

12.15.2025 Elder discussion with Eric McPherson

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Guys,

Attached are my notes specific to our time with Eric McPherson last night. Please review and clarify where needed.

We discussed we do not want to rush in quickly with any action but want to pray and meditate on this issue and path forward, but when we are ready to engage Eric, Steve Haupt and Keaton Jones (possibly later this week), we will need a “secretary” (my vote is Steve Awtrey) to schedule these two meetings (one with Eric and Keaton and one with Eric and Steve Haupt).

Based on when those meetings are scheduled we will see which elders might be available to sit in and facilitate those conversations.

--- Bret



12.15.2025-EldershipDiscussion.pdf
95.9 KB

McKnight Crossings Church

Dec. 15, 2025 Discussion on Eldership, specifically as it relates to Eric McPherson

Brothers,

I wanted to send a stand-alone note from our Monday night (Dec 15) meeting because I think this situation is important enough for us to align quickly on tone, messaging, and next steps.

Background and where we are

As you know, we have been meeting with Eric McPherson—not as an elder, but as a long-time member we were considering as an elder candidate. We communicated our recommendation of Eric as an Elder “intern” to the congregation, and we then heard significant concerns from Steve Haupt and Keaton Jones.

From what we understand so far, the concerns appear to center on:

- **Eric’s divorce** (and how that relates to the biblical qualifications), and
- additional concerns raised about **Eric’s character/suitability**.

In light of that feedback, we told Eric we intend to move slowly in any path toward him joining the eldership while we listen carefully and seek clarity. Eric took that news hard and expressed that he felt hurt—as if an offer of eldership was being withdrawn.

What we’re trying to accomplish (for all parties)

We are trying to shepherd **all three men well**:

- **Eric**, who is feeling wounded and needs care, clarity, and reassurance that this is not personal but a careful process we need to walk through;
- **Steve** and **Keaton**, who have expressed sincere concerns and need to be heard and engaged thoughtfully; and
- the **congregation**, who needs steady, Spirit-led leadership that prioritizes faithfulness over urgency.

It’s possible someone will feel offended or hurt no matter what we do, but our goal is to **minimize unnecessary hurt**, communicate clearly, and—above all—do what is **biblical, right, and Spirit-led**.

Key distinction we noted

We talked about two different “buckets” that may be driving the tension:

1. **Biblical qualifications / divorce-remarriage** (a doctrinal and interpretive question that may require careful teaching and wider conversation), and
2. **Character / relational concerns** (which may be addressed more directly through conversation, listening, and shepherding).

Part of our work in these meetings is to determine whether the objections are primarily about one bucket, the other, or both.

Proposed approach (from our discussion)

Here's the approach that seemed to have the most consensus Monday night:

1. Elder-supported meetings (no one meets alone).

For everyone's sake—clarity, fairness, accountability—conversations with Steve/Keaton should include Eric and at least two elders, not a one-on-one. Meetings should be elder lead and elder scheduled.

2. Meeting format option (to reduce heat and clarify).

One possible structure:

- Meet with **Steve (or Keaton) + Eric + two elders**
- Then, at an appropriate moment, **Eric steps out briefly**, and the elders check understanding/temperature with Steve/Keaton and confirm we're hearing them accurately.

3. Step 1 first; then reassess.

We don't need to pre-decide everything now. We can commit to the first meeting, then "call an audible" based on what we learn and how the conversation goes. Based on what we hear we may need additional congregational (or smaller group) teaching on the qualifications of an elder, specifically 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6.

Immediate action items (for us to assign)

To move this forward, I suggest we decide today/tomorrow:

- **Who contacts Steve Haupt and Eric McPherson** to invite him into a conversation and explain the intent/tone. (I recommend Steve Awtrey)
- **Who contacts Keaton Jones and Eric McPherson** similarly. (I recommend Steve Awtrey)
- **Which two elders** will be present with Eric for each meeting. This will probably be dependent on when Eric and Steve/Keaton are able to meet.
- Confirm we meet Steve and Keaton **separately first** with Eric (likely best) and not **together** with Eric.

What I'm asking from the group

- Clarify the above approach
- PRAY!

Did I miss anything or misstate anything?

I'm praying the Lord will give us wisdom and unity so we can act with both conviction and compassion.

— Bret