

Andrew Owens

Feedback from April 25 weekend - Informal Meeting with Staff and Elders Couples

Steve Walker

To: MXElders, and 1 other · Mon, Apr 28 at 5:58 PM

Message Body

Here are a few comments from the staff about Andrew Owens.

Elizabeth: Likes the Owens family. Based on Andrew's previous roles and responsibilities, she thought he would be someone who would be willing to do some of the less than desirable duties related to ministry. His demeanor was cordial and casual.

She was less than thrilled with the attire he wore to the staff dinner which she considered an interview; he wore cargo shorts and sandals. Her two main concerns are lack of leadership experience and preaching. His casual demeanor did not instill any confidence he could deliver a thoughtful and challenging sermons for a spiritually mature audience like MX. Wonders why he hasn't and if he's interested in pursuing a graduate degree in ministry.

Overall Impression Lukewarm. Let's not make a decision out of desperation.

Kaylynn: Liked the cultural fit. Although he hasn't pursued a graduate degree in ministry, she believes Lipscomb does a great job of preparing students for ministry. Her Children bonded with the Owens children. She believes parents (Andrew and Lydia) play a role in how children interact with their peers. She likes that he and Nathan already has an established seemingly healthy relationship. The ministry priorities she heard him discussed seems to align with MX such as women using their gifts. Although they are from the south, they have lived in the St Louis region for over a decade.

Her concern is lack of LM experience.

She hasn't heard him preach, but based on what she knows, she would very much like to take next steps with him.

Nathan – Still a strong yes.

Stephen Walker

To: MXElders, and 1 other · Sun, Apr 27 at 9:23 PM

Message Body

Positives

- He sees himself in the role as MX's LM and is excited about the opportunity.
- Seems to have a supportive wife and strong family values.
- Seems like a good fit culturally.
- He has 14 years of experience in ministry.

Challenges

- He has had limited leadership responsibility.
 - His past experiences seem to have him a little shelled shocked. May need some reassuring.
 - No experience developing and preaching sermons on a regular basis.
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dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com

To: donaldfitzgerald@att.net, Cc: me, and 3 others · Sun, Apr 27 at 8:53 PM

Message Body

Hello All:

Here are the thought I captured after the interview meeting Saturday.

Positive interview

- > Wife and family are a plus
- > Experience is a plus
- > Would be good support for Nathan and for a new children's minister.
- > Flexible, will grow, creative.
- > We will still need Walker in Admin role, I think.
- > Needs to grow in preaching- willing to do that.
- > In tune to younger population
- > Heart for the lost.
- > Good timing for a change for him.

I think if we eventually hire him we should start him preaching 26 weeks per year. Keep some of our rotation and variety going.

I still want to know what the staff impressions were. Perhaps Steve Walker can capture those at this weeks staff meeting?

> If staff are overall positive, I recommend we show him MOU and if workable we invite him to preach/teach on a Sunday.

Keep praying,
Dave

Don Fitzgerald

To: brad1125@swbell.net, Cc: me, and 2 others · Sun, Apr 27 at 8:08 AM

Message Body

I got a stronger positive impression yesterday than I did at the Zoom meetings. I like them both...they seem very spiritually grounded and a strong family unit. My only concern is his lack of preaching experience which we have said we can be patient with and help him with time and training. I'm thinking we move forward to next step.

Don

Andrew Owens

Feedback from April 25 weekend - Informal Meeting with Staff and Elders Couples

To: me, and 2 others · Sat, Apr 26 at 9:43 PM

Message Body

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I was pleasantly surprised to see what I thought could be a young family who wishes to come here and work. The profile that we originally talked about fits well here with a married couple with 4 children. I am prepared to say that we should move forward with Andrew at this time.

What is the correct spelling of Lydia's name? I am seeing two ways....Lidia or Lydia? Should we start with background checks?

Andrew Owens

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M Bret Blackford

To: me, and 1 other · Sat, Apr 26 at 6:27 PM

Message Body

Bret Blackford – Summary of Meeting (Initial Thoughts)

Andrew and Lidia have a lovely family. They appear to be stable, and their four children seem well-behaved. Andrew has been involved in youth and family ministry for several years and understands the difficulties and sacrifices that come with a call to ministry. However, he has had limited opportunities to preach and has shown some reluctance in that area. Today, he expressed a willingness to preach but noted he would appreciate assistance with sermon topics and themes. Currently, he is drawn to preaching from the *Sermon on the Mount*.

PROs:

- A young couple — a good age to help MX better connect with the demographic we are seeking.
- Andrew seems eager and willing to start. He expressed no reservations about the position, the congregation, or our worship style.
- He appears committed and called to ministry, having already left family and familiar surroundings to serve elsewhere.
- Andrew demonstrates a genuine faith.
- He seems willing to do hard work and is not looking for a narrowly defined role, but rather is open to doing what needs to be done.

