Christ
PRESBYTERIAN

PASTORAL CANDIDATE PACKET

Christ Presbyterian Church • Tulsa Oklahoma

Christ
PRESBYTERIAN

LETTER TO THE CANDIDATE

Grace and peace to you in our Lord Jesus Christ!

As you read through this packet and prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to Christ Presbyterian Church, we pray that, through our story of how Christ is moving within His people in Tulsa, you will be encouraged in your ministry.

This packet is meant to declare Christ's goodness in our community. It explains who we are, our origin and story, and our role in the broader Tulsa-area context. It captures some of our difficult history and the work that Christ continues to do through a group of very great sinners redeemed by a very great Savior.

As you pray about whether Christ is calling you to serve as Senior Pastor at Christ Presbyterian Church, we are praying along with you. We ask that you pray for us, too. Pray that God will provide a faithful shepherd for us and the right place for you as you continue to labor for Christ and His kingdom.

In Christ,

The Pastoral Search Committee

Garnet Baker
Connor Childers
John Johnson
Kim Lee
Corey Love
Dana Maher
Sophia Pernick
Paul Rose
Jonathan Shields

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

> "Rooted in our desire to share God's love with others, we have a rich history of church planting and outreach both locally and globally."

God has sustained Christ Presbyterian Church (CPC) throughout our history. Our story begins in 1967 with a group of Christ-followers who established a church where Christ would be proclaimed as King, His word embraced, and His story extended throughout Tulsa. We have always sought to be a community that faithfully preaches and teaches Christ's Word, joyfully participates in the work of His kingdom in Tulsa and beyond, and diligently strives to reflect the diversity of His body.

Our initial charter was to be a "conservative, reformed church in Tulsa built on the firm foundation of God's word, faithfully preaching and teaching the Scriptures, and obedient to the Great Commission." We officially organized in April 1968 and were blessed to move into our first facility in 1971. As our community grew and changed, so did our facilities. We've been worshipping and serving from our current location since 1986.

Rooted in our desire to share God's love with others, we have a rich history of church planting and outreach both locally and globally. We have participated in planting daughter congregations in the Tulsa area: in Claremore, Broken Arrow, Owasso, and three congregations in Tulsa.

Our desire to be sent as the body of Christ into Tulsa has taken on many forms. We sponsored the first RUF chapter at the University of Tulsa. Our members have supported and participated in founding local parachurch organizations like Crossover Community Impact - which includes Crossover Bible Church, Crossover Preparatory Academy, and Crossover Health Services - ministries that serve the marginalized. We continue to be active in both support and serving through MEND Crisis Pregnancy Center, Christ for Humanity, and Helping Hands.

Internationally, we continue our legacy of grace-based missions by supporting organizations that, through culturally aware acts of mercy, live out the gospel. These international organizations include MTW, Sister India, Abigail House, and African Hospitals Foundation. Specifically, we delight to support MTW missionaries who are directly connected to CPC, and we have sent teams to Honduras and Ukraine to assist in work there.

60 YEARS OF FAITHFUL WITNESS

CPC strives to reflect the racial and socio-economic diversity that exists in Tulsa. We aim to welcome people from various ethnic backgrounds alongside people who have struggled with substance abuse, mental health issues, and sexual identity challenges. We give thanks for all the ways God has sustained us and continues to be at work through us.

We also want to be honest with you about some challenges and growth areas for us. Our previous pastor was caught in a public, shocking betrayal and scandal in October of 2025. Unfortunately, this was not the first difficult pastoral exit that we've faced.

As we reflect on our history, we are embracing this season as an opportunity for repentance, renewal, and reimagining life together. We are seeking the renewal of our lay-led ministries, outreach to our community, and greater care and development of our leaders and ministry structures. We are in a season where we are seeking to be humble and dependent upon God to renew us.

We acknowledge these challenges and are striving to be as healthy as we can. And we see God's goodness as He continues to work among and through us! The session, on the advice of the Presbytery, is embracing this season of transition intentionally. We are getting outside help. We are forming new committees. Our women's and children's teams have been recommissioned, and they are faithfully serving our body. We are blessed to have Jason Bobo, our long-standing Associate Pastor, walk alongside us through his pastoral care and teaching. We are working to establish a renewed vision for how God will use us to impact Tulsa.

