

Next Steps with Ross Brown

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

To: mxelders@mcknightcrossings.org

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 at 05:15 PM CST

Fellow Elders,

I met with Ross Brown yesterday, and he shared that he is ready to join us as an Elder.

As you know, Ross (along with Jeff McGlawn) has been shadowing us and participating in our meetings since January 2024. During this time, he has:

- **Observed Our Process:** Gained insight into our decision-making and leadership dynamics.
- **Built Relationships:** Gotten to know each of us better, appreciating our unique personalities and gifts.
- **Understood the Responsibility:** Developed a clearer understanding of the responsibilities that come with this calling.

Ross has also shown great initiative by meeting individually with several of us. This demonstrates his serious consideration of the role and his willingness to step in with open eyes.

Next Steps

Ross mentioned that he has no timeline in mind and wants to be sensitive to any appearance of insider favoritism, especially as we consider his uncle, John Blackmore, for the Lead Minister position.

I'm not sure of the exact next steps but wanted to bring this to the group's attention. I've attached some of the communication used when Lane Hamm and I were installed, which can serve as a good template.

Suggested Path Forward:

1. **Internal Discussion** – Confirm among ourselves if we are comfortable with Ross joining now or if more time is needed for him or the congregation.
2. **Conversation with Ross** – Confirm his willingness to join as an Elder.
3. **Congregational Communication** – Present Ross to the congregation as our recommended elder and seek feedback.
4. **Feedback Review** – Consider and address any feedback as needed.
5. **Installation** – Install Ross (and Alicia) Brown during Sunday worship.

This isn't an urgent decision but certainly one to keep in our prayers. I see this as a positive step forward and hope we can continue to encourage and mentor Ross during this transition.

Looking forward to your thoughts and prayers on this.

Blessings,
--- Bret

08.15.2021: Elder Commissioning

From: M Bret Blackford (bret_blackford@yahoo.com)
To: mblackford@archcoal.com; bret_blackford@yahoo.com
Date: Sunday, August 29, 2021, 08:24 AM CDT

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

From: Jeff Kryder <jkryder@mcknightcrossings.org>
To: Lane Hamm <lane.a.hamm@gmail.com>; Blackford, Bret <bret_blackford@yahoo.com>
Cc: Brad Stevens <bstevens@shandselbert.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 11, 2021, 07:36:48 AM CDT
Subject: Elder Commissioning

Hi Guys,
This Sunday is a big day! Below is a summary of my remarks for the Elder Commissioning. For the questions that I ask you and then the church, I believe it best to come on the stage and bring your wives. After the church responds, all of the Elders and wives are invited to come to the stage, and Brad will pray for you and the next chapter at MX.
Thanks,
Jeff

Shepherd Commissioning – August 2021

For a few months, Lane Hamm and Bret Blackford have been serving alongside our current Shepherds. We have had a chance to see their lives more closely and they have had a chance to see the workings of our current leadership, warts and all.

We alerted you that the leadership was proposing these men and their wives (Kim and Michelle) – to become Shepherding Couples. Then, for a few weeks, we have invited you to get to know them and ask them, or us any questions.

I am happy to say that we have arrived at the day of commissioning.

A great summary of the qualities of a Shepherd are found in I Tim 3 and Titus 1. A few years back, I stumbled on an OT passage that describes the work of the Shepherd in one verse. Actually, the passage is stated in the negative. The people have been taken into Babylonian captivity, and this young priest – Ezekiel – reminds them of the history of their leaders. The Shepherds were not doing their jobs.

Ezekiel 34:4 - 4 You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.

However, we can positively reframe it in terms of the characteristics of a good shepherds.

Here is a good Shepherd - Spirit led description – **“You have strengthened the weak, healed the sick, and bound up the injured. You have brought back the strays and searched the lost. You have ruled them kindly and gently.”**

Ask these Men – Will you do your best to point people to Jesus by strengthening the weak, healing the sick, and binding up the injured? Will you do your best to bring back the strays, and search for the lost? Will you serve the flock of God kindly and gently?

Ask the Church – Will you follow these men (and their wives) as they seek to follow Christ? Will you do your best to promote a culture of trust and service in this church? Will you pray for the leaders? Will you do your part to make the burden of leadership a blessing? Will you commit yourself to becoming more like our Lord Jesus?

PRAY.

--
Jeff Kryder
Senior Minister
McKnight Crossings Church of Christ

Upcoming Elder Appointment (Summer 2021)

1. Communication to Church.

Recommended Shepherding Couples

A few months ago, the Shepherds spoke to several men about their willingness to serve as Shepherds at MX. Lane Hamm and Bret Blackford accepted our invitation to spend time with the leadership exploring the possibility of becoming Shepherds. We informed the body about this in October of 2020 and since that time, the leadership has had an opportunity to see and consider their lives in light of the qualities of an elder from I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. At this time, we would like to recommend to the congregation for these men to serve along with us. They have servant hearts, great gifts, and a strong commitment to this body.

If you do not know them well, will you have a conversation with Lane and Kim and Bret and Michelle? Please let them and us know by July 25th, if you have concerns that need to be addressed or support to be offered. After this period of feedback, prayer, and confirmation from the body, if the Lord wills, we shall install these men as Shepherds one Sunday in August.

Be in prayer for MX and our leadership.
McKnight Crossings Shepherds

2. Take time, if needed, for current elders to meet with Lane and Kim, and / or Bret and Michelle.
3. Send email to congregation on June 30th. **Will also resend this email on July 7.**
4. Provide a short communication of this email message on July 4th and again on July 11, during the Shepherd's Prayer time. **Communicated on June 27 and again on July 11.**
5. Congregational feedback will be received until July 25th.
6. At our August Elders' meeting, August 2, we will process feedback that might need consideration.
7. Based upon favorable results at that August meeting, we will install these men on August 15.