CONs:

- Andrew is currently in an awkward situation at his church and employer (Vaughn Hill Church of Christ). It is unclear if he feels called to MX specifically, or if he is simply seeking to leave a difficult environment. However, he did mention that he prayed and decided to apply before the situation at Vaughn Hill began to deteriorate.
- Limited preaching experience.
- Limited formal education in theology or counseling.
- Lidia, his wife, would need to continue working in Alton, IL. It is uncertain whether this will create a hardship in the future.
- Andrew did not fully answer the implicit question: "Why should we hire you?"
- McKnight has an older congregation with deep biblical knowledge. It is uncertain whether a young, relatively inexperienced preacher will be able to confidently speak to and lead such a group.

There is nothing that would prevent me from recommending Andrew proceed to the next step in the interview process. While he does not "wow" me, he seems like a solid candidate who, with the right support and mentoring, could grow into the Lead Minister role.

However, I also recommend we reach out to prior candidate Josh Nix to see if he might still be interested. Like Andrew, Josh has limited preaching experience, but he may bring a broader exposure to different worship styles and church environments. He could offer fresh ideas and perspectives.

If Josh is open to considering the position, I suggest we first have an informal discussion with a couple of the elders. If that conversation goes well, we could then invite him for a more formal meeting. This would need to happen quickly to avoid unnecessarily risking Andrew's current employment situation by dragging out the process.

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Jeff McGlawn

To: me, Cc: Steve, and 1 other · Wed, Apr 30 at 9:27 AM

Message Body

Sorry for my delay:

So would also agree with moving forward here are a few of positives and negatives of course the negatives lead to positives. At the moment I'm not seeing red flags as I did with him other than the lack of "preaching" experience. But you can't get much experience if you are not in that role.

Negatives:

- Very YM focused thus far (14 yrs) but has a ver wide perspective on church and a good work ethic it seems that do what needs to be done
- possibly weak sermon skills but is willing to work on it
- recent struggles with losing families from YG, but that could help him understand our situation of losing people too.

Positives:

- Very YM focused so the continuing of our Nextgen focus will be in his strengths
- Trainable and wants to grow and working on it, it seems.
- The whole family are servants and willing to jump in and help, when work needs to be done. (The kids jumped in and help set up without the parents telling them too) very good trait that shows who the parents are.

Jeff

Andrew Owens

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Steve Awtrey

To: me, Cc: MX · Wed, Apr 30 at 5:47 PM

Message Body

Greetings gentlemen! I am support of going the next step with Andrew. My thoughts are very much the same as everyone else.

Pros:

- He has 14 years of experience in ministry
- He developed a broad range of ministry skills in the 14 years at VH. He was probably an associate minister with emphasis in youth and children's ministry.
- In his 14 years he worked with a couple of lead ministers and saw each of them lead in a different way. He also worked with several elders and worked with the church through tough and not so tough times and didn't bail.
- He is in the age range we were hoping for.
- He has a great family and strong marriage.
- He is humble and very spiritually minded.
- He is willing to learn and develop in the role of lead minister.
- He and his family love St. Louis and are prepared to stay long term.

Cons:

- He is "untested" in this role.
- He has no graduate education in ministry. Neither did Jeff, and I have seen many "educated" ministers that were not all that effective. I think he would be open to further his education. Quite frankly, youth ministry does not always lend itself to graduate bible degrees. :)
- We and the congregation would have to understand that he would be learning this role as he goes. Sometimes churches can be impatient. As elders we would need to "have his back" and encourage him.

About Andrew's attire at the staff "interview". I had to chuckle. This generation is different! I remember when the vision elders met with Ethan Lasster for the first time for coffee at Panera, he came in shorts and a t-shirt. I probably had the same reaction as Elizabeth. Just chuckled and realized this generation is different from this "old timer".

I was down at Neotez yesterday with Nate Reiser, Mike Brown, and Jerry Williamson for our yearly time on the porch and talk. Andrew had talked with each of them about the possibilities at MX. I then asked their opinion, and they pretty much said things that matched what we have all been saying. Then one of them said, "*You know, it could be that there is no one out there that is a better option than Andrew.*" He did not make that comment meaning there aren't many out there and the bar is low but that he may be a greater fit for us than what we realize.

Other things:

- I am talking with **Josh Nix** about getting together for coffee. Probably next Tuesday morning.
- I am meeting in the morning with **Philip Matheny** about the possibilities with MX. I think he is going to explain to me why now is not a good time for them to fill that role.

Two more things to discuss later:

- I don't think it is a good idea to have Andrew, if we got that far, to only preach 26 Sundays a year to start out.
- When we give the MOU I don't think it is a good idea to put the salary range in our initial discussions. Just doesn't seem appropriate.

OK. Thanks for everyone's work!

Steve