These positive steps are preparing us for an exciting renewal, and we trust that God will provide the right next leader to help us pursue ongoing health and ministry.

TULSA

Downtown Tulsa Skyline

> Our "small town" feel comes from Tulsa's sense of "one degree of separation" from everyone knowing everyone.

Tulsa is a "Big, small town" - a city of contrasts. It contains all the conveniences of a metropolitan area while maintaining a "neighborly" feel and friendliness. It's big in the sense that it has world-class museums, professional sports teams, concert venues, and large, public outdoor parks and recreational areas. Our "small town" feel comes from Tulsa's sense of "one degree of separation" from everyone knowing everyone. Tulsans are generally friendly and seem sincere in their desire to get to know those around them and their communities. Additionally, many Tulsans feel they can get almost anywhere in Tulsa in less than 20 minutes.

ECONOMICS

Tulsa's origins are rooted in Indian Territory; different parts of the city today fall under the jurisdiction of the Osage, Muscogee, and Cherokee Nations. These tribal nations contribute to developing Tulsa's economic and cultural life through arts and business. The Osage Nation, for example, engages internationally in the oil and gas development and industry. Yet, native tribes also built casinos that have brought both economic opportunity and gambling addiction and alcoholism.

Tulsa's Golden Driller

Tulsa is best known as the "Oil Capital of the World" - a moniker earned in the early 20th century. Although the 1980's oil bust diminished some aspects of the oil industry in Tulsa, it is still a significant part of our city's economy. Additionally, during the "Roaring 20's" and World War II, Tulsa became integral in aeronautics development and manufacturing, and is now expanding into outer space industries. As we move into the future, Tulsa possesses a strong spirit of entrepreneurism and small businesses.

Economic prosperity, however, is not experienced by all Tulsans as the city also has a larger-than-average population below the poverty line (around 17%). Like many US cities, homelessness exists in Tulsa and is growing. At 0.2% of our population, it is a small but significant need that the church should address in compassionate, respectful, and effective ways. This is an opportunity for sound local churches to play a role in revitalizing communities and transforming hearts in the process.

RACE

The population distribution bears the marks of its historic ethnic segregation; that is, North Tulsa was historically "Black Tulsa." Greenwood District, for example, was known as 'Black Wall Street' and is the site where the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre took place. Today, historic North Tulsa remains 76% Black. Similarly, East Tulsa is largely Hispanic and Latino. Most areas in Midtown and South Tulsa are largely white.

Tulsa's past, however, contributes to the beauty of its culture today as a multi-ethnic city. Indeed, the city possesses a significantly higher-than-average population of multi-ethnic identification (approximately 17.5%). The city has promoted initiatives to revitalize neighborhoods in North Tulsa, and the city government hosts "Equity Dialogues" to foster discussions on race.

John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park

Oral Roberts University

Boston Avenue United Methodist Church

RELIGION

At the same time, numerous church-planting initiatives by Reformed congregations are attempting to address multi-ethnic, suburban challenges in a place that has historically been evangelical Christian and earned the nickname "Buckle of the Bible Belt."

Tulsa specifically has numerous options for Christian worship. Yet, the city also has one of the highest divorce rates for American cities and is witnessing a growing number of "religiously unaffiliated" (about 26%). Additionally, the Tulsa area has seen an increase in its Muslim population (currently estimated between 8,000 and 10,000).

What all of this seems to indicate is that many middle-aged and older residents in Tulsa are culturally Christians - they grew up in and around various churches and learned the language of the Christian faith. But hurt from various congregations has deeply damaged their faith and has left a post-Christian drift in

TULSA

The Gathering Place
Riverfront Park

Philbrook Museum of Art

the city, which provides opportunities to reach the disillusioned, skeptical adolescents and communities disconnected from faith altogether.

To this end, we desire to be marked by Gospel welcome and faithful equipping. We want to be a church where a warm, hospitable culture permeates our ministries; where people from every background are welcomed in the joy, love, and expectation of the Father's embrace. We want to develop, encourage, and deploy the numerous gifts God has blessed CPC's people with to serve both CPC and the Tulsa area.

