



Christ Community Church Job Description

Job Title: Associate Pastor of Church Planting

FLSA Status: Full-Time, Exempt

Work Week: Sunday-Thursday. Minimum 40 hours per week.

Weekend Responsibilities: As a member of the Pastoral Staff, a normal work week is Sunday through Thursday. This position is expected to assist with all weekend worship services and be available to the congregation in an on-call capacity as assigned.

Reports To: Senior Pastor

Position Overview:

The primary role of the Associate Pastor is to assist the Pastoral Leadership Team to carry out the mission of the church in *helping all people find freedom in following Jesus* while advancing the vision of the church to *live missionally and multiply movements of disciple-making and church-planting throughout the Sandhills and beyond*.

Position Focus:

The primary focus of this position is *church planting*. Specifically, being placed as the Senior Pastor of a local church plant in Moore County within the next two years.

The Associate Pastor will devote significant time to absorbing and aligning with the core doctrinal convictions, essential philosophical ethos, and strategic multiplication plan of Christ Community Church, particularly Missional Living and Making Disciples that Make Disciples. This will include helping to draft core documents while identifying and developing a core team in preparation for launching a successful, autonomous local church plant.

The Associate Pastor, as a future Senior Pastor, will focus on preaching and teaching the Bible, equipping and shepherding the saints for the work of ministry, building trusted relationships with staff, and launching a vibrant church plant.

Position Qualifications:

I. Proven Character

- Mature follower of Jesus Christ who walks by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-25); demonstrating a consistent lifestyle of godliness in accordance with the calling and qualifications of an Elder as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; and 1 Peter 5:1-5 (see *Appendix A* on Job Description).

- Affirm the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) *Statement of Faith* and Church Position Papers (see *Appendix B* on Job Description).
- Adhere to *The Standards of the Christian Life* as defined in Article III of our Constitution (see *Appendix C* on Job Description).
- Embrace the mission of the church to *help all people find freedom in following Jesus* and the vision of the church to *live missionally to multiply movements of disciple-making and church-planting throughout the Sandhills and beyond*.
- Align with the ethos of the Evangelical Free Church of America: *In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Christ.*

II. Proficient Competencies

- Disciple-Maker: Building intentional relationships in pursuit of being a better disciple and making more who make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Expository Preacher: Demonstrate a deep and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible with the skillful ability to proclaim and explain the Word of God to the people of God so that they clearly understand the truth of God and see the worth of God.
- Gentle Shepherd: Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to become angry; patiently and faithfully loving and leading the flock of God.
- Team Leader: Demonstrate a verifiable reputation of recruiting, training, developing, empowering, and evaluating healthy teams to include understanding and utilizing their unique spiritual gifts, personalities, temperaments, experiences, and strengths.
- Vision Caster: Capable of casting a clear and compelling vision that inspires people to participate in and take ownership of a vivid future.
- Entrepreneur Spirit: Demonstrates a proven track record of beginning new initiatives from start to handing over the initiative to a trained successor.
- Self-Motivated: Take ownership and initiative of job responsibilities; working independently without constant supervision and be a life-long learner who continues to seek ways to increase and improve ministry effectiveness, innovation, and creativity.
- Clear Communicator: Ability to clearly express thoughts and ideas in writing and through spoken words. Must be comfortable speaking in front of large groups and capable of communicating clearly and concisely.
- Administration: Ability to bring order to chaos and cut complexity.

III. Interpersonal Chemistry

- Respect: Commit to being considerate of others; treating them with love, appreciation, patience, and understanding.
- Discernment: Maintain the highest degree of discernment, judgment, discretion, and confidentiality.

- *Conflict Resolution*: Earnestly seek to resolve conflict quickly and completely while being willing and ready to extend and receive forgiveness.
- *Collaboration*: Able to tactfully and winsomely unite people with varying perspectives to advance harmony and love, and to achieve common goals.
- *Optimism*: Careful and mindful to believe the best before assuming the worst.
- *Self-Awareness*: Aware and mindful of how their actions, feelings and opinions affect others.

Position Responsibilities:

I. Pastor (1 Peter 5:2-3)

- Lead the flock by example of character and competency of skill as one appointed to exercise authority over the congregation.
- Protect the flock from false teachers and from spiritual apathy and sin.
- Steward the flock as one entrusted with the management of the Church by the true owner, Jesus Christ.
- Watch over and defending against attackers, treating injury and wounds, seeking and saving the lost or trapped, loving and sharing their lives to earn their trust.
- Teach the whole council of God and the complete duties of men; equipping the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up the body of Christ.
- Help plan, execute, and evaluate the weekly Worship Services.

