

FAQs

Skillman Church of Christ exploring God's mission

*This document will be updated as Skillman Church of Christ moves through the discovery and discernment process of whether to join The Hills. Currently, FAQs are divided into two areas. Questions concerning the process can be found in **Exploration Process**. Questions about what will happen at Skillman can be found in the **What Happens To ?** section.*

- **Exploration Process** – Last updated Jan. 25.
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Exploration Process

Q: Why is Skillman Church of Christ exploring the possibility of joining with another church?

A: The Skillman Church of Christ elders surveyed the membership in November 2021. The results were that 86% of the membership either wanted to pursue a merger with another congregation, wanted more information about a merger, or were undecided on whether to join with another church. The elders, after a period of prayer and discernment, elected to move forward with exploring this possibility.

Q: How did the elders decide to explore the possibility of joining with The Hills?

A: The elders believe that this opportunity has come through God's planning and God's timing. The elders began contacting other congregations that had an emphasis on missions, community outreach and child development. When the elders contacted The Hills, The Hills were extremely interested, as they had been given a vision to expand into Dallas County. The leaders of both churches met in early January 2022 to further learn about each other's visions and goals. The elders discerned that similar emphasis on missions and child development with The Hills could help accelerate making new disciples in Dallas County. At the same time, the elders also contacted The Campus Church, a group of Christians currently meeting in a Dallas school auditorium, and invited them to consider joining with Skillman. Many members of that church have been visiting Skillman in recent weeks as we have heard messages from The Hills about their mission and vision for growing disciples.

Q: Have the Skillman elders already decided to join with The Hills?

A: No! The elders believe in exploring the possibility of joining with The Hills because of similar emphases within both churches. However, a vote taken at the church will ultimately decide this question. Additionally, The Hills also must decide if their vision of a Dallas location is in north Dallas, Plano or another area of Dallas.

Q: Have The Hills decided to join with Skillman Church of Christ?

A: No. Like us, The Hills is prayerfully and prudently considering whether they can fulfill their God-given vision to expand in Dallas County by joining with Skillman Church of Church. The exploratory process that is occurring at Skillman is simultaneously occurring at The Hills.

Q: If both church's leadership teams decide to proceed, who will decide whether to join with The Hills?

A: The Skillman elders are convening a stand-alone advisory committee to further explore joining with The Hills. This committee's mission is *to evaluate whether joining The Hills presents the best opportunity for Skillman Church of Christ to be faithful stewards of the resources God has provided to us to fulfill His mission of making disciples.*

The independent advisory committee will convene February 2022 and hopefully complete their exploration by mid-March. During this phase, the elders will publish regular communications, so the Skillman membership can be informed of the process, including key dates. There are many moving pieces and much information needs to be gathered, along with much prayer and discernment, to make a fully informed decision.

The elders will make a recommendation to the Skillman membership, based on findings from the Advisory Committee. Ultimately, a vote taken at the Skillman church will decide whether Skillman Church of Christ joins with The Hills.

The Hills will follow their own process to decide whether to move forward with a union.

Q: Will a vote be taken at Skillman Church of Christ on whether to join The Hills?

A: Yes. However, the elders want to ensure three things before a vote is held:

1. The Advisory Committee has plenty of time to perform their due diligence and submit findings to the elders.
2. The membership has answers to their questions and appropriate family discussion has taken place.
3. The membership and elders have a clear vision of God's will for Skillman.

The elders will provide at least 30 days' notice of the voting date, time and location, but as of Jan. 25, the general timeline for this is expected to be in April 2022 (subject to change).

Q: How will I learn of new information during this process?

A: Members have several ways to keep informed:

1. For important updates, the elders will make announcements during the service, followed by an email to the Skillman membership.

*If you are currently a member who is not receiving emails from Skillman and wish to be on the Skillman email list, please contact the church office at 214-823-2179.

2. Important dates will be published in Skillman's weekly email, the *Skillman Messenger*.
3. Periodic announcements will be made at service as a reminder of important dates.
4. Members can access a Web page that has information and other resources to educate themselves about this process and about The Hills. Updates will be published with the most current date, so members will see new updates and be able to review them.
5. The elders will host a Q and A forum at the chapel Feb. 4, 2022, at 7 p.m.
6. Members can email elders@skillmanchurch.org to ask specific questions about this process or ask for updates.

What Happens To ?

Q: If Skillman joins The Hills, what happens to our facilities?

A: The elders believe the facilities belong to God, and that He has given us stewardship over them. The Hills have a similar belief—all the resources they have belong to God and God alone. The question is whether Skillman can better steward our resources singly or in union with The Hills. This is an area that needs further exploration by the Advisory Committee.

Q What happens to the Skillman staff?

A. At this time, nothing has been determined definitively concerning the staff. Most likely, our staff members will have the opportunity to apply with The Hills at this location. Should any of our staff members choose not to continue, they will be compensated generously for their efforts in working with the Skillman Church of Christ. The Hills will offer to work with any of these individuals on placement in a new role at a new location should this be necessary. Additionally, the elders have asked the Advisory Committee to explore this further.

Q: What happens to the Child Development Center (CDC)?

A: Because of the commonality of vision for child development and Christian education for children, the CDC would continue to operate. The Advisory Committee will seek more detailed information about this.

Q: What happens to Skillman's missions efforts?

A: Skillman Church of Christ has a long and committed effort to support international missions. Indeed, the missions and missionaries we currently support appear to meld with The Hills 5-year vision. We expect that these missionaries and mission efforts will be wholeheartedly supported by The Hills and would remain intact after a union, should one occur.

Q: What happens to Skillman's Sunday church services?

A: Should Skillman join with The Hills, Skillman will experience services differently. One change will be the addition of instrumental music worship. Skillman has experienced instrumental music worship in the recent past, and that would be re-introduced.

Another change would be the use of video technology for the sermon. Many Sundays throughout the year, the preacher will be seen via video from one of the other campuses. However, Rick Atchley, the Senior Teaching Minister at The Hills, did commit to be physically present at the Dallas campus of The Hills, especially at the beginning of the process. While the sermon time will be seen on video many Sundays, the rest of the service will be held live and in person, including worship, communion, welcome/announcements, baptisms, and blessings.

The Hills participates in communion every week, and this would remain an integral part of worship services at this location.

Q: What happens to Skillman's name?

A: If we join with The Hills, most likely the name will change. The Hills, in initial discussions with the elders, were unsure of what that would be. One possibility might be "The Hills – Skillman campus." The elders recognize that the heritage and history of Skillman can never be changed nor should it be erased. The Skillman Church of Christ has delivered God's saving

Word and will continue to do so, whatever she is called. However, this is an area that the Advisory Committee and the elders will further explore.

Q: What happens to monetary endowments, such as the Moeller Fund, specifically given to Skillman Church of Christ?

A: Both churches are debt-free, and both enjoy generous financial contribution from their respective memberships. If both churches determine to move forward in joining, the monetary resources would likely be combined together. However, the Advisory Committee will be looking at this closely to determine how a union would impact finances.