

**McKnight Crossings Church of Christ**  
**October 4, 2021 Shepherding Meeting**

Attendees:

Lane Hamm, Brad Stevens, Keaton Jones, Don Fitzgerald, Jeff Kryder, Steve Haupt, Glen Devania, Bret Blackford (secretary), Louis West, Wole Okunade, Steve Awtrey

There were two (2) separate Elder meetings on this day:

1. 6:00-7:00pm special meeting to address open priorities
2. 7:00-9:00pm regular monthly meeting

**Meeting 1:** Called and chaired by Brad Stevens. Loose agenda to discuss open items.

**1. Special Elder meeting to discuss priorities**

Saturday October 16, 8-11:30 (location TBD: **we still need a facilitator and clear agenda**)

- a. Decide what are priorities for MX. What do we want? What are the goals for the church?
- b. How do we have a more collaborative leadership between staff and elders?

**2. Jeff Kryder transition**

See **Attachment A**

**3. New elder(s)**

Brad Stevens to invite John Earnhart to start meeting with the elders.

**Meeting 2** (regular monthly elder meeting)

Staff (left meeting after agenda item #5): Jeremy Picker, Machalie Brown

**Agenda** (details below):

1. Unity in Diversity
2. People
3. Next Gen Updates
4. Elder / Staff Tuesdays
5. Food Pantry Update
6. Letter from Erich McPherson
7. MX Vision and Priorities
8. Pick Future Meeting Times

**1. Unity in Diversity:** Louis & Joyce West, Brett & Kari Ferguson, Paul & Jodi Mitchell

The representatives of the Unity in Diversity group shared how they have been impacted by racism and some things we could do as a congregation to try and address the situation. Reviewed Unity in Diversity goals noted in **Attachment B**. This document is truthful but it lacks the heart, spirit, and soul of the conversation. Document intended to be a catalyst for future conversations.

A few key statements/takeaways from the various conversations:

- Racial/ethnic unity must be a priority for the church. Not a priority on its own but woven into all other priorities.
- Rock Hill is 30% non-white (<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/rock-hill-mo/>)
- If you can't recognize people's hurt and pain you cannot help.
- "The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism" helped changed Kari Ferguson's perspective.
- If MX shutdown and closed the doors today who in our community would miss us? What are we known for?
- Jesus is the only true answer

**2. People**

Discussed various visits, concerns, and new members (Ron Orick)

**3. Next Gen Update**

Michalie updated on Youth Group – see [Attachment D](#).

**4. Elder / Staff Tuesdays**

Schedule is noted at [Attachment C](#).

**5. Food Pantry Update**

Bob Conally has retired from running the pantry and Barb Eickele will be taking over. There will be a retirement party for Bob Wed. October 6, 2021 at the MX church parking lot.

Barb had mentioned the Food Pantry has reduced the number of families served and the amount of food distributed. This is possibly due to COVID keeping people in and other sources of food being offered by the government and NGOs. Bot Scouts plan to do a food drive this year and Food Pantry should benefit from that.

**6. Letter from Erich McPherson**

Unfortunately, Bret Blackford was careless and inadvertently sent Erich’s letter to some of the staff when discussing the letter with the elders. This caused two problems: 1) it broke the trust with Erich McPherson, who intended his comments to be confidential and shared only with the elders, and 2) it caused unease with some of the staff. Dave Weiler and Lane Hamm met with the staff on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 to help with damage control. They listened to the staff and provided encouragement.

Erich’s letter does bring up topics that the elders still need to discuss. Time did not allow to properly address comments, concerns, and possible changes.

Erich’s letter attached below:



ErichMcPherson-lette  
r.pdf

**7. MC Vision and Priorities**

This was part of the 6:00pm **Meeting 1** discussed above.

**8. Pick Future Meeting Times**

During the Saturday half-day special elder meeting we will discuss the possibility of increasing the frequency of meetings. Possibly adding another meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month.