II. Preach (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

- Prepare authoritative, expository sermons where the point of the text is the point of the sermon – make the content of the sermon the Word of God.
- In preparation for launching a church plant, preach regularly in the weekend Worship Services (8-10 times a year).
- Participate in the weekly pre-preach process by providing helpful insight and critical observations of the sermon being prepared.
- Be diligent to study; devoting adequate time to preparing sermons and submitting to the input of the Pastoral Team during the pre-preach process.
- Preach in your own voice with your own personality. Be you.

III. Plant (Acts 9:31)

- Work alongside the Elders, the Leadership Team, and the Lead Multiplication Catalyst to advance the vision of the church by implementing the Multiplication Plan.
- Participate in a 9-month Church Planting Cohort with Passion4Planting.
- Participate in the Missional Community Leader Training Cohorts as a strategic part of the process of identifying, encouraging, and equipping future church plant leaders and leadership teams.

- Help identify, recruit and equip a Core Team of 80-150 people who will serve as the Launch Team for a new church plant.
- Conduct community surveys and studies to clearly understand the unique demographics, socioeconomics, and culture of a particular community in advance of launching a church plant.
- Build teams of volunteers to lead specific ministry areas in a church plant.
- Serve as the Senior Pastor of a church plant.

Minimum Qualifications:

Education: Bachelor's Degree in Pastoral Ministry. Master of Divinity is preferred.

Experience: Possess 5-7 years of full-time experience in local church ministry or in a directly related field. Church planting experience is strongly preferred.

Credentiailling: Licensure by the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) is preferred with a willingness to obtain licensure in a reasonable time frame required.

Church Membership: Willingness to join the church as a meaningful member.

Physical Requirements: This position includes time spent sitting, standing, walking, kneeling, bending, and stooping. Mobility to move from one office to another within the church campus and to off-campus locations. Heavy lifting up to 50 lbs. and light carrying up to 50 lbs. Ability to reach above shoulders, to extend arms, and to reach. Ability to climb a ladder. Manual dexterity sufficient to type, operate general office equipment, and play musical instruments. Specific visual acuities to include close vision, distance vision, color vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

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APPENDIX A: THE BIBLICAL QUALIFICATIONS OF AN ELDER

It is not enough for Elders to be called; they must also be qualified. Since the people of the church are instructed to submit to the Elders (Hebrews 13:17), God demands that elders be the type of people who are worthy of trust and submission. He protects the flock by laying out clear scriptural guidelines for all who wish to serve as elders.¹

1. **Willing** (1 Timothy 3:1)

He aspires to the role of being an elder, bishop, overseer, pastor, shepherd. This does not exclude the possibility that he is sought out and urged to be an elder. But no pressure should be used that would result in an unwilling, half-hearted service.

2. **Above Reproach** (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)

He lives in a way that gives no cause for others to think badly of the church, the faith, or the Lord.

3. **Respectable** (1 Timothy 3:2, 3:7)

He is honorable and dignified. He comports himself in situations so as not to step on toes unnecessarily. He does not offend against propriety. He meets the standards of the world for decency and respectability (as the standards of the church are higher).

4. **Spiritually Mature** (1 Timothy 3:6; Titus 1:8)

He is a mature believer. There is evidence in his life that humility is a fixed virtue and not easily overturned. He is a person of devotion to Christ with a life of prayer and meditation. He loves worship and has a deep personal relationship with the Lord.

5. **Self-Controlled** (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)

He is sensible. He is prudent. He is reasonable. He has good judgment. He sees things as they really are. He knows himself well. He understands people and how they respond. He is in touch with reality, such that there are no great gaps between what he sees in himself and what others see in him.

6. **Not Violent** (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)

He is not pugnacious or belligerent. His temper is under control. He is not given to quarreling or fighting. He has a conciliatory bent. His feelings are not worn on his sleeve. He does not carry resentments. He is not hypercritical.

7. **Peaceable** (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)

He is peaceable. He is lowly in his demeanor, not speaking much of himself or his achievements. He counts others better than himself and is quick to serve. He sincerely gives God the credit and honor for any accomplishments.

