



CHRIST CHURCH

SANFORD · PCA

Christ Church Sanford is a community of faith rooted in the love of God.

We believe worship is expressed in everything we do.

Our world view is deeply grounded in the Holy Scriptures, life's only rule of faith.

Come and join us to experience God's grace for yourself at Christ Church Sanford.

Dear Pastor,

Thank you for your interest in Christ Church Sanford. We hope the information in the following pages will help convey our congregation's values, priorities, and the warmth of our community.

Christ Church Sanford is characterized by the greatest commandment: loving God and loving our neighbor. We gather weekly for prayer and worship and bi-weekly for men's and women's Bible studies, life groups, and youth ministry. It is not uncommon for us to enjoy Sunday potlucks and fellowship gatherings in one another's homes. We host annual retreats for men, women, and youth, as well as a Backyard Bible Club for kids ages three through fifth grade. We partner with MNA and others for service projects and also minister to the school where we are currently gathering for worship.

We are looking for a relational servant-leader who can shepherd us through the faithful teaching of God's Word, overseeing our ministries, and truly loving our congregation while looking for opportunities to engage in Sanford and surrounding areas. Because we are a young, though healthy, congregation, our candidate needs to have strong leadership and discipleship skills to come alongside our members in organizing and operating the ministries of our church.

In this packet, you will read more about our story, mission and values, and the community of Sanford. Our Desired Profile will help you assess if your particular skills, gifts, and experience align with our needs. Instructions on how to apply will conclude this document. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to us.

In Christ,

Pastoral Search Committee





OUR STORY

Pastor Ralph Johnston and his wife, Lisa, arrived in Sanford at the end of 2019 to plant Christ Church Sanford.

They began meeting their neighbors and getting involved in the local community, hoping to gather a core group for ministry. Despite the beginning of the pandemic in March of 2020, Lisa gathered women for a Zoom Bible study in April, and Ralph gathered men shortly after.

By September, families began meeting in Ralph and Lisa's backyard for weekly teaching and fellowship. We had our first worship service in a rented community building on November 1, 2020.

Ralph was installed as pastor on November 15, 2020. And in the last six years we've established:

- LIFE Groups
- Bible Studies for men and women
- Anchor Student Ministry
- Backyard Bible Club
- Local and international missions work through our members
- And an intern from our fellowship was recently ordained and received a call to become an associate pastor in Maryland.



Over time, God continued to be faithful to CCS. Our particularization service was held April 6, 2025. In the last year, we have elected 5 ruling elders and 2 deacons. We are currently praying for the Lord to bring 3-5 new families into our fellowship.

From one family to twenty-two, CCS has grown consistently and has met at a variety of different locations. Presently, we meet Sunday mornings at Central Carolina Academy, an outstanding charter school with which we have a fantastic missional partnership.

Our congregation loves doing life together and is often found breaking bread in each others' homes, meeting up at local shops and parks, and planning spontaneous outings in the community.

We currently have 40 communicant members, an average of 45 people attending weekly (including 16 children), and an average monthly income of \$10,400. Praise God for his faithfulness!





We believe the gospel is good news because God accomplished for us what we could not accomplish on our own. We are redeemed and set free through faith in Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection alone. The gospel of Jesus is good news for the saved, the lost, the community, and the world. (John 3:16, Romans 5:8)

We will never forget that our most valuable resource is our people. Each person bears the image of God and is therefore worthy of love, respect, dignity, and affirmation. We also believe that each of us has an equal need for the forgiveness of our sins and salvation through faith in the person and work of Jesus. (Gen. 1:27, 1 Thess. 2:8)

We are committed to invest in and celebrate relationships. We understand that relationships take time and that they reflect the rhythms of where we live, work and play. We believe in collaborating with others and building partnerships whenever given the chance. We also recognized the central role of the church as God calls his people to gather for encouragement and support through worship, the preaching of the gospel, celebrating the sacraments, small groups, and in loving our friends, families and neighbors well. (Acts 2:42, Heb. 10:24-25)

We believe that this world is not our own and because of that, we are committed to take seriously the stewardship of our time, talents, and treasures. We desire to generously invest in our communities and world with our children, grandchildren, and eternity in mind. We resist the temptation to focus on our own personal kingdoms and instead focus on building the Kingdom of God for His glory and for our enjoyment. (Gen. 1:28, 2 Cor. 9:6-7, 1 Tim. 6:17-19)

See more about what we believe at www.christchurchsanford.com/about-7



WELCOME TO SANFORD

“Well centered—an ideal location, a rewarding lifestyle, a community where people come first: get centered in Sanford-Lee.”

