



FRIDAY, JULY 16

Dear MBC Family -

Over the course of the past week, we have sought to meet personally with as many people as possible who would like to discuss questions or concerns they might have amidst the spread of much disinformation about our church family. These meetings have been extremely helpful, fruitful, clarifying, and encouraging. In addition, we have sought to provide answers to [common questions](#) in a way that we hope helps our entire church family prepare for our Congregational Meeting this Sunday in coordination with our worship gatherings at 9 am and 11 am.

Even as these helpful personal meetings have been happening, we want you to be fully aware that a group of people (from inside and outside the church) continues to use social media, emails, online platforms, and other means to spread disinformation in our church family and to attack the character of church leaders in an effort to persuade people to “vote no” on elder nominees this Sunday. We do not believe it is profitable to respond to every accusation we see or hear online, yet we want to share with you one recent development that is now publicly accessible information, and we desire for you to hear it straight from us instead of another source. As you may have noticed, we have sought not to use personal names in our previous updates. However, in light of this development becoming public information, we include a few names here only on a limited basis.

Recently, Mark Gottlieb (who formerly served as an elder at MBC) and Wade Burnett (who currently serves as a pastor at MBC) have been meeting together in hopes of fostering more helpful discussions between brothers and sisters in Christ. As a next step in that process, Mark and Wade each invited a number of people to a personal meeting at our MBC Tysons location Thursday afternoon. The invite list included a current MBC elder (Wayne Fujito) and elder nominee (Chuck Hollingsworth), together with a list of individuals recommended by Mark who are associated with a group seeking to “vote no” on the elder nominees (including, among others, Steve Gaskins).

Due to an unfortunate scheduling error in a confirmation email from Mark, the MBC leaders and Mark were the only ones who showed up at MBC for the meeting Thursday. Mark called Steve Gaskins on speaker phone from MBC, apologized for the error, and confirmed that MBC leaders (who were still present in the room) would make themselves available to meet anytime later that afternoon or anytime the next day with him and others. Via speaker phone on that same call, Steve Gaskins communicated that he could not meet later that afternoon, but that he would respond back about meeting the next day.

The phone conversation above occurred at 1 pm on Thursday afternoon, including the offer from MBC leadership to meet anytime Thursday afternoon or anytime the next day, Friday. However, less than two hours later at 2:55 pm on Thursday afternoon, with no notice at all, Steve Gaskins and four other people (including some who were invited to this same meeting) filed a lawsuit against McLean Bible Church and the individual elders to stop MBC from voting on elder nominees this Sunday. In other words, in the same afternoon that MBC leaders were attempting to meet personally with this group, process servers were showing up at the homes of elders (and interacting with their wives and children) in order to deliver a lawsuit to them. Not long thereafter, an email was circulated to a larger group, attaching the lawsuit with Steve Gaskins named as the lead plaintiff, and stating that MBC leaders were unwilling to meet “in a biblical manner” about these things.

For many reasons, we are very sad to share the above information with you. We were sincerely praying and hoping that we could share a different sort of update today, especially knowing that this day is set aside for prayer and fasting in our church family. Yet even in all that we have shared above, we are keenly reminded of our need for God’s grace in our church family during these days, and His promise to give us all that we need as we look to Him.

Toward that end, we want to invite you to join us in person tonight (Friday) at 7 pm at MBC Tysons for an eagerly anticipated evening of corporate worship and prayer. All locations are invited (and encouraged!) to attend. In many ways, tonight’s prayer gathering will be the most important meeting we have together this week.

Lord willing, we will then gather on Sunday for worship at 9 am and 11 am, which will include a vote on elder nominees in a special Congregational Meeting called in coordination with these same worship services. Please arrive early to allow enough time to secure a ballot prior to our gathering, and please remember to bring photo identification as well. Given the challenges we experienced on June 30, we are trying our best to maintain the integrity of this vote.

In closing, we want to say a wholehearted “thank you” to all of you who have contacted us and other MBC leaders this week with affirmation and encouragement, and to all of you who have reached out with helpful questions that have led to so many God-honoring conversations. We look forward to seeing you tonight at Tysons and Sunday morning at all of our locations.

Prayerfully,
The MBC Elder Board