LIFE

Tulsa boasts of a climate that enables a robust, year-round outdoor life. The city is home to The Gathering Place and numerous other outdoor spaces.

Inhabitants can bike along the Arkansas River or on Turkey Mountain, kayak in one of the area's lakes (or in the Arkansas River), fish, hike, and more. Oklahoma weather can also be erratic, which includes the possibility of tornadoes. In true Oklahoma fashion, Tulsans have embraced impending weather with an attitude of grabbing a drink from the fridge, sitting on the front porch, and getting to know their neighbors.

The cost of living remains relatively low, making life in Tulsa quite affordable when compared to other cities. Residents tend to be community-oriented and friendly. Schools remain a topic of concern in Oklahoma, but residents have a wide variety of experiences from public, private, charter, parochial, and home schools. The State of Oklahoma has made all of these attainable for many of Tulsa's families.

BY THE NUMBERS

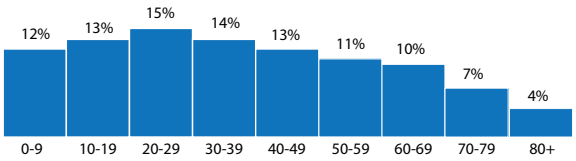
Age

35.9

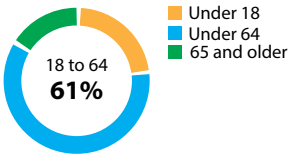
Median age

about 3 years below the national average: 39.2

Population by age range



Population by age category



Educational attainment

88.3%

High school grad or higher

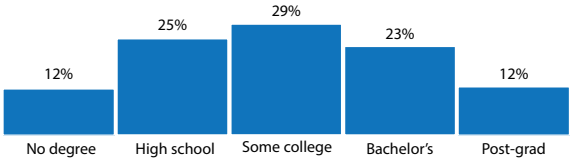
about the same as the rate in the United States: 88.9%

35%

Bachelor's degree or higher

a little less than the rate in the United States: 36.9%

Population by highest level of education



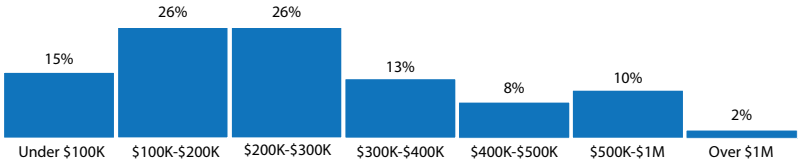
Home value

$234,400

Median value of owner-occupied housing units

about $125,000 below the national average: $360,600

Value of owner-occupied housing units



Income

$38,442

Per capita income

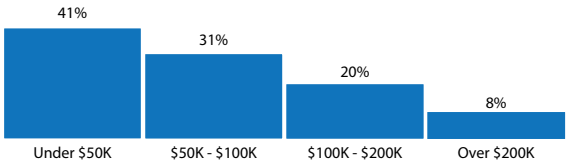
about $7,000 below the national average

$60,930

Median houshold income

about $20,000 below the national average: $81,604

Household income



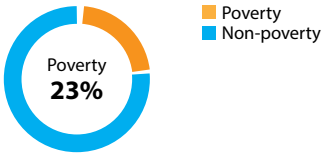
Poverty

16.9%

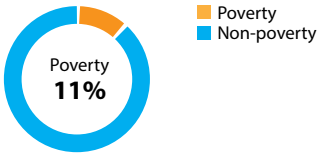
Persons below poverty line

about 1.4 times the rate in the United States: 12.2%

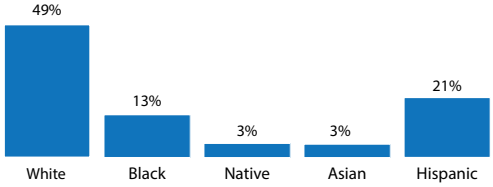
Children (Under 18)



Seniors (65 and over)



Race & Ethnicity



Data from censusreporter.org

CHURCH CULTURE AND OPPORTUNITIES

> We hope to continue to be a church that loves the people of Tulsa well, engages our community, and extends our ministry beyond Sunday gatherings into our daily lives.

