

McKnight Crossings Shepherding Model – 2025

Introduction

The following guidance has been prepared specifically for the McKnight Crossings Church. We recognize that Scripture gives local congregations flexibility in how Elders/Shepherds/Overseers serve and function. What is outlined here reflects the structure we believe best serves the needs of our church body in this place and at this time. We also acknowledge that this model is not static—our shepherding practices may, and should, be adjusted as the needs of the congregation and the opportunities before us change.

1. All elders will shepherd the flock as their primary calling. This charge can be nicely summarized from Ezekiel 34:4, reframed positively:
 - Strengthen the weak
 - Heal the sick
 - Bind up the injured
 - Bring back the strays
 - Search for the lost
 - Serve with gentleness, humility, and love.
2. Some of the elders will also focus on other areas of church leadership - Administration, Vision, and Pastoral wellbeing of the body. The purpose of the three part model is to simplify decision making functions, reduce times where the entire leadership needs meet to for lengthy “business meetings”, and allow for shepherds to use their particular gifts. Each leadership area will bring recommendations to the full eldership for decisions to be made.

The elders are the sole directors of the 501 (c) (3).

- **Administrative Elders** - Primary functions include:
 - Oversee policies and procedures.
 - Oversee budget and finances.
 - Ensure risk management.
 - Oversee facilities.
 - Oversee administrative staff.
- **Pastoral Elders** - Primary functions include:
 - Offer pastoral care to members in crisis, needing counsel or encouragement.
 - Actively develop relationships and minister to congregation through Connect Groups, Greeters Ministry, weekly prayer concerns, and organization prayer times.
 - Initiate times of spiritual encouragement to all shepherding couples and staff.
 - Lead, organize and encourage pastoral team.

- **Vision Elders** - Primary functions include:
 - Work closely with Lead Minister to envision and set forth congregational priorities, teaching, and plans.
 - With Lead Minister, primary communicators to the church on priorities, teaching, plans, and work with the spiritual formation team.
 - Responsible for leadership development and helping the church shepherd itself.
 - Oversee paid ministers.
 - Initiate strategic planning plans that would involve leadership and members as we look to the future of MX Church.
3. All Shepherds agree to the McKnight Crossings Church of Christ Shepherding Covenant ([link](#)).
 4. While seeking to be informed, elders will consistently challenge a mindset, common among both leaders and the congregation, that all elders must know all things at all times.
 5. While elders seek to know the sheep, they will consistently challenge the mindset that all elders will know all the sheep. The elders will actively seek to make connection points to get to know the sheep. Activities would include things like: Connect Groups, Huddle groups, Bible Study groups, various church-wide activities and practicing hospitality.
 6. Elders will meet periodically, at least monthly, along with the lead minister and other ministers as they are available with a focus on shepherding concerns and prayer. Ministry leaders, staff, and families will, at times, be invited to these meeting for listening, sharing, and prayer.
 7. It is the job of the ministers to help set up the elders for fruitful shepherding and leadership. It is the job of the elders to support the staff, empowering them to do their work.
 8. Shepherds will be available to the congregation at 8:45 am on Sunday mornings for prayer.
 9. We will periodically have special sessions to work through topics related to church life (women's roles, leadership development, etc.)
 - a. A set of "positions" will be documented to capture decisions on matters related to church life. This practice helps leadership move forward without repeatedly revisiting the same issues. These "positions" are not doctrine or creeds but provide agreed-upon guidance in areas where culture or scripture may raise debate or uncertainty and where unity is important. They are not permanent and may be revisited and revised whenever a majority of the Elders determine it is

necessary. Documenting these positions will also enable us to compile a consistent and clear summary of “What We Believe” for reference.

10. We feel a rotational model of leadership is a healthy system. All elders will serve with a possibility of having a “sabbatical” break depending on their life situation and length of time serving as an elder. Beginning in January of 2026, at least two of the current elders can rotate off for one year. Our prayer is that during this time, new leadership at this church will be groomed to replace those that are taking an “elder sabbatical”. This allows continuity, prevents burnout, and offers opportunity for fresh leadership to be commissioned. If desired, those that have taken a break, will then be affirmed by the congregation to return in service as an elder.
11. Elders will focus on additional leadership within the congregation. We will not have deacons in the traditional Church of Christ model, but will work diligently to ensure that Ministry Leaders and Connect Group Leaders (functional deacons), both male and female, are in place and being developed. We believe our calling to make disciples includes intentionally developing Christians to grow in leadership.
12. The elders will also commit to discipling and developing future leaders and elders. As men are chosen to “intern and discern” with the elder group, we will add a more formal program to be mentored as elders.