

November 29, 2021

Elder Meeting Notes

Steve Awtrey (chair), Lane Hamm, Louis West, Dave Weiler, Wole, Brad Stevens, Bret, Jon Earnhart, Steve Haupt, Keaton Jones, Jeff Kryder

Video Conference attendees: Jeremy Picker, Don Fitzgerald

- Shepherd info on Google [here](#)
- Next meeting December 13, 2021 @ 6:00am (Lane Hamm chairs)

Action Items (discussion points for next meeting):

- Jeff's replacement
- Children Coordinator
- How do we stage these? How do we approach these? What is the timing of each one?
 - **Vision Elders will continue this discussion.** Will bring thoughts/recommendations to the next Shepherd meeting scheduled for Dec. 13, 2021.

Louis West: Increasing passion in uniting church. Suggest the leadership, elders and wives, participate in an open discussion on diversity. We need to develop a sensitivity to what is impacting people's lives. Louis feels racial tension.

- Steve Awtrey – what are suggestions you have [Louis] for the leadership? Steve mentioned he was reading the book "[Dear White Christian](#)"
 - Louis: start discussion groups – possibly color of compromise. Also, Erol Keller may be back in St. Louis soon and a good resource for racial discussions.
 - Joyce suggestions: (Dave Weiler discussion – addressing these issues later in the elder's calendar)
 - Read a book together
 - Participate in Unity in Diversity
 - Hire a black minister

People:

Pattersons – Abby has been in a bad marriage that includes domestic violence. Abby has now moved out and has a restraining order but still finding a place to stay permanently. Peter is still living with Abby's husband and not going well.

Jim and Denice McCoys grandchild (son of Meredith) – has a diaphragm hernia (organs get pushed up)

Janice Davania – complications from gallbladder surgery. Had to remove a stent and spent some time in ER

Fitzgerald's granddaughter with "issues"

Ed Beilick coming with kids.

Paisley & Don Mathew family and son Canine – figuring out meds.

Larry Franke – Wole talked with him. Having a problem getting access on his computer. As he is having a hard time connecting with MX streaming Larry is virtually attending somewhere else.

Nancy Byers and her father not doing well. Looking for a new place.

Maria and Jerome Allen – radio silence

Brad Stevens – we need to cull the list of members and remove those who are not participating.

- Examples: Susy Burge, Valery Creech – what to do? Susy is probably streaming
- If you do not attend and do not contribute how long should you remain on the church roster?
- Action Item:
 - Get a list of non-attending and non-giving
 - Present list to elders
 - Decide if we need to call/write first before removing from roster
 - Rethink how we do membership

Sermon Series in Jeff's Absence

Vision Elders met to discuss the sermon series Sunday evening 11.28.2021
(see handout at [Attachment A](#))

Jeff Kryder Sabbatical Plan

(see handout at [Attachment B](#))

- Jon Earnhart – wants to make sure Jeff Kryder does not come back to the same suffocating and overwhelming situation. The elders need to find a way to change things up for Jeff Kryder for when he comes back from sabbatical.
- Lane Hamm – Jeff Kryder needs to find out what gives him energy and do those things. Decide what burns Jeff out and what gives him energy. Eliminate those things that cause Jeff Kryder the most grief.

Hiring a Children's Coordinator (Heather's replacement) – not a Children's Minister

- We need (at least) a coordinator to keep the lights on
- Heather needs a schedule of workers through May 2022
- Dave Weiler: How do we start the search process? Do we need a working committee and who would be in that group? Do we have a network of possible individuals who might be suitable candidates.
- Lane Hamm: Do we have a list of the critical things this person (Children's Coordinator) needs to do?
- Long-Term answer is we need a Children's Minister, which is more important to the Children's Coordinator position.
- Jeremy Picker – should family ministry be part of Jeremy's role as well? (A main goal expressed for the Children's Minister)
- ACTION ITEM – Next Mtg
 - Jeff's replacement
 - Children Coordinator
 - How do we stage these? How do we approach these? What is the timing of each one?
 - Vision Elders will continue this discussion. Will bring thoughts/recommendations to the next Shepherd meeting scheduled for Dec. 13, 2021.