While there are over 100 churches in the city, Christ Church Sanford is the only reformed PCA church presence. Half of the population of Lee County admits to zero religious affiliation. Many of the older congregations have been in steady decline for years.

However, Sanford is growing! Since 2020, there has been a 15.3% increase in population bringing our total just shy of 35,000. The median age is 35 years old, revealing a need for young, vibrant churches.

Sanford retains a low cost of living and a small-town feel, which can be easily experienced by taking a walk through its revitalized downtown area. This diverse community is in need of a covenant community that is meeting spiritual and physical needs.



Family Grounds Coffee



MonkeyKat Books



Temple Theater



Kiwanis Childrens' Park



Local Golf Courses



Strawberry Jammin' Festival

In Sanford, residents enjoy a charming downtown steeped in history, peaceful neighborhoods with a close community feel, and top-tier educational and professional opportunities—all at a cost of living well below the national average. In addition to the plentiful benefits locally, Sanford's central location allows for unmatched access to major cities and impressive natural landscapes throughout North Carolina.

Within a short drive, residents can easily experience the bustling cities of Raleigh or Durham, the world-renowned golf courses of Pinehurst, the wild Blue Ridge Mountains, or the beautiful beaches along the coast.

Diverse housing options situated in well-kept neighborhoods are easy to find in Sanford. Families discover a city powered by strong community values and excellent local public schools, while residents young and old enjoy a vibrant arts scene and ever-expanding calendar of lively community events.

In conclusion, Sanford is a fantastic place for folks of all ages. Whether recreation includes hiking or visiting our new library, sports or a getaway to the beach, the area is uniquely and centrally located for any of these activities. We have so much to offer, and we at CCS are fully aware of how many people searching after these things also are in need of the Gospel. We seek a pastor who is just as invested in our sweet town, and the people in it, as we are.



DESIRED PROFILE OF A PASTOR

We seek a Pastor who, with humility and grace, will shepherd CCS through faithful and relational servant-leadership, helping us to deepen our roots in Scripture that produces lives which bring glory to Christ.

Proclamation of the Word: We highly value expository preaching through the redemptive lens of the Gospel, applying the Word for the purposes of spiritual transformation, not simply knowledge alone.

Congregational Fellowship: In addition to participating in our normal rhythms of weekly ministry (i.e. Bible Studies and Life Groups), we desire to see the pastor's willingness to build meaningful relationships with individuals and families within our church.

Evangelism: Christ Church Sanford is an intentionally relational church. Education and training of members to renew our passion for evangelism and outreach in our community requires a pastor with a heart to reach unsaved people. We seek a leader who regularly shares his faith with others.

Spiritual Development of Members: Gifts and experience in leadership development and training are essential to the smooth operation of ministries within the church, as well as encouraging the spiritual health and discipleship of our members for the edification of the body.

Worship Leadership: We seek a pastor who, in partnership with the Session, will implement and educate our congregation on meaningful participation in our liturgical order of worship.

Teaching Responsibility: We seek a pastor with strengths in teaching in a variety of contexts such as Sunday School and evening services.

We prefer our candidate to be married and model healthy servant-leadership in his own family. He should boldly protect the peace, purity, and unity of our church, upholding Truth while also demonstrating grace in word and deed.

Lastly, we seek a pastor who sees the potential that is Sanford, North Carolina and the surrounding area, and longs to see CCS become a blessing to our community, for the glory of God.

