

## McKnight Crossings Church of Christ

### Leadership Summary

#### Our Faith Heritage

McKnight Crossings comes from the Restoration Movement within the Churches of Christ. Distinctives include:

- Authority of Scripture – The Bible is our sole authority for faith and practice, expressed as 'speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent.'
- No creeds or denominational headquarters – Each congregation is autonomous and self-governing, led locally by elders.
- Restoring New Testament Christianity – We seek to live out the simple practices and spirit of the first-century church.

This foundation guides how we make decisions, structure leadership, and worship together.

#### Organization and Leadership

Each local congregation is self-governing. At McKnight, leadership is entrusted to a plurality of elders (shepherds/overseers) when qualified men are available. Because we understand the Bible and Christian tradition to require an elder be married with children, we encourage leadership by shepherding couples, allowing the wisdom and guidance of wives to also shape church life.

Key Roles:

- Elders – provide spiritual oversight and shepherding.
- Ministers/Evangelists – focus on preaching, teaching, and equipping. The Lead Minister is encouraged to attend Shepherd meetings.
- Ministry Leaders & Hospitality Group Leaders – men and women who serve in functional roles similar to deacons.

While responsibilities are often delegated, elders remain accountable for all areas of church life, both spiritual and administrative.

#### Salvation

Our teaching emphasizes following the New Testament pattern of conversion:

1. Hearing the gospel.
2. Believing in Christ.
3. Repenting of sins.
4. Confessing faith in Jesus as Lord.
5. Being baptized by immersion for forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).

Baptism is the moment one receives salvation, forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit. After baptism, believers are called to live faithfully, guided by grace and obedience.

## The Role of Elders

The New Testament uses three complementary terms:

- Elder (Presbuteros) – respected men whose influence comes from character and maturity.
- Overseer (Episcopos) – guardians who watch over the flock, ensuring accountability and guidance.
- Shepherd (Poimen) – pastors who care for the church as Christ's flock.

These images define elders as servants, not rulers, whose authority rests on credibility and faithfulness rather than title.

One of the primary biblical purposes of elders is to safeguard the church against false teaching. Paul warns in Galatians 1:6–9 not to accept any other gospel, even if delivered by an angel. Similarly, in Acts 20:28–31 Paul charges the Ephesian elders to be on guard against 'savage wolves' who would distort the truth. Elders serve as anchors—men seasoned in faith, remembering the traditions and original gospel, ensuring that change never compromises the message entrusted 'once for all to God's holy people' (Jude 1:3).

This does not mean resisting all change. Rather, elders discern whether new practices or directions align with the gospel or drift from it. Their maturity and experience provide stability, helping the church avoid fads and hold fast to the faith first delivered.

## The McKnight Shepherd's Covenant

Elders at McKnight commit to:

- Leading as servants of Christ.
- Submitting to one another, modeling humility — even if asked to resign.
- Seeking consensus in decisions; final outcomes by majority vote after prayerful deliberation.
- Speaking with one voice, guarding unity, and never disclosing vote counts.
- Treating one another with love and equality, recognizing Jesus Christ as Chief Shepherd.
- Guarding their own hearts through confession, repentance, prayer, and study.

## The McKnight Shepherding Model

All elders are called to shepherd the flock as their primary responsibility. Drawing from Ezekiel 34:4, they are charged to:

- Strengthen the weak.
- Heal the sick.
- Bind up the injured.
- Bring back the strays.
- Search for the lost.

To use diverse gifts, elders serve in three functional focuses:

1. Administrative Elders – finances, facilities, staff, policies, risk management; also serve as the Board of Trustees.
2. Pastoral Elders – spiritual care, prayer, encouragement, hospitality, integrating new members.
3. Vision Elders – work with the senior minister on teaching, long-term plans, and leadership development.

Although responsibilities are divided, elders act collectively. Functional groups make recommendations, but decisions rest with the full Eldership. Elders may act independently only where prior latitude exists (budget, prior approvals).

This shepherding is not only collective but also deeply personal. Elders are to encourage the disheartened, help the weak, and be patient with each member (1 Thessalonians 5:14). In practice, this requires listening, counseling, prayer, and relational investment with individuals, ensuring that no one is overlooked or left behind.

### Leadership Practice at McKnight

- Meeting Rhythms – Elders meet monthly for shepherding/prayer and bi-monthly for leadership updates.
- Rotation – Where possible, Elders serve on rotation to prevent burnout and raise new leaders.
- Partnership with Ministers – Ministers equip elders for shepherding; elders empower ministers.
- Delegation with Accountability – While tasks are delegated, elders remain responsible. Elders stay informed about teaching, ministries, and finances, ensuring alignment with mission.

### Documenting Leadership Positions

As part of wise and transparent leadership, the Elders recognize the value of clearly documenting major positions and decisions on matters of doctrine, faith, and church practice.

- Maintaining a separate, organized record of these positions:
- Prevents repeated debate on settled issues.
- Provides clarity for current and future Elders.
- Reduces confusion among members and visitors seeking to understand our beliefs and practices.
- Allows for appropriate public communication of key positions when beneficial.

This document serves as a guide to leadership philosophy and structure. A separate document will be maintained for recording and updating specific doctrinal or policy positions adopted by the Eldership. Reference the unofficial [What do we Believe](#) document.

## Conclusion

Leadership at McKnight is not about power but about shepherding God's people with humility, unity, and faithfulness. Our goal is to model Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd, as we build up the body of Christ toward maturity (Ephesians 4:11–16).

Part of this calling is to guard the true gospel. Elders, through their maturity, experience, and faithfulness, ensure that the church remains anchored in the message of Christ while wisely discerning when and how to adapt. In this way, they help the body of Christ grow without losing its foundation in the gospel 'first heard' and faithfully handed down.

## References

- [\*What do We Believe\*](#) – An unofficial document summarizing positions and agreements from Elder meetings throughout the years. Ideally this will be formalized.
- [\*What Are Elders Supposed to Do?\*](#) – Summary of Biblical passages associated with church leadership. Does not give summary conclusion or structure but presents alternatives.
- [\*MX Shepherding Covenant\*](#) – Agreement among the elders to clarify expectations.
- [\*MX Shepherding Model\*](#) – 2013 Documentation on leadership priorities and structure. Somewhat outdated.
- [\*Qualifications of an Elder\*](#) – An internal website with various information and resources related to church leadership.