Classes:

January 2, 2022: Joint class fellowship time

January 9, 2022 (start class): Youth and Members (intergenerational) going through the book of James. 10-15 minutes of teaching and then discussion times. We want all generations to discuss the Bible lesson. Plan on going through the book of James for 3 months.

- Bret – ask AJ if any of the ACTS students would be willing to attend one of these classes.

Jeff Kryder – disappointed in class attendance on Sundays. Current Psalms class has a “piss poor” attendance.

Elder Sign-up for Tuesday Staff Mtgs. – [link to sign up here](#)

Thanksgiving Prayer

Several asked so I have included at [Attachment C](#) the shepherd's prayer that was given this past Sunday, Nov. 28, 2021.

Elder Contact Info included at [Attachment D](#).

Approach

1. **Mission of MX.** Each week reiterate the Mission of MX – **Welcoming others into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.**
2. **Vision of MX** - Each week set out the vision of MX - **Creating a contagious culture eager to DELIGHT in God, ENCOURAGE one another, and SERVE eagerly.**
3. **Values of MX** - Each week mention all the values and then focus on one value for the message - **The 7 values to shape our future.**
 - Spirit-led.
 - Diversity.
 - Next-Gen.
 - Adaptable.
 - Family.
 - Generous.
 - Missional.
4. **Book of Acts.** In order to ground the values in the Biblical story, hold them together as a cohesive unit, and to highlight a spirit of growth and change, I recommend that the Book of Acts is used each week as the primary text.
 - a. **Jesus** - Since the Book of Acts flows as the church's story after the work of Jesus in the flesh, the Gospels will also illustrate these values. At times it will be fitting to illustrate from the gospel or at least refer to a time when Jesus demonstrated this value.
 - b. **OT** - Furthermore, since Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT, the OT record will also attest to these values.
5. **Team Approach.** **Get together with 2-3** other people and spend some time thinking about your value – how it is Biblically rooted, why it is important, how to explain it, etc.
6. **Priority or Project.** Each week highlight a priority or project that flow from our vision and values in the next 1-3 years.
7. **Supporting Elder.** Each week an elder will follow-up the message to validate the importance of this value to the future of MX.
8. **7 Values that Matter**
 - a. We begin with the end in mind, examining our ministries through the framework of our 7 key values.
 - b. Recognize that our definitions of these values may evolve with time, awareness, and outcomes.
 - c. **Spirit-Led. (January 2, 2022: Speaker – Jeremy Picker, Elder – Wole)**
 - i. **Spirit-Led (prayerfully following the direction of God)**
 - ii. Acts 1 – prayer in upper room.
 - iii. Fervent prayer and careful listening invited Spirit to lead.
 - iv. The Spirit provided power, comfort, courage, and hope.
 - v. Acts 2 – Spirit shapes Pentecost and given to each believer at baptism.
 - vi. Acts 4 – Prayer together blows the roof off the place.
 - vii. Acts 7 – Gets Stephen killed.
 - viii. Acts 8 – Leads Philip to carry out his work.
 - ix. Acts 16 – Guides Paul in Macedonian call.
 - x. The Spirit is the living Jesus working in our day.
 - xi. The Spirit is extending the work and teachings of Jesus.
 - xii. The Spirit's work is a result of the gospel – the good news – that Jesus lived, died, and was raised. It never operates apart from this pivotal core.
 - xiii. The Spirit most often, though not always work in community, and works through those in prayer.
 - xiv. The Spirit works through those with faith and in prayer.
 - xv. Our task is to carefully plan programs combining our planning with the Spirit's guidance.
 - xvi. The work of the Spirit makes the work of the church distinct from any other organization or group or non-profit.