8. **Upright** (Titus 1:8)

¹ Paragraph taken from *Gospel Eldership* by Robert H. Thune, p. 23

He cares about whether people are treated fairly. He wants to see justice in the world at all levels.

9. Husband of One Wife (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)

The question is probably one of notoriety. What is this man's reputation with regard to whether he has had one wife or not?

10. Disciplined (1 Timothy 3:2-3; Titus 1:7-8)

He exercises self-control and mastery of his appetites. He prizes freedom from enslavements to such a degree that no bondage is yielded to.

11. Not Greedy (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)

He puts the kingdom first in all he does. His lifestyle does not reflect a love of luxury. He is a generous-giver. He is not anxious about his financial future. He is not so money-oriented that ministry decisions revolve around this issue.

12. Manages His Own Household (1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6-7)

He is the leader of a well-ordered household. If he has children, they are submissive (not perfect, but well-disciplined, so that they do not blatantly and regularly disregard the instructions of their parents). His children revere him. He is a loving and responsible spiritual leader in the home. He respects and tenderly loved his wife, if he is married. Their relationship is openly admirable.

13. Hospitable (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)

He loves strangers. He is given to being kind to newcomers. He makes them feel at home. His home is open for ministry. He does not shrink back from having guests; he is not a secretive person.

14. Gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)

He is not harsh or mean-spirited. He is inclined to tenderness. He resorts to toughness only when the circumstances commend this form of love. His words are not acid or divisive, but helpful and encouraging.

15. Lover of Good (Titus 1:8)

He loves to be involved in doing good. More than merely doing good, he has a bent and love to see goodness done. He is an expansive person.

16. Able to Teach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)

He is an apt teacher, skilled in teaching. He knows biblical doctrine and is able to explain it to people. He is astute enough theologically that he can spot serious error and show a person why it is wrong and harmful.

THE BIBLICAL DUTIES OF AN ELDER

Elders are shepherds of God's flock. We work for Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, who will return to evaluate how we've done with His sheep.²

We summarize the Elder's calling into five basic categories:

1. The Dignified Councilman (1 Peter 5:1-4)

Elders lead the flock by example of character and competency of skill as ones appointed to exercise authority over the congregation.

Presbyteros (elderly) refers primarily to age, but also to one who presides as a leader over a council or assembly.

2. The Vigilant Guardian (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 3:12-14)

Elders protect the flock from false teachers and from spiritual apathy and sin.

Episkopos (overseer) refers to someone who is alert and charged with guarding sound doctrine.

3. The Faithful Steward (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)

Elders steward the flock as ones entrusted with the management of the Church by the true owner, Jesus Christ.

Oikonomos (household manager) refers to those to whom the mysteries of God have been committed to be made known to men.

4. The Gentle Shepherd (1 Peter 5:2, Acts 20:28)

Elders care for the flock by encouraging them in the Gospel through all kinds of life circumstances.

Poimaino (shepherd) means to tend as a herdsman by watching for and defending against attackers, treating injury and wounds, seeking and saving the lost or trapped, loving and sharing their lives to earn their trust.

5. The Capable Teacher (Ephesians 4:11-16)

Elders feed the flock by treasuring God's Word and teaching it to others.

Didaskalos (teacher) refers to teaching the things of God and the duties of men; equipping the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

² Language taken from *Gospel Eldership* by Robert H. Thune and *Biblical Eldership* by Alexander Strauch

APPENDIX B: THE EFCA STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Church is part of the Evangelical Free Church of America, an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

- I. GOD:** We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.
- II. THE BIBLE:** We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that teaches, obeyed in all that it requires and trusted in all that it promises.
- III. THE HUMAN CONDITION:** We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated by God and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled, and renewed.
- IV. JESUS CHRIST:** We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and Fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus – Israel's promised Messiah – was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.
- V. THE WORK OF CHRIST:** We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.
- VI. THE HOLY SPIRIT:** We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and grace.
- VII. THE CHURCH:** We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united in the only Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of

believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

- VIII. CHRISTIAN LIVING:** We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from his sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely, and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always being witness to the gospel in word and deed.
- IX. CHRIST'S RETURN:** We believe in the personal, bodily, and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service, and energetic mission.
- X. RESPONSE AND ETERNAL DESTINY:** We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

