



SKILLMAN

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elder Announcement

Jan. 2, 2022

The following announcement was made by David Williams on behalf of the elders at the conclusion of our worship service on Sunday, January 2, 2022.

In November, the congregation was asked to give their view on women's full participation in church leadership and to nominate elders. On Sunday, December 12th, after reviewing the survey results and interviewing elder nominees, it was announced that Ken Teague and June Martin would be installed as elders, joining David Williams and Shane Calvin. Our bylaws call for a period of fourteen (14) days for scriptural objections to be made. The deadline was extended to December 30th due to the holidays. The elders have received letters from the congregation on both sides of the issue.

The congregation was also asked to provide their opinion regarding seeking out a merger with a "like-minded congregation." Sixty-four percent (64%) of the congregation felt that we should consider a merger. An additional twenty two percent (22%) of the congregation expressed the opinion of wanting to know more or were undecided. After hearing The Hills five-year vision titled, "Ask for Nations and Generations" in September, the Skillman Elders have been in prayerful conversation with The Hills. They are a large thriving congregation consisting of three campuses in Tarrant County. One aspect of their vision was to open two additional campuses in the metroplex in the Fall of 2023 and the Fall of 2025. Dallas County was a consideration for a location.

After getting indications of interest from several Dallas County groups and a period of discernment over many months, The Hills leadership believes that 2022 is the right time to investigate a move into Dallas County. On December 14th, two days after our announcement of elder nominees, David Meyer, the Executive Minister at The Hills, contacted David Williams and Shane Calvin to set up a meeting to discuss the opportunity and what that might mean for Skillman and Dallas County. A meeting is scheduled on January 6th to further our discussion of what the next steps might look like.

As a result of the congregation's expressed and significant interest in merger opportunities, the present Skillman Eldership believes that it is wise to postpone the installment of new Elders to an anticipated date of Sunday, January 16th. This will allow us to complete our first meeting with The Hills and will also allow us to complete the logistics of affirmation/installation. The affirmation will be done as a voice vote on that Sunday.

As previously announced, Mike Young, David Griffin, and David Alexander will still go forward with resigning as Elders effective December 31, 2021. Craig Gray has agreed to stay on through the process of discussions with The Hills or the completion of the installation of new

Elders. It is our intent to keep June, Ken and the congregation informed of any discussions with The Hills as much as possible.

The Elders understand that this announcement will be upsetting to some. This decision to postpone the elder installation process is not made lightly. To our knowledge, it is unprecedented in the history of this church. While the elders have not always been in unanimous agreement on topics in the past, **the elders are unanimous in searching out this opportunity to join with a vibrant church with a clear mission.**

We continue to urge you to be patient with the elders and bear one another in love through this time. There will be many questions about the merger. We won't know all the answers all the time. We must be patient with each other and remember what is important is reaching out to the unchurched. We must focus outward not inward as we consider any changes. We ask for your prayers about the January 6th meeting with The Hills and the opportunities for God's Kingdom in Dallas County. It's not about me. It's not about you. It's about them. Those outside our doors.

I'd like to close the service with this prayer. Would you bow your heads:

Lord, as we approach a new road of a new year, help us to remember that it's a new road that we have never traveled before. Every year is like that. But maybe this year more than most. And as we all travel down that road – not sure of what each of us might find, let each of us be comforted in knowing that the light goes on before us. Your light, our Father. You journey with us all down the new road ahead. We hear you calling us, whoever we are, whatever our circumstance, calling us to get off our knees. It is time to rise and shine as we continue on the journey. We praise your name Jehovah. And as we continue down the road, help us to share the Good News with others along that new road. Our job is to lead others to Christ. Give us a positive attitude and quell our fears. Help us all to remember that it we have a wonderful message to share. It unites us. In your Son's name we pray, Amen.