=====  
Summary of open items from prior discussions:

- Elder / Staff Relationships: Elders will visit office on Thursday’s based on rotation schedule
- Jeff Kryder Transition:
  - Jeff to determine end date
  - Jeff to eventually focus on Leadership Development
  - Elders: What is vision for Jeff’s replacement?
- Sabbatical: is this beneficial now and for who?
- From Machalie:
  - Teachers - Right now, I am teaching 3 times a week. Sunday, Theo/SLT and Wednesdays. Who can I bring in to help me? Will you help me?
  - Mentors - Who can take our students out to lunch? Studies recommend that students need 5 adults (besides their parents) pouring into them.
  - Classes - We need teachers for MXkids to be able to resume classes

- Food Pantry Video: In January we discussed a video that will document all the good that the pantry does, all the people it serves, and the current need to keep the shelves stocked.
- Eldership:
  - Meetings: Should we transition away from Sr Minister (Jeff Kryder) being Chair and have Elder rotation?
  - Types: Administrative, Pastoral, Vision
  - Appointing Process: Need to define process and when/how to recruit younger elders
  - Staff or Eldership lead church? We currently lead to staff led but need to decide.
- Gender Issues: Do we want to get in front of this issue now?
- Erich McPherson questions (attached above)

**Note:** I have attempted to collect some of the key conversations and documents on a website located here ... <https://www.shepherd.mx.mxcoc.xyz/elders.html>. As the contents are sensitive I have password protected the site.

Credentials to access:

ID: **Shepherd**

Password: **servant**

Let me know if there are other documents you'd like to see included.

=====  
Elders (distribution list for minutes):

Name	Phone	email
Steve Awtrey	314-374-3276	<a href="mailto:steve.awtrey@gmail.com">steve.awtrey@gmail.com</a>
Bret Blackford	314-402-7086	<a href="mailto:Bret_Blackford@yahoo.com">Bret_Blackford@yahoo.com</a>
Glenn Davania	314-822-0321	<a href="mailto:rGlenn88@hotmail.com">rGlenn88@hotmail.com</a>
Don Fitzgerald	314-791-5038	<a href="mailto:donaldFitzgerald@att.net">donaldFitzgerald@att.net</a>
Lane Hamm	314-269-4049	<a href="mailto:lane_hamm@yahoo.com">lane_hamm@yahoo.com</a>
Steve Haupt		<a href="mailto:steve@rotolite-stl.com">steve@rotolite-stl.com</a>
Keaton Jones	314-270-9632	<a href="mailto:keaton.jones@sbcglobal.net">keaton.jones@sbcglobal.net</a>
Wole Okunade	314-429-8832	<a href="mailto:alokunade@wustl.edu">alokunade@wustl.edu</a>
Brad Stevens	314-962-5370	<a href="mailto:bStevens@shandselbert.com">bStevens@shandselbert.com</a>
Steve Walker		<a href="mailto:srainey6@yahoo.com">srainey6@yahoo.com</a>
Dave Weiler	314-729-0327	<a href="mailto:dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com">dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com</a>
Louis West	314-308-5284	<a href="mailto:joyceDickersonWest@gmail.com">joyceDickersonWest@gmail.com</a>
Jeff Kryder	314-537-6912	<a href="mailto:jKryder@mcknightcrossings.org">jKryder@mcknightcrossings.org</a>

## Jeff Kryder transition

---

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

To: jkryder@mcknightcrossings.org

Cc: bret\_blackford@yahoo.com; dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com; srainey6@yahoo.com; mblackford@archcoal.com

Date: Wednesday, October 6, 2021, 05:02 PM CDT

---

Jeff,

The elders met together prior to the standing Monday 7:00pm meeting looking to prioritize all the items that need attention. Although not the main priority but one of key importance is you and your position as senior minister. In our August meeting we discussed your annual review and the reality that we cannot expect you to preach forever, at least not in the same capacity. Summary action items from that meeting are noted below.

The elders in no way want to rush you in this transition and realize how blessed MX is to have you as our senior minister. We do, however, want to make sure you are taking the steps to ensure you and your family are healthy and we realize we need to start planning for your transition away from the Sr Minister position. Again, the elders do not want to rush this transition but would like for you to continue communication with Dave Weiler and Steve Walker as we work through the items below.

**Brother, know that you are greatly appreciated!**

Jeff Kryder Transition:

- Jeff to submit a suggested timeline and a preferred end date
- Jeff to eventually focus on Leadership Development
- Elders: What is vision for Jeff's replacement?