- xvii. The Spirit brings God, Scripture, and our traditions, and makes them alive again in our time and place!!!
- xviii. Church members are not volunteers, they are agents of the Holy Spirit.
- xix. Staff are not simply paid workers; they are men and women living out the Spirit's call.
- xx. Are we listening to the Spirit? What is the Spirit saying today?
- xxi. How are you obeying the Spirit? (Acts 5:32)

d. Next Gen. (Jan 9, 2022: Speaker – Jeremy, Elder – Steve Awtrey)

- i. **Next Gen (investing in the next generation)**
- ii. Acts 2:17 is a great passage as the Spirit is poured out on all people, sons and daughters, and young men will see visions.
- iii. Acts 2:38-41 mentions the gospel for those who are listening and for those who are far off – the successive generations.
- iv. Whole households were baptized. (Acts 10:48, Acts 16:33). What an amazing picture!
- v. Next Gen is a posture of seeing the kingdom future as God sees it. It is about leaning into God's future for his church.
- vi. Next Gen is recognizing that young people and teens are not the future of the church, they are the church.
- vii. Matt 18:1-5. Children are essential to understanding the nature of God's kingdom.
- viii. Next Gen provides relevant activities for young people to discover and grow their talents.
- ix. Next Gen is about all of us investing in those who are most ready to receive and be changed by God. The percentages of people who are reached by Christ by 18 years is stunning.
- x. Next Gen is a conviction that a rising tide lifts all boats. When we focus on the Next Gen the health of the entire church rises.
- xi. Next Gen refuses to stratify the church by generations for its ministry. It is intergenerational.
- xii. Next Gen aligns with all the other values - family focus, adaptability, and mission focus, especially.
- xiii. We are not trying to glorify the youth, nor to neglect the gifts of older saints, just the opposite, we are compelled by the fresh energy of the youth and as older believers we are pouring into them.
- xiv. Next Gen makes an effort to be culturally relevant (language, arts, sciences, technology, customs, values, and assumptions) while refusing to deviate from the standards of God's Word.
- xv. What role, if any, does ACTS Campus Ministry play with Next-Gen?
- xvi. Next Gen values youth:
 - 1. Do I know your name?
 - 2. Do I know where you live?
 - 3. Do I know what is important to you?
 - 4. Do I know what you have been through?
 - 5. Do I know your hopes and dreams?

e. Family. (Jan 16, 2022: Speaker – Jason Vincent, Elder – Keaton Jones)

- i. **Family (having a common Father to deeply love one another)** (Acts 2:42-47 is the quintessential passage. We for the most part know the "what" – devoting themselves to one another – breaking of bread (sharing of life together), the apostles teaching, and prayer. The what is important and in danger of being lost today. How are we putting these four aspects of family into practice?
- ii. However, maybe more profound - How did this coming together happen? Why did they come together as family this way?
- iii. Family qualities:
 - 1. Families come together – one Father (Eph 3)
 - 2. Families know one another.

3. Families worship together.
4. Families share with each other – physically and emotionally (joys and sorrows).
- iv. To remember the Lord. The Lord’s Supper is the uniting, fellowship meal that centers the church in the good news and Jesus, and brings us together in unexplainable ways.
- v. A powerful study might be – “brothers and sisters” – how did this become the language of the saints? It is used throughout the book of Acts. Jerry Jones has done a study on this that might be helpful.
- vi. The role of the home and the place of house churches in the Book of Acts is significant. House churches capture the essence of all 7 values!
- vii. Francis Chan’s Book on the NT church is relevant for this study.
- viii. Connect Groups play a vital role.
- ix. Fellowship meals together are important.

f. Diversity. (Jan 23, 2022: Speaker – Jeremy Picker, Elder – Steve Walker /Dave Weiler