For more on the EFCA, please visit: www.efca.org

Position Paper I: STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God established marriage for His own glory and the happiness of mankind. Marriage is instituted by God, regulated by His commandments, and blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that Biblical marriage is a solemn covenant relationship instituted by God in the time of Adam and Eve as a foundational institution of society (Gen. 1:27-28) and is the "means" by which mankind fulfills the cultural mandate to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it..." The context is clear that the marital union is a relationship that carries with it the potential to bear children.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25) and between these participants and God himself, who is in fact the primary witness to the covenant (Mal. 2:14-16). This biblical relationship between a man and a woman is termed "one-flesh" (Gen. 2:24) and provides the proper basis for a family unit. This honorable and covenantal "one flesh" relationship symbolizes the mystery of the union between Christ and the church, His bride (Heb. 13:4, Eph. 5:31-32). This marriage covenant is sealed by solemn promises before God and human witnesses in the marriage ceremony and is marked by lifelong faithfulness to one another.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (I Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; I Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that, when marrying, God's will directs a believer in Christ to be united with another believer (II Cor. 6:14) in that believers are the temple, or residence, of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16). Marriage creates the framework for lifelong devotion and love between a husband and wife, who are given clear guidance as to their responsibilities within marriage (Eph. 5:22-33). This union further reflects the strength of God's covenant love for His people (Hos. 3:1), as well as Christ's devotion to the church, His body and bride.

We believe that God ordained marriage between the man and the woman, who were created as image bearers of God (Gen. 1:26-27) to bring glory to God as both Creator

and Redeemer. Christian marriage illustrates and witnesses the redeeming grace of Christ (Eph. 5:22-23).

We believe that Biblical marriage reflects the ultimate expression of love in a relationship; the sacrificial commitment to the good of the other. The marriage covenant subordinates individual impulses and interests in favor of the relationship. Companionship (Gen. 2:18c), mutual assistance (Gen. 18b) with one making up what lacks in the other (Gen. 2:19 Hebrew word *ezer*—sometimes translated “suitable helper,”), love, and devotion characterize a marriage that glorifies God.

We believe that marriage provides the proper context for human sexual intimacy (Heb. 13:4, I Cor. 7:3-5). Furthermore, child-rearing in this context provides the basis for the nurture and moral instruction of children as directed by God (Deut. 6:4-7). We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; I Cor. 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of CCC.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Christ Community Church (“CCC”) as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the CCC members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by CCC in any capacity, all CCC members, all Elder Board members, and each party to any wedding or wedding-related function conducted at CCC or by any CCC Pastor, staff member, or individual ordained by CCC agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22).

CCC Pastors, CCC Members, CCC Staff, and individuals ordained by CCC shall not use their title, position, or ordination in a way that contradicts or undermines the teachings of CCC, the Holy Bible, or this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality by, including, but not limited to, officiating over or solemnizing weddings or ceremonies joining (a) more than two people, or (b) two people of the same biological sex. Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, CCC will only recognize marriages between one biological man and one biological woman. Further, CCC Pastors, CCC Staff, and individuals ordained by CCC shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one biological man and one biological woman. Finally, the facilities and property of CCC shall only host weddings (and wedding-related functions including, but not limited to, bridal showers, rehearsal dinners, and receptions) between one biological man and one biological woman.

Position Paper II: STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION

There are few things in American discourse more potentially divisive than the issue of immigration. But for many reasons, Christ Community Church (“CCC”) cannot avoid the subject if we are to continue to live out the call God has placed on us to be a biblically-rooted, Christ-honoring community.

Our position has been developed after a great deal of prayer and rests squarely on the Bible and our core values. First, as expressed in our Doctrine of Faith, we believe that God calls us to love Him supremely, and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor, and justice for the oppressed. Further, in obedience to Christ’s commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed. As expressed in our Statement on Christian Living, the Christian life should be characterized by love for and obedience to God’s Word and love toward all (even those considered to be enemies). Our 2020 Vision aligns with such beliefs. In that document, we state that our ministries will be a demonstration of God’s heart for, among others, the downtrodden, and the oppressed; and will provide redemptive pathways out of systemic and generational dysfunction.

We believe that the issue of immigration is a common theme in Scripture, especially in the Old Testament. **We believe** that the Bible most often portrays the immigrant in a positive light.