Christ Presbyterian Church sits on the line between South Tulsa and Midtown. Many of our members drive by both multimillion-dollar homes and homeless communities on their way to church. Our congregation is made up of a wide range of people, from successful business owners to former addicts; singles, couples, newlyweds, families, and widows and widowers; the healthy and the ailing; people of many nationalities and ethnic groups; and members of diverse faith backgrounds. We reflect the cross-sections of the city.

Our desire is to continue to cultivate a dynamic body while we prayerfully discern how God is calling us to live more faithfully in our current context. We hope to continue to be a church that loves the people of Tulsa well, engages our community, and extends our ministry beyond Sunday gatherings into our daily lives.

The session continues to work faithfully to understand how CPC can better care for its members and engage their gifts and talents for Christ's kingdom. As the session reorganizes teams and asks God to reveal our blind spots, we long for a pastor who will walk alongside us and seek God's direction together.

CHURCH ASPIRATIONS

CPC aspires to be a Christ-centered community that:

- Recognizes the need for and relies on Christ's work and grace in our lives individually
- Deepens and grows together in grace lived in community
- Extends grace to our neighbors, giving them a place to belong

CHRIST-CENTERED

The heart of our calling is to be a community rooted and grounded in the person and work of Christ. We seek to live in light of our union with Him and respond to His grace in love, obedience, and holiness. As we gather to commune with one another, we desire to be a church in which the grace and example of Jesus shape the way we worship, serve, forgive, and care for one another. We seek a pastor who is secure in his belonging to Christ and knows how to lead others toward deeper communion and enjoyment of their belonging to Him.

CHRIST'S WORK AND GRACE

We recognize our need for God's grace and are reliant on Him to provide. We are keenly aware of our constant need to recall and be reminded of this deep need. We desire to be a people who delight in God's word, are humbled by God's demonstrated love toward us through the Son, and are empowered to live lives pleasing to Him by the power of the Spirit. We desire to grow in humility, authenticity, encouragement, hospitality, and service. We seek a pastor who is prayerfully dependent upon the Spirit's leading in his own life and for the ministry to others.

GRACE IN COMMUNITY

We desire to be a multi-generational, multi-ethnic congregation that gracefully embodies what we profess and welcomes people from every background and season of life. Our desire is that our members regularly experience the grace of Christ lived out as we worship together, serve one another, forgive one another, and care for one another.

A new mother caring for her infant, a longtime member who has witnessed God's faithfulness through decades of life, or a person in the midst of career changes and transitions can each encourage and learn from one another.

In sum, we long to be a church that authentically loves one another so deeply that it is palpable to anyone who enters our walls. We seek a pastor who is relationally winsome, who lives at peace with God, himself, and others, and who has a history of relationships across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines.

GRACE TO OUR NEIGHBORS

We pray to be a church wherein our neighbors are:

- Welcomed: visitors are greeted warmly, genuinely, and perhaps invited to lunch by one of our members
- Known: whether youth or elderly, we desire to know each other and our neighbors by name and to live life with them beyond the church's walls on Sunday mornings
- Valued: we pray that people feel that they are seen, heard, and matter when they are with us

A PLACE TO BELONG

We believe our differences in backgrounds, experiences, and seasons of life are not barriers to unity, but gifts of God to help us better understand and reflect the fullness of Christ and His kingdom. Therefore, we pray that, as our friends and neighbors encounter us, they find us to be a church where they:

- Form authentic connections
- Participate in church-wide and community events
- Serve and use the gifts and talents that God has given them

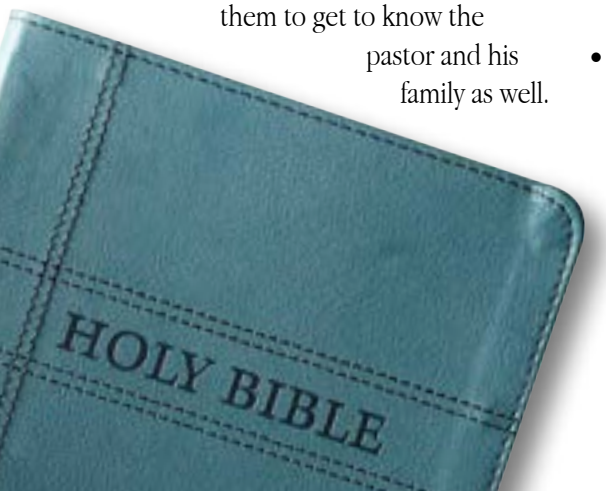
PASTORAL PROFILE

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

We are looking for and hope to welcome a Senior Pastor who loves Christ, delights in God's word, and is committed to:

- Faithfully Shepherding CPC: preaches and teaches God's Word with clarity and grace, encourages the church to grow as disciples of Christ, and walks alongside our members through prayer and pastoral care.
- Partnering in Ministry: approaches ministry with humility, integrity, and a servant's heart. He will partner closely with the Session, recognizing ministry is shared among elders, staff, volunteers, and church members. He will celebrate each member's gifts and cultivate a church community wherein people joyfully participate in God's work together.
- Sharing Life: enjoys being present within the life of the church through conversations after Sunday worship, hospital visits, attending community events, sharing meals, and celebrating life's milestones. We seek a pastor who genuinely finds pleasure in knowing our church community and allowing them to get to know the pastor and his family as well.
- Demonstrating Vulnerability and Transparency: embraces being known by and accountable to the session, fellow pastors, trustworthy mentors at CPC, or friends and confidants. We seek a pastor who has people to care for him honestly and openly so that he may be equipped to never tire of doing good for those under his charge.

We desire a pastor who is energized by and thoughtfully stewards the ministries God has entrusted to CPC while being open to where God is leading us next, celebrating what God has done, and enabling others to pursue new opportunities to serve Christ within the church, our community, and world.



PARTICULAR QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Leadership experience within a similar, like-minded ministry context, including proven experience collaborating with a pastoral team and developing staff.
- Ordained in the PCA or possess credentials transferable to the PCA.
- Alignment with core theological beliefs, core values, and vision of Christ Presbyterian Church
- Commitment to the PCA theological standards and form of government, and to the general framework of liturgical worship principles established at Christ Presbyterian Church.
- A passion for preaching and teaching God's Word clearly, consistently, and understandably to those of varying spiritual maturity, along with solid skills for teaching and developing those in church leadership.
- Confidence in his convictions, the ability to explain his rationale, and the wisdom and grace to interact lovingly with those who differ.
- An ability to cultivate new elders, deacons, and small group leaders.
- Cross-cultural relationship-building abilities, with a desire to build new partnerships and continue current relationships with several minority and other PCA churches, including our RUF partnerships.
- Desire for and comfort in interacting with a wide range of people, from mature believers to skeptics, with a priority on building relationships with individual congregants.
- Recognition that both work and rest are gifts from God and an embrace of healthy rhythms of ministry, which include enjoying the good gifts God provides,like family, friendships, recreation, and Sabbath rest.
- A growing Christ-like character that is marked by humility, vulnerability, and transparency of his own need for grace and ability to lead others to Christ.

We welcome and look forward to the unique gifts and desires our new Senior Pastor will bring to the table. We are eager to be led by our new pastor and excited to see how his gifts will be deployed within our body and community.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND MATERIALS

If you sense the Lord may be calling you to explore this role, please prepare a cover letter, resume, links to at least two sermons, and a brief response to the questions below:

1. What gifts, graces, and experiences would you bring to CPC?
2. As you have considered CPC and Tulsa, what about this opportunity seems to fit your calling and passions?
3. How have recent ministry experiences shaped your character, leadership, and dependence on Christ?
4. What does ongoing growth, care, and accountability look like for you as a leader? Who is a part of your care team and what are their roles in your life?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share or have us be aware of as we consider your candidacy?

Please submit all materials as PDFs using the following naming format:

- FirstnameLastname_CoverLetter
- FirstnameLastname_Resume
- FirstnameLastname_Questions

You can apply online by scanning this QR code or by visiting: christpresbyterian.church/pastoral-search

COMMITTEE PROFILE

JOHN JOHNSON

John has been a resident of Tulsa since 1964. He and his wife Dana met in Tulsa, have been married for 40 years, and have one adult son. They began attending CPC in 1998. John and Dana served in the children's ministry for many years, and John served on the diaconate, mainly focusing on the church properties.