- i. Diversity (sharing in our oneness; appreciating our differences)**
- ii. The Spirit is at work in the world, not only in the church! How much of the present focus on diversity is God speaking? Of course, the idea of diversity is used, misused, and politicized, but at heart it is a Biblical value and a value.
- iii. Diversity flows from the gospel (good news of Jesus) for all people, in all places, at all times, in whatever they are doing.
- iv. Acts 2 – the day of Pentecost is a diversity bonanza.
- v. Luke goes out of his way to demonstrate the diversity brought about by the gospel – First Jews, then Samaritans, then Gentiles!
- vi. Rich and poor together – Acts 2.
- vii. The Book of Acts highlights the role of women, in addition to men from the beginning. This is unprecedented in Biblical history. Acts 2:17, Acts 2:18 are key passages. Women are baptized (Lydia) Women are persecuted and hauled off to prison. Women are prophesying. (Acts 21) Women are teachers (Priscilla, Acts 18
- viii. The diversity of the deacons and their cultural background in Acts 7 is quite a picture.
- ix. The reaching of Cornelius is paramount to Luke’s story. Jew and Greek as God’s people is an amazing achievement, giving direction and importance for racial unity today.
- x. Diversity gets expressed in the early church communities, for instance I Cor 12:12-30 highlights in Corinth, how all are to be honored and included, and the diverse use of the gifts of all.
- xi. Practically speaking – A diverse church:
 1. Creates a safe place for people of many backgrounds to have honest dialogue.
 2. Provides educational and training opportunities for members to better understand other cultures.
 3. Recruits and hires staff members who will broaden the cultural awareness and provide outreach to communities in proximity to the building.
 4. All parts honored / included in the body and in the using of their gifts.
 5. Is a witness to the community of the barrier breaking, and unifying aspects of the gospel. (John 13:34-35)

g. Adaptable. (Jan 30, 2022: Speaker – Lane Hamm, Elder – Bret)

- i. Adaptable (changing to better honor God)**
- ii. The gospel does not change. We will not ever change what is non-negotiable. However, the way the gospel is presented, who it is presented to, and how it is presented, and how is it lived out, is open to change to accomplish the mission at hand.

- iii. We will maintain a rock-solid commitment to the never changing gospel in an ever changing culture.
- iv. We do not change for the sake of change, but change as Paul said to win as many as possible. (1 Cor 9:19-23)
 - v. This approach challenges us to meet people where they are.
 - vi. We must develop skills to adapt and move.
- vii. Early Christians using persecution and homelessness as a means to share the message.
- viii. The church was highly adaptable. It had to be!
- ix. We too must adapt and innovate because we can no longer rely on a “Christian world” to help us.
- x. People don’t resist change; they resist loss.
- xi. And Saul approved of their killing him. The Church Persecuted and Scattered. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. ² Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. ³ But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.
 - Philip in Samaria
 - ⁴ **Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.** ⁵ Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. ⁶ When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. ⁷ For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. ⁸ So there was great joy in that city.
- xii. Paul and Silas share the gospel from a prison cell – Acts 16.
- xiii. Went from meeting in the temple to meeting in homes.
- xiv. From Sabbath gatherings to the first day of the week assemblies.
- xv. Direct application of change for MX – leveraging technology and social media to grow our outreach, discipleship, and connection.

h. Generosity. (Feb 6, 2022: Speaker – Don, Elder – Brad)

- i. Generosity (eagerly giving time, talent, and treasure)**
- ii. Acts 2 - ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common.
- iii. Willing to give and longing to share (2:45-46) – finances, time, and hospitality.
- iv. Acts 4:32-35 – no needy person among them.
- v. Acts 9 – Dorcas doing good and helping the poor.
- vi. Acts 20:33-35 - I coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, *and to those who were with me*. In all things *I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak*, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, *‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’*
- vii. *Key idea – it is more blessed to give than to receive. Paul attributes this to Jesus. While we have no record of Jesus saying this precisely, his life is a demonstration of this principle again and again. This was not lost on the early disciples.*
- viii. *Generosity includes more than money. This point made by Peter is highly significant. Acts 3: ⁶ Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”*
- ix. What does generosity look like among us?
- x. Where did this spirit of generosity come from in the early church?

i. Missional. (Feb 13, 2022: Speaker – Jeff Fogarty, Elders – All)

- i. Missional (purposefully sharing the good news as you go)**
- ii. A spirit of mission characterized the church from the beginning in Acts 1:8 and wraps up the Book of Acts in Acts 28.
- iii. Acts 1:8 calls us to focus on the mission at our front door, and the church’s front door.