Qualities Shortcut

- Years of ministry experience 3+
- Preferably married
- Ordained or soon to be
- Live locally
- **Proclamation of the Word**
- **Congregational Fellowship**
- **Spiritual Development of Members**
- **Evangelism**
- **Worship Leadership**
- **Teaching Responsibility**





HOW TO REFER

To refer a candidate, use the following standard PCA form:

Pastor Recommendation Form

This form is offered so church members can suggest candidates for a senior or solo pastor along with information necessary in pursuing candidates. For the protection of the church, please KEEP RECOMMENDATIONS CONFIDENTIAL so that candidates are not placed in an awkward position and divisions are not caused within the congregation. Provide as much of the following information as you are able, and the Pastor Search Committee will proceed from there. Thank you for participating in this process with us!

Your name, telephone, and email: _____

Prospect's Name: _____

Current Location: _____

Church _____ Position _____

Address (Home or Church): _____

Contact Information:

Home Telephone: _____ Office Telephone: _____

Mobile Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

For how many years have you known the prospect? _____

What is/was your relationship with him?

Briefly describe his ministry experience or history.

Add any other relevant comments:

Please email to christchurchsanford@gmail.com

First Round Deadline for Referrals and Applicants: November 15, 2026

TO APPLY

Interested applicants are encouraged to send Ministerial Data Form and resume to the Search Committee at christchurchsanford@gmail.com or leave a message for Harrison Van Galder at (949) 326-3351.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Harrison Van Galder (Chairman) - Harrison and his wife Rachel Van Galder are U.S. Army officers who met at school in Los Angeles. They have two children, ages three and four months. Harrison is a recently installed ruling elder at Christ Church Sanford and is currently following the LAMP seminary course of instruction.



John Kinyon (Vice Chairman) - John is a serial church planter with almost 30 years of pastoral experience in the PCA. He has planted churches in Hawaii, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. He is the founder of Gosmalltowns.com and is currently on staff with Equipping Leaders International, a missions agency committed to train and equip pastors and church leaders in the developing world. He has been married to Martha Claire Kinyon for 39 years and, together, they have 5 grown sons (3 of whom are married) living all over the place.



- **Randy & Lauren Thomas** - Randy and Lauren are married with two teenage sons, Jack and Judson. They have attended CCS since 2020. Randy is a ruling elder, serves on the facilities team, and assists with the youth group. He works as a project manager for an industrial mechanical company in Greensboro. Lauren helps coordinate women's ministry and sings on the worship team. She homeschools and works part-time as a professional counselor in Sanford. The Body at CCS has felt like "home" and they have been deeply encouraged by growing alongside fellow believers. In their spare time, they enjoy music, art, and travel.



- **Marla Bokmeyer (Secretary)** - Marla relocated to Sanford from Dallas, TX to support her military family and quickly found a home at Christ Church Sanford. She co-coordinates women's ministry, serves in nursery, and assists with the hospitality and Operation Christmas Child committees. Marla is a semi-retired interior designer and enjoys cooking, reading, and the beach. She periodically commutes to Dallas to work and spend time with her children and grandchildren there.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Kate Blackburn - Kate has been married to her husband, Hunter, for twenty eight years. She home-schooled their four children, who now range between the ages of 18 and 25. Kate and Hunter have lived in the greater Raleigh area for twenty six years and have been on the south side of Pittsboro for thirteen of those years. They have loved raising their family here and love the community they have found at Christ Church. Kate enjoys being with her family, being outside, reading, and leading the Anchor Student Ministry at Christ Church.



Tom Watkins (Alternate) - Tom retired in 2019 after a 36-year career in municipal public service. Though originally from California, Tom and his wife Jan found their perfect home in Sanford in 2025. Tom and Jan have 13 grandchildren, with two more arriving this year. In his free time, Tom enjoys reading, biking, traveling, puzzles, and woodworking.



Nate & Amanda Auler (Alternates) - Married for 12 years, Nate and Amanda Auler have four rambunctious boys from the ages two to nine. Having only recently moved to Sanford, NC in April of 2025, they still consider themselves new to the area though that hasn't stopped them from investing deeply in their church. Community and hospitality are of utmost importance to the two of them as they love opening their home for fellowship. Nate is a nurse and Amanda is an author and media production coordinator for a fundraising company.



Daniel Gall - Daniel grew up in South Asia as an MK and for the past three years has been living in the Sanford area where his mom's side of the family is from. He does Handyman work and part time works with his parents who are still overseas.