**SUMMARY** (from Jeff Kryder's annual review):

- Jeff primarily desires to see "fruit bearing" in people's lives. He is energized by the prospect of doing a leadership development class and leadership mentoring.
- Jeff's position is draining and he is feeling increased negative thoughts and depression. Exercise helps, but he has not found a solution to the weighty and ongoing burden he feels as Senior Minister and primary preacher at MX.
- Jeff is concerned with how much longer he can or should continue "as is". He feels he has more to give to ministry at MX, but perhaps not as the Senior Minister?
- Jeff turns 62 in November 2021, and would welcome an exploration of transition of duties and/or ultimate retirement.

**ACTION ITEMS** (from Jeff Kryder's annual review):

- Jeff will seek out a Spiritual Director (his own suggestion).
- **MX will begin to work on a plan that is healthy for both Jeff and MX to move toward Jeff's retirement.** Can that plan be transitional? gradual? flexible? confidential?

---

## Unity in Diversity at MX (September 2021)

*I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.*

- John 17:23 NLT

We welcome diversity and healing into our fellowship at MX and our outreach into neighboring communities, through the reconciling work of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

What are our goals?

- For God to be glorified.
- For the church to be a credible witness to our neighbors of unity and diversity.
- For believers to be the bridge between people divided by racial and cultural differences, bringing healing and transformation to individuals and communities.

### Area 1: Personnel

- Offer training for staff and elders on race, racism, and cultural competency.
- Offer training for Ministry Leaders. This can include: Greeters, Safety, Ushers, Food Pantry, and Bible Class teachers.
- *This training to be requested by the Elders and its completion overseen by the Elders.*

### Area 2: Worship Services and Ministries

- Ministries are regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect the commitments of the church regarding race, culture, and diversity.
  - o Sunday Worship.
    - People of color are in publicly visible roles on Sunday mornings (During worship, Greeters, Ushers, Bible class teachers, etc.)
    - Worship is regularly prepared in collaboration with a person of color.
- Communication of programs and services will reflect our commitments to be a multicultural church.
  - o Public messaging (Sunday announcements, email, website, Facebook, etc.) and artistic displays reflect diversity.

### Area 3: Members and Community

- Have a consistent schedule of training to turn up the voices of the marginalized, and requesting that those in the dominant culture listen, learn, and empathize.
- Post every other week in MX email, website, and Facebook to help with awareness.
- Make Intentional efforts for the church to reflect on the racial composition of the neighboring communities.
- Outreach efforts to be intentionally inclusive of people of color.
- Organize a group which makes a commitment to have monthly dinner with families of a different background (post-covid).
- Find appropriate banners to place on our property.

- Additional Opportunities:
  - o Visit, worship, or share a ministry with predominantly African-American Church (North City Church, Ferguson, West Central, or Louis's cousin in Meacham Park).
  - o Offer opportunities where white people are in the minority.
  - o Visit museums and places of historical interest that educate on the African American experience (tour of underground railroad, East St. Louis, Alton)
  - o Establish two groups – one to look outward to community, and one to look inward at church.
  - o Have Block Party designed around Juneteenth. Pre-market this event. For instance, have a snow cone machine in North Webster the week before.
  - o Begin another Color of Compromise group to continue to widen awareness.

#### **Area 4: Organizational Structure**

- Elder composition includes people of color, ensuring that decisions by Elders are reviewed by people of color.
- People of color are being actively groomed for leadership.

For your consideration and feedback:

- What are the most important or first priorities?
- Can we do training on leadership level and grass roots activities at same time?
- What might be the time-tables?

**Office Visit - Elder Rotation for Brief Office Visit and /or Lunch / Coffee with the Staff**

Yahoo/Inbox

Jeff Kryder <jkryder@mcknightcrossings.org>

To: Brad Stevens (work), Dave & Amy Weiler, Glenn Davania, Jeff Kryder, Keaton Jones and 9 more...