- iv. Central to this mission are the great commandments and the great commission. (Mark 12:28-31, and Matt 28:19-20).
- v. ⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
- vi. ³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”
- vii. ⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.
- viii. Bold to speak (2:14, 3:1, 4:8)
- ix. Reaching across people barriers.
- x. Practically what might this missional value look like?
 1. Training and opportunities for those in our body to share the gospel.
 2. Building meaningful relationships with people in the communities in proximity to the building.
 3. Continuing to solidify our relationships with North City COC. Identify opportunities to work on community projects together.
 4. Help to sustain current and future international mission teams.

Jeff Kryder's Plans for the Sabbatical (Dec 13 2021-Feb 14 2022) – as of 11.30.2021

1. **Individual – use rest and quiet as restorative time.** To be uncomfortably still. Have “alone times” for a day or two at a time to focus on prayer, Bible reading, spiritual reading, and journaling.
 - a. Use Perry's cabin for 3-day quiet trip.
 - b. Personal Quiet Day at [Mercy Conference Center in Frontenac](#).
 - c. Spend day at [Contemplative Outreach Center in Kirkwood](#).
 - d. Spend a weekend with Mom.

2. **Face to Face and Zoom Conversations for spiritual direction.** – Spend time with spiritually minded people who understand ministry, outside of my ministry bubble to help me in deepening my walk with God and clarifying my role as God's person.
 - a. Memphis Trip - Meet with Jim Martin, Kent Blake, and Ed Dismuke.
 - b. Day trip to meet with Dale Robinson.
 - c. Plan for 2-3 meetings with Phil Gold. (Zoom)
 - d. Plan for 2-3 meetings with Arthur Sutherland. (Zoom)

3. **Therapist – for personal grief work, healing, and mental health.**
 - a. Regular meetings with Dr. Susan Blain.
 - b. Also, Consider Philip Matheny's neighbor as a possibility. Waiting to hear from Philip.

4. **Group Prayer and Healing.**
 - a. Join a Contemplative Outreach prayer group for centering prayer.

5. **Exploration Meetings.** – what's going on in other churches and ministries and how this might add clarity to our work at MX.
 - a. [Josh Kingcade at Memorial Drive Church](#) in Oklahoma City.
 - b. [Dusty Rush](#) at Campus Church in Atlanta.
 - c. [Bob Grigg](#) in San Antonio.
 - d. Dave Crumbaugh as friend at Windsor Crossings.

6. **Visit other churches** - to worship, feed my spirit, and to observe models, and ministries.
 - a. [Brian Zahn](#) ministries.
 - b. [The Journey](#).
 - c. [GreenTree](#).
 - d. Other.

7. **Generative activities – doing “non-obvious” activities.**
 - a. Cooking.
 - b. Biking.

8. **Resources.**
 - a. The meditations of Richard Rohrs.
 - b. [The Path of Centering Prayer](#) by David Frenette. Thomas Keating says, “This book in my view is the best, most comprehensive and most practical book on centering prayer.”
 - c. [Psalms for Praying](#) by Nan C. Merrill
 - d. [Cleaning Up Your Mental Mess](#) – Caroline Leaf
 - e. [Get Out of Your Head](#) – Jennie Allen

9. **Outcomes (Post-Sabbatical)**
 - a. Develop some key points of focus for healthy remaining years of full and part-time ministry after Sabbatical.
 - b. New insights for leading next leg at MX.

The year that is drawing towards its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God.

----- Abraham Lincoln

In the midst of a COVID pandemic spanning its second year you Lord have continued to bless your body here at McKnight Crossings. Our members have been financially impacted by the pandemic but we still give and are able to maintain the key areas of our budget and continue to serve our community.