We believe that God sets a standard for the Israelites to treat the immigrants who came to dwell among them “as the native among you” (Lev. 19:34). **We further believe** that as God gave the Law to his people, he repeatedly states that its protections (including the right to fair treatment as laborers (Deut. 24:14), to a Sabbath rest (Ex. 20:10), and to prompt payment for labor (Deut. 24:15)) and most, albeit not all, of its requirements are meant for the immigrant as well as the native-born (Ex. 12:49).

We further believe that throughout the Old Testament, the immigrant is repeatedly referenced with two other groups, the orphan and the widow, as a vulnerable group worthy of special care and provisions (Ps. 146:9, Zech. 7:10, Ezek. 22:7, Mal. 3:5, Jer. 7:6, and Deut. 24:21). **We believe** that God commands His people to love immigrants both because He loves them (Deut. 10:18) and because, given their unique history in Egypt, they ought to know better than to mistreat foreigners living in their midst (Deut. 10:19, Ex. 23:9, and Lev. 19:34).

However, **we do not believe** that Christ Community Church, or the universal church in general, is bound to directly apply God’s rules for the nation of Israel to itself or to the United States. But **we do believe** that God’s love for immigrants and others who are vulnerable is unchanging and should guide our contemporary response.

Moreover, **we believe** that the New Testament provides an emphatic command to love neighbors (Matt. 22:39, Lk. 10:27, and Rom. 13:9) as well as to extend hospitality to strangers (1 Tim. 5:10, Heb. 13:2). Thus, **we believe** the New Testament guides us in the

same general direction as the Old Testament texts: Christians are to love, welcome, and seek justice for immigrants.

Also, **we believe** the arrival of immigrants into our communities has brought the nations to our doorsteps. This movement of people is not an accident: the God who made all people also “determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live . . . so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him” (Acts 17:26-27). While economic and sociological reasons drive people’s desire to migrate, **we believe** God has sovereignly superintended this movement of people to America so that they might come into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. This is a two-way street, as many immigrants are already faithful Christians who bring the gospel with them to unbelieving Americans.

We believe a faithful Christian should not see his immigrant neighbor as an intrusion of his/her way of life, but as a sovereign opportunity for Christ to be expressed in the world through His bride. The immigrant who arrives may either be a brother or sister to be added to our fellowship or a lost soul in need of the gospel.

Thus, **we believe** it is our duty to view immigrants not as problems to solve, but as people for whom Jesus died. Without a biblical lens, we may come to view immigrants as a threat and an invasion, rather than as a missional opportunity. In doing so, we lose credibility with our immigrant neighbors when, while proclaiming Christ’s love to them, we also communicate that we dislike them and wish they were not part of our communities.

However, **we also believe** that we are called to submit to our governing authorities, including at the local, state, and federal levels (Rom. 13:1-6, 1 Peter 2:13-17, Titus 3:1). In fact, **we believe** that the Bible clearly indicates that God charges civil authorities with preserving order, protecting citizens, and punishing wrongdoers.

As a result, **we believe** the immigration issue in American is complicated by the fact that many immigrants are here unlawfully. **We believe** that instead of trying to investigate why these people have to cross the border without any legal authorization, some Christians tend to focus on the mere aspect that they broke the law of the society.

We believe that there are instances where improperly forcing oneself on an existing nation is unjust and unjustifiable. In other words, under certain circumstances immigration unlawfully can be both morally and legally wrong. Each respective immigrant, particularly Christian immigrants, bear responsibility for their actions. Thus, **we believe**, for some immigrant Christians, the proper Biblical response would be to return to their home nation.

We believe that nothing in United States’ law prohibits churches from ministering to undocumented immigrants in need, and there is no requirement that a church or an individual report someone whom they suspect of lacking legal status. Thus, **we believe** that ministering to undocumented immigrants does not put a church, or individual followers of Christ, outside of submission to the governmental authorities.

We believe that Christians and the church are to approach the subject of obedience to the state in view of their ultimate allegiance to Christ and his call on his people to care for the stranger and neighbor in need. This belief is founded, in part, because of lessons learned through history.

We believe that the broader evangelical church was slow to respond to the Holocaust and the rescue of people just as the church was slow to respond to the Civil Rights Movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. provides guidance regarding Romans 13 in our current democratic context. The Apostle Paul had no way of influencing legislation in his day, but Christians do so in our society.

Thus, **we believe** the gospel compels us in our culture to decry any and all forms of oppression, exploitation, bigotry or harassment of immigrants, regardless of their legal status. These are men and women for whom Christ died, and their dignity is no greater or lesser than our own.