Cc: Dolores Miller

Tue, Aug 31 at 11:34 AM

**Office Visit -Elder Rotation for Brief Office Visit and /or Lunch / Coffee with the Staff**

- The assigned day will be Tuesday, if possible, as the staff are at the offices on this day. There is a Next Gen Meeting in the morning at 10:30, and the entire Staff meets at 1:30.
- See your visit as a call of encouragement.
- Could feel a bit awkward initially.
- Can be brief.
- Check on how the staff is doing personally, what they are working on, what support they need, and offer a prayer and / or a Scripture.
- The Ministry Staff (Jeremy, Heather, Michalie, Jeff, and sometimes Jeannie) generally have more flexibility to grab a coffee or lunch, than the administrative staff (Elizabeth, Dolores, Tom, and sometimes Jeannie), if you are inclined to go out.
- Can try to touch base with everyone who is there, or if the Spirit leads, take a few extra minutes with one or two.
- Making a pastoral call on a member along with a staff person earns extra credit!

Here is the list and your initial date. Contact Dolores if you need to select another date.

~~Sep 7 - Keaton Jones~~  
~~Sep 14 - Don Fitzgerald~~  
~~Sep 21 - Glenn Davania~~  
~~Sep 28 - Bret Blackford~~  
~~Oct 5 - Lane Hamm~~  
Oct 12 - Steve Haupt  
Oct 16 - Wole Okunade  
Oct 26 - Dave Weiler  
Nov 2 - Steve Walker  
Nov 9 - Steve Awtrey

Better Together,

Jeff

--

**Jeff Kryder**  
**Senior Minister**  
**McKnight Crossings Church of Christ**



From Machalie Brown

# Elder's Meeting Report

Oct 4, 2021

MXYG

## REGULAR PROGRAMMING

### SUNDAY CLASS | Canteen, 112 A

- MS: Back to the Basics with Jeff Goff (112 A)
- HS: Gentle and Lowly debrief with Michalie
- End of every series, join big church.

### YOUTH GROUP | Wednesdays from 6:30-8

- OCT - James: Olivia Lowe
- NOV - With You: Series on Friendship
- DEC - Good Things: Old Testament and Gospels on Christmas
- \*\*Every 6 weeks, journaling

### THEO | Alternating Tuesdays from 6:30-8

- Oct. 12 and 26 | Nov. 9 and 30 | Dec. 14
- Acts study using Dwell Bible Audio App - going amazing!
- Doing 2 or 3 chapters at a time

### SLT | Alternating Tuesdays from 6:30-8

- Sept. 7 and 21 | Oct. 5 and 19 | Nov. 2 and 16 | Dec. 7
- Doing personal study

## SPECIAL EVENTS

- SEPT. 10-12 | Poplar Bluff Service Trip
  - Exactly what we needed! Serving together brings us together!
- SEPT. 25 | Middle School Guy's Night at the Blackford's
  - Was so fun! Thank you Brett and Michelle for the intentionality!
- OCT. 15 | Bonfire at the Patterson's
- OCT. 16 | Middle School Girls Night at the Picker's
- OCT. 22 | High School Guys Night at Beauchamp's
- NOV. 12-14 | REFUGE
  - 33 Signed up!
- NOV. 20 | Ladies Exercise and Coffee with Elizabeth McPherson
- NOV. 20 | High School Girls Night at McGlawn's
- DEC. 17 or 18 | High School Christmas Party at the Beauchamp's
- DEC. ?? | Middle School Christmas Party at the Goff's

## THINGS TO KNOW

- We would love to have more Elder presence in our programming. Let me know if you're interested in teaching - or just showing up and getting to know the kids!
- All is well, fall is still busy but a little more "structured" of a season. I am happy to be back in a routine!



## **WHAT I NEED FROM THE ELDERS**

- Professional:
  - Teachers - small progress on teachers. Jeff Goff is taking Middle school on Sundays!
  - Volunteer Base - Ideally, I'd like to have more than two adults present on Wednesday nights.
- Personal:
  - Keep praying for those young adults! We are having a young adult Retreat at Neotez the first weekend in November - send anyone (24-33ish) who might be interested my way!

## **PRAYER REQUESTS**

- **For our students:**
  - That they will make their relationship with God a priority, that they will take a look at their own lives and make the changes that Christ calls us to make. That they will be inclusive of each other, and that they will allow the gospel to transform them a little more each day.
- **For me** - That I lead with intentionality and prioritize Kingdom work over program work.
- **For our volunteers** - we are so thankful for them!
  - For future volunteers - that God would bring us the right people!
- **For our spring semester** - that I will plan it with direction and intention, listening to the direction of the Holy Spirit.