This year we have been able to return to this building to meet together and worship you. In prior years we may have taken our fellowship for granted and we thank you God that we can now physically come together in this building to give you praise and to encourage one another.

And as we return to this building we again have the opportunity to have classes to teach our young children of your love. Thank you for Heather Goff, Debbie Fitzgerald and others who teach and love on our children.

We recognize your work in our Youth Group. What a blessing these young men and women have been to each other and to this church. As a church body we have been blessed to have young men and women like Spencer Riekers, Josh Lowe, Alana Hamm, Oliva Lowe, Ian McPherson, Emma Kasicki, Gracie Earnhart and others lead our thoughts during communion or in a prayer. We are also blessed to have them lead us in singing. This past year the Youth Group has also been able to show your love to others in many ways: They have help school children in Honduras, they have served the hungry in Poplar Bluff, and provided VBS for the children in St. Louis city.

Lord, we thank you for the blessing of our children and the Youth Group.

And Father we continue to see you at work on our local campuses. In spite of the restrictions at the universities you have greatly blessed the ACTS campus ministry. AJ and Susan Bennett continue to have 40 to 60 students at their home on Friday nights for fellowship and to worship you. This past week on the Washington University campus over 90 students participated in the ACTS Thanksgiving meal. As our culture and our universities appear to become more and more alienated from you we thank you for the ACTS ministry that continues to show students that you are about love and grace and mercy. Our campuses may seem cold and a difficult mission field but there have been several baptisms and we see you working here among us and we thank you for the lives that are changing because of your love.

Father, you have also allowed us to participate in foreign missions. We are so fortunate to be able to support and be a part of missions going on in Mauritius, Marseilles, France and Malawi, Africa. Thank you that we are allowed to partner with the mission work in those countries. May your name be praised all across this world.

We have also been blessed with children and we thank you for the safe and healthy births of Liam Ward, Arielle Taylor, Olivia Ramos, and Mavis Clapper. We ask that your Spirit remain with these children and help their parents and this body raise these children to walk in your ways.

Amidst these blessings we also remember those who died this past year – Rosemary Grissom, Marty Dolan, Mathew Canon and Stephanie Hopper. Father, we commend their spirits unto you. And as we pause and reflect we realize that we still have among us Amy Weiler, Debbie Fitzgerald, Jamie Wighrung, Chris Borth, Joe Shelley and others. You have given these men and women new mornings and we are thankful.

And finally, Father, we are thankful for those who have committed themselves to your mercy and Lordship. This past year the following individuals were baptized: Liberty Goff, Jeff McMillian, Katie Bucklin, Ansley Picker, Brynleigh Willis, Mia Leicht, and Tommy Maiocco.

Lord, we look back at the year and see your blessings. It is good for us to remember your faithfulness and providence. You are the creator of all things and worthy of praise. And you have blessed us with being able to be called your children, and for that we say thanks.

---- Amen

Elder Contact Info.:

Steve Awtrey	steve.awtrey@gmail.com	(314) 374-3276
Bret Blackford	Bret_Blackford@yahoo.com	(314) 402-7086
Glen Devania	rGlenn88@hotmail.com	(314) 822-0321
Don Fitzgerald	donaldFitzgerald@att.net	(314)791-5038
Lane Hamm	lane_hamm@yahoo.com	314-269-4049
Steve Haupt	steve@rotolite-stl.com	
Keaton Jones	keaton.jones@sbcglobal.net	(314) 270-9632
Wole Okunade	alokunade@wustl.edu	(314) 429-8832
Brad Stevens	bStevens@shandselbert.com	(314) 962-5370
Steve Walker	srainey6@yahoo.com	
Dave Weiler	dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com	(314) 729-0327
Louis West	joyceDickersonWest@gmail.com	(314)308-5284
Jon Earnhart	jonathanearnhart44@gmail.com	636-485-6289
Jeff Kryder	jKryder@mcknightcrossings.org	314-537-6912