We further believe that the immigration issue in America is complicated by out-of-date legislation that is out of sync with the current labor market in our country and the selective enforcement of immigration laws. Thus, regardless of personal political persuasion, our system needs reform.

In conclusion, **we believe** we have a responsibility before God as citizens to work together to establish and enforce just laws that address immigration. Among other things, **we believe** such laws should involve securing our borders, holding businesses accountable for hiring practices, and taking essential steps that ensure fairness to taxpaying citizens of our country. Likewise, **we also believe** we have an equal responsibility before God as citizens to work together to refute and remove unjust laws that oppress anyone, including immigrants. Failing to act in either of these ways would be to settle for injustice.

Position Paper III: STATEMENT ON THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

Viewing human life as sacred is one of the most precious legacies of biblical faith.

For clarity, **we define** the concept of the *sanctity of human life* as the belief that every human being, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, cognition, consciousness, ability, viability, class, or status are to be perceived and treated as fellow image-bearers of God, persons of equal worth and inviolable dignity.

We recognize that the *sanctity of human life* is at the heart of many social, political, and moral debates concerning a wide range of bioethical issues: abortion, contraceptives (birth control), capital punishment, in vitro fertilization (IVF), genetic engineering, euthanasia, and war. Though not exhaustive, **we believe** that this statement articulates a position grounded in Scripture and consistent with Christian faith and practice throughout history.

We believe, in accordance with the Scriptures and as expressed in our Statement of Faith, that every human life is created by God, in the image of God (*imago Deo*), for the glory of God (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1; John 1:3). This is what sets human beings apart from all other created creatures. Therefore, every human life is intrinsically sacred; worthy of dignity, honor, and respect because they have been created in the likeness of God (Job 33:4).

We believe, in accordance with the Scriptures, that human life begins at conception (Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:4-5). Therefore, to terminate a pregnancy (i.e. abortion) is to take a human life and is a sin because it violates God's command to "*not kill*" (Exodus 20:13). However, we **further believe** that God is *merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love* (Psalm 86:15) toward those who are experiencing guilt and shame associated with an abortion and we stand ready to love and support those seeking forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

We believe, in accordance with the Scriptures, that life and death are in the hands of God (Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6; Job 1:21; Ecclesiastes 3:2). Therefore, to assist in the termination of a human life violates God's command to "*not kill*" (Exodus 20:13).

We believe, in accordance with the Scriptures, that every human life, from conception to death, is a living being (Genesis 2:7) that bears the image of God and has inestimable worth. Therefore, we are committed to a consistent ethic of life that safeguards the essential nature of human life at all stages, with a special concern to protect the lives of the most vulnerable (James 2:27). Those who deserve particular care and protection are the unborn, the very young, the aging and aged, the chronically or terminally ill, and the disabled.

APPENDIX C: THE STANDARDS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

We believe that the Scriptures enjoin a life in which a Christian gives witness to union with Christ by manifesting the fruit of the indwelling Spirit in all aspects of life.

We believe that the Christian life should be characterized by love for and obedience to God's Word; love toward all (even those considered to be enemies); humility, honesty, fidelity and integrity in all family, social, business, and professional relationships.

We believe that the Christian will be increasingly sensitive to the sin of his or her own heart and will yield to Christ as Lord of his or her life for victory over pride, self-seeking, jealousy, a critical spirit, bitterness, and all other characteristics of the old nature. We believe that the Christian will remain separate from those things which tend to hinder work of the Holy Spirit, and which impair the capacities of body, mind or spirit, realizing these unique capabilities are gifts of God for which the Christian is accountable, and which are to be separated unto Him for His purposes. Moreover, we believe that the Christian should desire to mature in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and become increasingly sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as to any practices, which hinder relationship with Christ.

As the Christian is made aware of such, he or she will, regardless of the standards of others, discontinue such practices. Further, the Christian realizes that "no man lives to himself" (Romans 14:7) and will gladly forego anything which causes a weaker brother or sister to stumble.

While it is understood that being born again through faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior is the basis for membership in Christ Community Church, we recommend to all members and any who are seeking membership to prayerfully seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit concerning their attitude toward the scriptural standards of the Christian life as outlined in this statement. (Galatians 5:22-23; Philippians 1:9-11; Romans 6:11-13; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 14:13).