week to discern which items need communicated to church.
- q. Christmas Eve Service – Jeremy to plan. Topic – Advent Candle 4 – Heaven to Earth – Peace.
- r. No Pancake Breakfast.

5. Physical Location and Contact Information

- a. Locations will vary.
- b. Cell #314-537-6912