CONNOR CHILDERS

Connor has attended CPC since 2019, when he moved to Tulsa to intern with RUF at TU. He grew up in a suburb of Atlanta and went to Georgia Tech. After finishing the RUF Internship in 2022, Connor returned to his technical background but loved Tulsa too much to leave. He is passionate about fostering community and is often found with the young adults of CPC. In May, Connor married his wife, Thalia, whom he met at CPC! Outside of work and CPC, he enjoys nature, running, and finding a good coffee shop.

GARNET BAKER

Garnet and her husband Steve joined the CPC family in 1989; she has been teaching Sunday School ever since. They are both members of the International Missions Team. Garnet was active in the women's ministry while her children were growing up, but then she began tutoring and teaching as an adjunct English instructor at Oral Roberts University. She can usually be seen reading the library books she has downloaded onto her phone. Steve is retired, but loves assisting the deacons in fixing things.

KIM LEE

Kim was born and raised in Tulsa and has attended CPC since 2015. She and her husband, Lawrence, have been married for 18 years and have 3 children, whom she homeschools full-time. A former pediatric nurse, she is also a real estate investor with experience flipping houses, owning rental property, and investing in apartment complexes, which has fueled her interest in business and entrepreneurship. Kim has a longstanding heart for God to be glorified among the nations, having served in Asia for two years after college, and has traveled to multiple countries since, including several trips to the Middle East. When she's not teaching, investing, or serving, you'll likely find her reading or talking about books – she almost always has three or four books in progress at any given time!

DANA MAHER

Dana is a pianist, vocalist, Celtic harpist, and composer who is a lifelong Tulsan (her sons are the 5th generation in her family to call Tulsa home). Dana and her family began attending CPC in 2009; she became Music Ministry Director in 2010. She has been married to Brian for 34 years. She teaches music at the University of Tulsa and was a member of the award-winning folk trio Vintage Wildflowers for 16 years.

JONATHAN SHIELDS

Jonathan and Mandi Shields have been a part of the Christ Presbyterian Church community for two years. They have three children who take up most of their home life. Jonathan is passionate about teaching and coaching, helping families with their personal finances, and serving the church community. In his free time…he doesn't know what free time is.

PAUL ROSE

Paul is a fourth-generation Oklahoman and has lived in Tulsa since graduating from Oklahoma State University in 1984. There he met Valerie, a transplanted Floridian and recent graduate of Oral Roberts University, and they were married in 1987. Paul and Valerie have six grown children and 11 grandchildren. One family resides in Tanzania, another in the DC area, and the remainder in Tulsa. Paul is a structural engineer who specializes in new buildings and the demolition of large structures. Valerie home-educated their children and served in home school leadership in local, state, and national levels, and currently sells personal health products. Paul and Valerie joined CPC in 2020 and serve by helping in hospitality and maintenance, and love teaching and congregational singing.

SOPHIA PERNICK

Sophia has attended CPC and lived in Tulsa for 1.5 years. She moved to Tulsa from West Virginia, but grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and has lived in five different states in the past five years, Oklahoma being her favorite! Sophia finds great joy in being loved by and loving her communities and serving in the Youth Ministry. She enjoys spending quality time with friends, which often involves playing some type of sport, eating some type of food, or attempting to camp. Sophia is also passionate about the movie "Over the Hedge," playing the piano, peanut butter, building spreadsheets, and Spindrift.

COREY LOVE

Corey was born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma; he attended college in Mississippi, and after his matriculation, he met his wife of 25 years, Cassandra. Corey and Cassandra have three daughters: Alexis, Nina, and Sydney. They moved back to Oklahoma and started attending Christ Presbyterian Church in 2010, and after a year of kicking the wheels, they joined. Corey and Cassandra were involved in teaching Sunday school, the welcoming committee, and Cassandra served on Women in the Church (WIC). Corey served on the Diaconate and is now a Ruling Elder. "It has been our joy to serve CPC."

Christ PRESBYTERIAN

Living the truth. Acting in love